Involuntary Associations

David Huddart

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The consequences of English's spread have become increasingly clear to its diverse speakers. Sometimes associated with a standardization leading to homogenization, often also with imperialism, English is increasingly understood to have no necessary connection with any country or group of countries. The willingness to accept that English has become Englishes might be less evident among so-called native speakers, but their authority is weaker than it once seemed. The idea of World Englishes encourages us to re-imagine our understanding of the language. The difference between error and innovation can no longer be decided through assumptions about language 'ownership'. In fact, the language is beginning to be a medium of the expression of identity for more and more people in very different contexts.

This book puts examples from World Englishes into dialogue with postcolonial studies, in the belief that while postcolonial studies has obviously had much to say about English, it has either been directly concerned with or has been influenced by English literary studies. The dialogue will correct misconceptions and misapprehensions in postcolonial studies, with World Englishes offering renewal for postcolonial studies. At the same time, the dialogue will also apply postcolonial studies’ political and philosophical ideas to World Englishes, resulting in a postcolonial perspective on English today.

‘An excellent contribution to the debates surrounding World Englishes and Postcolonial Studies, I know of no other book that sets up a conversation between these fields and there is much to be gained by scholars in both areas of study from this very informative analysis.’

Professor Bill Ashcroft, University of New South Wales

David Huddart is Associate Professor of English Literary Studies at the Chinese University of Hong Kong.