CHAPTER: ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Overview

This chapter gives an overview of the immigrant scene in the USA and tells how it affects the educational system of the USA. It also discusses the problems faced by the students in general and English as a Second Language (ESL) students in particular. The investigator then proceeds to give a brief outline of a statement of the problem with a specific reference to one of the New York City public schools in Bayside, Queens. As a part of the study, a statement of the hypothesis, null-hypothesis, and constraints of the research are also explored.

1.1 Immigrant scene in the USA

America is a land of immigrants. An old Vietnamese proverb says, "If the land is good, many birds will come there." People flock to the USA from all over the world because this is a good land. It has always harboured the oppressed, the downtrodden, and the unfortunate people who came here for peace, prosperity, and freedom. Emma Lazarus' quotation from New Colossus, an inscription on the Statue of Liberty, New York Harbor, aptly describes the motto of the great nation of America when she says,
Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses,
Yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send here, the homeless, tempest tossed to me:
I lift my lamp beside the golden door.

Sri Chinmoy voiced the same sentiment in his dedication to the Statue of Liberty on August 27, 1996 when he said,

*Her Beauty's cosmos-fragrance -ride
Freedom-smile-bestower is your soul.
World-peace-hunger's nectar-flooded Goal.*

of immigrants who entered the USA as skilled workers and professionals. In the mid 70's, due to the family reunification act, siblings and parents of Asian Americans found their way to the USA. According to one estimate, Post-1970 immigrants and their descendants could account for 90% of US population growth between 1997 and the year 2050. Charles Hughes, the president of Local 372 labor union said, "If Lady Liberty looked down from her perch in the harbour and saw what we have accomplished, she would have a big smile on her face" (New York Teacher, Oct 1997).

The history of American immigration is unique and interesting. According to the USA census bureau in 1907, a peak year of legal immigration, many immigrants walked through the doors of Ellis Island without ever knowing a single word of English. Immigrants from European countries flooded the USA in the 40's and 50's. The 1960's welcomed
professionals from Asian countries for the first time. In the 1970's, a flood of immigrants entered the USA. In the 1980's and 1990's the siblings of the first generation of immigrants entered the USA. A steady stream of immigrants and better reporting by states has pushed the number of US students who speak little English upto 14.3% which means 2.3 million students in 1991 from 1990. About 70% of these students speak Spanish and 15% speak an Asian language.

It has been estimated that 60% of today's world population is multilingual. Bilingual or Multilingualism is the norm rather than an exception. It was John Naisbitt who said that one billion people speak English in the world today and 400 million of those speak English as a Second Language (ESL) and an increasing number of them live and work in the USA. At its idealistic best, USA is a land of diversity and freedom. Walt Whitman hymned -

*Here is not a nation,*
*But a teeming nation of nations.*

Herman Melville boasted that ‘the blood of all the people of the world runs in the veins of America.’ There was a time when the USA was described as a melting pot of various cultures around the world. Today it is described as a mosaic of different socio-cultural backgrounds.
Immigrants, like the deep-sea divers, sought to avoid shocks to their systems by easing transition to a new environment. Current immigrants are different from their earlier counterparts. Unlike the first generation, children of immigrants are now moving toward Americanization and replacement of a foreign language with English. Considerations of what it means to be an American are as old as the nation as is the question of how we foster unity in spite of all our diversity. Ethnic diversity can be a tremendous source of enrichment, but such diversity carried too far risks fragmentation. The only way an individual can move into and benefit from, a new nation's cultural, legal, and economic life is to learn that nation's linguistic currency. This was clearly understood in the past by America's immigrants, who approached the rite of becoming a citizen as an almost "born again" religious experience in which the old ethnic identity was set aside and a new American identity was acquired.

This inner transformation no longer occurs for today's immigrants. Over the last 25 years, there has been a big change in US policy as to what is expected of immigrants. In the 19th century and early part of the 20th century, immigrants were expected to learn English and assimilate quickly into the mainstream of American society. The motto on US currency was _e pluribus unum_ - out of many, one. Since the civil movement of the 1960s, there has been a change of attitude. The emphasis has shifted from the one to the many. Now the US educational policies are much more accommodating toward the language and culture of the immigrants. Today,
the trend is toward multiculturalism, diversity, and accommodating the newcomer, rather than on the newcomer accommodating himself/herself to the American society.

Senate Majority Leader Robert J. Dole (R. Kansas), the current front runner in the race for the 1996 Republican nomination, on September 4, 1996 emphasized the importance of teaching English to immigrant children to prevent "ethnic separatism" and declared that English should be made the official language of the USA. He further added, "We need the glue of language to help hold us together." He had joined the other presidential hopefuls who had called for English to be made the official American language. Coincidently, Norway and Israel both demand that immigrants learn the official language. As Genesis XLI says, "The whole earth was of one language, and of one speech." Looking to the world today, we might assume that the one language that may unify the universe today may possibly be English. As a result, the mastery in English language has become a primary concern of immigrants and their children. Initially, language was devised to communicate, to express feelings and emotions, but little did we know that it could also become a source of livelihood. However, today learning and teaching techniques of English have received a special consideration.
1.2. The Educational System in the USA

In the USA, students start the first grade when they have completed their sixth year. Students attend elementary school up to 6th grade, junior high school up to 8th or 9th grade and high school up to 12th grade. All through a student's school career, he/she takes Degrees of Reading Power (DRP) test at the end of each school year. Based on a student's score on a DRP test, a student is placed into a Below Average, Above Average, or On Grade level English class in elementary school and in junior high school. High school education begins either in the 9th grade or in the 10th grade for a student. When he enters high school, he is placed according to his proficiency in English into a regular English class, an honors English class, or an Advance Placement English class. Regular English class is for an average native speaker of English, an honors English class is for above average native speakers of English and an AP English class is for highly motivated, exceptionally skilled students in English language. A student living in New York City or New York State is required to take a Reading Competency test, RCT Writing test or Regents Competency Test. He has an option either to take RCT Reading and RCT Writing competency tests (See Appendix 1) or a more difficult Regents Competency Test (See Appendix 2). Students can also opt to take an Advanced Placement Test for which they can earn college credit if they receive a higher grade. Education up to 12th grade or up to age 18 is free of cost to students. Students are enrolled into schools near their house or in their neighborhood.
which is called a student's "zoned" school. A student is promoted to a next grade level when he earns 10 credits. He needs 40 credits to graduate from high school. A student who does not earn 40 credits while in high school has an option to take a General Educational Development (GED) test and earn a high school diploma. Students only need to repeat the classes they have failed. As a result, you may have a mixed age group in high school classes. Students take eight English classes in the course of the four years. If they choose, they can take extra elective English classes.

1.3 Problems Faced by Students and Teachers

ESL students and teachers face many problems. The problems are magnified when you consider the various ethnic groups with multiple levels of competence within the same classroom. It is quite unfortunate to note that the resources to overcome these problems are limited.

1.3.1 General Problems

Recent statistics present rather a startling portrait of the American school population. Public school enrollment reached a record 51.7 million this year, surpassing the previous record of 51.3 million set in 1971. Over the next decade, an additional three million students are expected to join the rolls. To accommodate them, the National Center For Educational
Statistics estimates 6600 schools and 200,000 teachers will be needed. According to the 1980 United States census, there were at least 2.7 million children aged 5 to 14 years who were living in homes in which languages other than English were usually spoken (Waggoner, 1984). This is a rapidly growing group because USA is now undergoing a wave of immigration comparable in numbers to the great flood of immigrants who arrived in this country from 1900 to 1920. The new immigrants are a young group. Although the mean age of the population in the US is 30 and getting older, the average age of the recently arrived immigrant groups are sharply lower (Mccarty & Carrea, 1988). These figures present a unique trend in immigration which has a great impact upon American schools, especially schools located in the big cities such as Los Angeles, Houston, and New York City which demonstrate a high concentration of immigrants from various countries and cultures around the world.

It is rather a norm than an exception to come across a group of ten different ethnic groups in a class of thirty five students. The schools are faced with the problem of educating diverse ethnic and linguistic groups of students. School systems have a legal obligation to provide education and meet needs of students with diverse linguistic backgrounds by providing appropriate and innovative instructional programs. The keynote of the mandate is the case in 1970 of Law vs. Nichols in which a class action suit was filed on behalf of the Chinese speaking students against the San Francisco Unified School District. The ruling stated:
There is no equality of treatment merely by providing students with the same facilities, textbooks, teachers and curriculum; for students who do not understand English are effectively foreclosed from any meaningful education. (U. S. Supreme Court, 414 U.S. 563).

New York City public schools are faced with a unique problem in trying to educate all the recent arrivals from around the world. The Byzantine system of more than one million students face the school house space crunch. Thirty one years after the USA flung open its doors to an extraordinary wave of new immigrant strivers many Americans are starting to feel overwhelmed - and no wonder. Since 1970, nearly three million legal immigrants have settled in metropolitan New York area. That is one in five of all legal admissions to the USA and along with the legal influx, we have seen a flood of illegal immigrants. US Census data from 1990 show that in 1980 there were 1,670,000 immigrants living in the city. By 1995, this figure has risen to 2,542,755. According to the report, immigrants account for the jump in student enrollment. From 1989 to 1995, public school enrollment rose from 938,645 to 1,056,251, an increase of 117,606; during the same period, at least 131,207 immigrant students entered the system on a net basis.

The federal government estimates that 500,000 undocumented aliens live in New York City today while a startling 1.4 million call
California their home. Schools are splitting at the seams. In the Fall of 1996, New York City public schools held 91000 more students than they were built for, putting a squeeze on principals and teachers and touching off what has been a chaotic start to the new school year. Overcrowded schools mean crowded hallways with students and teachers changing classes and classrooms each period. Each term, to accommodate the contractual agreement of 34 students in an academic classroom, a teacher's and a student's program may change as many as three times in the first two weeks which is especially difficult and frustrating for an ESL student as he has not only to cope with the new environment, but also with day-to-day changes in his program. Books and other educational materials are in short supply due to the financial crunch that New York City is experiencing. It is a reality that little can be done in the real world of cash-starved urban schools like New York City public schools, operating with far less aid than their suburban counterparts.

1.3.2 Problems of ESL students

Students who come from foreign countries may enter a US school system at any stage in their adolescent lives, but it is especially difficult for those students who enter in 11th and 12th grades and who are in their late teen years. Correlation exists between migration and students' performance level. A lot of factors involving migration patterns such as specific linguistic minority communities, social class variation of migration,
occupation mobility in relation to family stress and parent-child relationship affect student performance. Adolescence is the most difficult period in a person's process of growing up. It becomes excruciatingly painful for a teenager from another country to be labeled "different" and hence not a part of the "in crowd" which alienates him/her from the "main stream kids". While he is going through the process of "adjusting", the teenager has to keep up with the academic expectations in other major subjects which are taught in English. Of course, he has been exposed to English language in his native country, but there everyone uses English as a second language.

No sooner does the same student enter the US school system, then he, along with his other ESL classmates, would have to compete with native speakers of English in all subject classes. These learners are faced with the double task of mastering not only the subject curriculum, but at the same time the second language which serves as a medium of instruction, a situation which too often results in Limited Proficiency in English (LEP) students falling behind the native English speaking peers. As a non-native speaker of English, I can personally testify to the frustrations and hardships that ESL students encounter as they strive to learn another language. To succeed in school, ESL students need teachers and other professionals who understand their culture and challenges of adjusting to a new homeland. Many problems occur due to cross-cultural misunderstandings. It is also fascinating to know the joys and rewards that result once English language
proficiency has been attained. Despite their difficulties, research shows that immigrants are more motivated in school than non-immigrants. According to a poll conducted by Dr. Rivera-Batiz, an associate professor of Economics at Columbia University's Teachers College, New York City, (1996), 62.7 percent of immigrant children described school as a place where they "really want to spend the day" compared with 43.4 percent of non-immigrant children.

Foreign born students take a Language Assessment Battery (LAB) test to determine their proficiency in English. If their grade is below a certain level, they are placed into an ESL class where they are taught English two periods a day. Because of the low proficiency in English, a majority of foreign born students are demoted by one grade level as they enter the US school system. A majority of ESL students graduate from high school with ESL classes on their school transcripts. If a foreign born student enters high school in the senior year, he/she can take RCT writing test in his/her mother tongue so that the student may have an opportunity to graduate without high proficiency in English as his/her chances of getting a job are minimal without a high school diploma. A student who does not earn enough credits while in high school has an option to take a General Educational Development (GED) test and get a high school diploma.

The syllabus an ESL student is supposed to follow in his/her English class also presents a challenge. The normal syllabus of one term of English
class in a New York City high school usually includes a study of a full length play, a novel, or a biography; a number of short stories and/or poems; and at least ten units of vocabulary items. Each vocabulary unit may include anywhere from 15 to 25 words. A student may learn a total of 150 to 250 words. Possible textbooks may include *Of Mice And Men*, *A Raisin In The Sun*, *The Diary Of Anne Frank*, *The Pearl*, *Romeo And Juliet*, *Macbeth*, *Julius Caesar*, and other literary works from British and American literature. A list of 43 books most frequently taught in 5% or more of public schools, Grades 7-12 is attached in the appendix. (See Appendix 3). In a given term, a student will study two full length works, five to seven short stories, five to seven poems, and ten units of vocabulary words. The teacher may choose from the literary works mentioned above after consulting with the department head.

The students have to cope with a syllabus which culminates into statewide reading and writing tests. College bound ESL students have to take a Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) or a Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). Each ESL student is required to take a LAB test (See Appendix 4) once a year in the month of March. A student who receives a grade above the cutoff score is "mainstreamed" into English class as taken by native students. Language difficulties, Rivera-Batiz said, are a major stumbling block, leading to lower standardized test scores for many immigrant children. But when comparing immigrant and US born children of the same socio-economic group, immigrant children do better as value of
education is emphasized early on in their homes and also due to the fact that education is equated with success in life.

As a part of their course of study, students are expected to express difficulties, make real life connections, use informal speculative writing, and reflect on their own process of writing. They are required to vary the tone of their writing from very personal to quite formal styles to suit the purpose of their writing. They will learn to use the library and other sources for book reports and other types of research projects. They will also learn to revise and edit their work after consultation with their peers and teachers. Finally, they will use writing to prepare oral presentations for their peers and teachers which will then be displayed in a variety of ways (i.e., bulletin boards, school libraries, or community newspapers).

1.3.3 Linguistic profile of ESL students

As ESL students in the USA come from around the world, their linguistic problems are varied and unique. In this sense, their primary native language often proves to be a hindrance in developing skills in the target language. An Indian student might find it difficult to put articles before a noun. A Chinese student may find it difficult to make subject-verb agree in a given sentence. It is especially difficult for an ESL student to understand idiomatic expressions and use words with proper shades of meanings to express an idea. They may write sentences which might be
grammatically correct, but exhibit a deficiency which makes the usage far from native like. ESL students try to translate from their native language into English and hence their fluency in written and oral work is strained.

ESL students learn to use the library early in their academic careers. They spend hours at hand to do research projects and it is evident that the projects made by ESL students have been placed in the most prominent places in the school. They try to compensate the lack of their writing skills by using artistic ways of designing their projects.

1.3.4 The Traditional Classroom

In USA, most of the teachers use traditional methods to teach their students. Traditional methods of teaching are used by teachers over the years and as a result teachers feel comfortable using it. There is a tendency on the part of colleagues to criticize the new methods and as a consequence, new methods are not likely to be experimented. There is also a fear that new methods may not bring the expected results. Above all, The administrator may not feel comfortable evaluating a lesson if he/she is not familiar with the new methods. I was especially lucky to try out the new methods with cooperation from my superiors.
The salient features of a traditional method are as follows. I will discuss the way a typical piece of literature is taught using the traditional method. If a teacher were to teach a biography such as *Diary Of Anne Frank*, the teacher will first assign students to read about Anne Frank from the encyclopedia. Then students might be expected to read about the times of World War II in a social study book. Students will be assigned to read fifteen to twenty pages a day which will be discussed in class using questions and answers from the text. Vocabulary will be discussed as a part of the curriculum. Sections of the book will be read in class. Quizzes and short tests will be given based on the reading assignments given for homework. Multiple choice and objective tests will be given when the entire book had been completed. From time to time, teachers will give writing assignments based on the book for homework. Teachers may assign students to write their own diary as Anne writes her own diary. Test grades would make up major portion of the final grade.

Teaching a work of fiction like *Nectar In A Sieve*, the teacher may give a brief background of the life in India in the early 1950's. The teacher may make a list of the words from the book and hand it out to students before they read a particular section of the book. Then he/she would give reading assignment which will be approximately twenty pages a day. There will be quizzes based on the reading assignments. If the teacher has time, he/she will make up questions from each chapter and hand out the assignment sheet to students before starting to teach the book in class.
Most of the lessons will be based on the questions from the assignment sheet. The culminating activity would be the final test which will include multiple choice questions, and a brief essay.

While teaching poetry, the teacher reads the poem out loud to model it for the students. Then together they discuss the symbolism, imagery, figures of speech, and tone. The teacher may assign students to memorize certain parts of the poem and discuss questions from the book.

While teaching a short story, the teacher may assign reading the short story for homework. There may be a quiz followed by a brief discussion of the theme of the short story. Following that, the teacher may discuss the plot, characters, setting, diction, and author's purpose. Teachers may write identifications of the characters on board for everyone to copy. Discussion of questions and answers from the book will be followed by a quiz or a brief test. The teacher may choose to give a major test after reading a few short stories and poems in class.

Vocabulary is taught as a part of the literature component and also as a separate unit. Most teachers assign one day of the week for the vocabulary study. The teacher will pronounce the words followed by the meanings and then would ask students to make their original sentences which will be followed by writing a paragraph for homework using the new words students have learned.
Grammar is taught as it evolves through the writings of the students. Different teachers use a different approach to mark the mistakes. Some teachers may correct all the mistakes on the paper while others may opt to correct one kind of mistake at a given time and may announce beforehand the kind of mistakes he/she will mark for a particular assignment. There are no lessons in grammar per se.

In the traditional method, the teacher follows a set curriculum with the focus being the improvement of reading and writing skills. Listening and speaking skills are most often compromised. The curriculum is structured and what had to be taught is determined beforehand. The book that had to be taught at each grade level, grammatical structures to be covered, the type of composition to be taught are all predetermined. At each grade level, certain part of the regents test questions are covered. Each teacher follows the curriculum and tries to tackle the problems in a unique way.

Major problems a teacher faces in a traditional classroom may be summed up in the following way. Absenteeism, lack of motivation, lack of incentive to follow the class work and submit the homework on time, lack of class participation are a few of the problems a teacher may face. In comparison to that, a classroom in an experimental class is exciting, interesting, and innovative as new methods are experimented which involve active participation by students.
1.3.5 What makes a good school?

Reading achievement in the USA is low. According to the most recent National Assessment of Educational Progress, 44% of US students in elementary and high school read below the "basic" level, meaning they exhibit "little or no mastery of the knowledge and skills necessary to perform work at each grade level." Parents send off children to school every day, hoping for the best but often settling for less. Teachers are usually overworked and underpaid. Public schools are often overcrowded and underfunded. The public begrudges tax hikes for schooling, then bemoans low test scores. Steve Wulf defines what is a good school in the following words:

*What makes a good school? There are no stock answers. But there are some universal truths. A good school is a community of parents, teachers, and students. A good school, like a good class, is run by someone with vision, passion, and compassion. A good school has teachers who still enjoy the challenge, no matter what their age or experience. A good school prepares its students not just for the SATS or ACTS, but also for the world out there (Time October 27, 1997 Page 64).*

When a student says "I do not know how to do that", a dedicated teacher's reply would be, "You do not know how to do that - yet." That is an empowering word: "yet." As teachers, our purpose, is not to provide students with the answers but with the tools they need to find the answers for themselves.
Standards vary state by state. Some are strong, some are weak. Examples:

- STRONG Describes the basic processes of photosynthesis and respiration and their importance in life
- WEAK Describe the basic processes of photosynthesis and respiration and their importance in life
- STRONG Describes the basic processes of cellular respiration and their importance in life
- WEAK Describe the basic processes of cellular respiration and their importance in life

1.3.6 The need for the study

The traditional method presents a lot of problems as we have discussed in the earlier paragraph. The present study was undertaken to alleviate those problems. ESL students especially find it very difficult to read the whole book within a short period of time. Students are shy and embarrassed when they make a mistake. Listening and speaking skills are compromised at the expense of reading and writing skills. Originality, creativity, and imaginative writing skills are undermined in favour of strict recall of information. Innovative pedagogic principles and strategies are
needed to solve some of the problems faced by the teachers and hence it is necessary to have language classes along these lines. Memorization of vocabulary is tedious and boring whereas using games, group review, study of theme-centered words, using a supplementary vocabulary self instruction book for homework, tapping in on Greek and Roman roots, prefixes, and suffixes enhanced the students' experience in learning the vocabulary words.

1.4 The Problem

As English is being considered to be promoted to the level of an official language of the USA, learning and teaching of the English language has acquired an added significance.

1.4.1 Statement of the Problem

Evolving Educational Methods And Strategies To Teach English To Foreign Born Students In USA With Special Reference To Asian American Students (Including Indian Students) In Grades 11 And 12.

In the present study, the investigator will make an effort to devise and develop strategies that can be utilized by classroom teachers of ESL classes which may significantly improve written and oral work produced by the ESL students.
1.4.2 The Terms Defined

Since the following terms are pivotal to the study of the research; it was necessary to define them.

Method: It refers to a settled kind of procedure, usually according to a definite, established, logical, or systemic plan.

Strategies: It refers to a skilful management in trying to achieve an end. A distinction is made between strategies and tactics. Strategy deals with the planning and directing of projects which involve movement of force, and tactics deal with the actual processes of movement of forces.

Asian Americans: It refers to a group of people who are born in an Asian country, but are now residing in the USA.

1.4.3 Delimitation of the Scope

In evolving educational methods and strategies, the present study was limited to the use of English language teaching in the area of ESL. The scope of the study is further limited in terms of the grade level. The investigator has chosen to study grades 11 and 12 at the high school level in one of the high schools in Queens County of the City of New York. It was practically impossible for the investigator to conduct the study in schools other than her own as the time schedule of the individual schools, distance between the schools and commuting time between schools may be phenomenal. Although the investigator was facing these limitations, the
group is a representative sample in any case. The school chosen has a vast majority of various ethnic groups represented. A breakdown of the experimental group by nationality included students from India, Pakistan, Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Colombia, El Salvador, and Tunisia.

1.5 Objectives of the Study

The following objectives were used as a guideline for the research study:

I. To set up an experimental and controlled group based on the overall performance of students and their performance in the English class and equalize the two groups in the best possible way

II. To review the related literature and a few standardized tests of English to be used as a pretest and as a posttest

III. To write, revise, and implement the teaching schedule to be followed during the actual teaching sessions

IV. To arrive at set techniques for teaching reading, writing, listening, and speaking in English

V. To decide on the pretest and posttest to be used for the measurement of proficiency in English

VI. To conduct an experiment with an aim to measure the
success or failure of the strategies in relation to the students' performance in English

VII. To interpret and analyze the data which was collected during the experiment and arrive at a conclusion based on the findings of the experiment

1.6 Hypothesis

The investigator, guided by a number of assumptions, came up with the hypothesis and null-hypothesis as follows:

Assumptions:

1. A number of studies have been conducted on the learning strategies for ESL students. They neglect the role of a good teacher, and successful teaching strategies in the student performance.

2. It is possible to come up with successful teaching strategies that will make a difference in student performance in English.

3. It is also possible to measure the student's proficiency in English by giving him appropriate tests to be used as a pretest and a posttest.
Hypothesis:

"The new strategies and methods are effective and as a result the experimental group will score substantially higher than the controlled group in a test which specifically measures the learner's achievement at the end of the experiment."

Null-Hypothesis:

"There is no difference in the traditional methods and the new strategies and as a result there will be no significant difference between the scores received by the experimental group and the controlled group."

1.7 Constraints of the Study

The investigator was mindful of the fact that in natural sciences the same experiment may yield the same result, unlike the human sciences wherein the experiment may very well yield varied results. Some of the constraints of the study were identified as follows:

The sample for the experiment was selected randomly from the same school. Two groups of twenty students each were selected for the controlled as well as the experimental group.
The duration of the experiment was for ten weeks. The fall term started on September 5, 1996 and ended on January 31, 1997. The last day for students to meet with their subject teachers was January 22, 1997. There are a total of 19 weeks in the term, out of which the first three weeks are devoted to the program-schedule changes for teachers and students. Nine days are utilized for class examinations, and six days are used for a pretest and a posttest. The school is closed for two weeks for Christmas vacation, and there are six other holidays when the schools are closed. This leaves only ten weeks for any kind of a serious experiment.

To avoid the teacher variable, both the groups were taught by the same teacher. Teacher bias may influence the outcome of the experiment; hence, the teacher tried her best so that the bias may not interfere with the result of her experiment.

It is very difficult to equalize the two groups due to the human factor. In spite of the initial difficulties, the investigator saw to it that the two groups were approximately equal to each other.

The investigator's target for the experiment was ten weeks. As a consequence, the teacher must give the pretest at the beginning of the third week into the school year which is September 18, 19, and 20. These are the three weeks when a lot of schedule changes take place. As a result, a few students from the study group were switched to other classes and as a result
they had to be dropped. To alleviate this problem, the investigator requested the other teacher who taught E5B to give the pretest as well. As a result, I did have a pretest score for all the students in E5B classes.

For majority of the term, the duplicating machine in school was out of order and hence all the duplicating work had to be done out of the school domain. Due to the financial crunch New York City was experiencing, the service contractors have not been paid. As a result, every time the machine broke down, it took a long time to get it repaired. As the machines were quite old, they broke down quite frequently. I fixed the problem by duplicating material beforehand and at professional places like Staples which is a well reputed office equipment store.

Periodically, I went over and offered suggestions to students on an individual basis about their project. It was impossible to offer suggestions to students who forgot to bring their projects to class. Unprepared groups like that had to be accommodated at a later date.

The noise level in the classroom was a problem when students worked in groups. I finally decided to give fewer hours of classroom time for group work and suggested to them that they can discuss the project with their group members over telephone from home or during their lunch period in school or they can assign individual parts of the paper to be completed by each student. I also had to extend the deadline three times because
students needed more time for research and to organize the information in a systematic way.

It was forever a problem when students did not finish their reading assignments on time. To acknowledge and overcome this problem, I reviewed sections of the book in class and gave them an extra week to finish reading the book. This also gave extra time to those students who had been transferred to my class later in the term. To facilitate their reading endeavors, I taught them various strategies to follow namely to know the plot, character analysis, and outcome of the story which will be discussed later on in the dissertation.

I shifted from one room to the next for all the five teaching classes. As a result, I had to carry heavy TOEFL test material to the various rooms throughout the school building. The frantic nature of a schedule filled with teaching and administrative duties left very little time to have individual conferences with the students. Because of my request to have an entire ESL program, I had to be content with teaching classes in a row. I found it difficult to adjust to this schedule in the initial stages, but later on my body adjusted to it without much discomfort. Later on in the term, I was in only two different rooms and shared a closet space with two very cooperative teachers.
1.8 Scheme of Presentation

The following scheme of presentation was used to facilitate the reporting of research study.

Chapter 1: Introduction
Chapter 2: Review of Related Literature
Chapter 3: Research Design and the Tools
Chapter 4: The Experiment
Chapter 5: Data Analysis and Interpretation
Chapter 6: Findings and Implications
Chapter 7: Conclusion