

M.A. THESIS IN LINGUISTICS

**IMPACT OF WEB-BASED LEARNING TO
ENHANCE ORAL AND WRITTEN
COMMUNICATION SKILLS IN GERMAN AS
A FOREIGN LANGUAGE**

A CASE STUDY OF UNDERGRADUATES OF UNIVERSITY OF
KELANIYA

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Abstract

Foreign language learning has become significant in today's context, owing to the amplified benefits it bequeaths its learners. Therefore, many researchers disclose an interest in discovering novel teaching approaches to intensify the efficacy of foreign language acquisition, in order to make the experience of learning multidimensional. Web based learning is an innovative approach in the arena of education; which infuses a diverse array of resources obtained through the utilization of WWW to make language learning extraordinary. Many pilot studies provide ample testimony to ascertain its aptitude in significantly enhancing language competencies and learner autonomy. This study was therefore, initiated with the aim of enhancing oral and written competencies and autonomy of the final year undergraduates who learn German as a foreign language at the University of Kelaniya; through the integration of web based methodology.

The participants of the study entailed of two research samples with analogous linguistic backgrounds, namely 40 and 20 learners who followed two compulsory course units of German; moreover, two focal participants from each sample were randomly selected to determine their in-depth personal progress in every stage of the research. The study was conducted for thirty weeks; specifically two hours per week, over the entire academic year. While pre-test, post-test and delayed post-test were utilized as primary data to evaluate the general and detailed development of both oral and written skills and expansion of the autonomy of the learners, observations, feedback and two brief interviews each from teachers and learners were obtained to identify their perception of learning through web based methodology. The data were analyzed in both percentage and actual figures.

The analysis of data revealed a remarkable improvement of both oral and written competencies and self-confidence and autonomy of the learners; as 100% of both research samples passed the final examination. Moreover, the observations, positive feedback and interviews of the motivated learners proved their willingness to expose themselves to novel learning approaches and acceptance of web based learning as a learning approach that guarantees a positive enhancement of their language skills. Finally, it is believed that this research would provide impetus to learners, teachers and researchers to inspire further discussions on the integration of web based learning in diverse fields.