

Integrating Koitaleel Samoei and Nandi resistance narratives into English language teaching: Alignment with Kenya's competency-based education and implications for UK universities

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ABSTRACT

This paper argues for integrating Koitaleel Samoei and Nandi resistance narratives into English language teaching (ELT) to operationalise Kenya's Competency-Based Education (CBE) goals, foster critical language awareness, cultural identity, and communicative competencies, and challenge colonial legacies embedded in traditional language pedagogy. This paper draws on Paulo Freire's critical pedagogy for ELT practice, arguing that students should engage with socio-political inequalities rather than learning English as neutral communication, to combat systemic biases in language teaching and validate diverse linguistic identities. Indigenous resistance narratives function as powerful instructional texts for developing communication, critical thinking, citizenship, and cultural competence espoused in competency-based education. The paper further explores implications for UK universities engaged in curriculum internationalization and decolonization initiatives. Koitaleel Samoei and Nandi Resistance narratives can be translated into UK university contexts to foster intercultural literacy and decolonial engagement from an English language teaching perspective. It contributes to curriculum scholarship by demonstrating how African resistance histories, especially those of Koitaleel Samoei, can be operationalized through English language teaching. Incorporating Koitaleel Samoei and Nandi resistance narratives into ELT will not only align with CBE's transformative educational vision, but also offer a model for globally responsive, critically engaged language education in higher education contexts.

Keywords: Koitaleel Samoei, Nandi resistance narratives, English language teaching, competency-based education, UK universities.

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INTRODUCTION

English language education today intersects well with questions related to identity, culture and power. In the Kenyan context, English remains a dominant educational language despite its colonial origin. Integrating Koitaleel Samoei and the Nandi resistance narratives in English language teaching within Kenya's Competency-Based Education (CBE) represents a paradigm shift from content-heavy, examination-driven instruction to learner-centred, competency-oriented education (KICD, 2017). English, as a core learning area, is positioned not merely as a linguistic subject but as a vehicle for communication, value

formation, and citizenship. However, despite CBE's emphasis on cultural identity and community relevance, English language materials often remain dominated by Eurocentric texts and colonial narratives.

The life and leadership of Koitaleel Samoei provides a culturally grounded and pedagogically rich resource for value-based English language instruction. Through reading historical texts, engaging in oral discussions and producing creative and reflective writing, learners can develop language skills together with critical thinking and civic awareness. Such integration enables English lessons

to move beyond linguistic competence to the cultivation of values and dispositions important for citizenship in a diverse and democratic society (MoE, 2017; Banks, 2015).

This paper argues that the inclusion of Koitaleel Samoei's story in English language classrooms supports CBE's holistic educational goals by simultaneously enhancing communicative competence and value education. Using indigenous historical narratives not only affirms learners' cultural identities but also provides meaningful contexts through which integrity, social justice and respect for human dignity can be taught, discussed and internalized. Using Koitaleel Samoei as a local leader in the Nandi resistance against British colonialism creates opportunities for learners to engage meaningfully with language while deepening understanding of historical identity.

This exploration asks how Koitaleel Samoei's story and resistance narratives can be integrated into English language teaching under Kenya's CBE and the implications of such culturally grounded ELT for UK university contexts. Looking at critical pedagogy in English language teaching, Paulo Freire (1970) outlines how literacy can be a tool for liberation rather than control. His ideas are highly influential in English Language Teaching (ELT) and also in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) because they reposition language education as a social, political and transformative practice, not just a technical skill. This insight is crucial in ELT because English has colonial histories, functions as a global economic gatekeeper, shapes access to mobility and opportunity and carries cultural and ideological power. Therefore, teaching English in TESOL without acknowledging these dimensions risks reproducing inequality. He encouraged identity-based approaches where learners negotiate cultural belonging and global citizenship. In classrooms, English language learning becomes connected to real-world engagements through community storytelling projects and analyzing political speeches, among others. Critical pedagogy emphasizes empowering learners to integrate historical power relations in language and culture, while multicultural education frameworks support the inclusion of diverse cultural narratives in the curriculum (Banks, 2015).

Research problem

Kenya's Competency-Based Education (CBE) emphasizes the development of competencies, values, critical thinking, communication, citizenship, and appreciation of cultural diversity through learner-centred pedagogies (KICD, 2019). However, English language teaching in many Kenyan schools continues to rely predominantly on Eurocentric texts and instructional materials with limited integration of indigenous historical narratives such as those of Koitaleel Samoei and the Nandi resistance. This disconnect limits opportunities for

learners to develop English language proficiency while simultaneously strengthening cultural identity, historical consciousness, and national values.

Scholars argue that language education should draw upon learners' sociocultural experiences to promote meaningful learning and intercultural competence (Cummins, 2001; Vygotsky, 1978). Similarly, postcolonial scholars contend that incorporating indigenous knowledge into curricula is essential for decolonizing education and challenging colonial epistemologies (Ngugi wa Thiong'o, 1986; Smith, 2021). Despite these perspectives, there remains limited empirical research on how Koitaleel Samoei and the Nandi resistance narratives can be systematically integrated into English language teaching in ways that align with Kenya's CBE.

Furthermore, there is little scholarship examining how these narratives could contribute to curriculum internationalization and decolonization efforts within UK universities, where increasing attention is given to inclusive curricula that represent diverse histories and voices (Arday and Mirza, 2018). This study explores how Koitaleel Samoei and Nandi resistance narratives can be integrated into English language teaching to support Kenya's CBE while offering insights for decolonizing English language education in UK higher education.

Research gap

Although there is growing scholarship on English Language Teaching (ELT), Competency-Based Education (CBE/CBC), and curriculum decolonization, important gaps remain regarding the pedagogical use of indigenous historical narratives in English language classrooms. For instance, existing studies on Koitaleel Samoei and the Nandi resistance have primarily examined these narratives from historical, political, and anti-colonial perspectives (Hollis, 1909; Matson, 1972; Ogot, 1976). Consequently, there is little research exploring their potential as pedagogical texts for developing English language skills such as reading, writing, speaking, listening, vocabulary, and critical literacy.

Secondly, while recent ELT scholarship advocates culturally responsive pedagogy, Global Englishes, translanguaging, and the decolonization of language education (Galloway and Rose, 2022; Garcia and Wei, 2021; Kubota, 2020; Motha, 2020), few studies have demonstrated how specific Kenyan indigenous historical narratives can be systematically integrated into English language pedagogy. Much of the literature discusses decolonization conceptually but offers limited classroom-oriented frameworks that translate these principles into curriculum and teaching practice.

Finally, although Kenya's Competency-Based Education (CBE/CBC) encourages contextualized learning, value education, and the use of culturally relevant content (KICD, 2017, 2019), there is limited evidence on how

indigenous resistance narratives can be deliberately aligned with the curriculum's core competencies, values, and learning outcomes. Existing studies rarely map such narratives onto competencies such as communication, critical thinking, creativity, citizenship, and self-efficacy. Despite increasing efforts by UK universities to decolonize curricula and internationalize English studies (Arday and Mirza, 2018; Bhambra et al., 2018), little comparative research examines how Kenyan indigenous narratives can contribute to these initiatives.

The potential of Koitaleel Samoei and the Nandi resistance narratives to enrich English language education, postcolonial literary studies, and intercultural learning in UK higher education remains underexplored. Therefore, this study addresses these interconnected gaps by developing a pedagogical framework for integrating Koitaleel Samoei and Nandi resistance narratives into English Language Teaching (ELT), demonstrating their alignment with Kenya's Competency-Based Education, and examining their broader implications for curriculum decolonization and internationalization in UK universities.

Research aim

The aim of this study is to explore how Koitaleel Samoei and Nandi resistance narratives can be integrated into English language teaching in ways that align with Kenya's Competency-Based Education and contribute to curriculum decolonization and internationalization in UK universities.

Research objectives

1. To examine the educational relevance of Koitaleel Samoei and Nandi resistance narratives in English language teaching.
2. To determine how these narratives support the competencies, values, and learning outcomes envisaged in Kenya's Competency-Based Education.
3. To explore pedagogical approaches for integrating Koitaleel Samoei and Nandi resistance narratives into English language classrooms.
4. To examine the implications of integrating Koitaleel Samoei and Nandi resistance narratives for decolonizing English language curricula in UK universities.

Research questions

1. What educational value do Koitaleel Samoei and Nandi resistance narratives have in English language teaching?
2. How do these narratives support the competencies and values promoted by Kenya's Competency-Based Education?

3. Which pedagogical approaches are most effective for integrating Koitaleel Samoei and Nandi resistance narratives into English language teaching?

4. What implications does the integration of Koitaleel Samoei and Nandi resistance narratives have for curriculum decolonization and English language teaching in UK universities?

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a qualitative desk-review (documentary) research design. The design is suitable because it enables the researcher to critically examine existing literature, curriculum documents, historical texts, and theoretical perspectives concerning the integration of indigenous narratives into English language teaching. Qualitative research facilitates an in-depth understanding of meanings, contexts, and interpretations associated with educational practices and curriculum reforms (Creswell and Poth, 2018).

Through documentary analysis, the study explored how Koitaleel Samoei and Nandi resistance narratives can support English language learning while advancing the goals of Kenya's Competency-Based Education (CBE) and informing decolonization efforts in UK higher education. The study was also informed by a postcolonial interpretive paradigm, which sought to challenge colonial representations of knowledge and promote the inclusion of marginalized voices in educational curricula (Said, 1978; Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, 1986).

Theoretical foundations for integrating indigenous narratives into English language teaching

The theoretical framework underpinning the study includes postcolonial and decolonial theories (Said, 1978; Spivak, 1988; Bhabha, 1994; Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, 1986) concerned with English language teaching and curriculum decolonization, the sociocultural theory of Vygotsky (1978) and the culturally responsive pedagogy framework (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Gay, 2018). The key analytical argument is that English should function not only as a language of global communication but also as a medium for representing African knowledge systems. Postcolonial theory supports reclaiming indigenous narratives as legitimate pedagogical resources in ELT.

Decolonial theory (Mignolo, 2011; Quijano, 2000) provides a lens for examining how colonial histories have shaped language education and curriculum content by supporting the inclusion of indigenous narratives as a means of reclaiming African knowledge systems and challenging Eurocentric dominance in English language teaching. On the other hand, the sociocultural theory of Vygotsky (1978) explains that language learning is socially mediated and culturally situated. Learners construct

meaning more effectively when instructional materials connect with familiar cultural experiences; therefore, in this perspective, Koitaleel Samoei's narrative provides authentic cultural contexts for developing English language skills.

Lastly, the culturally responsive pedagogy framework emphasizes the incorporation of learners' cultural backgrounds into teaching and learning processes while developing English proficiency. It supports the integration of Koitaleel Samoei narratives to enhance engagement, language development, critical thinking, and appreciation of cultural diversity. Together, these frameworks provide a comprehensive analytical lens that explains why indigenous narratives should be included, how learners can benefit from culturally grounded language instruction and also how teachers can effectively implement such narratives in classroom practice. The combined framework enables the study to evaluate the educational, cultural, and pedagogical significance of integrating Koitaleel Samoei and Nandi resistance narratives into English language teaching while examining their alignment with Kenya's CBE and relevance to curriculum decolonization in UK universities.

Koitaleel Samoei and the Nandi resistance as pedagogical texts

The concept of Koitaleel Samoei and the Nandi resistance as pedagogical texts views the history of the Nandi resistance not merely as a historical event but as an educational resource that promotes language learning, critical thinking, cultural identity and civic values. Grounding ELT in decolonial pedagogies encourages learners to critically analyze power structures embedded in language practices and content selection. This aligns with contemporary educational research advocating for curricula that reflect diverse cultural epistemologies through the use of English language as a tool for expressing local heritage and not merely Western norms.

In English language teaching (ELT), Koitaleel Samoei and Nandi resistance narratives can become texts that learners read, analyze, discuss and interpret to develop both linguistic competence and intercultural understanding. These texts can develop language skills when learners read historical narratives, speeches, biographies and oral traditions. They can practice listening through storytelling and oral histories. Speaking skills will develop through debates, presentations and role-plays. Writing skills will be enhanced through essays, reflective journals and creative writing.

To promote critical thinking, learners can examine questions such as how language shapes historical memory and why the Nandi resisted colonial rule, among others. These pedagogical texts can preserve indigenous knowledge by exposing learners to Nandi oral traditions, indigenous leadership systems, traditional conflict

resolution, cultural values and environmental stewardship (Janks, 2019). Using Koitaleel Samoei and Nandi resistance as pedagogical texts is a move from theory to application in demonstrating that English can decolonize English language teaching, make learning culturally relevant and meaningful and also serve as a medium for preserving and communicating African histories rather than only transmitting western perspectives.

Alignment with Kenya's competency-based education (CBE/CBC)

CBE's emphasis on nurturing confident, ethical, and engaged citizens resonates well with postcolonial calls to reclaim indigenous narratives in formal schooling. Koitaleel Samoei's narrative affirms indigenous leadership and agency that illustrates ethical decision-making and patriotism. It provides a context for critical engagement with colonial history. The betrayal and assassination of Koitaleel during peace negotiations raises ethical questions directly aligned with CBC values such as integrity, patriotism, responsibility, peace, unity, social justice, and respect for human dignity. Engagement with the narratives fosters these values through language learning tasks. The narratives can be explicitly mapped onto Kenya's CBE.

Classroom activities based on Koitaleel Samoei narratives can promote: communication and collaboration, critical thinking, creativity, citizenship, learning to learn, self-efficacy, and digital literacy. For instance, role-play promotes communication, debate fosters critical thinking, while digital storytelling promotes digital literacy. The narratives support inquiry learning, project-based learning, collaborative learning, task-based language teaching and experiential learning. This links naturally to CBE philosophy.

In CBE, integrity is linked to the values of ethics and moral responsibility, emphasizing honesty, trustworthiness and consistency in actions that learners are expected to demonstrate in school and community. CBE promotes learning experiences that enable learners to make ethical decisions, take responsibility for their actions, and uphold personal and communal values (MoE, 2017). Koitaleel Samoei demonstrated integrity through his unwavering commitment to defending his community against colonial oppression. He remained true to his principles, choosing to act in the best interests of the Nandi people despite great personal risk (Ochieng, 1990). He also fought for social justice and respected human dignity by resisting unfair colonial policies, including land grabbing and forced labour that threatened the well-being and rights of the Nandi people.

His actions illustrate a commitment to fairness, equity and the protection of community rights. From English language teaching, students can read texts about the Nandi resistance and identify how colonial injustices affect different people; they can also carry out debates on the

moral dimensions of colonial histories, and write reflective essays on resistance and identity or why it is important to fight injustice in society by drawing lessons from Koitaleel Samoei's leadership. Therefore, incorporating resistance narratives serves to reframe language learning as meaningful engagement rather than rote skill acquisition. It encourages critical thinking and gives learners access to counter-narratives to dominant colonial discourses.

Integrating resistance narratives supports the acquisition of competencies in English language teaching. For instance, comparative discourse analysis of colonial versus local historical figures will promote critical thinking competence, while reflective essays on land, governance and justice will promote citizenship. Such approaches align with competency-based assessment models that value performance and authentic tasks (Mulenga and Kabombwe, 2019).

This integration will move English language teaching beyond language acquisition towards critical citizenship, identity affirmation and transformative education. Ultimately, situating Koitaleel Samoei within a postcolonial and CBE framework transforms English language classrooms into spaces of historical recovery, ethical reflection and cultural affirmation. Such an approach not only enhances learners' communicative skills, but also contributes to the decolonization of knowledge by validating indigenous resistance narratives and empowering learners to engage critically with Kenya's colonial past and postcolonial present. Using local resistance histories, ELT exemplifies culturally responsive pedagogy by: making learning relevant, validating learners' cultural identities and encouraging community-linked inquiry (Gay, 2018) which CBE explicitly promotes through contextualized learning that is grounded in the learner's socio-cultural environment (KICD, 2017). Through analysis of colonial and indigenous accounts of the Nandi resistance, learners interrogate power, representation, and historical voice (Luke, 2012). Critical literacy strongly focuses on higher-order competencies using historical texts that provide rich vocabulary and contextual grammar.

Implications for English language teaching practice

Integrating Koitaleel Samoei's narratives into ELT requires curriculum developers to incorporate indigenous histories and oral traditions alongside canonical English texts. Such integration supports a decolonial curriculum that reflects Kenya's cultural diversity while maintaining English Language learning objectives. Bhabha (1994) supports decolonization of English language teaching by introducing the concepts of hybridity, cultural negotiation and identity formation useful for understanding how African historical narratives can coexist with English language education. Therefore, curriculum materials should include authentic texts, oral narratives, historical documents, and learner-centred activities that promote

language proficiency and critical literacy. Teacher education programmes should prepare pre-service and in-service English teachers to use indigenous narratives effectively in language classrooms.

This involves training in culturally responsive pedagogy, critical literacy, decolonial approaches to ELT, and strategies for integrating oral traditions into language instruction. Teachers also require skills in designing contextually relevant teaching materials and facilitating discussions on sensitive historical issues. Universities should strengthen collaborations with local communities and historians to ensure that teachers engage with authentic indigenous knowledge systems (Gay, 2018; Kumaravadivelu, 2021). In the classroom, the narratives provide meaningful contexts for developing listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. Teachers can use storytelling, debates, role plays, dramatization, project-based learning, and reflective writing to promote communicative competence. Learners may analyze historical speeches, compare oral and written narratives, conduct interviews with community elders, or produce digital storytelling projects in English. These activities foster critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, and intercultural competence while making English learning more relevant and engaging.

Despite their pedagogical value, several challenges may hinder the integration of Koitaleel Samoei's narratives into ELT. For example, limited availability of curriculum-approved teaching resources based on indigenous histories, inadequate teacher preparation in culturally responsive and decolonial pedagogies, and heavy examination-oriented practices that prioritize grammatical accuracy over critical engagement. There are time constraints within an already crowded curriculum, potential political or cultural sensitivities surrounding interpretations of colonial history and resistance, and limited institutional support for developing locally produced teaching materials and professional development opportunities. Addressing these challenges requires sustained investment in teacher professional development, curriculum reform, collaborative resource development, and supportive educational policies that recognize indigenous knowledge as a legitimate resource for English language learning.

Implications for UK universities

Koitaleel Samoei's narratives provide an opportunity to challenge Eurocentric approaches that have traditionally dominated English literature, history, and cultural studies. Incorporating indigenous African voices will encourage students to critically examine colonial narratives and their influence on language, literature and education, promote epistemic justice by recognizing indigenous knowledge systems as legitimate sources of scholarship, and support universities' commitments to equality, diversity, and inclusion by representing marginalized histories. Through these narratives, students learn that English can serve not

only as the language of colonialism but also as a medium for recovering suppressed histories and fostering critical dialogue.

Integrating Koitaleel Samoei's story transforms English from a discipline centred primarily on British literature into one that reflects the global use of English. Students should engage with African oral traditions, historical narratives, and postcolonial literature. The curriculum should reflect the multilingual and multicultural contexts in which English is used worldwide. Comparative studies between British imperial texts and African resistance narratives should encourage critical analysis of language, power, and identity so that students can gain a more balanced understanding of the historical relationship between Britain and its former colonies. This approach will prepare graduates to teach and use English in culturally diverse international contexts.

Studying Koitaleel Samoei's leadership and the Nandi resistance helps students develop intercultural competence by appreciating indigenous worldviews and cultural values, recognize multiple historical perspectives rather than accepting a single dominant narrative. It will help students to develop empathy through understanding the experiences of colonized communities and enhance critical intercultural communication skills required in multicultural classrooms and workplaces. Such learning aligns with UK universities' emphasis on producing globally aware graduates capable of working across cultures.

The study opens opportunities for collaborative research between UK and Kenyan universities through joint projects on decolonial education, English language teaching, indigenous knowledge, and postcolonial literature. There can also be collaborative curriculum development integrating African historical narratives into English education, and staff and student exchange programmes focusing on comparative colonial histories. It can include digital archiving and preservation of oral histories and indigenous cultural heritage, and co-authored publications that ensure equitable partnerships between African and UK scholars. These collaborations promote knowledge exchange while reducing unequal power relations that have historically characterized North-South academic partnerships.

CONCLUSION

This study has demonstrated that Koitaleel Samoei and the Nandi resistance narratives offer valuable pedagogical resources for English Language Teaching (ELT) in Kenya. Viewed through the lenses of postcolonial theory, sociocultural theory, culturally sustaining pedagogy, and Global Englishes, these narratives provide authentic, culturally relevant texts that support the development of learners' linguistic competence while fostering critical literacy, historical consciousness, and cultural identity.

Their integration into English language classrooms moves beyond the traditional reliance on Eurocentric texts, enabling learners to engage with local histories and indigenous knowledge systems through English.

The study further establishes that these narratives align closely with the principles of Kenya's Competency-Based Education (CBE/CBC). Classroom activities based on the narratives can promote communication and collaboration, critical thinking and problem-solving, creativity, citizenship, self-efficacy, and digital literacy while simultaneously nurturing values such as patriotism, integrity, social justice, respect, responsibility, and national unity. Thus, Koitaleel Samoei's story serves not only as historical content but also as a meaningful context for developing language proficiency and the competencies envisioned in the Basic Education Curriculum Framework.

The study also contributes to contemporary debates on decolonizing English language education. By positioning indigenous historical narratives as legitimate teaching resources, it challenges the dominance of Eurocentric literary traditions and supports a more inclusive and culturally responsive ELT curriculum. Furthermore, the study highlights the relevance of these narratives beyond Kenya, demonstrating their potential to enrich curriculum internationalization and decolonization initiatives in UK universities by broadening students' engagement with African histories, literatures, and epistemologies.

Nevertheless, it indicates that the successful integration of indigenous narratives into ELT requires supportive curriculum policies, appropriate teaching and learning resources, teacher preparation, and sustained collaboration among educators, curriculum developers, historians, and language specialists. Addressing these needs will help ensure that English language teaching contributes not only to linguistic competence but also to culturally responsive, equitable, and globally relevant education.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study makes the following recommendations:

1. Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD)

The Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development should systematically integrate indigenous historical narratives, including Koitaleel Samoei and the Nandi resistance, into English language curriculum designs, textbooks, readers, and teachers' guides. Such integration should explicitly align with the competencies and values outlined in the Competency-Based Education framework.

2. Teachers and teacher education institutions

Teacher education programmes should strengthen pre-

service and in-service training in culturally responsive pedagogy, critical literacy, Global Englishes, and decolonial approaches to English language teaching. Teachers should also be equipped to use storytelling, drama, debates, project-based learning, and digital storytelling to facilitate competency-based learning.

3. Schools

Schools should encourage interdisciplinary learning by linking English language teaching with History, Social Studies, and Creative Arts. Learners should engage with indigenous narratives through authentic classroom activities that develop listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills while promoting critical thinking and ethical reasoning.

4. Curriculum developers and publishers

Curriculum developers and educational publishers should produce culturally relevant English language materials that incorporate Kenyan historical narratives, oral traditions, biographies, folktales and community knowledge. These resources should reflect Kenya's linguistic and cultural diversity while maintaining high pedagogical standards.

5. UK universities

UK universities should expand efforts to decolonize English language and literature curricula by incorporating African resistance narratives and other indigenous knowledge systems into teaching and research. Comparative studies involving Kenyan and British historical experiences can enhance intercultural competence, global citizenship, and critical engagement with colonial histories.

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