

ABSTRACT

POLICY ON ENGLISH TEACHING AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION
AT THE JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL

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A policy on the teaching of English at the junior secondary level was extracted from the syllabuses published by the Ministry of Education in 1975, 1987, and 1988.

Verification that the policy extrapolated from the syllabuses was a fair extract was sought by submitting it for comment to officials of the Ministry of Education and to a sample of junior secondary school teachers of English randomly selected from the district of Victoria. Acceptance of the policy extracted was determined by administering an opinionnaire to a randomly selected sample of junior secondary teachers of English drawn from the eight educational districts of Trinidad. Of the 50 teachers in the sample, 49 agreed with the principles of the extracted policy while one teacher was undecided.

The study then sought to find out to what extent teaching methods, textbooks, and examinations (internal and 14+) were consistent with the Ministry's policy. The information was gathered through the use of questionnaires, classroom observations and analysis.

The results revealed that the textbooks commonly used were generally supportive of the aims and philosophy of the policy. However, teaching methods and examinations were largely inconsistent with the oral/aural approach advocated by the policy. They were concentrating on writing skills at the expense of oral skills; on the mechanics of writing rather than an appropriate use of language in contextual situations; on knowledge about language instead of communicative competence.

The findings of the study indicated that the policy was not being implemented to a large extent.