ABSTRACT

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Evolveing Educational Methods and Strategies to Teach English to Foreign Born Students in USA With Special Reference to Asian American Students in Grades 11 and 12

(Under the direction of Dr. Rajendrasinh Jadeja and Dr. May Nelson Paulissen)

The objective of this study was to develop strategies for teaching English to foreign born students in USA. The assumptions are (a) that the focus of current English as a Second Language (ESL) work in USA remains in teaching and testing of written English (b) that the ESL students have difficulty communicating through the written word (c) that it is possible to devise a set of methods and strategies that would bring written language in focus. The investigator developed and executed teaching strategies at Benjamin Cardozo High School in the ethnically mixed neighborhood of Bayside section of New York City.

The hypothesis was that “the new strategies 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.” The statistical analyses of the
test scores confirmed this hypothesis and it can be stated that the new strategies are more effective than the conventional ones.

The dissertation is divided into seven chapters. The first chapter sets the frame work of the study including the statement of the problem, the aim and objectives and the scope and constraints of the study. The second chapter studies and reviews the historical background of the contemporary work of scholars about the pertinent literature in the areas of teaching English to ESL students. In the third chapter, the investigator uses the appropriate tools to collect and interpret the data. The data is analyzed using the 't' test, Standard Deviation (SD), Coefficient of Variance (CV), and Coefficient of Skewness. The fourth chapter describes the new strategies and provides the details of their execution. The fifth chapter is devoted to the analysis and interpretation of the data. The sixth chapter deals with the findings of the research, and the implications for future research and teacher preparation. The seventh chapter forms a conclusion of the study and offers a brief summary besides offering some suggestions for the teaching of English to students in general and to ESL students in particular.

The salient feature of the techniques is the use of a different strategy for teaching a different book. Students were required to make an original newspaper when learning The Diary Of Anne Frank. Students were asked to write journals from the point of view of different characters using
different formats to summarize the book when the investigator taught *Nectar In A Sieve*. While studying individual short stories and poems, students wrote the plot, characters, and settings of individual stories and ultimately made up an original short story. To enhance the students' vocabulary skills, the teacher used the crossword puzzle, word search, flash cards, and word file box techniques. To maintain objectivity in assessment, the TOEFL test was used as pretest and posttest.

For data analysis, the raw scores, mean values, standard deviation, coefficient of variance between the control group and the experimental group are compared and analyzed. The investigator applied the t-test scores with a view to ascertaining the statistical significance. The 't' scores establish that the improvement in the experimental group's performance is not due to chance factors. The successful execution of the experiment is a key factor in determining the implementation of this model in any ESL setting. At the same time, it is important to note that further research is needed in light of the new graduation requirements for high school students in New York state inclusive of ESL students as of the school year starting in the fall term of the year 1999.