



Twice as Less: Black English and the Performance of Black Students in Mathematics and Science

Eleanor Wilson Orr

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"Eleanor Wilson Orr's book makes a major contribution toward our understanding of the ways in which language differences can affect the performance of black students in fields that do not seem to be closely connected to language skills". —John B. Slaughter, former director, National Science Foundation

Does Black English stand between black students and success in math and science? A teacher for over thirty-five years, Eleanor Wilson Orr discovered that many of her students' difficulties were rooted in language. This is her account of the program she established to help them reach their potential. In the light of the current debate over Ebonics, she has written an introduction for the reissue of this important study. "This book is not naive about Black English Vernacular and it is untainted by racism. It is a deeply thoughtful discussion of the possibility that subtle nonstandard understandings, or a simple lack of experience with standard understandings, of prepositions, conjunctions, and relative pronouns can impede comprehension of basic concepts in mathematics and science. Eleanor Wilson Orr has filled her book with evidence and so put the reader in a position to judge what conclusions are justified. This very original and possibly very consequential work deserves the close dispassionate study of sociolinguists, psycholinguists, educators, and everyone who cares about the advancement of Black Americans". —Roger Brown, Harvard University



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