

Book Review

Sofia Rüdiger, Theresa Neumaier, Sven Leuckert, & Sarah Buschfeld, eds. 2025.

World Englishes in the 21st century: New Perspectives and Challenges to the Dynamic Model.

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World Englishes in the 21st century: New Perspectives and Challenges to the Dynamic Model by Sofia Rüdiger, Theresa Neumaier, Sven Leuckert, and Sarah Buschfeld is the first publication in the new series New Directions in World Englishes Research by Edinburgh University Press. The book presents a wide range of papers on different anglophone speech communities around the world, all applying and discussing Schneider's (2007) seminal Dynamic Model of postcolonial Englishes. The Dynamic Model has substantially shaped research on World Englishes since its publication almost 20 years ago, changing the perspective in the field from focusing on individual varieties and their features to a new dynamic understanding of linguistic differences and similarities between Englishes. Broadly speaking, the Dynamic Model describes the evolution of postcolonial Englishes along five phases: (1) English is transplanted to a new location through colonial expansion and (2) becomes the dominant language in a stabilizing colony. (3) Through the nativization of English, as settlers and indigenous people appropriate English, a new distinct variety arises. (4) This variety stabilizes after political independence and functions as the carrier of a new national postcolonial identity. (5) The postcolonial English eventually diversifies as new subvarieties emerge. This process is pushed by changing identity rewritings of all the parties involved in (post)colonial contact settings (i.e. settlers, indigenous peoples, and various adstrate groups) and affects linguistic structures and the ideological conception of a variety. The model has been extremely productive because it has been widely applied, it has become a 'must-cite publication', and it has been widely criticized constructively. *World Englishes in the 21st century* is the most recent book-length engagement in a long line of publications on modelling World Englishes, and illustrates how the Dynamic Model can be applied productively in conventional and new ways. The general tone of all publications is to engage with the model pragmatically, which means that the authors illustrate how certain aspects of Schneider's theoretical considerations can be applied to a speech community or the data they analyze. They do not try to prove the model right or wrong or argue about specific details of the model. Raymond Hickey sums up this general approach of the

book in his chapter “Evolving Near the Source: The Dynamic Model in Ireland” (Chapter 2) by stating that the question should not be whether the Dynamic Model fits a particular variety but “[h]ow and in what respects a particular variety match[es] the model” (p. 40).

The book has an immense scope with 18 contributions, an introduction and a synopsis, summing up to an overall length of 392 pages. These 18 contributions are very heterogeneous with regard to the varieties and regions they cover, their research approach, as well as their engagement with the Dynamic Model. The latter aspect determines the structure of the volume. The 20 chapters are grouped into five sections in analogy to the phases of the Dynamic Model: “Foundation”, “Stabilisation”, “Nativisation”, “(De)Stabilisation”, and “Differentiation”. Section 1, “Foundation”, includes the “Introduction: Twenty Years of the Dynamic Model”, which provides an overview of various models of World Englishes, a comprehensive summary of Schneider’s Dynamic Model, and a brief discussion of its extensions, mostly the Extra- and Intra-Territorial Forces (EIF) Model (Buschfeld and Kautzsch 2020). This model also takes a dynamic approach to World Englishes, but it does not position colonization and decolonization as the only driving force of the evolution of Englishes. Buschfeld and Kautzsch (2020) propose that forces within a territory, such as language policies or the education system, and forces from outside, such as migration or the global mediasphere, affect the evolution of a variety. Another important addition of the EIF Model is the widening of the scope to countries that were not British or American colonies. This broader perspective is also evident in the volume, which includes chapters on “non-postcolonial varieties” (p. 14), such as Japanese English.

The second section, “Stabilisation”, is the longest section and presents ‘typical’ applications of the Dynamic Model to individual speech communities. The eight chapters (Chapters 2–9) focus on specific Englishes from all three Kachruvian circles and discuss the evolution of a single variety, either by giving an overview of a variety’s sociolinguistic history or by presenting empirical analyses of specific features or variables. Among the empirical chapters, Ninja Schulz et al.’s (Chapter 7) approach seems a promising starting point for more diachronic research on World Englishes. They compare corpus data from 1930s Hong Kong with British English from the same period and in this way assess the nativization of Hong Kong English from a diachronic perspective.

The third section, “Nativization”, includes two empirical chapters that assess cross-varietal variation with the corpus of Global Web-based English (GloWbE) (Chapter 10) and the Electronic World Atlas of Varieties of English (Chapter 11), respectively, and two theoretical papers that address variation in and across World Englishes in relation to the Dynamic Model. Pam Peters’ theoretical chapter, “Epicentral and Extraterritorial Influences on World Englishes” (Chapter 12) focuses

on the transnational interaction of World Englishes. The interaction of different Englishes is often overlooked in research on World Englishes, which all too often focuses on Englishes in isolation. Peters considers which variables and data might be best suited for such a transnational approach and in this way establishes a link to Buschfeld and Kautzsch's (2020) notion of extra-territorial forces that shape the evolution of postcolonial Englishes in addition to intra-territorial developments modelled by Schneider. Ariane Borlongan discusses these national developments in the fourth phase of Schneider's model in detail in his contribution on "Linguistic Aspects of Endonormative Stabilisation: Standardisation of Englishes" (Chapter 13).

The three chapters in Section 4 (Chapters 14–16), "(De)stabilization", are very refreshing since they all depart further from the core considerations of the Dynamic Model and the methodological nationalism prevalent in much World Englishes research. They discuss the identity work of Englishes beyond national boundaries. Julius C. Martinez and Isabel Pefianco Martin's chapter, "Philippine English in Migration and Mobility: Beyond Internal Differentiation" (Chapter 14) is a personal highlight of mine in the volume. They analyze English language use among Filipino migrant workers in Japan in terms of linguistic structures and attitudes. The glimpses readers get of their data highlight its richness for discussions of the transnational role of World Englishes: In various English as Lingua Franca situations, English is fluidly mixed with other languages (mainly Japanese and Filipino) and the Filipino speakers smoothly shift between Philippine English, Japanese English, and more American-oriented Englishes as the situation requires. Christian Mair's contribution, "Postcolonial Identity Troubles: Pidgin/Creoles in the Dynamic Model" (Chapter 15) starts by assessing the role of Pidgins and Creoles on a national level but then illustrates the global spread of Jamaican Creole and Nigerian Pidgin. Andy Kirkpatrick addresses the question "Can Postcolonial Englishes 'Decolonise the Mind'?" (Chapter 16) and considers the emancipatory potential of postcolonial Englishes in the context of literature. He establishes a very important link between World Englishes and English as a lingua franca, a link often ignored by both fields. He views English very optimistically as a global resource for 'decolonising the mind': For example, English is used to tell 'local' from postcolonial contexts to a global audience as in the novel *Glory* by Zimbabwean author NoViolet Bulawayo. Kirkpatrick further argues that English has not only become a source for expressing postcolonial identities but a transnational lingua franca, particularly in the context of World Literatures, i.e. "texts written for an international audience by authors for whom English is not a first language" (p. 311). He concludes, reminiscent of Pennycook's (2007) notion of *Global Englishes and Transcultural Flows*, that "we have moved beyond the postcolonial period and have entered the period of transnational and transcultural flows" (p. 314).

The final three chapters and a synopsis by the editors form the last section called “Differentiation”. The editors group the three final contributions together since they suggest different ways to extend the Dynamic Model. Christina Suárez-Gómez and Elena Seona classify Bangladeshi English at the intersection of an English as a second or foreign language variety (Chapter 17), Kate Burridge and Howard Manns discuss the evolution of Australian English slang using the Dynamic Model (Chapter 18), and Thomas Hoffmann fuses Construction Grammar with the Dynamic Model (Chapter 19). While all three contributions bring an interesting new perspective to the Dynamic Model, they do not diverge from the core principles of the model too much, in contrast to the chapters from Section 4, which provide a transnational perspective. From my point of view, the (de)stabilisation chapters might have been a better choice for closing the volume with an outlook on the Dynamic Model beyond national borders.

The individual contributions are regionally very diverse, applying the Dynamic Model to different speech communities around the world or providing cross-varietal perspectives using data from several Englishes for their analyses. Thirteen varieties of English are discussed in detail, including Englishes of the Inner Circle (i.e. Australian, African American, and Irish English), Outer Circle (e.g. Bangladeshi, Cameroon, Hong Kong, Khoekhoegowab [Namibian], Nigerian, and Philippine English), and Expanding Circle (Brunei and Japanese English) as well as Jamaican Creole and Nigerian Pidgin. The inclusion of Expanding Circle varieties in an edited volume on modelling World Englishes is a continuation of an ongoing trend to widen the scope of World Englishes research and models to the Expanding Circle. The chapter “The Dynamic Model and the Evolution of African American English” (Chapter 3) is the greatest surprise to me because it is typically not discussed using models of World Englishes. Guy Bailey and Patricia Cukor-Avila describe the evolution of African American English by providing a sociohistorical account of the variety along the five phases of the Dynamic Model. They also present results from apparent and real-time data on diachronic changes of characteristic features of African American English in the late 19th and 20th centuries. They conclude by highlighting the explanatory power of the Dynamic Model, which in their line of argumentation “obliges researchers to examine AAE [African American English] in all its historical complexity” (p. 64). The editors’ choice of including the exceptional cases (for World Englishes) of African American English as well as Japanese and Brunei English into the volume is very worthwhile because these cases show the explanatory power of core elements of the Dynamic Model beyond standard varieties of the Inner and Outer Circle, which are typically discussed with the model.

The book not only covers all Kachruvian Circles but also has global coverage. Besides comparative work on many different varieties, the volume includes country-specific contributions on English in sub-Saharan Africa (Cameroon, Nigeria, Namibia),

Europe (Ireland), North America (USA) and the Caribbean (Jamaica), Oceania (Australia), South Asia (Bangladesh), and South-East Asia (Brunei, Hong Kong, Japan, the Philippines). The only major region of the world not covered in the book is South America. A contribution on English in a country or several from this part of the continent would have provided an interesting perspective since there is very little research from a World Englishes perspective on this region. Although all four editors work in German universities, they have brought together a global cast of contributors, with many researchers from universities in Outer Circle countries, i.e. the traditional focus of much World Englishes research. From my perspective, this aspect of the book is essential because an inclusion of scholars from around the world allows for a greater diversity of perspectives and helps promote greater equality of knowledge production about World Englishes. It would have been engaging to include researchers who usually do not draw on the toolkit of theories from World Englishes for their analyses, such as scholars from the Caribbean, who mostly use different theories to model variation between English and Creole, or researchers who have provided critical perspectives on aspects of the World Englishes paradigm, such as Alastair Pennycook, Ruanni Tupas, or Suresh Canagarajah. I hope that future edited volumes will also host a global cast of contributors and take up the opportunity to provide a space for productive critical engagements from varied perspectives.

The 18 chapters are a mix of theoretical and empirical papers. Many focus more on the socio-political history and sociolinguistic conditions of the evolution of a specific variety, such as Hickey's chapter on Ireland, while other papers rely mostly on empirical analyses, such as the chapters that take a cross-varietal perspective with the GloWbE corpus. Examples of the latter are Chapter 10 by Thomas Biermeier on word-formation processes, Chapter 11 by Peter Collins on nonstandard morphosyntax, and Chapter 19 by Hoffmann on the 'V *the TIME away*' (e.g. *dance the night away*) construction. Among the empirical chapters, corpus data dominates, including GloWbE, individual components of the International Corpus of English, the Diachronic Corpus of Hong Kong English, as well as very specific corpora like a corpus of graduation theses by Japanese university students compiled by James D'Angelo and Yasuhiro Fujiwara (Chapter 8). Other data is used much more rarely in the volume but there are chapters that build their arguments on analyses of questionnaires, sociolinguistic interviews, as well as of daily conversations of Filipino migrants in Japan recorded in different settings and "under natural conditions" (p. 270). The latter data is extremely rich, providing very insightful views on the role of World Englishes in an age of global mobility. Apart from Aloysius Ngefac and Kingsley Ugwuanyi's chapter, "Twenty Years After the Conception of the Dynamic Model: Investigating the Factors that Triggered the Endonormative Stabilisation of Cameroon and Nigerian Englishes" (Chapter 4) and Martinez and Martin's paper on

Philippine English in Japan (Chapter 14), none of the other chapters use language attitudinal data for their argumentation. I find this scarcity of attitudinal data surprising because I agree with Hundt (2021: 312), who argues that future research on World Englishes needs a “multi-method approach”, which combines usage data with attitudinal or other data on norms and issues of identity. The role of attitudes and ideologies for the evolution of Englishes along the Dynamic Model or the EIF Model may therefore be addressed in more detail in the future.

In conclusion, the volume provides a well-crafted and timely update to the Dynamic Model and shows that the model is still highly valuable even after 20 years, as it can be employed in very diverse ways to *World Englishes in the 21st century*. There have been many edited volumes on World Englishes recently and there are also several earlier publications that focus specifically on the modelling of World Englishes, but the current volume stands out because of its immense scope and the diversity of the contributions, which I tried to sketch in this review. From my perspective, these two main selling points make the book a very worthwhile read for a wide range of different World Englishes scholars. What left a lasting impression on me is that many contributions – including my personal favorites of the “(De)stabilization” section – offer perspectives on new directions for World Englishes research beyond established approaches.

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