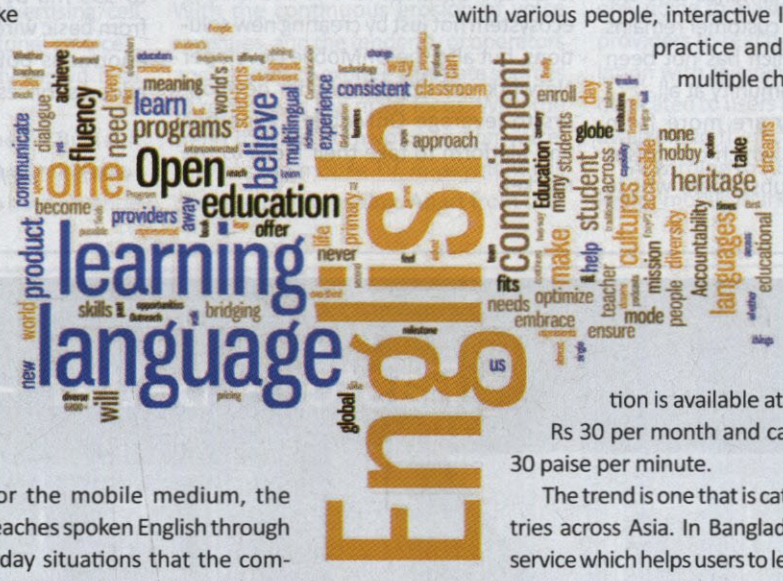
# Learning Made Easy

## Enmeshing mobile phones with language learning is a unique trend sure to catch on

The English language has become one of the most integral parts of doing business in India. Picking up on this trend, BSNL has come up with a unique solution to make the learning of English simpler by routing it through mobile phones. The solution has been devised in conjunction with OnMobile and EnableM technologies. Moreover, IMImobile and IL&FS Education & Technology Services have also announced the launch of 'English Seekho' on mobiles.




Designed specially for the mobile medium, the 'Learn English' program teaches spoken English through simple stories and everyday situations that the common man can relate to. Subscribers have the option to select their level of learning (basic/advanced), based on their proficiency of the language. They can also select specific professions, situations or conversations to learn English. So now, a driver or a receptionist can listen to lessons aligned to his/her profession. Similarly, subscribers can listen to conversations based on situations, they might encounter everyday. Daily SMSs and practice tests are a part of the learning package. To make the program user-friendly and self-paced, certain options such as bookmarks, pause, etc. have also been introduced. The program is available in nine Indian languages, namely, Hindi, Tamil, Kannada, Marathi, Bengali, Gujarati, Punjabi, Telugu and Malayalam. The program is available at a subscription cost of Rs 20 per month and a call browsing charge of 30 paise per minute.

The 'English Seekho' service also provides its users grammar lessons through SMS. The course structure consists of ten chapters and forty-four lessons with one lesson per day of five-eight minutes. The curriculum provides a special focus on interviews, getting jobs and on-job training. The total length of the program is 350 minutes. The range of service offerings include focusing on social English speaking on various occasions with various people, interactive IVR lessons as well as practice and recall sessions with multiple choice questions. To use this application, the user needs to call the IVR number and select the language of their comfort. After that, they need to select the specific sub-sections of their choice. The application is available at a subscription cost of Rs 30 per month and call browsing charge of 30 paise per minute.

The trend is one that is catching in various countries across Asia. In Bangladesh, Janala, a mobile service which helps users to learn English via phones in the country, has delivered 1 mn lessons. Users in Bangladesh dial 3000 and get access to three minute long audio lessons and SMS quizzes. The lessons vary from Essential English for beginners to story telling lessons for advanced learners. Telecom operators charge 1 Taka per minute for the lessons, though it has been criticized for still being rather high.

In China, Pearson Education has teamed up with Nokia's mobile learning platform Mobiledu to extend the learning of English language to users. Customers can access the content through an application preloaded on their Nokia handsets, or by visiting the service's mobile website and most other WAP portals in China.

Either through IVR or pre-loaded applications, mobile phones will become an integral part of learning in the future. While in India, the concept is still fairly new, it will be a matter of time that other telecom providers will offer similar services to aid learning in the country.

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