



English Language Proficiency among Secondary School Students in Adoni Division of Andhra Pradesh: An Empirical Study using ELPT-MKDR

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Abstract— English language proficiency plays a pivotal role in determining academic success and enhancing employability prospects, particularly in multilingual societies such as India. This study examines the English language proficiency levels of secondary school students in the Adoni Division of Andhra Pradesh using the standardized English Language Proficiency Test (ELPT-MKDR). Adopting a descriptive survey design, the study utilized both descriptive and inferential statistical methods to analyze the data. A sample of 300 students was selected through stratified random sampling from government and private schools located in both rural and urban areas. The ELPT-MKDR, comprising 56 items distributed across three sections and fourteen content domains, was administered under standardized testing conditions. Data analysis involved the computation of mean scores, standard deviations, independent samples t-tests, and correlation coefficients. The results revealed that most students demonstrated a moderate level of English language proficiency. Significant differences were observed with respect to school location (rural–urban) and school management (government–private). Furthermore, the findings indicate a disparity between students' grammatical competence and their ability to use English effectively in communicative contexts. The study underscores the need for pedagogical interventions and curriculum reforms aimed at strengthening communicative language competence and improving overall English language proficiency among secondary school learners.



Keywords— English Language Proficiency, ELPT-MKDR, Secondary School Students, Andhra Pradesh, Language Assessment, Communicative Competence.

I. INTRODUCTION

English has attained the status of a global language, serving as a primary medium of communication, education, scientific inquiry, and technological innovation. In the Indian context, English functions not only as a second language but also as a crucial instrument for academic advancement, professional development, and access to global opportunities. The growing significance of English proficiency has been reinforced by the demands of globalization and the expansion of knowledge-driven economies, where effective communication skills are increasingly valued.

Despite the widespread recognition of its importance, the development of English language proficiency among school students continues to pose significant challenges. Evidence from the English Language Proficiency Test (ELPT) manual indicates that a considerable number of students experience difficulties in using English effectively for communication, even after several years of formal instruction. This concern is particularly evident in rural and semi-urban regions, where opportunities for meaningful exposure to English beyond the classroom remain limited.

The Adoni Division of Andhra Pradesh presents a representative educational context in which the majority of students come from vernacular-language backgrounds. In such settings, English language learning is frequently confined to textbook-oriented teaching practices, with comparatively little emphasis on communicative application and real-life language use. Consequently, there is a need for systematic assessment of students' English language proficiency through standardized and reliable measurement tools. Against this backdrop, the present study seeks to evaluate the English language proficiency of secondary school students using the English Language Proficiency Test (ELPT-MKDR) and to examine the influence of selected demographic and institutional variables on language learning outcomes.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Research in the field of second language acquisition underscores the significance of developing both linguistic competence and communicative competence for effective language use. While linguistic competence involves mastery of grammatical structures, vocabulary, and language conventions, communicative competence emphasizes the ability to use language appropriately and effectively in real-life contexts. However, English language teaching in India has traditionally relied on grammar-oriented and translation-based instructional methods, which often contribute to the development of theoretical knowledge rather than practical communication skills.

Scholarly literature on language assessment advocates a comprehensive approach to proficiency evaluation that encompasses multiple dimensions of language ability, including vocabulary knowledge, grammatical accuracy, reading comprehension, and language application skills. In this regard, the English Language Proficiency Test (ELPT) adopts a multidimensional assessment framework by integrating diverse content domains and varied item formats designed to measure different aspects of language proficiency.

Previous empirical studies have identified several factors that influence English language proficiency, including socio-economic background, educational environment, and opportunities for exposure to the target language. Research consistently demonstrates that students studying in urban settings and private educational institutions generally exhibit higher levels of proficiency, largely due to better access to educational resources, enriched learning environments, and greater opportunities for communicative practice. Building upon these findings, the present study employs a standardized assessment instrument to examine English language proficiency among

secondary school students and investigates variations in proficiency across selected demographic and institutional variables.

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The present study was undertaken with the following objectives:

1. To assess the level of English language proficiency among secondary school students.
2. To evaluate students' performance across various linguistic domains of English language proficiency.
3. To examine differences in English language proficiency between students from rural and urban backgrounds.
4. To compare the proficiency levels of students studying in government and private schools.
5. To investigate the relationship between students' exposure to English and their overall language proficiency.

IV. HYPOTHESES

The study was guided by the following null hypotheses:

H₀₁: There is no statistically significant difference in English language proficiency between rural and urban secondary school students.

H₀₂: There is no statistically significant difference in English language proficiency between students enrolled in government schools and those enrolled in private schools.

H₀₃: There is no statistically significant relationship between exposure to English and English language proficiency among secondary school students.

V. METHODOLOGY

The present investigation adopted a descriptive survey design to assess the existing level of English language proficiency among secondary school students. The descriptive approach was considered appropriate for obtaining a comprehensive understanding of students' proficiency levels and for examining variations associated with selected demographic and institutional factors.

Sample

The study sample comprised 300 secondary school students selected through the stratified random sampling technique. Stratification was employed to ensure adequate representation of students from different educational and geographical backgrounds. Accordingly, the sample

included students from both rural and urban areas as well as from government and private schools, thereby facilitating meaningful comparative analysis across these groups.

Research Tool

Data for the study were collected using the English Language Proficiency Test (ELPT-MKDR), a standardized instrument designed to assess various dimensions of English language proficiency. The test consists of 56 items organized into three sections: multiple-choice questions, fill-in-the-blank items, and identification-based tasks. It covers fourteen linguistic domains, including nouns, pronouns, tenses, sentence structure, translation, voice, and direct and indirect speech. Each content area is assigned equal weightage, ensuring a balanced assessment of students' language competencies across different aspects of English usage.

Administration of the Test

The ELPT-MKDR was administered to the participants in their respective classroom settings under standardized testing conditions. Prior to the administration of the test, students were provided with clear instructions regarding the procedure and requirements of the assessment. In accordance with the guidelines specified in the test manual, participants were allotted approximately 30 minutes to complete all test items.

Scoring Procedure

The scoring of the ELPT-MKDR was carried out according to the procedures prescribed in the test manual. Each correct response was awarded one mark, whereas incorrect responses received a score of zero. Consequently, the maximum obtainable score on the test was 56. To facilitate interpretation and comparison of performance levels, the obtained raw scores were subsequently transformed into standardized z-scores using the normative data provided in the ELPT manual.

VI. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The data collected for the study were systematically analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques were employed to address the objectives of the study and to test the formulated

hypotheses. Descriptive measures such as mean and standard deviation were used to determine the overall level of English language proficiency among the participants, while inferential statistics, including independent samples t-tests and correlation analysis, were utilized to examine group differences and relationships among variables.

Results and Data Analysis

The findings of the study are presented and interpreted in accordance with the research objectives and hypotheses. Statistical results are reported through appropriate tables and graphical representations to facilitate clear understanding and interpretation of the data. The analysis begins with an examination of the overall performance of the students based on descriptive statistical measures. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of ELPT Scores

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Min	Max
ELPT Score	300	31.42	9.85	10	54

The mean score indicates moderate proficiency with considerable variation among students.

The distribution of students across proficiency levels is shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Distribution of Proficiency Levels

Level	Frequency	Percentage
Extremely High	12	4%
High	30	10%
Above Average	54	18%
Average	120	40%
Below Average	48	16%
Low	27	9%
Extremely Low	9	3%

The majority of students fall under the average category, indicating moderate proficiency levels.

Figure 1 illustrates the distribution of proficiency levels among students.

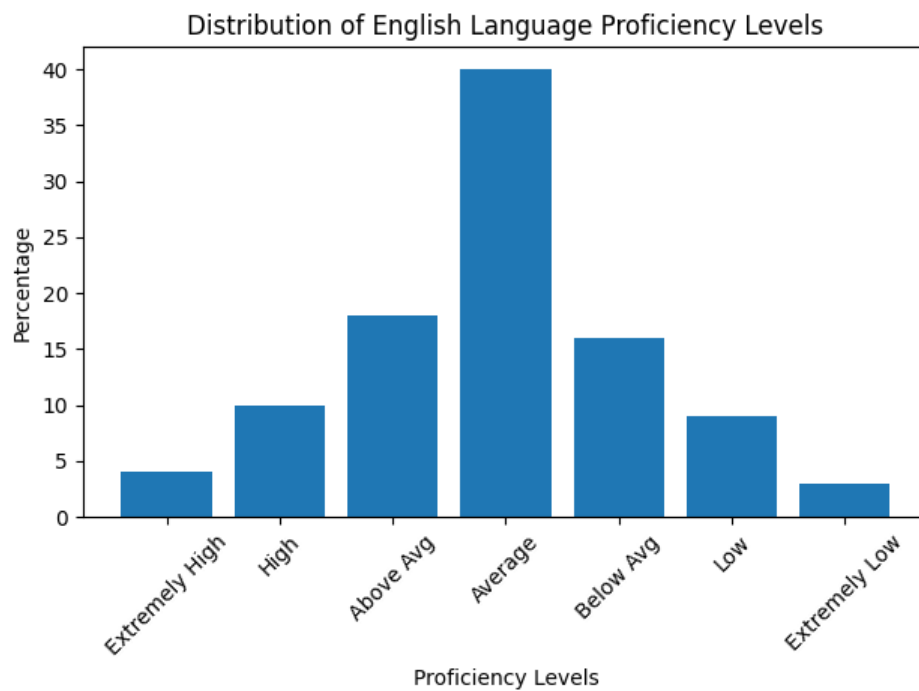


Fig.1. Distribution of Proficiency Levels

Figure 2 presents the proportional composition of proficiency levels.

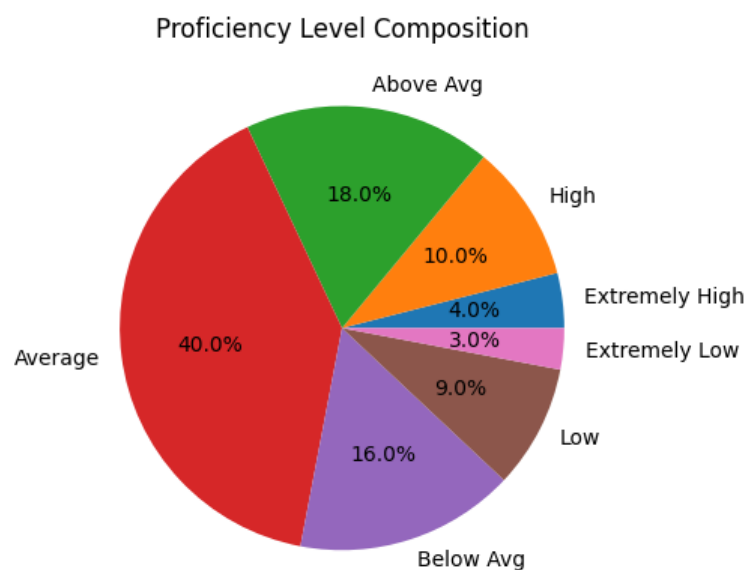


Fig.2. Proficiency Level Composition

Figure 3 shows the comparison between rural and urban students.

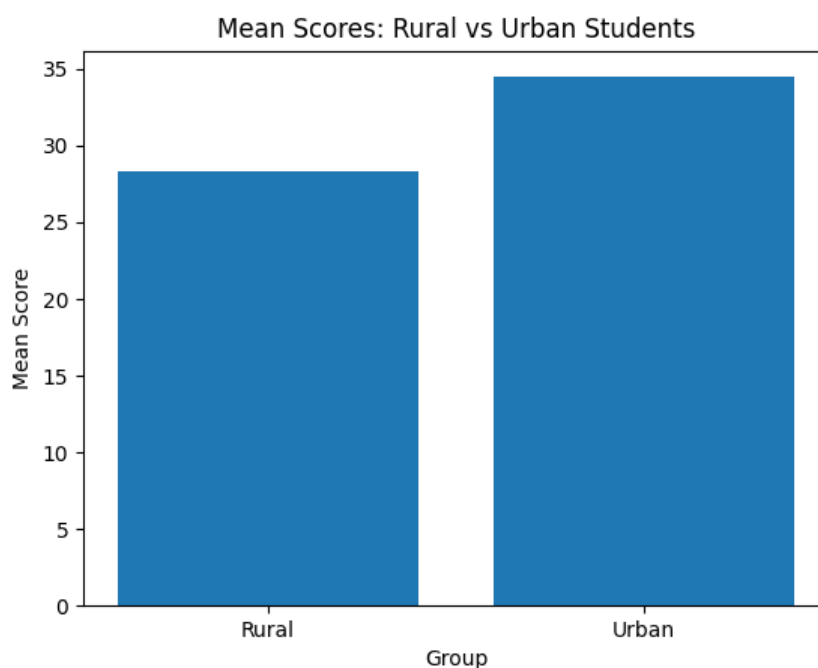


Fig.3. Rural vs Urban Mean Scores

Figure 4 indicates the difference between government and private school students.

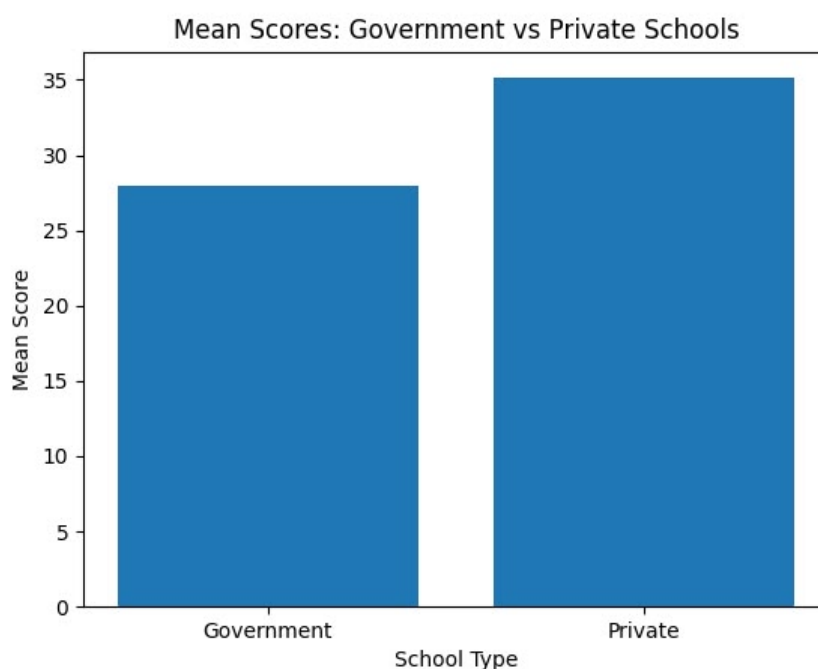


Fig.4. Government vs Private School Comparison

Descriptive Statistics

An analysis of the descriptive statistics revealed that the students obtained a mean score of 31.42, with a standard deviation of 9.85. The mean score indicates a moderate level of overall English language proficiency

among the participants, while the relatively high standard deviation reflects substantial variability in performance across the sample.

Proficiency Levels

Students' proficiency levels were classified based on standardized z-scores. The analysis indicated that the majority of students were concentrated within the average proficiency category. Comparatively smaller proportions of students were classified under the high and extremely high proficiency levels. At the same time, a notable segment of the sample was distributed across the below-average and low proficiency categories, highlighting disparities in English language competence among the participants.

Comparison Between Rural and Urban Students

A comparative analysis of English language proficiency across geographical locations revealed that urban students achieved higher mean scores than their rural counterparts. The results of the independent samples t-test indicated that the observed difference was statistically significant at the 0.01 level of significance ($p < 0.01$). Consequently, the null hypothesis stating that no significant difference exists between rural and urban students was rejected.

Comparison Between Government and Private School Students

The analysis further demonstrated that students enrolled in private schools outperformed those studying in government schools in terms of English language proficiency. The difference in mean scores was found to be statistically significant, suggesting that institutional factors, including the quality of instructional practices, availability of learning resources, and opportunities for language exposure, may contribute to variations in proficiency levels.

Correlation Analysis

The results of the correlation analysis revealed a positive and statistically meaningful relationship between English language exposure and proficiency ($r = 0.62$). This finding indicates that increased exposure to English is associated with higher levels of language proficiency, thereby emphasizing the importance of providing students with greater opportunities for meaningful interaction and engagement with the language.

VII. DISCUSSION

The findings of the present study suggest that although students possess a foundational understanding of English grammar, their ability to utilize this knowledge effectively in authentic communicative situations remains limited. This discrepancy between linguistic knowledge and practical language use represents a significant challenge in contemporary language education. The multidimensional structure of the ELPT-MKDR, which places equal emphasis on both knowledge-based and application-oriented components, effectively highlights this gap. The analysis

revealed that students generally performed better on objective and recognition-based items, whereas tasks requiring sentence construction, translation, and contextual language application posed greater difficulty. Furthermore, the statistically significant differences observed between rural and urban students, as well as between government and private school students, underscore the influence of environmental, socio-educational, and institutional factors on language learning outcomes. These findings reinforce the importance of providing learners with enriched language-learning environments and greater opportunities for meaningful language practice.

VIII. MAJOR FINDINGS

The major findings of the study are summarized as follows:

1. The majority of secondary school students demonstrated an average level of English language proficiency.
2. Students exhibited stronger performance in grammar-based components than in tasks requiring practical language application.
3. Urban students achieved significantly higher proficiency scores than rural students.
4. Students enrolled in private schools outperformed their counterparts in government schools.
5. Exposure to English was found to have a significant positive relationship with language proficiency.

IX. EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

The findings of the study have important implications for English language teaching and learning. The results highlight the necessity of adopting communicative and learner-centered instructional approaches that promote active language use rather than mere acquisition of grammatical knowledge. Educational institutions should incorporate practical language-learning activities such as group discussions, role plays, presentations, and interactive tasks to strengthen students' communicative competence. Furthermore, continuous professional development programs should be organized to equip teachers with contemporary pedagogical strategies and innovative language-teaching techniques. The study also emphasizes the importance of increasing students' exposure to English through media resources, digital platforms, reading materials, and authentic communicative interactions, thereby facilitating more effective language acquisition.

X. CONCLUSION

The present study concludes that the overall level of English language proficiency among secondary school students in the Adoni Division of Andhra Pradesh is moderate, with notable variations across different demographic and institutional groups. The findings demonstrate the effectiveness of the ELPT-MKDR as a comprehensive and reliable instrument for assessing English language proficiency and identifying specific areas of learning difficulty. The study further highlights the need to move beyond traditional grammar-oriented instructional practices and adopt interactive, communicative, and application-based approaches to language teaching. Enhancing English language proficiency among learners requires coordinated efforts from educators, policymakers, educational institutions, and students to create supportive learning environments that foster both linguistic competence and communicative effectiveness.

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