

The Handbook of World Englishes

Edited by

*Braj B. Kachru,
Yamuna Kachru,
Cecil L. Nelson*

The Handbook of World Englishes

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mentors, educators, and researchers
whose contributions have
provided refreshing
visions for our better
understanding of world Englishes

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Contents

List of Figures and Tables	xi
List of Contributors	xiii
Preface	xvii
Introduction: The World of World Englishes BRAJ B. KACHRU, YAMUNA KACHRU, AND CECIL L. NELSON	1
Part I The Historical Context	17
1 The Beginnings ROBERT D. KING	19
First Diaspora	
2 First Steps: Wales and Ireland ROBERT D. KING	30
3 English in Scotland FIONA DOUGLAS	41
Second Diaspora	
4 English in North America EDGAR W. SCHNEIDER	58
5 English in Australia and New Zealand SCOTT F. KIESLING	74
Third Diaspora	
6 South Asian Englishes RAVINDER GARGESH	90
7 East Asian Englishes NOBUYUKI HONNA	114

8	Southeast Asian Englishes	130
	MARIA LOURDES S. BAUTISTA AND ANDREW B. GONZALEZ	
9	South American Englishes	145
	KANAVILLIL RAJAGOPALAN	
10	South African Englishes	158
	NKONKO M. KAMWANGAMALU	
11	West African Englishes	172
	TOPE OMONIYI	
12	East African Englishes	188
	JOSEF SCHMIED	
13	Caribbean Englishes	203
	MICHAEL ACETO	
14	Euro-Englishes	223
	MARKO MODIANO	
Fourth Diaspora		
15	World Englishes Today	240
	KINGSLEY BOLTON	
Part II Variational Contexts		271
16	Contact Linguistics and World Englishes	273
	RAJEND MESTHRIE	
17	Varieties of World Englishes	289
	KINGSLEY BOLTON	
18	Pidgins and Creoles	313
	SALIKOKO S. MUFWENE	
19	African American English	328
	WALT WOLFRAM	
Part III Acculturation		347
20	Written Language, Standard Language, Global Language	349
	M. A. K. HALLIDAY	
21	Speaking and Writing in World Englishes	366
	YAMUNA KACHRU	
22	Genres and Styles in World Englishes	386
	VIJAY K. BHATIA	
Part IV Crossing Borders		403
23	Literary Creativity in World Englishes	405
	EDWIN THUMBOO	
24	World Englishes and Issues of Intelligibility	428
	LARRY E. SMITH AND CECIL L. NELSON	

25	World Englishes and Culture Wars BRAJ B. KACHRU	446
Part V Grammar Wars and Standards		473
26	Grammar Wars: Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century England LINDA C. MITCHELL	475
27	Grammar Wars: The United States JOHN ALGEO	496
28	World Englishes and Descriptive Grammars DANIEL R. DAVIS	509
Part VI Ideology, Identity, and Constructs		527
29	Colonial/Postcolonial Critique: The Challenge from World Englishes PRADEEP A. DHILLON	529
30	Cultural Studies and Discursive Constructions of World Englishes WIMAL DISSANAYAKE	545
31	World Englishes and Gender Identities TAMARA M. VALENTINE	567
Part VII World Englishes and Globalization		581
32	World Englishes in the Media ELIZABETH A. MARTIN	583
33	World Englishes in Global Advertising TEJ K. BHATIA	601
34	World Englishes and Global Commerce STANLEY YUNICK VAN HORN	620
Part VIII World Englishes and Applied Theory		643
35	A Recurring Decimal: English in Language Policy and Planning AYO BAMGBOŞE	645
36	Teaching World Englishes ROBERT J. BAUMGARDNER	661
37	Models, Methods, and Curriculum for ELT Preparation KIMBERLEY BROWN	680
38	World Englishes and Lexicography FREDRIC DOLEZAL	694
39	World Englishes and Test Construction FRED DAVIDSON	709

40	World Englishes and Communicative Competence MARGIE BERNS	718
	Part IX Resources on World Englishes	731
41	World Englishes and Corpora Studies GERALD NELSON	733
42	Comparing World Englishes: A Research Guide HELEN FALLON	751
	Author Index	763
	Subject Index	779

Figures and Tables

Figures

3.1	The Scottish English linguistic continuum	45
19.1	Trajectory of language change for African Americans in Hyde County (adapted from Wolfram and Thomas, 2002: 200)	338
19.2	Trajectory of language change for Beech Bottom (based on Mallinson and Wolfram, 2002)	339
19.3	Trajectory of language change for Texana (based on Childs and Mallinson, forthcoming)	339
23.1	The situation of the writer in world Englishes	412
33.1	World Englishes and language mixing: contact and convergence	605
33.2	English expression and its pronunciation guide in katakana	609
33.3	Bridging the global vs. local divide	613
41.1	A tree diagram from the ICE-GB corpus	739

Tables

11.1	Language pluralism in West Africa	178
11.2	Some of West Africa's transnational languages (figures calculated from Grimes, 2004)	179
11.3	Populations of concern to UNHCR end 2002 (<i>UNHCR Statistical Yearbook</i> , 2002)	180
11.4	Refugees across intra- and intercolonial language boundaries	180
24.1	Intelligibility: subjects scoring 60 percent and above	434
24.2	Comprehensibility: subjects scoring 60 percent and above	435
24.3	Interpretability: subjects scoring 60 percent and above	435
24.4	Percentage of subject groups that thought they understood 60 percent or more of the conversations between the five sets of interactors	437

24.5	Percentage of subjects making accurate guesses as to the nationalities of the pairs in the conversations	438
24.6	Subjects' perceptions of interactors' level of education and proficiency in English	440
25.1	Speakers of major languages (in percentages)	451
25.2	Functional domains of English	453
33.1	Script mixing in global advertising: functions	610
33.2	Models of globalization: competitive and cooperative	612
41.1	Composition of the Brown Corpus	734
41.2	Composition of the ICE corpora	737
41.3	An outline of the units and structures from morpheme to discourse which can be investigated using the completed ICE corpora (adapted from Kennedy, 1996: 223)	744

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Preface

One might understandably ask, “Why yet another resource volume?” when there is no paucity of reference works for the English language. Such publications are available, with varied orientations, in every genre – companions, encyclopedias, handbooks, and manuals – in almost every part of the English-speaking world.

We had two motivations for initiating this handbook project: First, we thought it important to revisit the proliferation of terminologies and concepts articulating the global uses of Englishes (e.g., *international*, *lingua franca*, *world English*, *global English*) in the post-1950s diffusion and cross-cultural functions and identities of varieties of the language. It has been extensively – and insightfully – argued that all these concepts only partially represent the social, cultural, educational, and attitudinal realities of the presence of Englishes in their worldwide contexts. It is further rightly argued that the multiple and diverse functions of world Englishes in dynamic societies of Asia, Africa, Europe, and the Americas demand theoretical and methodological perspectives that contextualize the varied and increasingly evolving cultural and social characteristics of the language. There is indeed greater emphasis today than in the past on capturing the expanding fusions and hybridizations of linguistic forms and the unprecedented variations in global functions of world Englishes. It is, we believe, appropriate to remind ourselves that the English language has a long history of convergence with and assimilation of other languages. What is new – and not necessarily recognized by all observers – is that the colonial and post-colonial eras opened challenging new doors for contacts with a great variety of distinct linguistic structures and cultures associated with Asian, African, and Native American languages.

Our second set of motivations involved the dynamic global profile of the language, which has drawn the attention of scholars in diverse areas. This interest is evident in studies related to cross-cultural linguistic and literary creativity, language change and convergence, and world Englishes in education, especially in Asian and African contexts. Researchers in these areas will

immediately think of that pioneering and insightful undertaking, *The Oxford Companion to the English Language* (1992), edited by Tom McArthur, which brought together selected scholars from all the circles of Englishes. Earlier efforts in this direction, though not with the same encyclopedic range of topics and contributions, include Bailey and Görlach (1982), Smith (1981, 1987), and B. Kachru (1982/1992), to provide just a few examples.

In outlining and designing *The Handbook of World Englishes*, the editors, as expected in any such project, had to face the conflict between practical limitations and larger visions and dreams. This volume is, then, a compromise between an ambitious agenda and the accomplished reality. Our dilemma was very similar to the one that Tom McArthur faced in 1992 (p. vii):

Liberals would want to be fair to everyone, balancing every viewpoint and counter-viewpoint, until from the point of view of conservatives everything cancelled out everything else.

We finally decided to follow the much-talked-about “middle path” (*madhyama mārga*). The result is *The Handbook of World Englishes* in its present form.

In characterizing this handbook, it might be easier to say what it is actually *not*: it is not an encyclopedia, and it is not a volume of structural descriptions of world varieties of Englishes. A good example of such a work is Kortmann and Schneider (2005). Instead, *The Handbook of World Englishes* is a compendium of selected, thematically integrated topics that brings together multiple theoretical, contextual, and ideological perspectives that may *include* descriptions, but whose primary aim is to provide fresh interpretations of changing identities of users and uses of Englishes across the Three Circles. In this sense, then, we believe that *The Handbook* provides refreshing and, indeed, still hotly debated theoretical and functional constructs of world Englishes. In other words, it locates them in socially relevant and contextually appropriate situations. The contributors of regional profiles (Parts 1–3) were free to present their areas and varieties in terms of what they felt was important to emphasize, in order to provide historical, ideological, and ideational insights for the varieties under discussion.

In realizing our vision for *The Handbook* we are indebted, first, to our contributors, whose cooperation and patience made the volume possible. The editors, of course, bear the responsibility for any limitations of the work. We wish to express our deep gratitude to Larry Smith for his help at every step in the conceptualization of this volume; to Kingsley Bolton for his insight and suggestions; to Stanley Van Horn for his comments on and critique of various points; to Sarah Coleman of Blackwell Publishing for her professional editorial advice and smooth implementation of the editorial process; to Anna Oxbury for copyediting a complex volume with her usual patience and expertise; to Heeyoun Cho, Jamie S. Lee, Woosung Lee, and Theera Ratitamkul for their assistance in multiple ways at various stages in the completion of the volume; and to the Research Board of the Graduate College of the University of Illinois

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Introduction: The World of World Englishes

BRAJ B. KACHRU, YAMUNA KACHRU,
AND CECIL L. NELSON

Introduction

The Handbook of World Englishes presents essentially – but not exclusively – selected critical dimensions of theoretical, ideological, applied and pedagogical constructs related to the unprecedented spread of the English medium in world contexts. The emphasis of the volume's nine parts and forty-two chapters is on exploring and elucidating topics of the following types:

- 1 the distinctiveness of the sociolinguistic contexts of varieties of Englishes, their diffusion and location in world contexts;
- 2 the functional ranges and domains in which such varieties are actually used across cultures;
- 3 the creative processes that determine the distinctiveness of each major variety at various linguistic levels;
- 4 the relationship of linguistic creativity to acculturation in distinct sociocultural contexts of Asia, Africa and other parts of the English-using world;
- 5 the distinction between *genetic* and *functional* nativeness, and its theoretical and pragmatic implications;
- 6 the characteristics of cross-over between canons and canonicities, and devices used for representing such distinctiveness; and
- 7 attitude-marking love-hate relationships with the medium and their reflections in language policies and language planning in Anglophone societies.

One major aim of *The Handbook of World Englishes* is, then, to represent the cross-cultural and global contextualization of the English language in multiple voices. In this respect, the forty-two invited contributions represent and articulate visions from the major varieties of world Englishes – African, Asian, European, and North and South American.

Structure

The volume is divided into nine parts, and each part comprises thematically appropriate chapters.

Part I: The historical context

The 15 chapters of Part I unfold the spread of English across cultural and linguistic boundaries, roughly following the conceptualization of the Three Circles of English first discussed by Kachru (1985; see also Kachru, 2005: 211–20). In “The Beginnings” (Chapter 1), Robert D. King asks, “how did the English language begin, this supple, economic, subtle instrument of communication, commerce, and belles-lettres that has become de facto and in many institutions and contexts de jure the lingua franca of the world? Where and when was it born?”

In tracing the earliest “growth patterns of English,” King follows a tree metaphor. Chapters 2–3 introduce the First Diaspora of the English language, beginning with that of “Wales and Ireland” (Robert D. King). The story of Wales and Ireland is essentially “the first step,” “the story of the replacement of one language by another.” King warns that “it is almost impossible to resist reaching for military metaphors to give a name to what happened. We talk of a ‘conquest’ . . . the replacement of one language by another does have points in common with ‘conquests’ and ‘victories’.”

The chapter on “English in Scotland” (Fiona Douglas) warns that the title “belies a complex and heterogeneous situation.” In the growth of Scottish English, there are, Douglas points out, two strands: first, the development of *Scots*, and later, the development of *Scottish Standard English*, a variety formed in contact with the southern English standard during the eighteenth century.

In the Second Diaspora, “English in North America” (Edgar W. Schneider) “began as the first of Britain’s colonial (and later post-colonial) offspring, and it went through the same process of linguistic and cultural appropriation that has shaped the post-colonial varieties.” In this respect, then, as Schneider argues, English in North America shares several linguistic processes with varieties of English in, for example, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa (see also Mufwene, 1996, and 2001: 106, who finds “The same processes in African-American English and other ‘disenfranchised Englishes’.”).

Chapter 5 discusses the varieties of Englishes in Australia and New Zealand (Scott F. Kiesling). One might ask: Why a single chapter for two distinct varieties in the second diaspora of Englishes? Kiesling appropriately answers this question:

The relatively short distance from Sydney to Auckland has meant that there has been significant travel and migration between the two since colonization. This intermigration is likely one of the factors that has led them to have similar

ways of speaking. There is thus a very strong linguistic motivation to include them together. Finally, they both were colonized by the British fairly late (Australia in 1788 and New Zealand circa 1840) . . . [T]here is a logical basis in grouping them together when viewed from historical, geographical, and linguistic viewpoints.

The Third Diaspora transplanted English in new linguistic, cultural and social contexts. It entailed teaching and learning English in multilingual situations with genetically and culturally unrelated African (e.g., Bantu and Niger-Congo), Asian (e.g., Indo-Aryan, Dravidian, and Dardic), and East Asian (e.g., Altaic and Austronesian) language contexts.

In historical terms, these continents opened up fresh linguistic resources for contact and convergence with English, and growth and development of yet more international and regional contact varieties of the language. The result was that new dimensions of linguistic creativity evolved. These aspects of creativity are discussed in detail, with their theoretical and applied implications, in Parts III, IV, VII, and VIII.

The nine chapters grouped under the “Third Diaspora” provide descriptive profiles of the contexts, creativity, and language policies of some selected regions from the third diaspora: South Asia (Ravinder Gargesh), East Asia (Nobuyuki Honna), Southeast Asia (M. Bautista and Andrew Gonzalez), South America (Kanavillil Rajagopalan), South Africa (Nkonko Kamwangamalu), West Africa (Tope Omoniyi), East Africa (Joseph Schmied), the Caribbean (Michael Aceto), and Europe (Marko Modiano).

Chapter 15, “World Englishes Today” (the Fourth Diaspora) provides a penetrating overview of the terminological, functional and theoretical conceptualizations of the current presence of English in its pluralistic world contexts and of its characterization and the constructs of English in world Englishes.

First, Kingsley Bolton explains the “meanings and interpretations” of the term “world Englishes,” and the underlying philosophy of a “world Englishes paradigm.” A number of “distinct, albeit overlapping, approaches to research (and publications) in the field of ‘world Englishes’, ‘new Englishes’, and ‘new varieties of English’” are identified and outlined in the following seven approaches: (1) English studies; (2) sociolinguistics (sociology of language, feature-based, Kachruvian, pidgin and creole studies); (3) applied linguistics; (4) lexicographical; (5) the popularizers; (6) critical linguistics; and finally, (7) the futurology approach. This all-embracing survey of the world Englishes “enterprise” shows, as Bolton summarizes it, “a changing disciplinary and discursal map, marked by a series of paradigm shifts in the last 20 years.”

The concluding section considers some points about taking theory to practice – in other words, the implications of such paradigms on applied theory or “applied linguistics.” That indeed includes “different understandings of the field of ‘applied linguistics.’”

Part II: Variational contexts

The first chapter of Part II, "Contact Linguistics and World Englishes" (Rajend Mesthrie), argues for a greater degree of rapprochement between the fields of world Englishes and contact linguistics. The varieties of English in the Outer and Expanding Circles are essentially "contact varieties," with their distinct characteristics of nativization and hybridity, in formal linguistic terms, and in their sociocultural features and identity construction in sociolinguistic terms. The sources for contact and convergence include, argues Mesthrie, the regional dialects of settlers, sailors and soldiers from the Inner Circle, and the first or additional languages of missionaries who were responsible for introducing the teaching of English in diverse contexts. It is claimed that the contribution of the substrate languages notwithstanding, the impact of the superstrate is no less influential than realized earlier in constructs of the varieties in these Circles.

The second chapter, "Varieties of World Englishes" (Kingsley Bolton), highlights how the concepts *language*, *variety*, and *variation* are crucial in understanding the "world Englishes enterprise." Identificational terms such as "varieties of English," "localized varieties of English," "non-native varieties of English," "second language varieties of English," and "new varieties of English" lie at the heart of such a conceptualization. We might, as an aside, add that some of these ideational terms, such as "second language" and "new" varieties are contextually, conceptually, and historically misleading.

In theoretical and pragmatic terms, then, the use of the term "Englishes" emphasizes the autonomy and plurality of the world varieties of the English language. The term "Englishes," Bolton argues, "emphasizes the autonomy and plurality of English languages worldwide." As opposed to this, "the phrase 'varieties of English' suggests heteronomy of such varieties to the common core of 'English'." The "double-voicedness" of such nomenclature (English vs. Englishes) "resonates within the much-cited Bakhtinian distinction between 'centrifugal' and 'centripetal' forces in language change." The chapter locates the term "variety" within the context of world Englishes and "attempts to unravel discussions of the wider theoretical context" in the following sections.

In our understanding of world Englishes and their functional ranges and domains, creoles and pidgins are integral parts of the linguistic ecology. The third chapter, "Pidgins and Creoles" (Salikoko Mufwene), provocatively raises certain conceptual and functional questions about such varieties. Mufwene interrogates the genetic scenario that suggests that creoles evolved from pidgins. He argues that "this genetic scenario is questioned by the colonial history of the territories where these varieties emerged, independent of each other." This chapter addresses three major issues: the nature of pidgins and creoles, the development of creoles, and creolization and general linguistics. Mufwene arrives at the conclusion that "studies of structural aspects of creoles have yet to inform general linguistics beyond the subject matter of time reference and serial verb constructions."

The fourth chapter, "African American English" (Walt Wolfram), discusses the formal linguistic issues concerning African American English. This ethnic dialect has received more scholarly, sociolinguistic, educational, and political attention than any other dialect of English. It has been characterized in many *avatars*, and the discussions have, as Wolfram suggests, "often related to underlying issues of racial politics and ethnic ideologies in American society." The labels for such *avatars* "include: *Negro Dialect*, *Nonstandard Negro English*, *Black English*, *Black English Vernacular*, *Afro-American English*, *African American (Vernacular) English*, *African American Language*," and in recent years, *Ebonics*. This chapter, however, primarily focuses on the "descriptive base" of the variety, "its genesis and its early development," and the change and development it is currently going through.

Part III: Acculturation

The chapters in Part III examine the three major facets of acculturation of world Englishes. Chapter 20, "Written Language, Standard Language, Global Language" (M. A. K. Halliday), provides a larger perspective about how English, along with a small number of other languages in the modern period, has expanded away from local and national to international domains, changing as it moved into different social and cultural contexts. In the evolution of language, critical moments occur when a language is used both as a spoken and written medium, and when it acquires the form of a standard language in what is considered a nation-state. The present reality of the English language, Halliday argues, is that it is acquiring a new identity as the "global language" of the late capitalist world. The chapter discusses some of the consequences of this development. However, Halliday suggests that we have to wait till we realize the long-term effects that globalization has on the English medium.

The two chapters that follow discuss the acculturation of English in terms of specific functional roles in cross-cultural contexts. "Speaking and Writing in World Englishes" (Yamuna Kachru) illustrates the conventions of language and language use in multilingual societies where a number of languages make up the verbal repertoire of speakers/writers. This results in characteristic patterns of language use. The focus of her discussion is on speech acts, cross-cultural speech act research, linguistic politeness, and writing practices.

In Chapter 22, "Genres and Styles in World Englishes," Vijay K. Bhatia brings out the perspectives of register, text-type, and other similar functional criteria to show that genres are motivated by the common concern of highlighting functional variation in a variety of language. The sociolinguistic reality, however, is that all these concepts represent particular ways of identifying functional and formal constructs of a variety of world Englishes. The chapter discusses the distinctions between two frequently used terms, *genre* and *style*. The functional uses of these terms are discussed with reference to world Englishes and liberal vs. conservative genres.

Part IV: Crossing borders

The three chapters of Part IV deal with inclusive issues of acculturation that accrue in the worldwide varieties of English and in the conceptualization of those varieties under one designation, "world Englishes": literary creativity, intelligibility, canonicity and the "culture wars" that arise from territorial allegiances to one or another vision of what "English" is or can be and how it works.

In Chapter 23, "Literary Creativity in World Englishes," Edwin Thumboo argues that "the dynamics of literary creativity . . . are largely generated from within. External influences tend to stimulate rather than confront." The results of this stimulation can be seen in the growth in output and kinds of experimentation in literatures in Englishes across the world. Part of the acculturation of English in various contexts is the addition, subtraction, and expansion of its elements at all levels; another part is its acquisition of new genres and styles. While creative literatures share the medium of English, they retain – and develop – their own identities; as Thumboo concludes: "We ought to treat the new literatures as separate in certain essential aspects despite their sharing of English."

In Chapter 24, "World Englishes and Issues of Intelligibility," Larry E. Smith and Cecil L. Nelson examine one of the central objections of Randolph Quirk and others to recognizing the ongoing development of variation across Englishes, i.e., the "frequently voiced concern . . . that speakers of different varieties of English will soon become unintelligible to one another." The first and most straightforward rejoinder to this apprehension is that one has only to look around the English-using world, historically or in terms of the present day situation, to see that it has always been the case that some English speakers have been at least to some degree unintelligible to other English speakers. The "brogue" of Ocracoke, North Carolina (USA) sounds very different from the English spoken on California's beaches, or on Australia's, for that matter; and there are many mismatches of lexical items across the populations, yet any observer would call all three varieties "English." Having recognized variation, as legitimate observers must, a uniformitarian principle must allow – indeed, make it certain – that the same kinds of variations exist across "non-native" Englishes, institutionalized or not. It remains to document the matches or mismatches, and to investigate the necessary bases of intelligibility, expanded as intelligibility, comprehensibility, and interpretability. As Smith and Nelson conclude, "[S]ince all the evidence shows that most non-Inner-Circle uses of English across the world do not involve Inner-Circle users, more studies of those interactions will continue to reveal what the criteria of intelligibility truly are."

In Chapter 25, "World Englishes and Culture Wars" (Braj B. Kachru), the present diffusion and constructs of and attitudes toward English in the world today are compared to the legendary "Speaking Tree," which awakens in the minds of its beholders "both fear and celebration, aversion and esteem, and indeed agony and ecstasy." Those who see the canon of English literature or of Englishness as relatively fixed, a starting point with distance measured from it to far-flung reduplications of the pattern, are those who view the spread of

English with “fear and aversion,” while those who see it from the world Englishes paradigm react to the same data with attitudes of “celebration and esteem.” While English is in one sense – cross-culturally – “international,” that is a term that Kachru avoids, since there is not *an* English that is uniform in its forms and functions from place to place, from culture to culture. Drawing on the metaphor of Caliban, who was taught speech for the convenience of his master so that they could communicate with one another, but who rejected any allegiance to that speech in no uncertain terms, Kachru writes that the medium of English is shared by all of its users in the three Circles, but that “[t]he *mantras*, the messages and discourses, represent multiple identities and contexts and visions.” It is in this “variousness” that English finds its being in the present.

Part V: Grammar wars and standards

In all major languages, historical issues related to ideology, attitudes, and standardization have been at the center of the cross-cultural grammar wars. In the case of English, this is reflected, for example, in the anthology of “readings in language, history and cultural identity” entitled *Proper English?* (edited by Tony Crowley, 1991). The readings include papers by John Locke (1690), Jonathan Swift (1712), Samuel Johnson (1747), Thomas Sheridan (1762), James Buchanan (1764), Noah Webster (1789), John Walker (1791), John Pickering (1816), T. Watts (1850), Archbishop R. C. Trench (1851), G. F. Graham (1869), Henry Alford (1864), Henry James (1905), Henry Newbolt (1921), Henry Wyld (1934), A. S. C. Ross (1954), Alison Assiter (1983), and John Marenbon (1987). This debate, spread over centuries in the Inner Circle, has still not abated, and yet new constructs of perspectives – ideological, theoretical and methodological – continue to be brought into it.

As an aside, one might add here that earlier examples of such grammar textbooks with loaded ideological, political, and social agendas have a long history. One such example, now from the Outer Circle, is provided by Frances B. Singh (1987). In her pioneering study on pre-Raj and post-Raj South Asia (India), Singh “examines the various connections four grammar books . . . posit between the English language and Indian society.” The grammars are by J. Nesfield (1895), L. Tipping (1933), P. C. Wren and H. Martin (1954), and C. D. Sidhu (1976). In her perceptive analysis, Singh first presents Nesfield’s agenda in construction of the grammar text:

The sentences of Nesfield’s text propagate the notion of the British supremacy and impose a view of history which justifies colonial rule. It is a view which corresponds to the contemporary conception of English as an imposed foreign language, the language of political domination and synonym for it. (1987: 253)

Second comes the construct of Tipping; his position is:

. . . that English is to be assimilated to the Indian context. The revised edition of Wren and Martin’s grammar follows in the Tipping tradition. English is no longer

seen as something imposed, but as something in the process of being Indianized. (1987: 253)

Finally, comes the grammar of Sidhu which, says Singh, “is radically different from the others”:

It reveals a familiarity with the way life is experienced in India. Sidhu’s grammar proves that English language teaching can be taught through and express Indian experiences. (1987: 253)

And Singh rightly concludes that:

In so doing, the English language becomes the opposite of its historical role: a mode of communication which expresses Indians’ consciousness of themselves as citizens of an independent country. (1987: 253)

In this analysis Singh demonstrates the development between the English medium and constructs of the messages. Singh’s paper is not part of this handbook, but her insights and analysis, documented briefly here, in this case, in India, are appropriate for our understanding of the strategies and constructs generally used in grammar textbooks.

In Part V, Chapter 26, “Grammar Wars: Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century England” (Linda C. Mitchell), outlines how the grammarians of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, though claiming to “[protect] the language from corruption . . . were in fact positioning themselves on a cultural battlefield, using linguistics to protest social issues.” Mitchell describes four such major battles. First, concerning the status of English vis-à-vis Latin; second, about “good grammar” against “good writing”; third, debate over the nature of “universal grammar”; and, fourth, “how grammar could regulate the speech and therefore power of such marginal groups as foreigners, workers, and the middle class.”

In Chapter 27, John Algeo critically outlines the phenomena of grammar wars in the United States, rightly warning us that such wars are not limited to the USA; “The Greeks had a word for it – *logomachia* ‘a war about words.’” St Paul used that term in his first epistle to Timothy (6:4–5), where he wrote of one who “is puffed up, knowing nothing but doting about questions and disputes of words [*logomachia*], whereof cometh envy, strife, railing, evil surmisings, wrangling of men corrupted in mind and bereft of the truth.” One grammar war, following Benjamin Lee Whorf (1956), is “about how we conceptualize words, [it] is to dispute about epistemology – how we know the world. Grammar wars are thus philosophical in their nature, but they have also been linked, more or less closely, with disputes about usage, in the sense of what is genuine, correct or proper language.”

These wars result in establishing relationships with sociology and social classes. The two major aspects of such wars are theoretical (or philosophical) and related to usage (or sociological). Algeo’s chapter penetratingly discusses multiple dimensions of grammar wars over theory and over usage. In con-