



The Oxford Guide to World English

Tom McArthur

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'In the closing years of the twentieth century, the English language has become a global resource. As such, it does not owe its existence or the protection of its essence to any nation or group.'

Tom McArthur, in his Introduction to *The Oxford Companion to the English Language*.

The Oxford Guide to World English takes up where its 'mother book', *The Oxford Companion to the English Language*, left off. Organized by continent, there are chapters on Europe, the Americas, Africa, Asia, and Australasia, Oceania, and Antarctica. Tom McArthur takes note of the world's many varieties of English in an interconnected way and notes the ties that bind varieties and regions that happen to be geographically far apart, as with, for example: West African English and African American English; Scots, Ulster Scots, the Scotch-Irish migrations to Appalachia in the US, and country and western music; and aspects of Australian, New Zealand, South African, and Falklands English as southern-hemisphere varieties. The end result is a book that is accessible and appealing to the non-specialist, and that covers a very wide range of dialects and languages, including UK dialects such as Brummie, Cockney, and Manx English, Spanglish, Jamaican Creole, Yinglish, Chicano English, Maori English, and Bahamian.

A concluding chapter studies the nature and power of large languages; such issues as gender and political correctness; the role, status, and nature of broken and/or fractured English; the worldwide English language teaching industry; and the issue of standardness, considered both locally and globally.

This hugely comprehensive work provides a fascinating and novel survey of English both as a pre-eminent world language and as an increasingly divergent language.

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