

# Remembering Tom McArthur

In addition to all his other academic achievements, Tom McArthur clearly was one of the impulse-giving, great founding fathers of ‘World Englishes’ as an academic field. *English Today*, the journal that he founded, has always been particularly open to topics in this emerging discipline, contributing a lot to it becoming known more widely. And his own publications were early milestones. His 1998 CUP book with a programmatic title, *The English Languages*, and his 2002 OUP monograph *Oxford Guide to World English* were unmatched at that time, offering a treasure trove of factual information on the global spread of English with demographic, sociohistorical, socio-political and theoretical information; I used these sources regularly when working on the early versions of my own ‘Dynamic Model of the evolution of Postcolonial Englishes’ (Schneider, 2003, 2007). His ‘Circle of World Englishes’, published in an article in *English Today* in 1987, was one of the earliest influential visualizations of relationships between national varieties of English, posit-

ing not only a ‘World Standard English’ at the center but also integrating many national varieties (like ‘Bangladeshi English’), ethnic varieties (like ‘Athabaskan English’), vernaculars (like ‘Black English Vernacular’) and pidgins and creoles (like ‘Tok Pisin’ or ‘Guyanese’). In another *English Today* article (2003: 56–57) he suggested the notion of the ‘English Language Complex’, later popularized and worked out in greater detail by Mesthrie & Bhatt (2008: 1–10). His legacy and impact on the field place him among the great early giants, together with Braj Kachru, Larry Smith, and Manfred Görlach.

I met Tom only once, and only rather briefly, but that memory has always been precious to me. In 2006 I gave a talk at the City University of Hong Kong, and he was in the audience, and came up and identified himself afterwards, which was a great honor and pleasure to me. He was kind, gentle, and friendly, and that’s how I keep him in my mind.

Thank you, Tom.

*Edgar W. Schneider,  
University of Regensburg*



*EDGAR W. SCHNEIDER is Emeritus Professor of English Linguistics at the University of Regensburg, Germany. He is an internationally renowned sociolinguist, known best in World Englishes research for his “Dynamic Model” (Postcolonial English,*

*Cambridge University Press, 2007). He has published many books (including English Around the World, CUP, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn., 2020) and articles and lectured on all continents, including many keynote lectures. He edited the journal English World-Wide and its associated book series for many years and was President of the International Society for the Linguistics of English. [Edgar.Schneider@sprachlit.uni-regensburg.de](mailto:Edgar.Schneider@sprachlit.uni-regensburg.de)*

## References

- McArthur, T. 1987. ‘The English languages?’ *English Today*, 3(3), 9–11.
- McArthur, T. 1998. *The English Languages*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- McArthur, T. 2002. *Oxford Guide to World English*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- McArthur, T. 2003. ‘World English, Euro-English, Nordic English?’ *English Today*, 19(1), 54–58.
- Mesthrie, R. & Bhatt, R. M. 2008. *World Englishes: The Study of New Varieties*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Schneider, E. W. 2003. ‘The dynamics of New Englishes: From identity construction to dialect birth.’ *Language*, 79, 233–281.
- Schneider, E. W. 2007. *Postcolonial English. Varieties Around the World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.