

Pedagogical Implications in Studies of Attitudes to World Englishes: A Critical Analysis

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Language attitudes, perceptions, and beliefs are considered powerful determinants of language learning. Contemporary research attest to this in the proliferation of mostly survey-based studies exploring teacher and student attitudes towards varieties of English conducted within Global Englishes paradigms in various parts of the world. They generally promote an inclusive approach to Englishes in the classroom, suggesting that instead of the unquestioning adoption of a single, prestigious, ‘native speaker’ pedagogical model such as Standard British or American English, developing an awareness of Englishes such as Sri Lankan, Indian and Hong Kong English is more beneficial for local and international communication in the current global context. These studies often conclude with implications for teaching and learning in the form of overtly stated or implied recommendations on how to address attitudes to varieties of English in the classroom. I analysed the recommendations in nearly 50 recent studies of teacher and/or student attitudes to Englishes published between 2018 and 2024 compiled through keyword searches in several academic databases. Themes identified in these studies include increasing teacher awareness, developing WEs inclusive curriculum materials, promoting critical reflection, and Englishes in assessments. Informed by my own experiences as a teacher of English, teacher trainer, curriculum developer in Sri Lanka, as well as a researcher of Sri Lankan English, I critically engage with the generaliseability, feasibility and teacher agency undergirding these themes, relating it to the local context of teaching and learning English in secondary education in Sri Lanka. I conclude with a consideration of the affordances of adopting a subjective approach that takes into account individual, social and contextual factors in when promoting and integrating multiple Englishes in the classroom.

Keywords: World Englishes, Attitudes and perceptions, Pedagogical implications