

# Framework for a Mobile E-Learning App for Students with Learning Disabilities

N.D.Gunasekara<sup>1</sup>, S.D.Mahawela<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Sri Lanka Institute of Advanced Technological Education

<sup>2</sup>Training and Development in Professional Psychological Counselors' Association

Sri Lanka

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**Abstract:** Learning disabilities (LDs) such as dyslexia, dyscalculia, ADHD, and processing disorders challenge students' ability to engage with traditional educational materials. With the rapid growth of mobile technology, e-learning apps provide a promising avenue for creating accessible and personalized learning environments. This research proposes a conceptual framework for a mobile e-learning application designed specifically for learners with learning disabilities. The framework integrates principles of inclusive design, multimodal instructional strategies, adaptive learning, assistive technologies, and learner analytics. It also evaluates existing e-learning platforms and identifies gaps in accessibility and user-centered design. The proposed model aims to guide future development of accessible mobile learning systems that address the diverse cognitive needs of LD learners

**Keywords:** Learning Disabilities, Mobile App, Accessibility, Universal Design for Learning, educational app.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Students with learning disabilities require tailored instructional environments due to difficulties in reading, writing, attention regulation, and information processing. Conventional teaching approaches are often insufficient for addressing these needs, resulting in frustration, limited engagement, and reduced academic performance.

Mobile e-learning technologies offer new opportunities for delivering adaptable and inclusive instruction. However, most current applications are designed for general users and do not fully address the cognitive and accessibility challenges faced by LD students. This research develops a conceptual framework for a mobile e-learning app intended explicitly for learners with LDs, outlining core design components, essential features, and accessibility considerations.

### A. Research Questions

This study addresses the following research questions:

**RQ1:** What are the essential components of a mobile e-learning app framework specifically designed for students with learning disabilities?

**RQ2:** What specific features, accommodations, and design elements are most critical for addressing the needs of students with diverse learning disability profiles?

**RQ3:** How can Universal Design for Learning principles be operationalized in mobile app technical specifications and user interface design?

**RQ4:** What are the key usability, accessibility, and pedagogical considerations that differentiate effective LD-focused apps from mainstream educational applications?

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. Understanding Learning Disabilities

Learning disabilities (LD) represent a diverse group of neurological conditions affecting how individuals receive, process, store, and respond to information [1]. Key categories include dyslexia (reading difficulties), dyscalculia (mathematical difficulties), dysgraphia (writing difficulties), auditory processing disorder, visual processing disorder, and attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) when it impacts learning [2]. Approximately 5-15% of school-age children worldwide are identified with learning disabilities, with prevalence varying by diagnostic criteria and geographic region ([3]; [4]). Students with learning disabilities possess average to above-average intelligence but experience significant challenges in academic achievement due to differences in how their brains process information [5]. These students often struggle with traditional teaching methods designed for neurotypical learners, leading to achievement gaps, reduced self-efficacy, higher dropout rates, and long-term impacts on educational and career outcomes [4] [6]. The challenges faced by students with LD are not due to lack of ability or motivation but rather mismatches between their cognitive profiles and instructional delivery methods [7].

### B. Mobile Learning (M-Learning)

Mobile devices—particularly smartphones and tablets—have become ubiquitous in educational contexts, with ownership rates exceeding 90% among students in developed nations and rapidly growing in developing regions [8]. Mobile learning (m-learning) offers several advantages particularly relevant for students with learning disabilities: Such as learning can occur anywhere, anytime, reducing environmental barriers and allowing students to learn in comfortable, low-stress settings [9] [10]. Further mobile apps can adapt content, pacing, and presentation to individual needs, providing customized learning experiences difficult to achieve in traditional classrooms [11] [12]. In addition to that touchscreen interfaces combined with audio, visual, and text capabilities enable multiple representation formats supporting diverse learning preferences [13] [7]. Moreover modern mobile operating systems include built-in accessibility features and support third-party assistive technologies [14] [15]. Also interactive, game-like features can increase engagement and reduce anxiety associated with academic tasks [16] [17]. Lastly real-time responses to student actions support learning and build confidence [18] [19].

### C. Universal Design for Learning (UDL)

Universal Design for Learning, developed by CAST (Center for Applied Special Technology), provides a research-based framework for designing flexible learning environments that accommodate individual learning differences from the outset rather than retrofitting accommodations later [7] [13]. UDL is grounded in neuroscience research identifying three primary brain networks involved in learning:

**Recognition Networks** (the "what" of learning): UDL Principle 1 mandates providing **Multiple Means of Representation**, ensuring information is perceivable and comprehensible through various formats (visual, auditory, text, tactile).

**Strategic Networks** (the "how" of learning): UDL Principle 2 requires **Multiple Means of Action and Expression**, allowing diverse ways for students to demonstrate knowledge and engage with materials (speech to text, writing supports).

**Affective Networks** (the "why" of learning): UDL Principle 3 emphasizes **Multiple Means of Engagement**, supporting motivation, interest, and persistence through choice, relevance, gamification and appropriate challenge levels.

For students with learning disabilities, UDL principles are particularly critical as they systematically address barriers created by one-size-fits-all instructional approaches [20] [21].

### D. Research Gap

While substantial research examines mobile learning generally [9] [22] and assistive technology for disabilities broadly [20] [21], few studies specifically address mobile e-learning app design for students with learning disabilities. Most existing research focuses on single-disability types (primarily dyslexia) rather than comprehensive frameworks addressing diverse LD profiles.

Existing research tends to examine individual features in isolation—such as text-to-speech effectiveness [23], font readability for dyslexic readers [24], or mathematics app interventions for dyscalculia [25]—rather than proposing integrated, comprehensive app frameworks.

Much literature emphasizes WCAG (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines) compliance and technical accessibility standards [26] [27] but provides limited guidance on pedagogical design, content adaptation, or learning strategy support beyond basic access.

### III. METHODOLOGY

This study is entirely **conceptual** and based on: literature synthesis of learning disabilities, review of mobile learning design principles, analysis of accessibility standards (e.g., WCAG, UDL), comparison of features in existing e-learning apps

The framework proposed is not based on theoretical and design-based research principles.

### IV. PROPOSED FRAMEWORK

#### *A. Component 1 : Accessible and User-Centric Interface Design*

A mobile interface for LD learners should:

- minimize visual clutter
- use dyslexic-friendly fonts
- allow customizable font size, spacing, and color contrast
- include intuitive navigation
- offer voice- and gesture-based controls
- support adjustable reading speeds

#### *B. Component 2: Multimodal Content Delivery*

LD learners benefit from varied sensory inputs. The app should incorporate:

- text, audio, video, and visual symbols
- interactive elements such as drag-and-drop tasks
- text-to-speech and speech-to-text support
- real-time highlighting during audio playback
- animation and interactive simulations

#### *C. Component 3: Adaptive Learning System*

Adaptive learning technologies personalize the learning experience by:

- adjusting difficulty based on performance
- recommending suitable content sequences
- identifying areas of difficulty
- providing immediate feedback
- enabling customized learning paths

#### *D. Component 4: Assistive Educational Tools*

Key assistive tools include:

- built-in dictionary with audio support
- visual math manipulatives for dyscalculia
- reading supports (line focus, color overlays)
- focus timers and distraction blockers for ADHD
- memory aids such as flashcards and reminders
- note-taking tools synchronized with audio

**E. Component 5: Learner Analytics and Gamified Feedback**

To support continuous improvement, the app should include:

- progress dashboards
- motivational badges and rewards
- predictive indicators of learning challenges
- teacher and parent access to performance summaries
- feedback that is supportive rather than punitive

**V. ANALYSIS**

When comparing with the existing mobile apps, common features considered and the results are summarized below

**TABLE I: COMPARISON OF PROPOSED FRAMEWORK WITH EXISTING MOBILE APPS**

Feature	E - learning apps	Proposed Framework
Standard content delivery	√	√
Accessibility focused design	Limited	strong
Multi sensory learning	partial	Fully integrated
Text customization	minimal	advanced
LD specific assistive tools	Reare	Core component
Adaptive learning	Moderately available	Key feature
Cognitive load management	Not explicit	Built in
Analytics for LD learners	weak	enhanced
Standard content delivery	√	√

Existing e-learning platforms prioritize content dissemination rather than accessibility or LD-sensitive design. The conceptual framework expands on these limitations and introduces inclusive, adaptive features.

**VI. DISCUSSION**

Mobile e-learning holds significant potential for supporting students with learning disabilities. The framework addresses specific needs of students with dyslexia, dyscalculia, dysgraphia, ADHD, and processing disorders while maintaining universal design principles benefiting all learners. This dual focus avoids creating separate "special needs" apps while ensuring critical accommodations aren't overlooked. Challenges for implementation may include balancing simplicity with functionality and integrating diverse LD requirements into a single app. Nevertheless, the conceptual framework provides a strong foundation for future development.

**VII. CONCLUSION**

This research presents a theoretically grounded framework for a mobile e-learning application aimed at students with learning disabilities. By synthesizing principles of UDL, mobile learning theory, and accessibility standards, the model outlines practical design components essential for effective support of LD learners. The framework highlights the necessity of adaptive, multimodal, and user-centered features in the development of inclusive mobile learning environments.

Future work may involve prototype development, user experience evaluation, and experimental validation.

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