Chapter III
Problem and Hypotheses

The results of the studies reviewed in the first two chapters indicate that a fixed amount of time is necessary for learning of a fixed amount of material, irrespective of the number of trials into which the time is divided. Results of the studies in which Paired Associate learning or Free recall learning were used support this hypothesis. However, negative results have been reported by investigators who used serial learning except for Keppel and Rehula (1965) who reported affirmative results.

Conflicting results have also been reported when less meaningful material is used (Hovland 1938 a, b, vs Braun and Heyman 1958, Muhar and Shrivastava 1971) to investigate whether the total time hypothesis holds true for material of varying degree of meaningfulness.

The present investigator feels that enough work has not been done to investigate whether the Total Time Hypothesis holds true for material of varying degree of meaningfulness. Realising the importance of future research in this area, the investigator designed an experimental study for testing the tenability of the Total Time Hypothesis for meaningful and nonsense syllables and high association values.
The problem for the present investigation was formulated as follows:

To verify the total time hypothesis for material of varying degree of meaningfulness by following massed-distributed and whole part methods of learning. It was hypothesised that:

1. A fixed amount of meaningful material will be learned in a fixed amount of time regardless of the method of learning used provided all other variables are controlled.

2. Since the Total-Time Hypothesis does not hold true for material of low meaningfulness, more N.S.S. would be learned by the part and distributed method of practice than by the massed or whole method.

We may now pass on to the next chapter dealing with the design and methodology of the present investigation.