This is a study of social-psychological perceptions and practice affecting English language learning in a bi/multilingual socio-cultural context. The area of study is set in the field of social psychology in Language learning. The attitudinal and motivational perceptions toward language learning indicate the social and psychological nature of language learning. These perceptions are formed among individuals through an interaction between the individual personality and social-context factors, thus, the label ‘social-psychological’ is used to refer to these factors.

A social psychological approach necessitates an integration of micro-individual psychological aspects with the macro-collective socio-cultural contextual factors. Therefore, theoretical orientations from Sociology and Psychology will place the issue of language learning in the socio-cultural contexts of its occurrence at the same time giving the individual investment in the activity its due importance.

Sociology helps to account for the infinite inter-relationships between ‘the individual’ and ‘the society’. The Sociological Paradigms provide different perspectives to perceive societal phenomena. A sociological point of view focuses on the dichotomous position of the world of Language and the language in the World. So much so that we cannot teach a language for long without coming face to face with social context factors, which have bearing on language and language learning processes.
Psychology, on the other hand, studies the behaviour and mental processes of the individual human beings. The culturally oriented theories of psychology provide a perspective that even psychological tools are constructed socially. We have access to them by participating in the social world where they’re made and shared.

The social psychological perceptions are therefore cultural filters. In the language learning process they reflect the personal, educational and parental background factors and are translated into individuals’ attitudes and beliefs, motivational orientations, states of anxiety; and self assessment in language proficiency. To account for success or failure in English language learning, therefore, at the tertiary level, in Andhra Pradesh in India, the micro individual, instructional and parental background factors are studied in the backdrop of the macro, forces of globalization, and urbanization. In the minds of the learners, English is associated with a spreading international culture incorporating business, technological innovations, consumer values, democracy, world travel, and the multifarious icons of fashion, sport and music. In the face of this situation the students at the tertiary level come with a skewed view of the nature of language learning and adopt a negative self-concept in relation to learning English.

An insight into why some students do not do well in learning English is sought by looking into the profile of their social psychological perceptions vis-à-vis attitudes and beliefs toward language learning; Motivation in language learning, Anxiety in language learning, and Self assessment in language learning. Further, in order to understand the relation of these social-psychological perceptions with the ecological/contextual
background factors, an analysis is taken up of the actual frameworks of practice vis-à-vis the students' personal exposure to English, the instructional parameters of 'methods' and 'materials' used, and the 'socio economic' and 'educational' background of the parents.

The study discusses the social psychological perceptions of the students differentiating them in terms of those who studied in Telugu Medium (TM) till their schooling or Intermediate education and those who studied in English Medium (EM) all through. It is hypothesized here that a social constructivist approach to teaching and learning will help students who hold certain social psychological perceptions which hinder their achievement in language learning. The assumption here is that every context is unique in its social psychological and ecological factors and thus the descriptive profile of the present context is presented here vis-à-vis these perceptions and the actual frameworks of practice.

The attitudes and beliefs toward language learning are studied with respect to beliefs and attitudes toward the nature of language learning, aptitude in language learning, communication and learning strategies, bilingualism and the importance of English. The attitudes/beliefs towards these categories show the students' stance on the ownership of language; the components involved in language learning; the role of age and intelligence; the advantage of knowing the mother tongue; the strategies that help improve learning English, writing language tests and examinations, learning words, and handling errors; Use of mother tongue while teaching and learning, for writing exams and
mother tongue education at the primary level; Importance of English and purposes for which English is used.

Students’ motivational orientations toward learning English in terms of Instrumental, Integrative, Intrinsic and Extrinsic are assessed. Next the issues of anxiety that the learners face in general and with respect to each skill are examined. Finally, students’ self-assessment in language learning on one hand and their performance on the Proficiency test on the other, also gives a clue into the existing levels of proficiency and the facility they have with the language against their assumed proficiency.

The study shows that while the students from the two streams (TM and EM) are largely different with respect to all the social psychological factors, quite a lot of students from the EM background comply with the TM students on certain factors. These students are the periphery students with a need for proper scaffolding to achieve their complete potential. A constructive view teaching that takes these students’ social psychological perceptions will help the students to develop positive self-identities vis-à-vis second language learning.

A description of the social psychological profile of language learning at the tertiary level in Andhra Pradesh, it is hoped will help the institution of the school to focus on the learner; provide an ecological approach to ELT in the context and encourage teachers to involve in reflective practice in their language classrooms which makes available to them the ongoing professional knowledge to address volatile issues in the process of SLA, in turn to create a good social order.