

ELT Alanında World Englishes (Dünya İngilizceleri) ve English as a Lingua Franca (Ortak Dil Olarak İngilizce) Araştırmalarının Sistematik Bir İncelemesi: Yükselen Eğilimler ve Pedagojik Çıkarımlar

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ÖZ

Bu sistematik inceleme, World Englishes (WE) ve English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) alanlarında İngiliz Dili Eğitimi (ELT) bağlamında yürütülen güncel araştırmaları; yükselen eğilimler, yöntemsel örüntüler ve pedagojik çıkarımlar açısından incelemektedir. İncelemede, 2019–2024 yılları arasında yayımlanan ve Scopus ile MLA Directory of Periodicals/MLA International Bibliography veri tabanlarında indekslenen hakemli dergi makaleleri analiz edilmiştir. Önceden belirlenen dahil etme ve hariç tutma ölçütleri doğrultusunda 30 çalışma seçilmiş ve nitel içerik analizi/tematik sentez yoluyla incelenmiştir. Bulgular, ELT bağlamında WE ve ELF araştırmalarının ağırlıklı olarak Avrupa ve Asya bağlamlarında yoğunlaştığını ve karma yöntem desenlerinin en sık kullanılan yaklaşım olduğunu göstermektedir. İncelenen çalışmalar genelinde öğretmenlerin ve öğrencilerin dilsel çeşitlilik ile kültürlerarası iletişimin önemini giderek daha fazla kabul ettikleri; ancak özellikle Britanya ve Amerikan İngilizcesi başta olmak üzere yerli konuşur normlarının tutumları, ders materyallerini, ölçme-değerlendirme uygulamalarını ve sınıf içi beklentileri şekillendirmeye devam ettiği görülmüştür. İnceleme ayrıca müfredat tasarımı, ders kitapları, ölçme-değerlendirme ve yeterince temsil edilmeyen coğrafi bağlamlara yönelik çalışmaların sınırlı kaldığını ortaya koymaktadır. Bu bulgular, yerli konuşur benzeri performans yerine anlaşılabilirliği ve iletişimsel etkililiği önceleyen daha uygulamaya dönük WE ve ELF odaklı öğretmen eğitimi, daha kapsayıcı materyaller ve değerlendirme çerçevelerine ihtiyaç olduğunu göstermektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Dünya İngilizceleri; Ortak Dil Olarak İngilizce; Küresel İngilizceler; İngiliz Dili Eğitimi; sistematik inceleme; öğretmen eğitimi; yerli konuşur normları.



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**A Systematic Review of World Englishes and English as a Lingua Franca Research in ELT:
Emerging Trends and Pedagogical Implications**

ABSTRACT

This systematic review examines recent research on World Englishes (WE) and English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) in English Language Teaching (ELT), with a focus on emerging trends, methodological patterns, and pedagogical implications. The review analysed peer-reviewed journal articles published between 2019 and 2024 and indexed in Scopus and the MLA Directory of Periodicals/MLA International Bibliography. Following predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria, 30 studies were selected and examined through qualitative content analysis/thematic synthesis. The findings indicate that WE and ELF research in ELT has been concentrated mainly in European and Asian contexts, with mixed-methods designs being the most frequently used approach. Across the reviewed studies, teachers and learners increasingly recognised linguistic diversity and intercultural communication; however, native-speaker norms, particularly British and American English, continued to shape attitudes, materials, assessment practices, and classroom expectations. The review also identifies limited attention to curriculum design, coursebooks, assessment, and underrepresented geographical contexts. These findings suggest the need for more practical WE- and ELF-informed teacher education, more inclusive materials, and assessment frameworks that prioritise intelligibility and communicative effectiveness over native-like performance.

Keywords: World Englishes; English as a Lingua Franca; Global Englishes; English Language Teaching; systematic review; teacher education; native-speaker norms.

1. INTRODUCTION

The term *lingua franca* originates from the Italian phrase meaning “Frankish tongue” (Online Etymology Dictionary, n.d.). The first usage of the term *lingua franca* dates back to medieval times, where it was used to describe a pidgin language spoken around the Mediterranean. In this region, trade and commerce were of utmost importance. Looking back in history, a *lingua franca* is any language that is systematically used to facilitate communication between people who do not share a common native language (Sergeant & Swann, 2012).

Since the middle of the 20th century, the world has been dominated by the English language, a situation that does not appear to be changing anytime soon. Nonetheless, English did not rise to global prominence overnight; in fact, it took many years and several twists of fate for it to become a *lingua franca*. The spread of English can be attributed to migration, diffusion, or infiltration. For example, the spread of English to North America and Australia through colonisation is a perfect example of migration. Since the communities that settled in these countries were largely drawn from the British Isles, they naturally brought English with them. The spread of English into countries such as India and Scandinavia, however, is an example of diffusion that resulted from people in these regions adopting English through prolonged contact with English-speaking communities. Still, they did not experience a large-scale migration like the ones that occurred in North America and Australia. Meanwhile, in countries such as South Africa, English spread through infiltration. Infiltration can be seen as a blend of migration and diffusion because the language was brought to the region by the communities who settled there, and the local population was gradually assimilated (Ostler, 2005).

Given English's current dominance, its popularity can be attributed to the global reach of American media, technology, and academia (Graddol, 1997). In today's world, a country no longer needs to rely on colonialism to spread its culture; something as simple as a successful television series can achieve the same effect. America's cultural spread, however, extends far beyond this, encompassing various spheres that continue to reinforce English as a dominant global language. Even so, English, in the same sense, has also been described as a tool of neo-colonialism because of its global dominance. The reason for this is the marginalisation of local languages and cultures by the global language, which perpetuates linguistic and cultural hegemony (Phillipson, 1992). Hence, the spread of English through globalisation has been criticised for creating inequalities, as access to English proficiency often determines socioeconomic opportunities, favouring those who can afford English education. This dominance may reinforce power imbalances between English-dominant nations and others, which can be seen as colonial-like dynamics in modern contexts (Pennycook, 2017).

When discussing the role of English globally, it is beneficial to categorise it using Kachru's (1985) Three Circles of English model. For this classification, countries are divided into three circles: the inner circle, the outer circle, and the expanding circle. This classification can be viewed in Table 1. The Inner Circle refers to countries where English is the native language, such as the United Kingdom, Australia and the United States. In these countries, English is the primary

language of communication. The Outer Circle, on the other hand, refers to countries where English is a second language due to historical colonisation, such as India, Nigeria, and the Philippines. In these contexts, English serves official or institutional purposes and is usually used alongside local languages. Lastly, the Expanding Circle encompasses countries where English is taught as a foreign language, such as Türkiye, China and Japan. In these contexts, English is learnt primarily for international communication. This model underscores the complex dynamics of English as a global language and its varied functions across different sociolinguistic contexts.

Table 1. Kachru (1985)’s three circles of English

Circle	Role of English	Example Countries
Inner Circle	English as a Native Language	United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, United States
Outer Circle	English as a Second or Institutional Language	India, Nigeria, Singapore, Malaysia, Pakistan, South Africa, the Philippines
Expanding Circle	English as a Foreign or International Language	Türkiye, China, South Korea, Germany, Brazil

Within ELT, World Englishes and English as a Lingua Franca can be understood as two related but distinct perspectives that question the dominance of native-speaker norms. WE scholarship highlights the legitimacy of localised and institutionalised varieties of English, particularly in Outer and Expanding Circle contexts (Kachru, 1985; Matsuda, 2012). ELF research, on the other hand, focuses on English as a communicative resource among multilingual speakers, in which intelligibility, negotiation of meaning, accommodation, and intercultural awareness become more important than a single native-speaker model (Jenkins, 2007; Seidlhofer, 2011). Together, these perspectives challenge traditional ELT practices that privilege British or American English as the unquestioned target model and invite more pluralistic approaches to curriculum, materials, teacher education, and assessment (Canagarajah, 2013; Galloway & Rose, 2015; Matsuda, 2012).

Although WE and ELF have been widely discussed in applied linguistics, recent ELT-focused research remains fragmented across different contexts, participant groups, and pedagogical concerns. Existing studies often examine teacher beliefs, learner attitudes, teaching practices, coursebooks, curriculum, or assessment separately, yet fewer reviews synthesise how these strands have developed together in the post-2019 period. Therefore, a systematic review is needed to identify dominant patterns, underexplored areas, and future directions in WE- and ELF-informed ELT research.

For all the aforementioned reasons, there is a crucial need for systematic research to examine and understand how English is used and taught in diverse contexts, with a focus on users’ perspectives on World Englishes and English as a lingua franca. Most existing research focuses heavily on the Inner Circle countries, resulting in a neglect of the rich linguistic and cultural variations in Outer and Expanding Circle nations (Matsuda, 2012). Through the examination of these circles, researchers can develop pedagogical practices that not only focus on adherence to

native-speaker norms but also foster greater cultural awareness and inclusivity (Canagarajah, 2013). Thus, research is of the utmost importance in preparing all learners worldwide for the realities of global communication in a linguistically diverse world.

1.1. Aim and Significance of the Study

The role of English in the world is not going to diminish any time soon, and if anything, new reasons to learn English emerge constantly. For this reason, it is very essential to keep up with research in this area, particularly studies conducted in countries outside the Inner Circle, since understanding their perspectives on World Englishes (WE) and English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) is crucial. Hence, this systematic review aims to synthesise key insights into how these paradigms have been studied since 2019. The review underscores the various contexts, participant groups, and methods, ultimately providing a comprehensive understanding of how WE and ELF have shaped language education practices. Moreover, this work is significant in identifying gaps in the literature and proposing directions for future research.

1.2. Research Questions

This review is guided by the following research questions:

RQ1: What common patterns can be identified in WE and ELF research in ELT between 2019 and 2024 in terms of geographical focus, participant type, educational context, and research methodology?

RQ2: What are the emerging trends and challenges in WE and ELF research within ELT contexts during this period?

2. METHOD

Language education is an area of ever-evolving research, and it is therefore crucial to keep up with the developments in the field to ensure that teaching practices, policies, and theories remain informed by the most up-to-date evidence. The dynamic nature of language use, accelerated by the rapid pace of globalisation and technological advancements, underscores the need for educators and researchers to constantly adapt their understanding of trends and innovations in the field. To understand the current state of knowledge on a specific topic, it is important to consider findings from multiple studies simultaneously. The most effective way of doing this is through a systematic review (Chalmers et al., 2024). For this reason, the method used in this systematic review involves selecting journals and articles based on inclusion and exclusion criteria that conform to the systematic review strategy outlined by Gough et al. (2012).

This study adopted a systematic literature review design. A systematic review was considered appropriate because the study aimed to identify, synthesise, and interpret recent patterns in WE and ELF research within ELT rather than examine a single empirical context. The review followed a transparent search, screening, selection, and synthesis process based on predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria.

2.1. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

The literature search was conducted in Scopus and the MLA Directory of Periodicals/MLA International Bibliography. These two sources were selected because Scopus provides broad international coverage of peer-reviewed research across education, applied linguistics, and the social sciences. At the same time, the MLA database offers field-specific coverage of research in language, linguistics, literature, and language education. However, the use of only two indices is acknowledged as a limitation, as relevant studies indexed elsewhere may not have been captured.

To ensure the high standard of this systematic review, the journal articles were limited based on the following inclusion criteria:

Table 2. The inclusion criteria

The studies’ publication date should be 2019 onward.
The studies should be written in English.
The studies should be peer-reviewed journal articles.
The journals should be indexed in Scopus and the MLA Directory of Periodicals.
The studies should focus exclusively on English language teaching (ELT).

To exclude irrelevant studies, exclusion criteria were also applied. Studies that fit the criteria below were excluded from this systematic review, as follows:

Table 3. The exclusion criteria

Studies published before 2019.
Studies not written in English.
Studies other than peer-reviewed journal articles, such as theses, dissertations, books, book chapters, opinion pieces, editorials, and other non-peer-reviewed materials.
Studies not focusing on English language teaching (ELT).
Studies not related to the context of World Englishes (WE) or English as a Lingua Franca (ELF).

After outlining the journal parameters and inclusion/exclusion criteria, the search for relevant studies was conducted using the following keywords: “World Englishes (WE) and English as a Lingua Franca (ELF)”, “World Englishes”, “English as a Lingua Franca (ELF)”, “World Englishes + ELT”, “English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) + ELT”, “World Englishes + Beliefs”, “English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) + Beliefs”. As a result of this filtering process, 30 studies were selected for analysis. Table 4 below illustrates the distribution of the selected studies according to the journals, and Table 5 illustrates the distribution of the selected studies according to the year of publication.

Table 4. Journal distribution of articles

Journal Names	Number of Articles
World Englishes	4
Asian Englishes	2
TESOL Quarterly	3
ELT Journal	2
RELJ Journal	2
Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development	2
Asia Pacific Journal of Education	1
Athens Journal of Philology	1
Asian Studies Review	1
EJAL	1
International Journal of Information and Education Technology	1
Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies	1
Journal of Language, Identity & Education	1
Language Awareness	1
MEXTESOL Journal	1
System	1
TESL-EJ	1
TESOL Journal	1
The Literacy Trek	1
The Reading Matrix	1
Changing English	1

Table 5. Year of publication distribution of articles

Years of Publication	Number of Publication
2019	8
2020	6
2021	2
2022	6
2023	4
2024	4

Note. N=30

As shown in Table 4, the largest number of selected studies was published in *World Englishes* (n = 4), followed by *TESOL Quarterly* (n = 3). Other journals, including *Asian Englishes* (n

= 2), *ELT Journal* (n = 2), *RELC Journal* (n = 2), and the *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development* (n = 2), also contributed to the review.

Upon reviewing the publication years of the studies, it is evident that interest in WE and ELF research has increased since 2019. Notably, 2019 (n=8) and 2020/2022 (n=6) had the highest number of publications, reflecting the growing attention to these paradigms in ELT research. At the time of this review, although the number of studies appears to have decreased over recent years, this does not necessarily indicate a decline in interest. Many studies were excluded because they did not meet the inclusion criteria. Additionally, some research may not have focused specifically on ELT but instead addressed secondary topics, such as English as a medium of communication or the cultural aspects of English.

2.2. Data Collection and Analysis

A review form was used in order to systematically analyse the selected studies for this review. The review form included the following key elements for analysis:

- Bibliographic Information: Journal, author(s), and year of publication.
- Research Context: The location of the study and the type of participants.
- Methodology: Research design (For example, qualitative, quantitative, mixed methods).
- Thematic Focus: Research aims, trends, and challenges related to WE and ELF.
- Key Findings and Recommendations: Summaries of results and future research suggestions.

To enhance the reliability and transparency of the review process, a structured review form was developed and used consistently across all selected studies. The form had previously been reviewed and refined by an expert in the field of ELT. Based on the expert feedback, additional categories, including thematic focus and recommendations for future research, were added to the form. In the present review, one independent reviewer conducted the content analysis of the selected studies, focusing on the aims, research questions, methodologies, findings, and pedagogical implications of each article. The studies were first examined descriptively, and then coded and categorised according to recurring patterns and themes. Although the use of a structured review form and expert feedback helped to strengthen the consistency and credibility of the analysis, the absence of a second coder means that inter-rater reliability could not be calculated. Therefore, the possibility of subjective interpretation is acknowledged as a methodological limitation of the study.

3. RESULTS

3.1. Breakdown of study context, education context and methodology in World Englishes and English as a Lingua Franca Research in ELT

To determine recent trends in World Englishes and English as a Lingua Franca research, 30 articles were selected and examined for this analysis based on their study contexts, educational

contexts, and methodologies. The countries where the studies were conducted, referred to as the study context, were classified into global regions, including Europe, Asia, the Americas, and Oceania. This categorisation is based on the regional divisions provided by the United Nations (United Nations Statistics Division, n.d.). Regarding educational contexts, the studies were grouped into in-service, pre-service, or student-centred categories, with additional focuses on curriculum, corpora, and coursebooks. Methodologically, the studies implemented qualitative, quantitative, or mixed approaches. An overview of these variables is presented in the figure below.

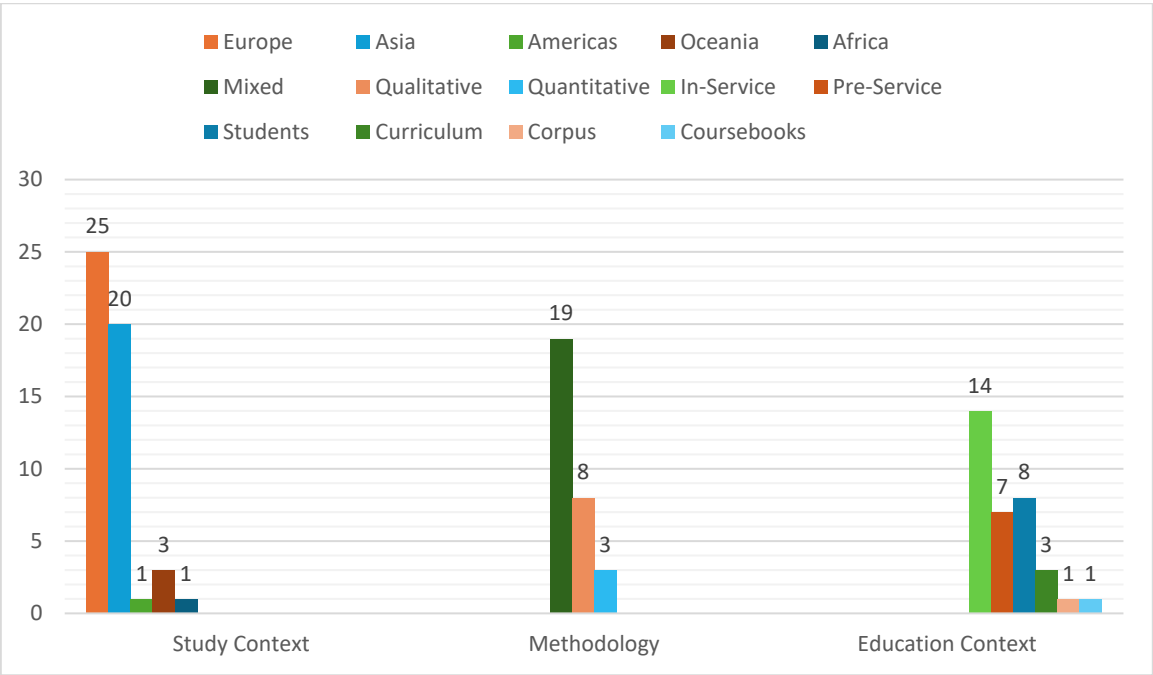


Figure 1. An overview of research trends in WE and ELF since 2019, categorised by study context, method, and education context.

N*: Number of context-mentions. Some studies included more than one geographical context; therefore, totals are not mutually exclusive.

According to Figure 1, the research was carried out mostly in Europe (25 studies), followed by Asia (20 studies). Fewer studies were conducted in other regions: 1 in the Americas, 3 in Oceania, and 1 in Africa. In terms of educational context, 14 studies focused on in-service teachers, followed by 7 on pre-service teachers; the rest focused on Students (n=8), Curriculum (n=3), Corpus (n=1), and Coursebooks (n=1).

As for the methodologies, most studies implemented a mixed-methods approach (n=19), integrating qualitative (n=8) and quantitative (n=3) methods. Quantitative data collection methods included surveys with Likert-scale items, pre- and post-test questionnaires, descriptive statistical analyses, and statistical processes such as ANOVAs and Tukey HSD tests. Specific techniques, such as the Verbal-Guise Technique (VGT), were used to assess attitudes toward native and non-native accents. Qualitative data collection, on the other hand, relied on semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, reflective journals, asynchronous personal narratives, and thematic analyses. Several studies incorporated instructional interventions, such as video-based writing tasks, online forums, and face-to-face discussions. They collected data from pre- and post-

intervention surveys, journal reflections, and group discussions. Comparative analyses of teaching materials, policies, and linguistic frameworks were also conducted, utilising both quantitative methods, such as frequency analysis of ELF-related elements, and qualitative analyses, such as examining linguistic and cultural inclusivity. Conceptual studies further evaluated WE/ELF paradigms, proposing new frameworks and pedagogical implications by synthesising prior research.

To delve more thoroughly into World Englishes and English as a Lingua Franca, Table 6 categorises the countries included in the study based on Kachru's (1985) model of the Three Circles of English. This model distinguishes between the Inner Circle, where English is a native language; the Outer Circle, where English is widely used as a second language; and the Expanding Circle, where English is primarily a foreign language.

Table 6. Categorisation of Countries Based on Kachru's Three Circles of English

Inner Circle	N*	Outer Circle	N*	Expanding Circle	N*
United Kingdom	3	Hong Kong	2	Asia	15
United States	3	Malaysia	1	Eastern Asia	8
Australia	3	Pakistan	1	South-eastern Asia	4
Total	9	South Africa	1	Central Asia	1
		India	1	Southern Asia	2
		Total	6	Europe	22
				Western Europe	14
				Eastern Europe	7
				Northern Europe	1
				Americas	1
				Latin America	1
				Total	38

N*: Number of the Studies

Table 6 provides a comprehensive understanding of the countries where the studies were conducted in accordance with Kachru's Three Circles of English model. This model divides countries into the Inner Circle, Outer Circle, and Expanding Circle based on their use of English.

To break this down even further, it can be observed that research in the Inner Circle, which represents countries where English is a native language, namely the United Kingdom, the United States, and Australia, where it is prominently featured, contributed to a total of nine studies. The small number of studies, only three per country, suggests that research on WE and ELF in these regions is less focused on, as English is already well embedded within the societies.

The Outer Circle includes six context mentions across Hong Kong, Malaysia, Pakistan, South Africa, and India. The number of studies conducted in these countries suggests growing academic interest in how English functions in these multilingual contexts.

The Expanding Circle, where the most studies were conducted, includes countries from various regions such as Asia, Europe, and Latin America. The countries in this category are classified as places where English is generally taught as a foreign language, and, based on the amount of research reported, it would not be erroneous to say that there is a clear, growing academic interest in the widespread use of English as a foreign language. Table 6 calls attention to the increasing focus on English as a global lingua franca, particularly in Expanding Circle contexts. This reinforces the ongoing significance of English in global communication and its evolving role in educational systems worldwide.

3.2. Thematic review of recent trends related to World Englishes and English as a Lingua Franca in English Language Teaching Research

Through the thematic analysis of 30 articles, the studies were grouped into five main themes, which are elaborated upon in the following sections.

3.2.1 Teachers' Knowledge, Beliefs, and Attitudes toward World Englishes and English as a Lingua Franca

When the areas of research are broken down, it can be observed that a significant number of studies focused on investigating the knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes of language teachers toward WE and ELF in various contexts (n=16). The main factor these studies aimed to investigate is how the teachers perceived the integration of WE and ELF in their classrooms and how these perceptions influenced their teaching practices. Across studies focusing on teacher beliefs and attitudes, a recurring pattern was the coexistence of theoretical openness to WE/ELF and continued attachment to native-speaker norms. Teachers generally recognised the importance of linguistic diversity, intercultural communication, and intelligibility; however, their classroom preferences often remained shaped by British or American English, assessment expectations, institutional norms, and perceived student needs (Ardıç Kıyak, 2021; Hamid et al., 2022; Lai, 2020; Tosuncuoğlu & Kırmızı, 2019). This pattern was visible across Turkish, Hong Kong, Cambodian, Colombian, and comparative Outer/Expanding Circle contexts.

An interesting aspect was identified by Kaçar (2021), who focused on how Turkish pre-service teachers' participation in the Comenius language assistantship program in Europe influenced their sociolinguistic perspectives on ELF and WE. The results concluded that participants developed inclusive pedagogical practices, shifted to ELF- and WE-aware perspectives, improved critical and creative thinking skills, and heightened intercultural awareness.

Focusing on perspectives from other Expanding Circle countries, where a common theme would be encompassed limited incorporation of ELF and WE frameworks in teacher education programs, Macías and Mosquera-Pérez (2024), for this reason, focussed on finding out how pre-service EFL teachers develop awareness and understanding of English diversity through ELF and WE perspectives. Their research found that participants revised dominant native-speaker beliefs, enhanced their understanding of global English diversity, and felt more confident in their identity as non-native English users. Similarly, Bon and Charubusp (2024) explored Cambodian EFL

teachers' attitudes toward ELF, WE, and their professional identities, and found that while teachers acknowledged the importance of English varieties, they still preferred native-speaker norms in teaching. Professional identities influenced attitudes, with non-native teachers leveraging shared cultural backgrounds as strengths.

From a pre-service perspective, Eslami et al. (2019) sought out the impact of experiential instructional activities on pre-service teachers' awareness, tolerance, and respect for WE. They reported that the activities were indeed beneficial in raising awareness and respect for WE. Students became more aware of diverse English norms, but some biases remained. Jeong et al. (2022) questioned the attitudinal tendencies of Spanish and Swedish pre-service teachers toward English as a Lingua Franca and what factors may contribute to their attitudes. The study concluded that both Spanish and Swedish pre-service teachers showed mixed attitudes towards ELF. Swedish participants exhibited more positive ELF orientation; however, Spanish participants were more NS-centric. Factors that influenced this included instructors' perspectives and prior international experience.

Research into Global Englishes Language Teaching (GELT) was carried out by Galloway and Numajiri (2020) in their study, which explored the feasibility of implementing GELT into TESOL curricula and how the teachers perceived it. The results showed that practitioners were positively inclined towards GELT but identified barriers like attachment to native norms, lack of resources, and assessment constraints.

From a comparative sense, Monfared (2022) chose to investigate teachers from Outer Circle (India, Malaysia, South Africa) and Expanding Circle (Iran, Türkiye) countries and sought to find the answer to how teachers perceived the relevance of WE in proficiency tests, as well as to what extent WE perspectives were adopted in language testing. The results showed that teachers supported WE in theory but expressed their resistance to its inclusion in tests due to concerns about fairness and practicality.

3.2.2. Learner Perspectives on World Englishes and English as a Lingua Franca

Across learner-focused studies, a common pattern was that learners became more receptive to diverse English varieties when they were exposed to Global Englishes- or WE-informed pedagogical interventions. However, learners' attitudes often remained shaped by perceived usefulness, intelligibility, professional identity, and the continuing prestige of native-speaker models.

The purpose of Kang and Ahn's (2019) study was to examine how Korean university students felt about using English for cross-cultural communication and what changes occurred in their opinions after receiving a treatment. The purpose of the study was to strengthen the students' understanding of various English dialects. It was found that students' opinions of English dialects had improved and that they were more receptive to a variety of English standards. Similarly, Chen (2022) sought to examine how an intervention oriented on the concept of Global Englishes affected learners' self-confidence as English users and their acceptance of English diversity. She

discovered that learners were more accepting of different English dialects and even acknowledged non-native speakers as role models.

Looking at these concepts from a Japanese context, Kim (2024) conducted their research in different Japanese universities and hoped to examine multilingual postgraduate students' attitudes towards English accents in an ELF context by questioning the way multilingual students perceive the different accents, whether they vary their accents by context, and the factors which may influence their accent attitudes. The study reported that the participants expressed a desire for native-like accents for intelligibility, but also recorded tolerance towards others' accents. Contextual use of accents, on the other hand, varied.

Studies that compare Outer Circle and Expanding Circle countries were also conducted, including one by Haidar and Fang (2019), which analysed the role of English in education in Pakistan and China and its connection to globalisation, language ideology, and identity. The study's findings indicated that opinions on English were mixed in Pakistan due to its association with colonial ideology. However, discussions on cultural identity were triggered in China by English's perception as a growing global language.

3.2.3. Implementation of World Englishes and English as a Lingua Franca in teaching practices

Studies focusing on classroom practice suggest that teachers' awareness of WE and ELF does not automatically translate into systematic pedagogical implementation. Although many teachers recognised the value of cultural diversity, intelligibility, and multilingual communication, their practices were often constrained by traditional norms, institutional expectations, student preferences, limited materials, and assessment pressures.

In a Turkish context, Ceyhan-Bingöl and Özkan (2019) analysed how EFL teachers perceived ELF and how it aligned with their teaching methods. They found that the majority of participants were aware of ELF, integrated cultural elements into their instruction, and it was observed that their classroom practise did in fact match the opinions which they had stated. In the same manner, Kemaloğlu-Er and Lowe (2023) sought to investigate how exposure to World Englishes (WE) and English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) influences language teacher identity and practices and concluded that teachers gained greater legitimacy and awareness of WE/ELF, but struggled to reconcile their traditional norms with new evolving identities as identity shifts require an internal negotiation and adaptation.

Looking at how Inner Circle countries view the integration of WE concepts, Sadeghpour and Sharifian's (2019) study is a useful reference, as it investigates English teachers' perceptions of the relevance of WE in ELT in Australia. It was found that teachers do, in fact, recognise WE but find practical integration challenging due to time, materials, and students' expectations.

A more nuanced look at teaching practices from a speech model perspective is provided by Dalman et al. (2023), who explored the relationships between teachers' countries of origin and their attitudes/perceptions of WE classroom speech models. In their study, they focused on four classroom speech models. Teachers' attitudes and preferences were found to be varied by country

of origin, with L2 models being less favoured than L1 and local accent models. Turkish teachers were found to be less inclined to prefer L1 models compared to Slavic and Chinese teachers.

Dewey and Pineda (2020) questioned the teachers' attitudes towards ELF and whether their teaching priorities evolve with such exposure, and whether ELF aligns with their pedagogical contexts. Teachers were found to have valued communicative success over accuracy, favouring experimentation and promoting L1 sociocultural identities.

3.2.4. Curriculum Design and WE/ELF Integration

Integration of WE and ELF into curriculum design is an under-researched area; however, the study by Matsuda (2019) is one example of research conducted in this area, in which the influence of WE studies on ELT and the introduction of the Teaching English as an International Language (TEIL) paradigm is explored. The study points out the need for acknowledging diverse English varieties in ELT and advocates for TEIL to prepare students for a more realistic and pluricentric English use.

Looking at a more focused view, Tsang (2019) proposes reconceptualising listening, speaking, and pronunciation instruction through globalised TESOL practices and sought to reveal how TESOL curriculum and pedagogy incorporate WE and ELF perspectives. The study identified a shift from standard accents to WE-informed goals for TESOL. The study also emphasised intelligibility over native-like pronunciation. Even so, the study additionally showed that there was a lack of practical guidance for teachers.

Sadeghpour and D'Angelo (2022) studied the compatibility of World English and Global English paradigms and their relevance to English pedagogy. The study questioned whether the two terms differed and overlapped or if they coexist as complementary frameworks in English studies, and the results showed that WE was indeed found to be focused on in pluricentric varieties while GE integrated WE with a broader lens, including ELF. The final impression was that the paradigms can coexist, but they require reconciling differing scopes and priorities.

Coursebook-focused studies also suggest a persistent mismatch between WE/ELF-oriented theoretical discussions and the actual representation of English in teaching materials. Guerra et al. (2022), for instance, analysed ELF-aware activities and cultural representations in Portuguese and Turkish EFL coursebooks and found that both sets of materials remained heavily reliant on native English varieties, with limited representation of non-native communication and intercultural diversity. Similarly, Lindqvist and Soler (2024) examined ELT textbooks used in Swedish upper-secondary schools. They found that standard Inner Circle varieties continued to dominate despite curricular emphasis on the global role of English. Together, these studies indicate that coursebooks remain a key site for the reproduction of native-speaker norms, even in contexts where policy and pedagogy increasingly acknowledge the need for more pluralistic representations of English. A different direction was taken in Laitinen's (2020) study, which focuses on integrated grammar related to ELF in terms of modal auxiliaries specifically, and the study recorded ELF as being shaped by evolutionary processes similar to established varieties

and focused attention on a distinct variability of patterns in ELF modal usage and genre-dependent differences.

3.2.5. Challenges in Adopting World Englishes and English as a Lingua Franca Frameworks

Across the reviewed studies, the main challenges to adopting WE- and ELF-informed frameworks were practical rather than purely theoretical. Teachers and researchers repeatedly identified limited pedagogical resources, lack of teacher training, exam-oriented expectations, parental preference for Standard English, and uncertainty about assessment criteria as barriers to implementation.

In their study, Choi and Liu (2020) concentrated on the challenges related to how teachers develop and implement ELF-aware practices, along with how teachers address challenges which may arise. The most notable challenges identified were a lack of pedagogical skills, insufficient materials, and parents' preference for Standard English. The study also highlighted some strategies, such as reflection, peer collaboration, and material sharing. Similarly, Shin and Walkinshaw (2023) also put their focus on the challenges of integrating WE into classrooms through exploring the awareness and attitudes of English teachers in terms of World Englishes. It was concluded that teachers valued WE despite expressing a preference for native English varieties (American/British) due to exam pressures and societal expectations. It was also noted that there is a lack of WE training and resources, which limits its implementation.

In their study, Leyi (2020) focused on how WE and ELF challenge traditional concepts of English education and the kind of adjustments necessary for teaching methods and assessment. The study highlighted an emphasis on intelligibility over native norms, a clear need for contextualised teaching and assessments, and the advantages of local bilingual teachers. In a similar manner, Irham and Huda (2023) studied the persistent reliance on nativelike norms in language assessment despite the global spread of ELF and World Englishes. They aimed to critique the traditional productive skill assessments and propose a more inclusive, ELF- and WEs-friendly alternative. To achieve this, the study sought to examine how assessment rubrics align with WEs and ELF principles, and whether there are alternative frameworks that could improve fairness in assessments. The study showed the existence of biases in current assessment rubrics towards native-like norms and advocated for intelligibility and communicative competence as core metrics.

3.3. Summary of Findings in Relation to the Research Questions

3.3.1. RQ1: What common patterns can be identified in WE and ELF research in ELT between 2019 and 2024 in terms of geographical focus, participant type, educational context, and research methodology?

The reviewed studies reveal several common patterns in WE and ELF research in ELT between 2019 and 2024. Geographically, the studies were concentrated mainly in European and Asian contexts, while Africa, Oceania, and the Americas were represented less frequently. In

terms of educational context, in-service teachers constituted the most frequently studied group, followed by pre-service teachers and learners; in contrast, curriculum, coursebooks, corpora, and assessment received comparatively less attention. Methodologically, mixed-methods designs were the most common, suggesting that researchers often combined quantitative attitude data with qualitative insights from interviews, reflections, observations, or document analysis.

3.3.2. RQ2: What are the emerging trends and challenges in WE and ELF research within ELT contexts during this period?

The review indicates that the most prominent trend is the growing recognition of linguistic diversity, intelligibility, intercultural communication, and the pedagogical relevance of WE and ELF. However, the main challenge remains the continued dominance of native-speaker norms, particularly British and American English, in teacher beliefs, learner expectations, materials, assessment practices, and institutional assumptions. The reviewed studies also show that the implementation of WE- and ELF-informed pedagogy is limited by practical barriers, including insufficient teacher training, limited pedagogical resources, exam-oriented expectations, parental preference for Standard English, and uncertainty about assessment criteria. Therefore, the reviewed literature suggests a continuing tension between theoretical acceptance of WE/ELF and practical dependence on native-speaker-centred models.

4. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE SUGGESTIONS

Across the studies reviewed, a consistent pattern emerges: while teachers and learners increasingly acknowledge the relevance of World Englishes (WE) and English as a Lingua Franca (ELF), native-speaker norms from Inner Circle countries, particularly those associated with British and American English, continue to hold considerable influence. This preference is visible in teacher and learner attitudes, instructional practices, course materials, and assessment-related expectations. Although many teachers recognise the importance of preparing students for global communication, their beliefs and classroom practices are often shaped by traditional native-speaker models. The findings suggest that this preference is closely linked to perceptions of intelligibility, practicality, prestige, and societal expectations. In many contexts, native norms are still viewed as providing learners with academic or professional advantages, even when teachers acknowledge the global and dynamic nature of English.

To address these issues, future research should examine how ELF and WE principles can be incorporated into teacher education and professional development programmes in more classroom-oriented ways. Rather than limiting WE- and ELF-informed pedagogy to theoretical discussion, teacher education could include microteaching with diverse English varieties, critical reflection on native-speaker bias, analysis of coursebook representations, lesson-design tasks using multilingual communication scenarios, and assessment practices that prioritise intelligibility and communicative effectiveness over native-like accuracy. Furthermore, a shift towards more inclusive pedagogical practice could be supported through collaborative platforms

where teachers share locally relevant materials, recordings of multilingual English interactions, ELF-aware classroom activities, and examples of assessment rubrics that reflect the realities of global English use.

The review also highlights several neglected areas in the literature. Research has predominantly focused on in-service teachers, while pre-service teachers, learners, curriculum design, coursebooks, corpora, and assessment have received comparatively less attention. Since teacher beliefs and pedagogical habits may become more difficult to change once teachers enter the profession, greater attention should be given to pre-service teacher education. Universities and teacher education programmes can play an important role in preparing future teachers to work with linguistically diverse models of English and to question native-speaker-centred assumptions from the beginning of their professional development.

The geographical distribution of the reviewed studies also points to important gaps. Although European and Asian contexts were strongly represented, Africa, Oceania, the Americas, and several Outer Circle contexts received less attention. Future research should therefore include a wider range of geographical settings to develop a more balanced understanding of how WE and ELF are perceived, taught, and implemented across diverse sociolinguistic and educational contexts. Further research on Inner Circle perspectives may also be useful, particularly regarding how teachers in traditionally native-English-speaking contexts understand WE, ELF, and the changing ownership of English.

Another important implication concerns the relationship between native-speaker norms and inclusive WE/ELF frameworks. Since native-like forms continue to be associated with prestige, intelligibility, and practical value in many contexts, future research should explore how these preferences can be critically balanced with more inclusive understandings of English. Rather than simply rejecting native-speaker norms, future studies may investigate how learners can be prepared to both understand widely recognised standard varieties and communicate effectively across diverse global contexts.

Finally, more attention should be given to the practical implementation of WE and ELF principles in curriculum and materials design. Coursebooks, lesson plans, listening materials, speaking tasks, and assessment rubrics that incorporate diverse English varieties and communication strategies can help teachers and learners engage with English as a global and dynamic language. Future research may therefore focus on how WE- and ELF-informed materials can be designed, used, and evaluated in real classroom contexts. Such developments would support learners in preparing for international communication while fostering a more inclusive approach to English language teaching.

The original contribution of this review lies in its synthesis of recent WE and ELF research specifically within ELT contexts. Rather than treating teacher beliefs, learner attitudes, teaching practices, curriculum, materials, and assessment as separate strands, the review integrates these areas. It shows that the central issue in the field is the gap between increasing awareness of linguistic diversity and the continuing practical dominance of native-speaker norms. In this

respect, the study provides a current map of WE- and ELF-related ELT research and identifies areas where further empirical, pedagogical, and materials-based work is needed.

4.1. Limitations of the Study

This study has several limitations. First, the review was limited to peer-reviewed journal articles published in English and indexed in Scopus and the MLA Directory of Periodicals/MLA International Bibliography; therefore, relevant studies published in other languages, in other databases, in books, in book chapters, in theses, or in conference proceedings may have been excluded. Second, the coding process also represents a limitation. Since the content analysis was conducted by a single reviewer, inter-rater reliability could not be established. Although a structured review form and expert feedback were used to increase consistency and transparency, future systematic reviews may benefit from including at least two independent coders to strengthen reliability and reduce the risk of subjective interpretation. Finally, because some studies included more than one geographical or educational context, the numerical distributions presented in the tables should be interpreted as indicators of general tendencies rather than strictly mutually exclusive categories.

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