



DOI: 10.22363/2687-0088-2020-24-3-730-734

Book review

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2020. *The Handbook of World Englishes*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edn.  
Hoboken, N.J.: Wiley – Blackwell. 816 p. + xxx p.**

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**For citation:**

Lebedeva, Ekaterina S. 2020. Review of Nelson, Cecil L., Zoya G. Proshina & Daniel R. Davis. 2020. *The Handbook of World Englishes*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. Hoboken, N.J.: Wiley – Blackwell. 816 p. + xxx p. *Russian Journal of Linguistics* 24 (3). 730–734. DOI: 10.22363/2687-0088-2020-24-3-730-734

Рецензия

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**Для цитирования:**

Lebedeva E.S. Review of Nelson, Cecil L., Zoya G. Proshina & Daniel R. Davis. 2020. *The Handbook of World Englishes*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. Hoboken, N.J.: Wiley – Blackwell. 816 p. + xxx p. *Russian Journal of Linguistics*. 2020. Vol. 24. № 3. P. 730–734. DOI: 10.22363/2687-0088-2020-24-3-730-734

A handbook provides “the most important and useful information about a subject,” says the Cambridge Dictionary. *The Handbook of World Englishes* is a comprehensive guide into the history, description, development, and interdisciplinary issues of the paradigm introduced and substantiated by the prominent linguist Braj B. Kachru.

In 2009, Braj B. Kachru and his colleagues Yamuna Kachru and Cecil L. Nelson published the first edition of *The Handbook of World Englishes*, which for more than a decade has been a beacon for linguists and scholars working in the field

of the spread of the English language. Technological progress, upward sociocultural mobility and global economic changes brought new ideas, criticisms, and views that answered some of the questions asked in the first edition of the *Handbook* as well as raised many more new ones which are to be tackled. As a result, 2020 saw the publication of the second edition of the *Handbook*, revised, expanded, and updated.

Cecil L. Nelson, Zoya G. Proshina, and Daniel R. Davis took a long and complicated journey contributing to and editing the volume, which discusses world Englishes (WE) from all perspectives, responds to criticisms, defends the studies and statuses of the varieties of the English language, and, what is more, opens new domains for the future research. The volume is divided into 9 parts, with each thoroughly and meticulously touching upon different issues related to the field.

Part I provides the historical context of the varieties of the Inner, Outer, and Expanding Circles. Starting with the very beginning of English language history the *Handbook* goes through the historical and sociocultural contexts of the English language in the British Isles, the United States of America, Canada, New Zealand, and Australia. The authors, following Kachru's tradition, underline the origins of the English language in the first two chapters on the "First Diaspora," and the chapters on other varieties of the Inner circle in the "Second Diaspora." Interestingly, the research on Caribbean Englishes, which share many similarities with forms heard across English-speaking communities in the Americas in general, appears under the heading of the Second Diaspora although the questions of pidgins and creoles (the way these varieties are called locally) are addressed later in the volume.

It is worth mentioning that the number of pages devoted to the varieties of the Outer and Expanding Circles is two and a half times more than that describing the Inner Circle varieties, which again shows the reality as it is: non-native English varieties outnumber the native ones. In the Second Diaspora section, the contributors give descriptions of Englishes in South Asia, South East Asia, and Africa. The continents and territories, having in common their colonial pasts, share that historical context which defined the use of English in different domains, such as government, education, and for various purposes, for example, identity-shaping and creative writing.

Definitely, the coverage of the Expanding Circle varieties takes a broader geographical perspective: South America, Europe, Russia, and East Asia have their social, political, economic, educational, and cultural environments for the local varieties of English to function and maintain the status of the main foreign language adopted in the regions. All the chapters emphasize the growing demand for English in the education domain, along with other sectors, such as tourism, manufacturing, trade, and advertising. Moreover, apart from the issues of the status and functions of English, the authors describe the features of the varieties in terms of phonology, lexis, syntax, culture, and pragmatics. The authors unanimously underline the language's pluricentricity and stress the multiple number of Englishes which constitute the variety, depending on what local dialect or minority language (as in

case of Russia) English has contact with. The Fourth Diaspora is addressed in chapters on Chinese English and Russian Englishes, which marked the continuous process of Expanding Circle dynamic life.

Part II presents the issues related to contact linguistics, with Rajend Mesthrie stressing the importance of the historical input to individual varieties and relevance of the comparative database and tools for linguistic analysis and variety description. Mesthrie looks into the early contact history and makes a reasonable, however controversial, point concerning the work of creative writers whose literature may not be considered representational in terms of the spoken Englishes of certain communities. The chapter (Salikoko S. Mufwene) devoted to pidgins and creoles defines the terms and describes the functions of these varieties, oftentimes non-standardized, stressing their relevance to general and contact linguistic studies.

Part III deals with the issues of acculturation, with M.A.K. Halliday differentiating between standard and global language and paying particular attention to meaning potential of the both. Yamuna Kachru analyses speech acts and rhetorical strategies in the Outer and Expanding Circles, underlining the processes of nativization of English and Englishization of indigenous languages. The use of genre and style, the definitions of the concepts and numerous examples in the context of WE are given in the following chapter by Vijay K. Bhatia.

Part IV crosses borders and goes deeply into creativity in the context of WE. Edwin Thumboo observes historical and contemporary forces that helped shape the new literatures in English as well as perspectives to study the creative writings of such authors. Alexandra A. Rivlina follows Thumboo's "creative path" with numerous examples of bilingual linguistic creativity, showing bilingual language play on different language levels and in different varieties. Thanks to Larry E. Smith and Cecil L. Nelson, the major questions of intelligibility and understanding across cultures are thoroughly studied. The next chapter gives a chance to, once again, look at the magnificent metaphorical language of the WE founding father, Braj B. Kachru, whose longing for the recognition of the English language varieties makes its way through the English of his text.

Part V addresses such complicated yet significant issues as grammar and standards starting the discussion with 17<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup> century battles fought in the name of grammar, then proceeding to the 19<sup>th</sup>–20<sup>th</sup> century usage wars. Daniel R. Davis looks into grammatical description and its potential for world Englishes. It is noteworthy that the last chapter (Gerald Nelson) in this part marks the most recent studies of the corpus linguistics for the WE stressing the necessity to continue corpus-based research into world Englishes.

The other crucial issues under study within the WE paradigm are ideology and identity, and the chapters in Part VI encounter these concepts in different ways giving the perspective of colonial discourse and postcolonial theory and raising questions of the nature of cultural production with creative writings of postcolonial authors being of top priority.

Part VII penetrates into the questions of globalization unveiling the relations between WE and media, advertising and commerce. Recently, the world has turned to social media networks across the board and, as a result, researchers are focusing on computer-mediated communication, which is analysed by means of variable methods. However, the question about whether media reflect the pluricentricity of English is still to be answered. In his chapter, Tej K. Bhatia observes different approaches for advertising analysis and provides numerous examples of global mixing of world Englishes and their mixing with other languages thus raising the questions of cross-cultural translational mishaps and intelligibility. Of no less importance is the expansion of English in commercial contexts where the necessity for prescriptive mononorms outweigh the creativity and variety of language practices in use.

Part VIII considers the practical relevance of theoretical and academic linguistic findings to the governmental organisations defining language policy and planning which, unfortunately, ignore the problems of unfavorable educational environment in some countries. Margie Berns gives a critical review of communicative competence and calls for a pluricentric approach to investigating the nature of acceptability and intelligibility. Aya Matsuda explores the implications of WE studies for pedagogy focusing on English language courses that will embrace the diversity of the language and prompt teachers to expose their students to different varieties of English. Part VIII finishes with the chapters discussing the multidimensional nature and dynamics of English language proficiency and application of WE studies for language testing and lexicography.

The final chapters celebrate the maturity of World Englishes and future expansion of world Englishes. Kingsley Bolton proves that WE shifted the paradigm in the linguistic studies of the late 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> centuries and inspired new directions, innovations and discoveries already under study and yet to come. Yamuna Kachru and Larry E. Smith highlight the fact that these innovations and discoveries will come more from the Outer and Expanding Circles than from the Inner Circle.

Each contributor to the *Handbook*, apart from providing profound analysis and an extensive literature review, raised a lot of new questions and opened a never-ending source of ideas and material for future work and further research both in theoretical and applied dimensions.

The *Handbook* gathered linguists from all Three Circles, uniting their individual varieties in the common academic English of the volume, to produce a landmark reference for studies of world Englishes.

Braj B. Kachru, in his chapter “World Englishes and culture wars,” criticizes *The Cambridge History of the English Language*, vol. 5 (1994), which was devoted to “English in Britain and overseas” for the exclusion of African varieties because of a notable lack of professional scholarship. Surely, Professor Kachru would have been grateful to his fellow scholars, Cecil L. Nelson, Zoya G. Proshina, and Daniel

R. Davis for covering all the aspects, neglecting nothing, and commemorating the maturity and wisdom of Braj B. Kachru's child.

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**Book review history:**

Received: 7 April 2020

Revised: 13 July 2020

Accepted: 15 July 2020

**История рецензии:**

Дата поступления в редакцию: 7 апреля 2020

Дата принятия к печати: 15 июля 2020

**Bionote:**

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