

BOOK REVIEW

Marzieh Sadeghpour and Farzad Sharifian (eds.). *Cultural Linguistics and World Englishes*. Singapore: Springer, 2021.

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The discussion of World Englishes has developed in response to how English is culturally modulated. Although much literature can be found in World Englishes, the scholarly discussion of the interplay of cultural linguistics and World Englishes still needs to be improved. To fill this gap, the book discussed here entitled *Cultural Linguistics and World Englishes* attempts to shed light on how “cultural linguistics as an interdisciplinary branch of linguistics that examines the relationship between language and culture” (1), and how the complexities of language and culture can capture the World Englishes.

The volume is divided into 17 chapters that present the integration of culture within the framework of World Englishes. In this sense, the concept of English-speaking culture is demonstrated through its cultural traits, which affect the diversity of English. In Chapter 1, Farzad Sharifian and Marzieh Sadeghpour discuss the general idea of World Englishes from the perspective of cultural linguistics and a critical review of the studies conducted to date on these theoretical frameworks. They explore how to identify the diversity of English in the world to assemble the corpus linguistics of World Englishes shaped by both cultural and social constructions. The field of linguistics is concerned with the study of language forms and functions; a corpus is basically a collection of texts stored in an electronic, machine-readable format (Lange and Leuckert 2019). Corpus linguistics must start with corpora, but whether corpus linguistics is more of a toolbox or an independent discipline is already controversial. In Chapter 2, Ian G. Malcolm uses the cultural linguistics framework to examine how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have adapted Australian English to represent their identity and cultural sanctity. The findings show that different cultures did not prevent them from using their version of English. In this sense, the framework of cultural linguistics has

shown that while Aboriginal English is not identical to mainstream Australian English, it can represent the cultural underpinnings of a people who speak that language.

Taking a comparative approach, Siew Imm in Chapter 3 argues that the keywords of the short story “The Blood Berry Vine” are in Australian Aboriginal English using the Australian corpus of English literature. His finding reports that the keywords in this storybook are linked to the depiction of Australian Aboriginal culture. This finding indicates that the combination of a corpus-based approach with transitivity analysis from the lens of cultural linguistics allows us to understand the speakers’ point of view. Zhichang Xu and Nina Fang in Chapter 4 examine *Xiào* or “being good to parents” and filial piety as the culturally constructed Chinese concept from the perspective of cultural linguistics and World Englishes. This finding supports the cultural linguistics theory that cultural conceptualisations are negotiated and renegotiated throughout time and geography, and are distributed unevenly within a cultural community. For Hyejeong Ahn and Chon Hak Kim’s research on Korean English in Chapter 5, the critical examination is based on the analytical framework of cultural conceptualisation to show that the English in Han Kang’s novella is used to express the two distinct Korean cultural schemas. Cultural linguistics, as a concept, aims to understand the concept of Korean culture by observing features that are similar to those of Kachruvian (inner circle) varieties. The findings show that while Korean English does not automatically relate to formal features of standard English, it can convey Korean culture semantically.

Kim Ebensgaard Jensen in Chapter 6 focuses on the gap in cross-cultural communication in the context of World Englishes and examines how World Englishes speakers draw meaning from the connection between culture and lexis in the corpus of global web-based English (GloWbE). In her conclusion, Jansen claimed that examining the interrelationship of lexis and its cultural concept in the World Englishes context would provide insights for further research in cultural linguistics. In this case, speakers of local variants of English interpret the concepts in terms of lexical imports. Appropriately, in Chapter 7, Denisa Latić reports on a corpus-based study of the conceptual culture of ghosts in Hong Kong that is related to their marital status. It is obvious that “in Hong Kong, life and death, the real and the other world, coexist in its inhabitants’ traditions and language, which are substantiated with marriage-related references within the domain of ghosts” (129). In this regard, Denisa Latić examines the representation of the phenomena with keywords and collocation. She argues that keyword chains can be used as

an additional analytical tool from a cultural-linguistics perspective, as they provide a quantification mechanism within inherently qualitative studies. Thus, she claims that the ghost-related keyword chain can be traced linguistically in collocations that reflect Hong Kong people's cultural aspects. In Chapter 8, Zhichang Xu and Thuy Ngoc Dinh adopt the framework of cultural linguistics to analyse the social media interaction data of Asian cultural backgrounds, including *yuán* and *duyên* (fate) in Chinese and Vietnamese English, respectively, through conversational analysis. In this context, the authors have suggested the study's implications in terms of cultural awareness to promote intercultural communication in the World Englishes era.

Wafaa Othman S. Fallatah in Chapter 9 examines the corpus data of thirty newspaper articles written in Saudi English by Saudi authors about bilingual creativity traits. The analysis of the collected data shows the four main reasons, namely religion, women, gender discrimination, and family, as a bilingual justification for creativity. In Chapter 10, Anna Finzel reports on Indian English on the sanctity of culture from the perspective of the third gender (*hijras*). In this context, the cultural linguistics framework is used to analyse such societal structures that focus on social marginalisation, and the cognitive sociolinguistics method is used to support the analysis. The findings seem to reflect that "Indian society as a whole may be a space for everybody as a locus of integration" (213) due to the history of *hijras* in Indian society affecting the conceptualisations of British English. Nevertheless, in the same geographical context, Frank Polzenhagen in Chapter 11 presents cultural insights into Indian families by analysing the vocabulary of Indian English. He uses cultural linguistics as an analytical tool to study the issues related to marriage and linguistic expression in Indian English and the cultural artifacts of Indian families. The finding suggests that the linguistic features of Indian English promote the culture of their speakers. In this regard, the comparative study of English varieties from an outer circle country is a very fruitful endeavour from the perspective of cultural linguistics. In line with this, a comparative corpus-based study by Ray C. H. Leung in Chapter 12 examines the collocation of yoga from the corpus of GloWbE. The result shows that yoga, known in American and Indian English, has significant differences in cultural conceptualisations. In this sense, the cultural linguistics framework shows evidence for yoga's socio-cultural transformation.

Barbara Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk and Paul A. Wilson in Chapter 13 report on the communication differences between British and American cultures. The findings emphasised a stereotyping in which both cultures are claimed to oppose expressive cultures (261). Burstein (2014) defines

expressive culture as the processes, feelings, and ideas bound up in the social production of aesthetic forms and performances in everyday life. It is how culture is embodied and expressed through sensory experiences like dance, music, literature, visual media, and theatre. In this regard, they thoroughly trace the cultural emotions of American and British English using GRID questionnaire as a methodological tool on the dimensions of valence, power, excitement, and novelty and the framework of cultural linguistics. They argued that although both cultures regularly used the cultural emotion of dignity, the results confirm that British and American English differ in the relative importance of expressiveness and restraint in pride. In Chapter 14, Diana Prodanovi'c Stanki'c focuses on English as a foreign language in Serbia and its impact on speakers in the context of online communication. From a culture-linguistics point of view, her findings demonstrated the effectiveness of funny Serbian memes in presenting Serbian culture as a communicative discourse in communication encounters between Serbian English users. They have successfully brought Serbian cultural concepts into the context of English as an international language. In Chapter 15, Milene Mendes de Oliveira encourages scholars to think beyond a targeted cultural concept when analysing the writing of Brazilian and German English varieties. She argues that when World Englishes speakers communicate in English, they should simultaneously represent and express the concept of their own culture.

Through a usage-based approach, Arne Peters in Chapter 16 examines a corpus of herbalist-based cultural linguistics of South African English and applies the cognitive-sociolinguistic method as a methodological approach to World Englishes. The findings report that the cultural cognition aspect of English speakers in South Africa is found in their linguistic features in the black South African variety of English. In Chapter 17, Frank Polzenhagen and Hans-Georg Wolf conducted a study based-corpora of English in Cameroon to compare political leadership, wealth, and corruption expressions in African English with American and British English. This chapter is instructive in that it promotes the connection between lexical items and variants of English. The finding shows that the cultural linguistics framework applies to studying more cultural expression in English as a lingua franca.

Marzieh Sadeghpour and Farzad Sharifian conclude this volume by noting that in a multicultural context, English speakers worldwide have brought English into their local communities to express their cultural vision. This aspect is revealed through many English versions in World Englishes.

Accordingly, the rapid development of communication technology plays a vital role in promoting multicultural communication to identify a variety of English behind the cultural concept. They encourage further empirical studies of World Englishes that use the framework of cultural linguistics to prove the existence of varieties of English in this globalisation era. However, the volume would have been more straightforward if the editors had provided more space for detailed methodological positions, such as the ethical consideration of research and theory. In addition, the editors might have taken the time to summarise the most important findings of the volume about various language areas in the concluding section, taking cultural-linguistics aspects into account. In this way, it would benefit everyday practitioners unfamiliar with “cultural linguistics as an interdisciplinary sub-branch of linguistics that explores the relationship between language and cultural conceptualizations” (1). In summary, the book’s contributions will undoubtedly stimulate discussion and publicise English variations about speakers’ cultural backgrounds in the era of World Englishes. Therefore, the book is worthwhile for English teachers, practitioners, and language researchers to foster a critical awareness of effective communication in a multicultural context by understanding the general principles and various lexicons of World Englishes.

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