

**World Englishes in the classroom: A critical literature review of attitudes towards
variation in English among teachers of English**

Dinali Fernando

Department of English, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka

The study of language attitudes has long been a significant area of research. Generally adopting social psychological approaches, language attitudes research at present is dominated by studies of attitudes towards World Englishes (AWEs) in English language teaching (ELT) contexts. Undergirded by the theoretical assumption that attitudes can determine successful language learning, these studies explore the attitudes of teachers and students of English in countries where powerful global pedagogical models, British and/or American English, compete with established local varieties within and outside the classroom. This critical literature review explores the contribution of recent research towards gaining an in-depth understanding of teachers' AWEs. Over fifty international and local studies conducted in pedagogical contexts, mostly published between 2011 and 2019, were reviewed. Findings revealed a dominant theoretical assumption about attitudes as a stable, measurable construct and the employment of two deductive methods, the language attitudes survey and the verbal-guise test. These approaches have produced quantitative, generalisable results that have succeeded in identifying global attitudinal trends such as the growing acceptance of local varieties alongside the persisting preference for Inner Circle pedagogical norms. Many studies also adopted a binary view of attitudes, affirming 'positive' attitudes while identifying 'negative' attitudes as deficient, with little attempt to explore ambivalence in attitudinal reactions. A silencing of teachers' individual voices which might have shed light on their own attitudes was also observed. The literature review concludes that a more nuanced understanding of current AWEs among teachers of English in Sri Lanka based on their own experiences and worldviews might make a more meaningful contribution to English education in the 21st century characterized by competing Sri Lankan Englishes, and regional and global WEs. For this, the study recommends social constructionist and narrative approaches that view concepts such as attitudes as unfixed, volatile, contextualised, and discursively constructed by individuals.

Keywords: Language attitudes; World Englishes; English language teaching; teachers of English; Sri Lankan Englishes