INTRODUCTION:
The present paper elucidates the effect and impact of the English grammar proficiency among the technical students in the context of rural area of Andhra Pradesh. It also throws a light on the nature of English language competence of the students in India especially in the context of rural background. Since, the current study is concerned with the strategies essential in enhancing proficiency in English Language among the students of Engineering and Technology in A.P.

It examines the difficulties of the learners in learning English with a multi-lingual background. It is limited to the students of a technical discipline in Andhra Pradesh, one of the Southern States of India. Their vernacular language is Telugu. A few of them prefer to pursue their complete education in their native language. But, most of the students realize the significance of English and opt for it compelled by the associated socio-political prospects.

The Status and Importance of the English Language in India:
Among all the languages of the humankind in the world, today English deserves to be considered as the world language. It is the most common means of communication between the people of the globe. In India, English is the auxiliary official language of the Union. In India, English remains to be the medium of instruction in colleges and Universities. English is considered as an International language, a window to the modern world, the library language, the link language, the unifying force, a language for employment, a language of Technology and sciences and finally the language of administration and law courts.

Aim of the study:
The present study, therefore aims at studying and testing the proficiency of English among the technical students especially of the first year B. Tech. students. It is assumed that whoever has proficiency in English will communicate well. Likewise, whoever doesn’t have proficiency in English will fail to communicate well. This is a general phenomenon. Among the technical students in India especially in rural area, they lack the proficiency in English. This is one of the reasons why they are not able to secure the jobs in engineering sectors.

Main objectives of the study:
➢ To identify the problems of the technical students in terms of the basic grammar of English.
➢ To find out if any correlation between the background and the medium of instruction that has direct impact on the achievement of English grammar proficiency.
➢ To find out if any correlation that exists between the social, religious and gender background of the students that may have direct impact on the achievement of proficiency in English.
➢ To find out if there is any correlation between the background of the students who habitually read English newspapers/Books that may have direct impact on the achievement of English proficiency.
➢ To find out if there is any correlation between the Educational background of the parents that may have direct impact on the achievement of proficiency in English grammar.

METHODOLOGY USED FOR THE STUDY:
In the process of investigation and interpretation the researcher has adopted the following methods and techniques in data collection and analysis.

Selection of the college for the study:
For the study, only one engineering college has selected and this college is from rural area of Andhra Pradesh.

Sampling of the informants of the study:
The college selected has both boys and girls students on their roles in all the first year graduation (1st B.Tech). They are actively attending the college and trained in English grammar from their school level till now.

Construction of the tools for data collection and analysis:
The identification of basic grammar proficiency problems faced by the graduate students particularly technical students...
BASIC ENGLISH GRAMMAR PROFICIENCY: A PILOT STUDY AMONG THE ENGINEERING COLLEGE STUDENTS

Composition of the Respondents (Total: 70):

| Sl. No. | Gender of the respondents | No. of respondents |
|---------|---------------------------|---------------------|
| 1.      | Male                      | 40                  |
| 2.      | Female                    | 30                  |
| Total   |                           | 70                  |

Table-2 Medium of Instruction language-wise:

| Sl. No. | Educational level | Language | Telugu | English |
|---------|------------------|----------|--------|---------|
| 1.      | Classes: 1-5     |          | 43     | 27      |
| 2.      | Classes: 6-7     |          | 33     | 37      |
| 3.      | Classes: 8-10    |          | 28     | 42      |
| 4.      | Intermediate     |          | 13     | 57      |
| Total   |                   |          | 117    | 163     |

Table-3 Social variable: Caste-wise:

| Sl. No. | Social variable | No. of respondents |
|---------|-----------------|---------------------|
| 1.      | SCs             | 12                  |
| 2.      | BCs             | 40                  |
| 3.      | OCs             | 18                  |
| Total   |                 | 70                  |

Table-4 Social Variable: Religion-wise:

| Sl. No. | Religion | No. of respondents |
|---------|----------|--------------------|
| 1.      | Christians| 03                 |
| 2.      | Muslims  | 07                 |
| 3.      | Hindus   | 60                 |
| Total   |          | 70                 |

Table-5 Social variable: Region-wise:

| Sl. No. | Region type | No. of respondents |
|---------|-------------|--------------------|
| 1.      | Urban       | 26                 |
| 2.      | Semi-Urban  | 05                 |
| 3.      | Rural       | 39                 |
| Total   |             | 70                 |

Table-6 Newspaper reading: Frequency-wise:

| Sl. No. | Frequency of Newspaper reading | No. of respondents |
|---------|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| 1.      | Frequently                      | 20                 |
| 2.      | Often                           | 08                 |
| 3.      | Rarely                          | 38                 |
| 4.      | Seldom                          | 04                 |
| Total   |                                | 70                 |

Table-7 Parental education-wise:

| Sl. No. | educational level of Parents | No. of Respondents |
|---------|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| 1.      | Illiteracy                  | 30                 |
| 2.      | School education             | 27                 |
| 3.      | College education            | 12                 |
| 4.      | University education         | 01                 |
| Total   |                             | 70                 |
DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION OF THE RESULTS:
In the following, various scores of the students belonging to different variables will be discussed and the significance of the scores is interpreted accordingly.

Gender-wise proficiency:
For present work, the researcher has taken gender as one of the social variables because it assumes that Female students are very conscious about the use of their language and hence they show more interest in acquiring English compared to the male counterparts.

![Figure 1: Marks Distribution Of The Female And Male Students](image)

For the present study, there are seventy students that have participated, amongst them forty students are male students and 30 are female students. Compared with male students female students have performed well in the test. The figure shows that female students have obtained 34.94% marks and male students have obtained 29.88% marks in the test. Much of the research that compared the proficiencies of and/or achievements in the English as second language shows that females are consistently better.

Medium of instruction of the students:
The researcher has considered medium of instruction of the students as one of the social variables since it assumes that the number of years a student receives education through a given medium of instruction will have considerable impact in his/her proficiency.

As observed in the figure that it displays upto 5th class, 6 to 7th class, 8th to 10th class and Intermediate respondents test scores including female and male students in terms of Telugu and English medium. In the figure: 2 displayed above, the scores of the English medium students are higher than those of the Telugu medium students. Upto 5th class who studied English medium scored the percentage of 38.83% whereas Telugu medium students scored only 27.79%, Likewise 6th to 7th class the scores of English medium students are 37.96% which is greater than the scores of the Telugu medium students i.e. 25.42%. 8th to 10th class English medium students scored better than the Telugu medium students as 38.02% and 23.93% respectively. Even in Intermediate students of the English medium scored 34.04% which is much higher than Telugu Medium students scored 23.31%.

Caste background of the students:
The researcher has taken caste as a variable not because one who believes in caste hierarchy socially, but wanted to study whether it has any correlation with the proficiency in basic English grammar. Our assumption is that caste background of students determines the degree of access to education in general and English medium in particular.
The above figure describes influence of social background of the students on performance in test results. Among others, students who belong to scheduled caste performed comparatively poorly as against the students of other castes like BCs and OCs. SCs scored 29.94% whereas BCs got 32.46% and OCs gained 32.55%. It may be based on the sociological factors that provide less scope for SCs in their access to the educational system. Most of the parents of SC students are illiterates and they speak only their mother tongue (monolingual) at home. The students have no opportunity to speak in English at home. This is one of the reasons why the SC students couldn’t perform well in displaying their competence in English. Based on the above factors SC students performance is poor in their scores in the test. These results are purely based on the present test, not to be applied to general context.

**Religious background of the students:**
We thought of enquiring whether religious background plays any role in proficiency in English. We assumed that students from Christian religious background may have more fascination for English language because it was the language of missionaries in the past. We also assumed that non-Christian students may not have so much fascination for English. But the results of the test claim different scores. It seems that religion has no correlatory effect on the learning of English.

**Regional background of the students:**
By region, we mean the Urban vs. Rural way of life where it was assumed that urban people are more exposed to the usage of English at least as hearers while it is not the case with rural areas.
In the Figure: 5 the scores describe that the students who come from urban area scored high percentage in the test i.e. 34.13% whereas the semi-urban students scored only 33.43%. The rural area students scored only 30.48% in the test when compared with urban and semi-urban students. In overall the students who come from urban area performed well in the test when compared with the other students.

Frequency of reading English papers/Books:
It was assumed that the more one reads English newspapers and books, the more he/she may acquire proficiency in English grammar.

Educational background of the parents:
We assumed that the educational background of the parents influence the attitude of their children towards learning English language. The higher the educational level, the higher likelihood of their children showing more interest in English.
In the above Figure-7 demonstrates that whose parents studied at the university scored well i.e. 59.37%. Those students whose parents studied in college level they scored 36.06%, while those students whose parents studied in school level scored 34.46% and finally those students whose parents are illiterate scored very low percentage i.e. 32.73%. Through this study, we may say that parents who studied higher education usually concentrate on their children’s language learning as stated by Gardner (1977).

CONCLUSIONS:
The above results are computed based on the data collected from the point of a number of social variables viz. urban, semi-urban and rural, female and male students etc. and their performance is shown in the tables based on the data findings. The study is based on the questionnaire specially designed to be used for this purpose.

The study is conducted to cover 70 students in the district of Prakasam in Andhra Pradesh. During the study, different variables i.e., Urban, Semi-Urban and Rural, Gender, Religion, Caste, Medium of instruction and Parental Education background wise performance have been examined to investigate English Language competence among the students of technology and Engineering in the context of rural area of Andhra Pradesh.

The study reveals that performance of the English medium students is higher than the Telugu medium students. The research comparing proficiency and/or achievement in a second language shows that female students are consistently performed better than the male students. Among the others, students of the scheduled caste performed poorly when compared with the other castes viz. BCs and OCs. The reason for their poor performance is due to their socially disadvantaged position in accessing education. In the case of the students who read English newspapers or books frequently performed well in the test when compared to other students. Through this study, we claim that students whose parents with the background of higher education significantly performed better in the English language learning.

The students of Technology and Engineering (B. Tech) pay little attention to the English examination. They do not often realize the need for the English language learning. Most of them have no knowledge of the importance and necessity of English language proficiency in their future life. They take the passing of the English examination as a necessary burden that they are forced to learning English. This mode of the mindset must be changed to gain English language competence. After the graduation they have to face the interviews for job where often they fail for the lack of effective and efficient English language performance.

As long as the social and language-related inequalities exist among the people in terms of Gender, medium of education, caste, parental education, religion, urban-rural divide etc, significant differences in the proficiency of English will remain.

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