

research, Slavin suggests, should identify the source of the positive findings related to non-cognitive variables. Are the results due to changes in the classroom incentive structure, task structure, feedback systems, authority processes, and/or teacher's roles?

Slavin concludes with a discussion of several unresolved issues. Variables such as specific group regards, task specialization, long-term retention, scoring methods, subject specificity effects and new cooperative learning methods all require further, more detailed study in relation to academic achievement. The unresolved issues related to intergroup relations and acceptance of mainstreamed students are associated with the generalizability of the effects of out-of-class relationships. Moreover, it may be that the variables that produce the effects observed in cross-ethnic relations are different from those that are important in cross-handicap relations. Finally, a list of seventeen theoretical and practical issues which must be resolved are listed. These issues are fertile ground for the creation of future research hypotheses.

After beginning students of cooperative learning have read introductory texts such as *The Jigsaw Classroom* (by E. Avonson, N. Blaney, C. Stephan, J. Sikes and M. Snapp, published by Sage Publications in 1978) and *Learning Together and Alone* (by D.W. Johnson and R.T. Johnson, published by Prentice-Hall in 1975), they, like their more advanced colleagues, will find this volume informative and provocative.

Daniel McDougall
University of Calgary

Willinsky, John. *The Well-Tempered Tongue; The Politics of Standard English in the High School*, New York: Peter Lang Publishing Inc., 1984, 183 pp., \$23.15 (hardcover).

Given the current panic over academic standards and the related enthusiasm for returning to "the basics," John Willinsky's study of the teaching of English seems timely indeed. Against the background of recent sociolinguistic and sociological studies of language mastery and school achievement, Willinsky presents a case study of the teaching of English in a Canadian high school. A crucial feature of Willinsky's account is his intention to treat "standard English" as a social fact, to critically expose the social construction of the standard. Throughout, his investigation highlights the persistence of a politics of inequality in the face of recent attempts to develop an enlightened language curriculum policy based on the current state of knowledge in linguistics.

Willinsky begins his analysis with a historical overview of the emergence of standard English and its place in the school curriculum. The historical constitution of standard English as a prestige form is shown to be a political fact, the imposition of a definite moral order associated with the development of the nation state and the rise of the bourgeoisie. The educational significance of the prestige form is associated with the school's role in contributing to a more efficient division of labour in society. Willinsky notes that the attempt to explain social inequality in terms of essential (or "natural") rather than socially constructed differences has remained constant, although the locus of essential difference has shifted. Thus during the 1960's, language replaced earlier notions of intelligence and motivation as an explanation of inequality of educational outcomes, marking a shift from a biological to an environmental explanation of difference. This shift has posed a dilemma for teachers. They can no longer naively rely on the older moral posture of imposing the standard; they are to cease disparaging working-class English or Black English. Yet, perhaps unavoidably, they continue to insist on the superiority of their own way of speaking English.

Willinsky observes that in educational literature and policymaking, this dilemma is handled through a new ideology of language teaching which officially renounces a judgmental, correction-oriented approach in favor of modelling the standard against a background of linguistic neutrality and value relativism. Non-standard English is no longer to be regarded as wrong; rather, it is just different. But non-standard English is also *not* what teachers exemplify or recognize. The new ideology thus glosses over the persisting divisive effects of the standard's use on academic achievement and identity formation.

Having set forth an overview of the ideological significance of standard English in both the wider culture and the schooling process, Willinsky turns to his study of English instruction in one Nova Scotia high school.

What he finds there supports his contention that the new linguistic sophistication in curriculum theory and program development has not resolved the politics of English instruction but only changed the terms. What the teaching of English amounts to *practically* differs drastically in the general (non-university bound) and academic streams. With respect to both what teachers attempt to teach and what gets learned by students, standard English is experienced as either an alien form (by general stream students) or a confirmation of one's own mastery and credibility (by academic stream students). Linguistic neutrality notwithstanding, students grasp that what counts about the standard is its character as a prestige form. For both groups, the standard identifies what kind of speech, and therefore, which speakers, are worthy to be recognized. Preponderantly, non-standard, general stream speakers find themselves denied not only academic status but also a credible identity, and their instruction is largely given over to the identification and correction of mistakes. Academic, standard speakers, on the other hand, are encouraged to express themselves. Having shown themselves worthy to be entrusted with the standard, they are "free to think within ideology." In short, given the politics of streaming, the new, linguistically informed approach to English instruction is least practicable where it should count the most.

Two important influences appear to guide Willinsky's interest in language use. On the one hand, his approach to standard English as a social fact draws upon the symbolic interactionist conception of the development of the self: language plays a crucial role in the formation of identities, and thus in the possibility of stigmatization. As with other interactionist treatments of deviance, Willinsky tends to depict the linguistic deviant as the victim of invidious social dynamics such as labelling.

On the other hand, Willinsky shows enthusiasm for approaches to discourse analysis associated with recent French social theory. The latter develop investigations in which the phenomenon of language is viewed as decentred from the achievements of the self. Here, the unit of analysis is the discursive formation, not the acting individual. The various sorts of linguistic deviance can then be viewed, with Foucault, as one among many diverse "effects" of the working of specific discursive practices.

These approaches cannot easily be theoretically harmonized, since discourse theory (in its various forms) rejects the homocentric assumptions of interactionism (man-the-speaking-actor) in favour of decentred analyses of discursive forms and practices. Willinsky has blended the earnest interactionist concern with the victim with a more decentred approach to language as a field of practices in which formations of power/knowledge are produced. At the level of theory, then, Willinsky's approach remains equivocal.

At the level of research design, however, a preference for experiential over structural analysis is clearly evident. Willinsky's data collection is attuned to the experiences of participants — to their perspectives, intentions, reactions, and reflections — as these become evident to him through observing classroom lesson activities and more particularly through conducting interviews and administering a questionnaire (in the form of a fill-in test). It might have been appropriate to make use of formal techniques of classroom interaction analysis or textual analysis, which emphasize the social organization of knowledge and which are more in keeping with his interest in discourse theory.

If my assessment is correct, Willinsky's analysis is implicated, if not ensnared, in a paradigm shift which affects much recent research in education, language, and culture. Yet this observation is not meant to detract from the importance of Willinsky's contribution. This book helps to fill a serious gap in the social analysis of education in Canada, which includes few case studies of school practice. Further, Willinsky's work exemplifies the virtue of social analysis which eschews the extremes of either ungrounded cultural criticism or technical-administrative studies which uncritically affirm the priorities of established institutional arrangements. Unfortunately, the book's publication is limited to an American hardcover version. The result is a price tag which will preclude wide adoption for undergraduate education courses. This is a pity, since Willinsky's study could provide the centrepiece for a course segment investigating the place of language in the culture of the school.

Peter. R. Grahame
Trent University