



Evaluation of Reading Skills in English among the Students of Upper Primary Classes: A Case Study in AP and Telangana

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DOI : <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.19543726>

ARTICLE DETAILS

Research Paper

Accepted: 28-03-2026

Published: 10-04-2026

Keywords:

*Reading skill, English
Second Language,
Evaluation, Fluency,
Education Performances*

ABSTRACT

This study aimed at Evaluation and challenges in the development of Reading skills such as Read the text carefully, silent letter words, complete the sentence, match these parts of sentence, re arrange the sentence. For the purpose of study four eighty students has been selected from rural and urban areas of AP and Telangana. Initially to test the Proper use of Grammar laid in the curriculum in upper primary school level students. AP and Telangana were selected on the basis of the rural and urban literacy rate of education competitively to the state literacy rate 64% (2011). Based on that one twenty students from urban and one twenty students from rural were selected from AP and Telangana, each study area the study keeping in mind the convenience and administration support. A questionnaire with ten variables was utilized as the instruments of the study. The findings revealed that Telugu medium students English as their second language have problem in reading tasks especially in language use. The study suggests some practical methods in order to cope with reading difficulties.

1. Introduction

The main emphasis of the paper is to understand the Evaluation of language skills among school children and language use at Upper Primary School level. In the recent national curriculum review popularly known as National Curriculum Framework-2005 (NCF) brings out the issue of English language as a subject of study and medium of instruction at 1st class onwards. It further says that “The



level of introduction of English has now become a matter of political response to people aspirations rendering almost irrelevant an academic debate on the merits of very early introduction.” State of Telangana introduced English subject as second language from 3rd class in the government schools of United Andhra Pradesh from the academic year 2008-2009.

This subject of the study is based on Language as an increasingly important area in Socio linguistics. Language is often regarded as a skill rather than knowledge itself. It is generally understood to be a matter of doing than of knowing. While absorbing the mother tongue, the first skill that a child acquires is the ability to understand the spoken word, involving the skill of listening. As a progress, the child tries to reproduce these sound sequences to express his/her own desires and needs and thereby acquires the skill of speaking. Hence, the basic skills can be said, constitute one’s language ability. On the other hand, though qualified as secondary, it is worth noting that the ability reading is significant, illustrating matters of literacy.

It is a systematic process of recoding speech sounds through a symbol system (alphabets). It is a learned skill, not an acquired one. It requires training in the art of Reading. In both an individual’s life and in the life of mankind, Reading comes after a speech. In human history, these came on later stage while speech was the first medium of communication. Most of us have difficulty in writing because it seems to require more efforts in terms of care, and in terms of thought, than speaking does. Speaking is spontaneously in most cases, whereas Reading always carries with it the notation of correctness of grammar uses, of appropriate expression and comprehension on the reader’s side, which are aspects that make it difficult for us in terms of effort and time.

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Reading is getting meaning from the printed page. Actually there are no meanings on the printed page. There are only symbols that stand for meanings. Printed symbols are such can only stimulate recall of familiar concepts. New meanings come from the manipulation concepts recalled by the reader. According to the Bond and Thinker (1957), reading involves the recognition of written or printed symbols which serve as stimuli for recall of meanings built up through the readers past experience. New meanings are derived through manipulation of concepts already with reader’s possession. Applied linguistics inherited the view of language as speech and writing as an orthographic.

2. Research Questions



First we ask, what is the empirical relationship between Telugu ESL students Reading problem with English as a subject? This question allows us to test whether there is more congruence of Telugu as mother tongue than English as subject of learning. We ask: has the congruence between ESL students Reading problems and origins of Telugu students increased more in rural areas than urban areas? Finally, to analyse the interaction of ESL students and origins of government upper primary schools with reference to the parental social status, education and income on specific outcomes of students' performance in Reading skills, We ask do Telugu ESL students find it harder to learn English as a subject at upper primary level in government run schools.

3. Data and Measurement

For the final try out of the study four eighty students from AP and Telangana were selected. Initially the schools of the AP and Telangana states were listed, within that among Guntur and Rangareddy were selected on the basis of the high frequency literacy rate of education competitively to the state literacy rate 66% (2011). Based on that twenty schools were selected for the study, each study area the study keeping in mind the convenience and administration support.

4. Methods

In the study multi stage cluster sampling approach¹ has been adopted. In the first stage of sampling selection is based on schools located in urban and rural with high proficiency rate of English language. To ensure there would be enough students for the each type of school to collect data and compare by groups, twenty public upper primary schools of AP and Telangana, with in that Guntur from AP, Rangareddy from Telangana were selected for the study, to test reading skills. In the Second stage a structured questionnaire has been distributed to the students to collect data related to English language Reading skills. Then a sample of students in each selected section has been chosen to conduct written test by applying random sampling method. Under Reading, there are five indicators are used for understanding their ability of Reading process. Further, the researcher also makes clear picture between rural and urban school students' performance from the selected indicators.

5. Results and Analysis

¹ Cluster sampling is a sampling technique used when natural groupings are evident in a statistical population. In this technique, the total population divided into these cluster/groups and a sample of the groups is selected. The cluster should be jointly exclusive and collectively full. In single stage cluster sampling, all the elements from each of the selected cluster are used. In multi-stage cluster sampling, a random sampling technique is applied to the elements from the each of the selected clusters



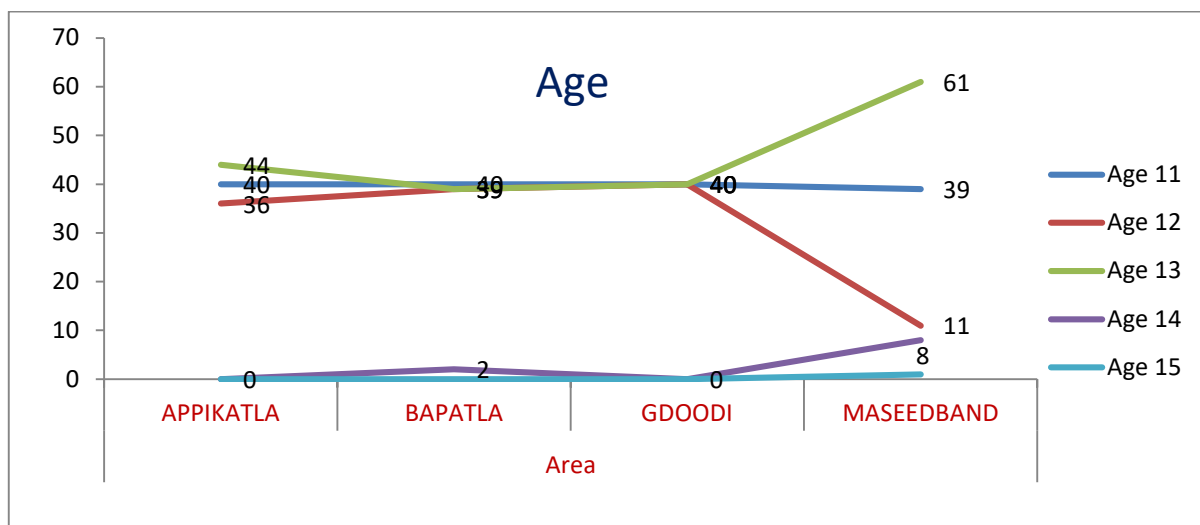
We employ two techniques to analyze classified tables to study the association between student in schools, social and parental background in learning English as a subject at government run Upper Primary Schools in AP and Telangana. To do this systematically to address the problems of Telugu ESL Reading performance, the researcher carefully designed his questionnaire and followed two methods to obtain information. For the purpose schematic representation of the Reading tests was conducted by using the questionnaire method. The following table gives you a clear picture of schematic representation of writing skills of students.

Table 1.1 A schematic representation of the reading tests used in the questionnaire to obtain the students' reading performance through the following indicators is given below.

Tools Used in the Study

SNO	Tools Used	Purpose served	Author
1	Read the text carefully	Fluency and accuracy test	Investigator
2	Silent Letter Words	The ability to spell words correctly	Investigator
3	Complete the sentence	The ability to select the word in given options	Investigator
4	Match these parts of sentences	The ability to make meaningful sentence	Investigator
5	Rearrange the sentences	The ability to keep order of their occurrence	Investigator

1.2 Area and Age wise students participation in the Study





1.2 The above table displays the age range of the students according to their classes. It can be observed that the total number of students is same in 5th, 6th, and 7th classes. However, the age range of students is different from each class and within the class.

1.3 gender wise student’s participation in the study

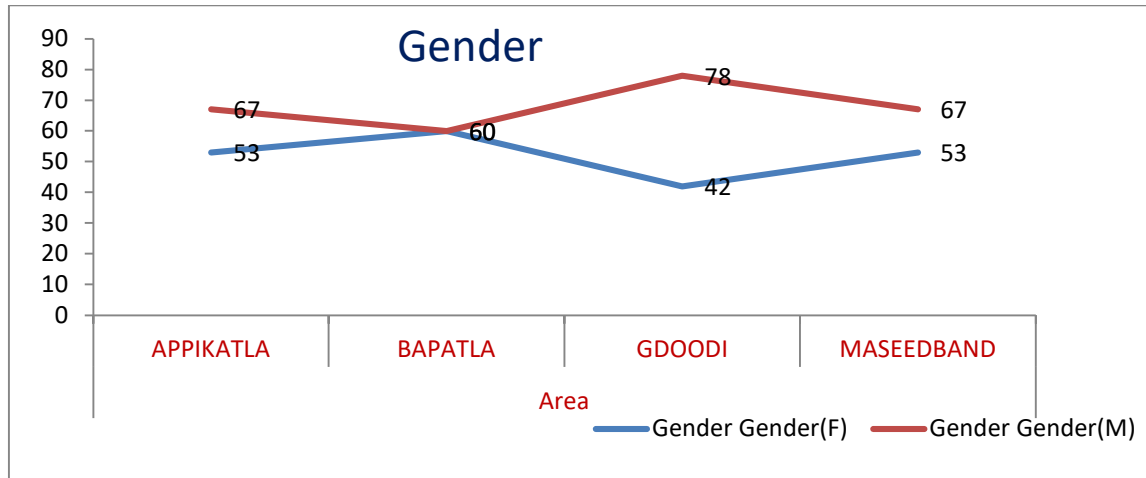


Table 1.3 displays the distribution of students of different areas, gender wise student’s percentage and their participation in the investigation/ research. The table shows that an equal number of the students from rural and urban, where 240 students from Telangana and 240 students from Andhra Pradesh have participated in this research. The distribution is maintained in accordance with the class gender aspect and in rural-urban ratio, as shown strictly by the numbers: 240 students from rural and 240 students from urban randomly selected from two states for the study.

1.4 According to their Mother Tongue participation of the students

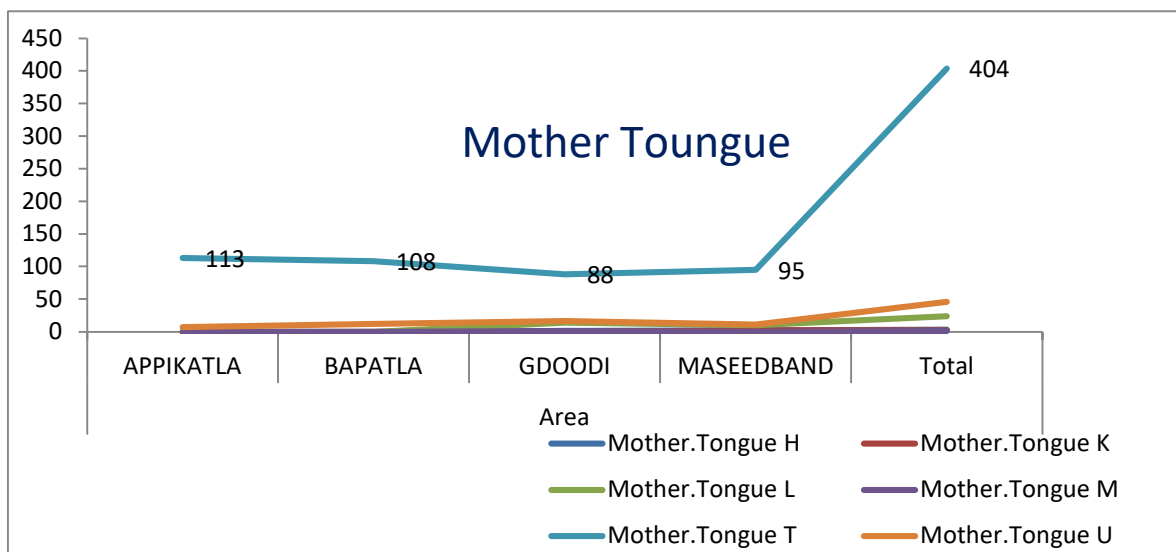




Table 1.4 displays the distribution of students of different areas and different mother tongues of students participated in this investigation/ research. The rest of the 76 speakers are from different mother tongues, it may be Hindi, Kannada, Lambadi/Banjara, Marathi, Urdu students from rural and urban participated, where 240 students from Telangana and 240 students from Andhra Pradesh have participated in this research. The distribution is maintained in accordance with the area and Mother tongue wise students' percentage in rural-urban ratio, as shown strictly by the numbers: 240 students from rural and 240 students from urban randomly selected from Andhra and Telangana for the study.

1.5 Telugu as Medium of Instruction

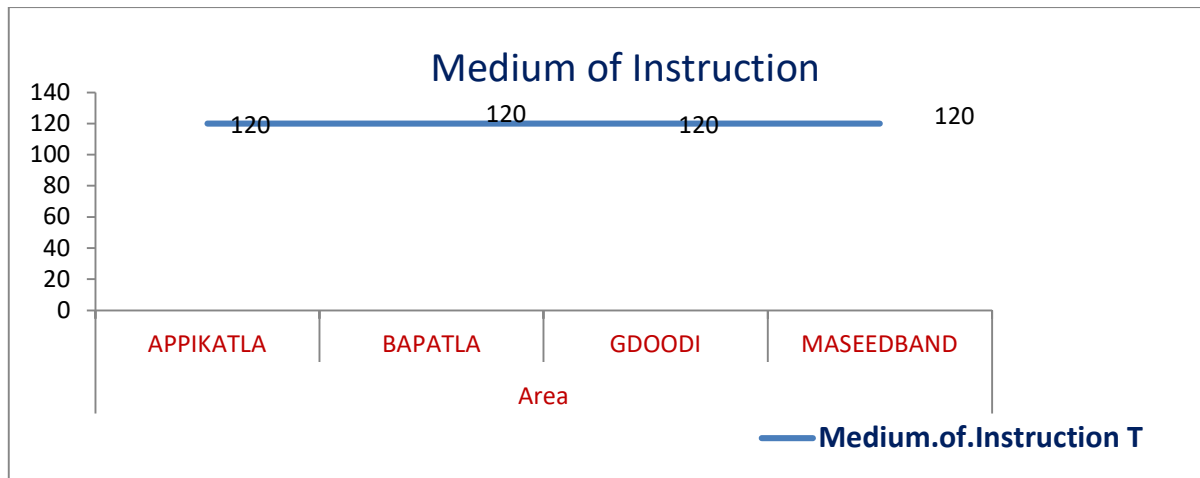


Table 1.5 displays the distribution of student's different areas and Medium wise participation in the investigation/ research. The table shows that an equal number of the students from different areas participated in this study. Whereas all participated students in this study are from Telangana and Andhra Pradesh are Telugu as their Medium of Instruction in their respective schools. 6th, 7th and 8th equal ratios of students have participated in this research. The distribution is maintained in accordance with the medium aspect and in rural-urban ratio, as shown strictly by the numbers: 240 students from rural and 240 students from urban randomly selected for the study.

1.6 Participation of Rural and Urban Ratio

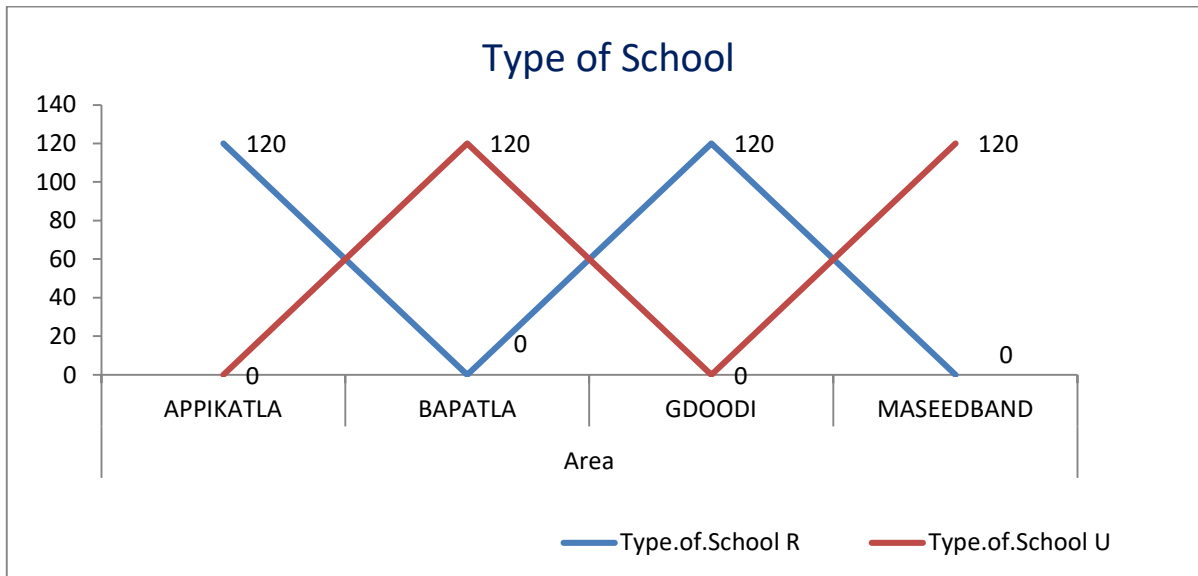
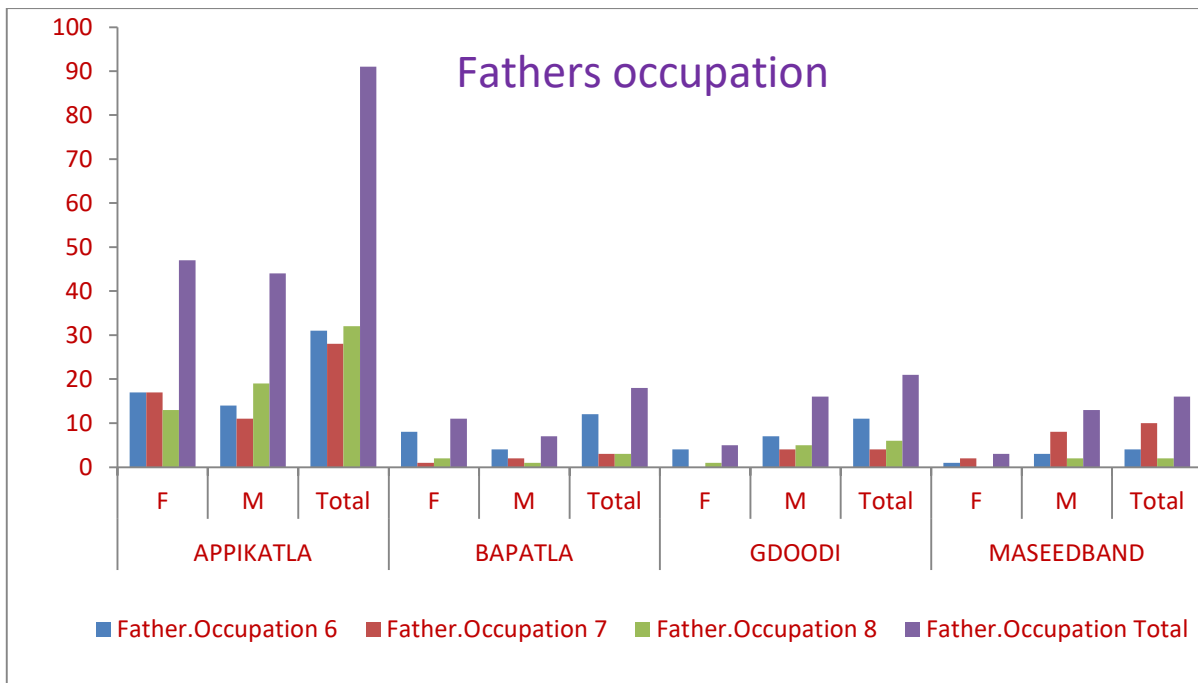


Table 1.6 displays the distribution of students of different area and type of school students in the investigation/ research. The table shows that an equal number of the students from rural and urban are selected for this study.. The distribution is maintained in accordance with the in rural-urban ratio, as shown strictly by the numbers: 240 students from rural and 240 students from urban are randomly selected for the study.

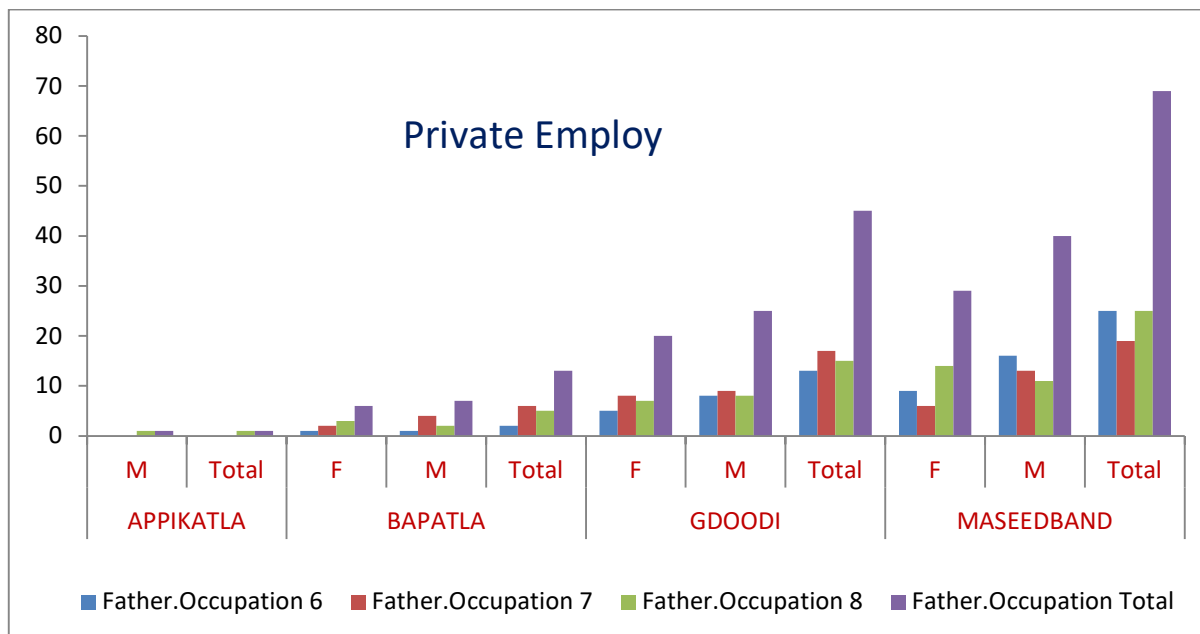
1.6 Parent (Farmers) students Participated in the Study





According to the survey conducted, Table 1.5 displays the **parents' occupation (Farmer) wise students' participation**, out of 120 respondents of rural students of Appikatal of Andhra Pradesh female are 47(51.60%) male students are 44(48.40%), over all 91 parents occupation(farmer) wise students participations. Within this 91 respondents, 6th class female 17(54.80%) male 14(45.20%), 7th class female 17(60.70%) male 11 (39.30%), 8th class female 13 (40.60%) male 19(59.40%). parents' occupation wise students' participation, out of 120 respondents of rural students of Appikatal of Andhra Pradesh female are 47(51.60%) male students are 44(48.40%), over all 91 parents occupation(farmer) wise students participations.

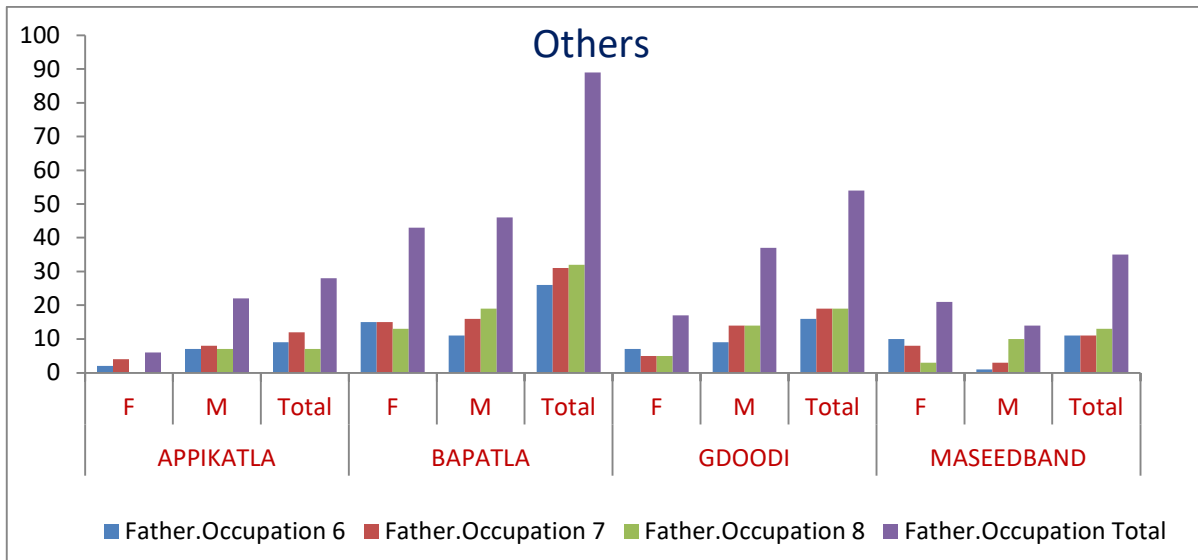
1.6.1 Parent (Private Employ) students participated in the study



1.6.2 The parents' occupation (Private Employ) wise students' participation, out of 120 respondents of rural students of Appikatala of Andhra Pradesh male students are 1(100%), **AP rural Private Employees are nil.** Parents occupation (Private Employ) wise students participation of Urban Bapatla of Andhra Pradesh female are 6(46.20%) male are 7(53.80%), over all parents occupation (Private Employ) wise students participations 13(100%). Rural (Govuladoddi) parents' occupation(PE) wise students' participation, out of 120 respondents of Govuladoddi of Telanagana female are 20(44.40%) male are 25(55.60%), over all parents occupation (others) wise students participations 45(100%).Urban (Maseedbanda) parents' occupation wise students' participation, out of 120 respondents of Maseedbanda of Telangana female are 29(42%) male are 40(58%), over all parents occupation (PE) wise students participations 69(100%)



1.8 Parents (others) students participated in the study



the parents’ occupation (others) wise students’ participation, out of 120 respondents of rural students of Appikatala of Andhra Pradesh female are 6(21.40%) male students are 22(78.60%), Parents occupation(Others) wise students participation of Urban Bapatla of Andhra pradesh female are 43(48.30%) male are 46(51.70%), over all parents occupation (others) wise students participations 89(100%). Rural (Govuladoddi) parents’ occupation(others) wise students’ participation, out of 120 respondents of Govuladoddi of Telanagana female are17(31.50%) male are 37(68.50%), over all parents occupation (others) wise students participations 54(100%).Urban (Maseedbanda) parents’ occupation wise students’ participation, out of 120 respondents of Maseedbanda of Telangana female are21(60%) male are 14(40%), over all parents occupation (others) wise students participations 35(100%).

Summary

As we observe the above Reading Test -1, 1 mark secured rural female (100%) and male (75%) urban female (100%) male are (88%). When it comes to see zero mark secured rural female students are nil and male (25%), urban female (0%) male (11%). If we see Reading test 1A (complete the sentence by given options) over all rural female and male students secured higher than the urban students. As we observe the above Reading Test 1B, zero marks secured rural male (75%) and female (87%) urban male (77%) female (91%). When it comes to see 1mark secured ruralfemale students (12%) and male (25%) urban female (9%) male (22%). If we see Reading test 1b (complete the sentence by given options) over all rural female and male students secured higher than the urban students.



As we observe the above Reading Test -2, zero marks secured rural female are (50%) and male (58%), urban female (27.7%) male (66.67%). When it comes to 1mark secured rural female students are (12.50%) and male (25%), urban female nil male also nil. 2marks secured rural female are 12.50 and male are 8.33%, when it comes urban female and male are zero. If we will see three marks secured female are 25.8% male are 8.33%. rural female are 25% male 8.33%. urban female are 72.73% and male are 33.33%. if we will see the over all performance of the students 1 and two marks secured rural students higher than urban. When it comes to three marks secured urban students are high in percentage.

As we observe the above Reading Test-3, zero marks secured rural female are (87.50%) and male (75%), urban female (90.91%) male (66.67%). When it comes to 1mark secured rural female students are (12.50%) and male (25%), urban female (9.09%) male (33.33%). if we can see the over all performance of the students 1mark secured rural and urban female students performances are very low than the male. As we observe the above Reading Test 3B, zero marks secured rural female are (87.50%) and male (83.33%), urban female (90.91%) male (66.67%). When it comes to 1mark secured rural female students are (12.50%) and male (16.67%), urban female (9.09%) male (33.33%). if we can see the over all performance of the students zero mark secured rural and urban students very high in number. 1mark secured rural and urban female students performances are very low than the male.

As we observe the above Reading Test -4, all students from rural and urban are secured zero marks. This may be the new exercise for them or teachers are not demonstrate properly. As we observe the above Reading Test 4B, all students from rural and urban are secured zero marks. This may be the new exercise for them or teachers are not demonstrate properly.

As we observe the above Reading Test -5, zero marks secured rural female are (37.50%) and male (75.00%), urban female (18.18%) male are (77.78%). When it comes to 1mark secured rural female students are (62.50%) and male are (25.50%), urban female (81.82%) male (22.22%). if we can see the over all performance of the students zero mark secured rural and urban very high in number. 1mark secured rural and urban female students performances are very higher than male students. As we observe the above Reading Test 5B, all students from rural and urban are secured zero marks. This may be the new exercise for them or teachers are not demonstrate properly.

Conclusion

The study is based on case study for which survey and questionnaires have been used as data gathering techniques This paper set out to study challenges and problems in the development of reading skills such



as read the text carefully it serves fluency and accuracy test, silent letter words serves the the ability to spell words correctly, complete the sentence serve the the ability to select word in given options , match the parts of sentence serves the the ability to make meaningful sentence, rearrange the sentences serves the the ability to keep order of their occurrence (proper use of Grammar laid in the curriculum) in upper primary level students. We find the fallowing: firstly, although the reading skills of Telugu ESL students in government run Upper Primary Schools are gaining momentum slowly. A tentative picture of congruence between female students and male students of government upper primary schools located both at rural and urban localities. We find there is not much difference between female students and male students. It is because of the same environment and economic background of the parental income as well the education levels of their parents. Students residing at urban localities are having more access to information, inclusion and participation in to difference cultural associations which was not the case for rural students.

The second observation through the study is that parents Education level are quite similar that is why most of the students performance is below average and average in the 4 point scale of measurement. Basing on the parents income and education there was not much impact on the student's performance both at rural and urban localities.

Finally the study indicates that the impact of teachers is much in the process of acquiring reading skills. Very few students are spending time at home in gaining reading skills. It also indicates that most of the parents are living in poverty which impacting student education especially in learning English as subject. The poor parents do not know English at their homes and they do not speak at all. Whatever the learning process that takes place should come from the school. It the teacher who is the key person for imparting the English subject to the Telugu ESL students. The results of the study clearly indicate that the performance of the students is poor because lacks of untrained teachers are according to the new syllabus both at rural and urban localities.

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