

## ADOPTION OF M-LEARNING TO ENHANCE LSRW SKILLS FOR LEARNERS OF ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

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### ABSTRACT

M-learning is a learning method through various perspectives, with various interactions using personal mobile phones. It offers modern ways to enhance LSRW skills through mobile devices, such as tablet computers, MP3 players, smart phones and mobile phones. At present, people are willing to learn at different rates, and mobile learning allows learners to learn any place and anytime. The foremost characteristics of m-learning are predictable as the possible for learning process to be spontaneous, informal and omnipresent. In contrast to classroom learning, in m-learning there is no need for the learners to sit in a classroom or at a computer to get learning materials. Moreover, it is one of the ideal methods to language learning barriers in terms of time and place. This paper will give a brief overview of the m-learning, which is an appropriate technique to enhance for LSRW skills, using mobile phones. In addition, this paper promotes self-study concept, which is obviously important in learning English as a second language.

**Keywords:** M-learning, Self-study, LSRW, Mobile Assisted Language Learning

### INTRODUCTION

Mobile devices and learning apps are providing different approach to students to enhance English in the present era. Mobile learning gives freedom to learn, download smart study

materials and the opportunity to learn from all corners of the sphere. Using mobile devices, with easy access to internet, learners can interact with people from anywhere in the world. Irrespective of time and place people chat or exchange information with each other. In a society where everyone wants to do everything quickly, even language learning with mobile phones is included as a quick way to improve LSRW skills. When a learner utilizes a little time in a day to self-study through m-learning, it is believed that the learner can improve proficiency in English. Furthermore, it is assumed that with latest technology and facilities available in the modern era, mobile phones are accessible in all urban and rural areas of each country irrespective of economic status. Therefore, m-learning in many ways is inexpensive to learn in new environment and new way. In this study, an investigation was made to enhance LSRW skills through m-learning which is an effective learning for career opportunities.

The acquisition of language learning in a mobile-based environment is proven accompanying by research study of learning via mobile devices. It was observed that from the study the process of learning conducted naturally, logically, reflecting learners' interests are highly appreciated by the students which inculcate them to learn. One definition of mobile learning is, "any sort of learning that happens when the learner is not at a fixed, predetermined location, or learning that happens when the learner takes advantage of the learning opportunities offered by mobile technologies" (MOBIlearn, 2003). In other words, with the use of mobile devices, learners can learn anywhere and at any time (Crescente and Lee, 2011). The good advantage of m-learning is learners can download English applications that may help learners to acquire proficiency in language skills. The current generation learners are skilled mobile users because their dominance in using mobile devices is unmatched with the older generation.

Therefore, the outcomes and the findings of this paper recommend students to adopt m-learning to enhance their LSRW skills.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Ally (2009) stated that "Mobile learning is done through the use of wireless mobile technology that allows anyone to access information and learning materials from anywhere and at anytime." According to his statement, learners have choice of their learning material, place and time. Different researchers have given different understandings of m-learning or self-study. Scholars interpret autonomy in different ways, giving particular attention to different aspects at different times, mainly because autonomy is seen as a multi-dimensional construct that takes different forms for different individuals, and for the same individual in different contexts (Benson, 2001). Nevertheless, according to Cotteral (2000), in more practical terms, this entails students taking responsibility for various aspects and stages of the learning process, including setting goals, determining content, selecting resources and techniques, as well as assessing progress.

Permitting the principles in applied linguistics, any tool that can increase students' access to the language will contribute greatly to their progress (Reinders 2010). Since mobile phones are part of students' everyday routines, m-learning will improve the efficiency of language learning for English as second language learners. Some people feel reluctant to use mobile phones in learning and consequently they have not been used widely in educational settings (Mcneal and Hooft, 2006). Chen, Hsieh, and Kinshuk (2008) conduct a research on the effects of using mobile phones for the delivery of vocabulary material on English learners in Taiwan. The study discloses that the students are happy to use their phones because it is easy to access to the

contents. In addition, m-learning has the ability to practice anytime and anywhere. Some learners are adopted small screen size that other teaching materials.

### **PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

This study aims to:

- Discuss how personal mobile phones will enhance LSRW skills.
- Motivate m-learning and self-study for personal and professional growth.
- Recognize the potential of mobile phones as a learning tool.

### **Mobile Phones: Useful for language learning**

Today the latest technological revolution made smart mobile phones to furnish with features like SMS, MMS, Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, internet access, digital camera, video recorder and multimedia contents including audio and video. A few mobiles have inbuilt learning software such as dictionary, quiz software, voice recording and listening. Through recording facility, learners can download speeches, listen and record their language skills. By practicing it continuously with interest and involvement, the English language learners can improve LSRW skills.

### **ADVANTAGES OF MOBILE LEARNING**

Mobile phones are the most influential communication which is even richer than email communication. With such a learning device the learner has a wide range of advantages. The learner should be brought to see the potential of becoming personally empowered in language learning, with the possibility of becoming part of an online community of learners. The following are the few advantages of mobile learning.

- The facility to speak and listen is a great learning tool for the language learners and they can learn and test their knowledge through mobile phones.

- Listening to motivational speeches and watching videos are very popular among students to enhance communication skills.
- YouTube allows students to watch videos which improve their confidence level.
- Online dictionaries are used widely to improve vocabulary in language acquisition.
- Facebook and WhatsApp are a positive way for students to share information and learn from others.

### **M-LEARNING: INFORMAL AND LIFELONG LEARNING**

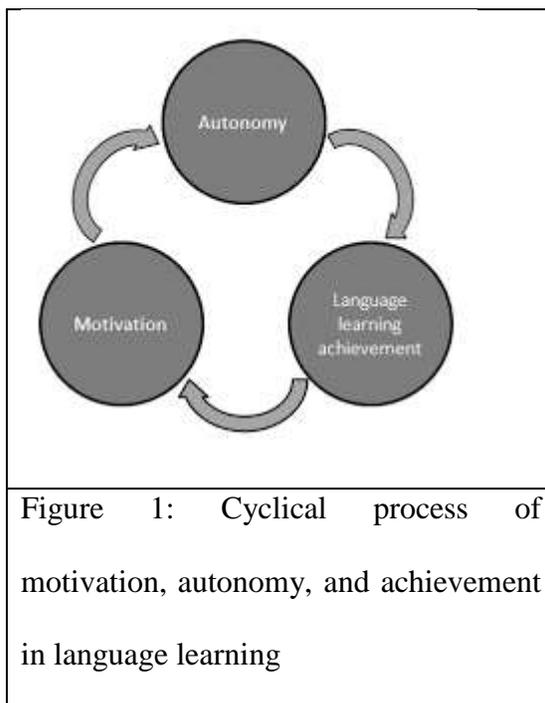
Learning lifelong is an individual practice, it makes the person to deliberately learn which for either personal or professional purposes. Reading and learning is a lifelong process. As we do our routine work in our day today life, learning should also happen all the time as long as we are alive. Many studies of informal learning, (Livingstone. D. W, 2001) states that adults learn a lot of things outside formal education. Informal learning could be either intentional through deliberate learning projects (Tough, 1971) or accidental through conversations, TV and newspapers, or even observing the world. During the last two decades, constant scientific and technological innovation has made profound effects on how learning is understood. Learning can no longer be stagnant at a place and time to acquire knowledge, it can happen anywhere and anytime. With the emerging innovative technologies, learning lifelong has become a mandatory part in a day today life that shows how we receive, gather information and communicate with others.

The learners may not realize m-learning as learning because it becomes as a reality in our lives. As technology rapidly changes, individuals must adapt to m-learning to meet everyday demands of language acquisition. The software and apps used in the m-learning reduce the size

and ease of use and supports such activities. The smartness and portable of mobile phones create learning robust for recording and allocation of informal learning.

## RESEARCH DESIGN

This study aims to investigate the effectiveness of the mobile phones on improving LSRW skills among ESL learners. 41 participants from Sri Ramakrishna Institute of Technology, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, India were selected for the research study. The research area of the study is learning and self-autonomy with proper guidance will enhance LSRW skills. Nurturing motivation is a central procedure in language learning, in words of Dornyei and Ushioda (2013) the consensus is that motivation, autonomy and learning achievement are interrelated forming a cyclical process (Figure 1). Based on the concept of Dornyei and Ushioda, the research study was made to improve communication skills.



## **PARTICIPANTS FOR THE STUDY**

The study was conducted in Sri Ramakrishna Institute of Technology (SRIT), Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, India on March/April, 2018. 41 students from first year B.E. - Electrical and Electronics Engineering students participated in the research study. All the participants were taking English as a compulsory subject as a graduation requirement and some from school level itself. The medium of instruction of the participants at school level was English and Tamil. 38 are from English and 3 are from Tamil medium respectively. Analyzing the gender wise ratio, there were 13 girls and 28 boys in the course. The control group was motivated to the use of mobile application to enhance their communication skills through given web resources and apps. The participants actively participated in the study for a span of 25 days as per their own time and place.

## **PROCEDURE OF THE STUDY**

Before administering the research study, the participants were notified about the research work and were motivated for the study. They were informed about the importance of LSRW skills and its role in personal and professional growth. At the beginning of the study, the participants were tested on their knowledge of LSRW. A question paper is prepared based on LSRW to assess their skills and it was evaluated meticulously allocating 10 marks to each component. As per the research area, the members were encouraged to access mobile learning for a period of 25 days with recommended websites and mobile apps to practice LSRW skills. After 25 days, another set of question paper was prepared based on LSRW and the valuation was made meticulously to assess their skills. The research study showed that all the participants have improved their language skills. The detailed study is given below with testimonials.

## AUTONOMY LEARNING: WEBSITES AND APPS FOR EDUCATION

As language teachers, it is important to promote self-study to our students. Websites and apps enable greater learner autonomy for language practice beyond the classroom. Mobile devices can supply greater access to second language input than normally. The participants are asked to use mobile phones to do certain exercises on LSRW and Vocabulary skills as a self-learning mode for a span of 25 days. The following tables show the websites and apps which were recommended during the research study.

Table 1: Websites accessed by Participants

Name of the Website	Skill
<a href="https://www.fluentu.com">https://www.fluentu.com</a>	Talking to real people
<a href="https://www.britishcouncil.in">https://www.britishcouncil.in</a>	Practice English
<a href="https://www.myenglishteacher.eu">https://www.myenglishteacher.eu</a>	Writing Skill
<a href="https://www.eslteacheredu.org">https://www.eslteacheredu.org</a>	Conversational English, grammar
<a href="https://www.lynda.com">https://www.lynda.com</a>	E-mail writing

Table 1

Source: Google, for illustration purposes only

Table 2: Apps accessed by Participants

Name of the App	Skill
English Podcast for Learners	Nurture speaking, listening skills through audio
English Listening and Speaking	Stories and transcripts
Duolingo	Vocabulary

Learn English, Speak English - Conversation	Helps the learner to speak in English with a video character
Rosetta Stone	Vocabulary and grammar

Table 2

Source: Google, for illustration purposes only

### ENHANCING LSRW SKILLS THROUGH MOBILE PHONE

Apart from accessing the above websites and apps the students were encouraged to use mobile phones to boost LSRW skills. The following are the some of the practices given to the students.

**Listening:** Listening exercises may be considered the first stage in learning a second language. The participants were asked to download famous/motivational speeches from YouTube and other web resources. They were also informed to listen to the speeches again and again until they understand the content and mark the unknown words, therefore they can search for the meaning and correct pronunciation through online. Further, the participants were requested to frequently change the videos, therefore they can listen to various types to speeches to develop listening skills and pronunciation.

**Speaking:** The learners were inspired to develop their speaking skills by intimating them to speak in English to unknown persons. According to some researchers, due to nervousness people feel uneasy while practicing face to face communication, but when the speaker speaks to an unknown person through mobile phone, it will increase their confidence level. Therefore, it was made mandatory that each participant should speak to toll free customer care no and continue their speech for five minutes. This type of speaking activity via mobile phone differs from face to face communication and even if the speaker makes errors in communicating the person who is

responding will ignore the errors made during conversation and will continue the conversation still it is completed. So the speaker will have confidence in speaking. Therefore, speaking to unknown person using mobile phone will definitely enhance speaking skills.

**Reading:** Understanding what is written is called reading skills, and even some native English speakers suffer from poor reading skills. Research suggests that people spend more than 30 minutes a day reading or sending messages on their mobile phones; and spend more than an hour browsing the Internet on their mobile phones. The participants were suggested to engage in reading activities on their phone for a small portion of their time, which could make measurable improvements in their reading ability. In addition, the by reading continuously for a few weeks, reading speed of a person will improve where they read more or even save time for other purpose.

**Writing:** Social media engages learners to use the language not only grammatically but socially. The participants in the research study were advised to practice writing skills regularly by responding in social media, such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, etc. The importance of email communication is also given and requested to send frequent mails to friends, peers, and customer care whenever they buy a product.

**Vocabulary:** Mobile apps can be a highly effective way to discover and learn new vocabulary. The participants were motivated to use apps to enrich vocabulary by learning a word or two.

## **FINDINGS**

The participants were asked to appear for an assessment (Pretest and Posttest) of LSRW skills before and also and after the study. Paper based test was conducted for Listening, Reading and Writing and video recording was done for speaking test. Based on the evaluation of the test, the average marks and standard deviation are calculated to find out the whether there is any

improvement is the LSRW. The study proved that in all the four skills the participants scored more marks and their language style was improved after practicing LSRW skills through m-learning. The following tables show the result of the study.

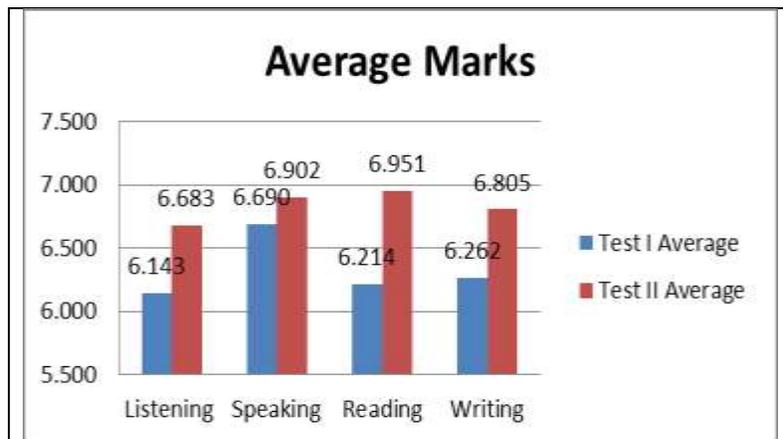
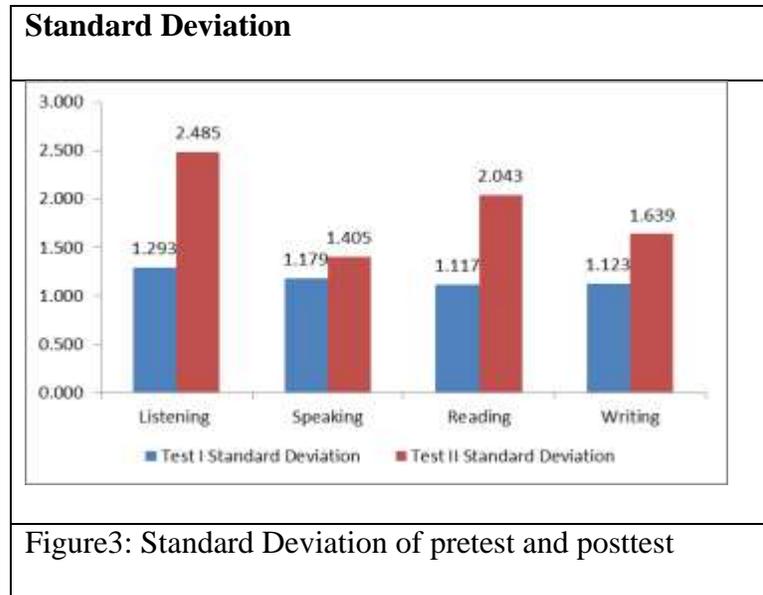


Figure2: Average of pretest and posttest



### CONFIDENCE INTERVAL

In statistics, a confidence interval (CI) is a type of interval estimate, computed from the statistics of the observed data that might contain the true value of an unknown population parameter. The desired level of confidence is set by the researcher and not determined by data. Most commonly, the 95% confidence level is used. Zar, J.H. (1984). The confidence interval for difference between means of pretest and posttest of m-learning is calculate and shown for all the four skills.

Assessment Skills	Confidence Interval	
	95%	90%
Listening	(-0.3174, 1.3975)	(-0.1796, 1.2596)
Speaking	(-0.3495, 0.7735)	(-0.2593, 0.6832)
Reading	(-0.0243, 1.4496)	(-0.1388, 1.3350)
Writing	(-0.0651, 1.1511)	(-0.0326, 1.0533)

Table 3: Confidence Interval for means of pretest and posttest of m-learning

## CONCLUSION

This research study reached the aims proposed by the researcher. The levels of motivation related to frequency of occurrence of autonomous language learning activities using m-learning undertaken by participants were examined. At present, the learners feel using the technology is more effective and interesting than before. In fact, through mobile phones, we can provide a richer learning environment for our language learners. It is a well-known fact that prime focus in language acquisition is to represent the learners to the language with technology. Websites and apps that involve in language learning should be encouraged for learners. M-learning is an opportunity for EFL learners to learn new language.

## SUGGESTION FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Mobile devices become part of our daily lives in the modern era. By using this device, self-learning can be developed by transforming these devices for language learning. The future research can include how mobile phones can enhance LSRW with the perspective of self-accessing. There should be a wide range of websites and mobile apps with error free apps which should pretest and posttest after a language learning course. In addition, future research can focus on the teacher's anxiety in the use of mobile tools in teaching the English language. The young and energetic teachers have to overcome the experiments in fulfilling technology for effective teaching of the language.

## Author Details

Dr.N.Venugopal received his Ph.D in English from Bharathiar University in 2016 and has been in teaching technical English for the past 16 years. His research interests include Teaching English through Animation Videos, Mobile Assisted Language Learning and Humor Based Language Learning. His objective is to render his knowledge, experience and expertise in

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