

**BOOK REVIEW: THE HANDBOOK OF WORLD ENGLISHES, EDITED BY  
KACHRU, B. B., KACHRU, Y., & NELSON, C. L. (2009).**

**Ali Raza Siyal**

MPhil scholar, University of Sindh, Jamshoro,

Assistant professor of English, College Education Department, Government of Sindh

**Introduction**

The Handbook of World Englishes encompasses a collection of newly commissioned articles that investigate significant dimensions and case studies related to the theoretical, ideological, applied, and pedagogical facets of English usage on a global scale. The book organizes the work on World Englishes. This book also discusses English as a second language (ESL), English as a foreign language (EFL), and world Englishes (WE). The authors detail the new English found in the Caribbean and West Africa. However, a few elements are missing. Moreover, this work expands the broad scope of world Englishes. In this book, the researchers discuss the main diasporas, including trade, business, commerce, and communication. Furthermore, the various chapters in the book address transnational Englishes, such as African, Asian, and European varieties. The book describes English as a multifaceted and multidimensional language. Power, technology, politics, business, and world literature play a pivotal role in strengthening the English language. The author of this book believes that the widespread use of English has given rise to world Englishes, which hold significant pedagogical implications. As the language came into contact with various cultures, it absorbed these influences, ultimately becoming the language of English.

Kachru et al. (2009) discuss the inclusion of Englishes in the book during the post-colonial era. They explain the reasons behind how and why English became dominant in British colonies. English became dominant in these colonies due to the power exerted by the British, who had greater control over politics, knowledge, business, and trade. Even after leaving the colonies, their profound impact remains unforgettable. Their literature was predominant, and the author states that this literature was written in the English language. Additionally, their influence was felt from sociolinguistic perspectives. The book has also documented other World Englishes, such as West African English, East African English, Hong Kong English, Malayan English, Singaporean English, and Philippine English, recognizing them as autonomous varieties of English.

From my perspective, this book examines the formal and diverse varieties of the English language. The mentioned formal varieties of the English language include those from Southern Africa, East Africa, South Asia, Southeast Asia, the West Indies, and the Philippines, as well as traditional English, which encompasses the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, and New Zealand.

The Handbook of World Englishes demonstrates that English challenges traditional hierarchies. In it, English is portrayed not as a single language but as a multilingual repertoire. It is neither isolated nor separate; rather, it is a blend of many languages, including Angles, Saxons, Jutes, French, Vikings, Germans, Indians, Greek, and Latin. According to Crystal (2003), English is maintained through various methods, with commentary being one of the most popular techniques. In this book, Asian English in India, Singapore, and the Philippines refers to a history linked to the colonial era. Colonization strengthened the English language, which later evolved into a pluricentric language.

The most important and influential element in the book is the interdisciplinary approach to language. This means English serves as a medium for instruction and teaching for all non-native speakers. The book has united sociolinguistics, history, and political science. This

book explores the significant contributions of the English language, revealing its aims and purposes. English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is also extensively addressed. English has multiple purposes, not just a single one. The book highlights a few of these that any other author has not discussed. This is a significant and positive aspect of the writer's contribution. No doubt, the book presents a global perspective in its work. He has thoroughly discussed the various forms of the English language. For example, African, local, and indigenous Englishes receive less attention.

The handbook of world Englishes covers nearly all areas, with a few exceptions mentioned above. It offers readers a decolonized view of the English language. While the colonial system has ended, the English language continues to wield significant influence. More importantly, this work functions as a research tool and a foundation for scholars to explore and seek assistance in studying World Englishes. In addition, this work could further examine African and digital Englishes. The contributions of this book to the field of world Englishes are noteworthy, fulfilling the criteria for a newer, more inclusive framework.

The book has certainly left gaps, as the quality work contains future underpinnings that may be explored and addressed by other writers. The author does not discuss the topic of Englishes in underdeveloped countries. He addresses the Englishes of developed and developing nations in this book but overlooks underdeveloped countries such as those in Africa, Ghana, and Cambodia. Their English varieties, including African English, Ghanaian English, and Cambodian English, receive very little attention. As a result, these forms of English may be erased from the world's map. These are the writers and literature that keep any language alive.

Furthermore, Pidgin and Creole Englishes, such as Jamaican Patois and Aboriginal English, are not discussed as openly as other varieties of English, including Indian English, Chinese English, British English, German English, and French English. In the book, differences between global Englishes and world Englishes are not clearly established. These illustrate some gaps in the book. More importantly, the most professional and institutionalized genres tend to be relatively conservative, which limits creativity and innovation. Gatekeeping mechanisms are present in most of these socially constructed genres.

The primary focus of the Handbook of World Englishes remains the comparison with competing works. The central feature emphasizes Kachruvian WE 'World English,' in which Asian English is more prominent than global English. Furthermore, the book places greater emphasis on theory while paying less attention to African English. Its accessibility is academically dense. The author discusses digital Englishes less frequently, and digital communication is also mentioned infrequently.

Indeed, the "Handbook on World Englishes" has opened up avenues for students to explore World Englishes. Many new insights can be gleaned from this book. It provides a thorough background on World Englishes, particularly the reasons why English transitioned from a monocentric to a pluricentric language. In addition, it has put considerable effort into various insights about the world Englishes. However, the book has not paid much attention to the Englishes of those countries that are lagging behind, particularly those facing poverty, often referred to as underdeveloped countries. This suggests that he has represented the language of a selected class. He should also focus more on the Englishes of underdeveloped countries, as it has acted like an ambassador for countries worldwide. Overall, efforts to promote the world Englishes are praiseworthy and highly appreciated. This has provided a platform for scholars to research and gather knowledge on the topic of "world Englishes."

### **Conclusion**

A handbook of world Englishes offers rich theoretical and empirical insights. This book has opened a new chapter for scholars to gather knowledge and references on the subject of world

Englishes. It can be said that this work has enhanced the field of world Englishes. Readers now have a comprehensive understanding of the main reasons behind the transformation of English into Englishes. Furthermore, this book is utilized in policy-making. Key features are analyzed, and policies are developed. When teaching English, sensitive issues related to the language are considered.

### References

- Crystal, D. (2003). *English as a global language*. Cambridge University Press.
- Kachru, B. B., Kachru, Y., & Nelson, C. L. (Eds.). (2009). *The handbook of world Englishes*. John Wiley & Sons.