PROFESORES DE ENSEÑANZA SECUNDARIA · INGLÉS · JUNTA DE EXTREMADURA

TEMA

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The Commonwealth. Cultural Diversity. The Development of Linguistic Varieties. Intercultural Influences and Manifestations. The Novels of E. M. Forster, D. Lessing and N. Gordimer

La Commonwealth. La diversidad cultural. El desarrollo de variedades lingüísticas. Influencias y manifestaciones interculturales. Las novelas de E.M. Forster, D. Lessing N. Gordimer.

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NOVIEMBRE DE 2026

Material de elaboración propia a partir de las fuentes oficiales que se citan al final del tema. No es un temario oficial ni sustituye a la normativa publicada.

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1. INTRODUCTION

"Only connect!" That was, in the words of E. M. Forster's *Howards End* (1910), "the whole of her sermon": "Only connect the prose and the passion, and both will be exalted." The phrase could stand as the motto of this topic. The Commonwealth is, at bottom, an attempt to connect peoples, languages and cultures that were once joined by empire and are now joined, in theory at least, by choice; and the three novelists I will study each ask, in a different continent and a different decade, whether such connection is possible.

I will first explain what the Commonwealth is: its origins, the London Declaration of 1949, its principles and its situation as of November 2026. Secondly, I will consider cultural diversity and intercultural influences. Thirdly, I will examine the development of linguistic varieties, from Kachru's three circles to Indian English and Singapore English. Then I will turn to the novels of E. M. Forster, Doris Lessing and Nadine Gordimer. Finally, I will explain the pedagogical and didactic implications of the topic and close with a conclusion.

Before moving on, I would like to mention the sources consulted. For the language I have used David Crystal's *English as a Global Language* (Cambridge University Press, second edition 2003) and Randolph Quirk and H. G. Widdowson's collective volume *English in the World: Teaching and Learning the Language and Literatures* (Cambridge University Press, 1985), which contains Braj Kachru's founding chapter on the outer circle. For vocabulary I have consulted Henry Yule and A. C. Burnell's *Hobson-Jobson*, the Anglo-Indian glossary of 1886. For the institutional facts I have relied on the website of the Commonwealth Secretariat, and for the novelists on the texts of Forster in Project Gutenberg and on the notes of the Nobel Foundation. The legal framework is the LOMLOE, Royal Decrees 217/2022 and 243/2022, and the Extremaduran Decrees 110/2022 and 109/2022, which I will detail in the didactic section.