

Decolonising English Language Teaching through Indigenous Knowledge

Integration: Evidence from Teachers' Perceptions in Public Secondary Schools in Oyo West Local Government Area, Oyo State

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Abstract

This study investigated teachers' adoption of decolonising English Language Teaching (ELT) through the integration of Indigenous Knowledge Systems in public secondary schools in Oyo West Local Government Area, Oyo State. The study adopted the descriptive research design. The population comprised Senior Secondary School II (SS II) English Language teachers in public secondary schools within the study area. Twenty public secondary schools were selected through simple random sampling, after which two SS II English Language teachers were randomly selected from each school, yielding a sample of 40 teachers. Data were collected using the Teachers' Decolonising English Language Teaching Questionnaire (TDELTQ), which was subjected to face and content validation by experts in English Language Education. The internal consistency reliability of the instrument was established using Cronbach's alpha ($r = 0.78$). Data were analysed using frequency counts, percentages, mean, standard deviation, and an independent samples t-test at the 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that teachers reported a high level of adoption of decolonising English Language Teaching practices through Indigenous Knowledge integration. The study also found no statistically significant difference between male and female teachers' adoption of decolonising ELT practices ($t(38) = -0.96, p = .342$). The study concludes that teachers demonstrate a favourable disposition towards

integrating Indigenous Knowledge into English Language Teaching; however, sustained institutional support is required to strengthen implementation. It was therefore recommended that educational authorities redesign English Language curricula to systematically incorporate Indigenous Knowledge Systems, culturally relevant content, and multilingual pedagogical approaches.

Keywords: Decolonisation, English Language Teaching, Indigenous Knowledge Systems, Literacy Development

Introduction

English instruction in Nigeria has its roots in colonial epistemologies that have traditionally marginalized and delegitimised local linguistic and cultural frameworks while favoring Western knowledge systems (Makoni & Pennycook, 2007; Phillipson, 1992). English was institutionalised as an ideological tool of power, social stratification, and cognitive orientation as well as a medium of teaching as a result of British colonial control. Because of this historical positioning, English has maintained its hegemonic position in Nigeria's educational system even in the

postcolonial era, frequently serving as the main gatekeeper to participation in international knowledge economies, academic success, and social mobility (Banda, 2023; Noutchie, 2025). The continued use of English as the primary language of instruction despite decades of independence is indicative of larger global linguistic inequalities that favor urban languages over indigenous ones. This issue, which emphasises how linguistic imperialism perpetuates uneven power relations between the Global North and South, has been thoroughly theorised within postcolonial and World Englishes scholarship (Phillipson, 1992; Makoni & Pennycook, 2007). These hierarchies are evident in Nigerian classroom practices,

where students, regardless of their linguistic backgrounds or life experiences, are frequently expected to think, write, and express complex cognitive processes only in English.

English-only pedagogies frequently alienate students from their cultural and cognitive realities, which limits comprehension, creativity, and meaningful engagement, according to recent scholarship that has increasingly questioned the monolingual orientation of English Language Teaching (ELT) (Deutschmann et al., 2024; Ajani et al., 2024). The imposition of English as the only language of instruction causes a substantial gap between learners' home languages and school language practices in multilingual African contexts like Nigeria, where more than 500 indigenous languages coexist (Sanni et al., 2025). In addition to impairing cognitive accessibility, this gap also leads to student anxiety, decreased engagement, and poor performance in language and content courses.

From a sociolinguistic standpoint, this circumstance exemplifies what has been called "subtractive bilingualism," in which learning English frequently happens at the expense of native language development rather than in tandem with it (Banda, 2023). As a result, students may become academically functionally excellent in English while also losing their linguistic identities and cultural foundation. The long-term effects of ELT methods on identity formation, epistemic fairness, and cultural sustainability in postcolonial nations have prompted serious concerns. The decolonisation of English Language Teaching (ELT) is a transformative pedagogical agenda that aims to challenge Eurocentric epistemologies and re-center indigenous knowledge systems within classroom practice in response to these challenges (Ajani, 2025; Noutchie, 2025). Decolonising ELT asks for a critical rethinking of how English is taught, learnt, and contextualized in ways that affirm local knowledge systems, multilingual realities, and culturally responsive pedagogies rather than rejecting English as a universal language.

In today's educational discourse, Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS), which are defined as locally produced and culturally embedded bodies of knowledge transmitted through language, practice, and lived experience, are becoming more widely acknowledged as important pedagogical resources (Ajani et al., 2024; Hoppers, 2022). These knowledge systems, which have supported African communities for many generations, include oral traditions, proverbs, storytelling techniques, ecological knowledge, moral philosophies, and community-based epistemologies. Thus, including IKS into ELT offers a culturally based framework for language acquisition that improves meaning-making and relevance.

According to empirical research done in many African educational settings, incorporating Indigenous Knowledge Systems into English language instruction has major educational advantages. These include increased vocabulary retention, better reading comprehension, better learner engagement, and more robust student identity development (Banda,

2023; Ajani, 2025). Additionally, by fostering inclusive classrooms where students may make significant connections between English language content and their sociocultural surroundings, culturally responsive ELT approaches have been demonstrated to lessen linguistic anxiety. Furthermore, including IKS into ELT is in line with international calls for epistemic equity in education, which support the acknowledgment and incorporation of other knowledge systems in pedagogical practice and curricular design. Teachers can create more equitable learning settings that challenge past patterns of marginalization and exclusion by situating indigenous knowledge as a legitimate and useful resource inside English language classrooms.

Decolonising English language instruction in Nigeria is both an ethical and pedagogical requirement. It advocates for a change from inflexible, Eurocentric teaching practices to more linguistically pluralistic, inclusive, and culturally sensitive methods. Teachers can enhance language learning outcomes and support the larger initiative of cultural

revitalisation, identity affirmation, and educational transformation in postcolonial African countries by incorporating Indigenous Knowledge Systems into ELT methods.

Statement of the Problem

English Language Teaching (ELT) in Nigeria continues to be predominantly influenced by colonial epistemologies that privilege Western linguistic norms while marginalising Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) and learners' sociocultural realities. Although English serves as the official language of instruction, most learners operate within multilingual communities where indigenous languages and cultural knowledge shape everyday communication and learning experiences. Consequently, classroom practices often remain disconnected from learners lived realities, making English language instruction culturally alienating, cognitively restrictive, and less meaningful. This disconnect contributes to persistent challenges such as low learner motivation, inadequate vocabulary development, poor reading comprehension, and underachievement in

English language learning. Beyond its pedagogical implications, the continued exclusion of Indigenous Knowledge Systems from English language instruction perpetuates epistemic injustice by devaluing indigenous ways of knowing and limiting learners' opportunities for cultural expression, identity development, and equitable participation in classroom discourse. Although scholars increasingly advocate decolonial and culturally responsive pedagogies as viable alternatives to Eurocentric teaching approaches, evidence regarding the extent to which these approaches are reflected in teachers' classroom practices within Nigerian secondary schools remains limited. Consequently, monolingual and Eurocentric instructional practices continue to dominate English language classrooms despite the multilingual realities of Nigerian learners. This study therefore addressed the need to examine teachers' adoption of decolonising English Language Teaching practices through the integration of Indigenous Knowledge Systems in public secondary schools in Oyo West Local Government Area, Oyo State. Understanding teachers' perceptions

and reported practices is essential because teachers serve as the primary agents responsible for translating curriculum policies into classroom instruction and for determining the extent to which culturally responsive pedagogies are implemented.

Research Gap

The present study addresses the following research gaps:

1. **Empirical Gap:** While previous studies have extensively discussed decolonising education conceptually, relatively few empirical studies have examined teachers' adoption of Indigenous Knowledge integration in English Language Teaching within Nigerian secondary schools using quantitative survey data.
2. **Contextual (Regional) Gap:** Existing Nigerian studies have largely focused on broader national issues or other geographical locations, with limited empirical evidence from Oyo West Local Government Area. Oyo West represents a linguistically and culturally rich educational context where English coexists with Yoruba

and other indigenous languages. Investigating teachers' perceptions within this setting provides context-specific evidence that may differ from findings reported in other regions and contributes to a more nuanced understanding of decolonising ELT across diverse Nigerian contexts.

3. **Theoretical Gap:** Much of the literature emphasises curriculum reform and policy advocacy while paying comparatively less attention to teachers' perceptions and classroom readiness, which are critical determinants of successful implementation. Examining teachers' perceptions provides empirical support for decolonial theory by demonstrating the extent to which its principles are reflected in actual instructional practices.

By addressing these empirical, contextual, and theoretical gaps, this study contributes evidence on teachers' adoption of Indigenous Knowledge integration in English Language Teaching and provides insights that can inform curriculum reform, teacher education, and policy

initiatives aimed at promoting culturally responsive and inclusive English language instruction in Nigeria.

Research Objectives

The study sought to:

1. determine the level of teachers' adoption of decolonising English Language Teaching through the integration of Indigenous Knowledge Systems in public secondary schools in Oyo West Local Government Area, Oyo State.
2. determine whether there is a significant difference between male and female teachers in their adoption of decolonising English Language Teaching through the integration of Indigenous Knowledge Systems.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the level of teachers' adoption of decolonising English Language Teaching through the integration of Indigenous Knowledge Systems in

public secondary schools in Oyo West Local Government Area, Oyo State?

2. Is there a difference between male and female teachers in their adoption of decolonising English Language Teaching through the integration of Indigenous Knowledge Systems?

Hypothesis

The following null hypothesis was tested at the 0.05 level of significance:

H₀₁: There is no statistically significant difference between male and female teachers in their adoption of decolonising English Language Teaching through the integration of Indigenous Knowledge Systems in public secondary schools in Oyo West Local Government Area, Oyo State.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant because it contributes to the growing body of literature on decolonising English Language Teaching (ELT) by providing empirical evidence on teachers' adoption of Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) in public secondary schools in Oyo West

Local Government Area, Oyo State. The findings extend the discourse on decolonial and culturally responsive pedagogies by highlighting the extent to which English language teachers integrate indigenous knowledge into their instructional practices within a multilingual educational context. The study is expected to benefit English language teachers by increasing awareness of the importance of incorporating learners' indigenous languages, cultural experiences, oral traditions, proverbs, and other locally relevant resources into English language instruction. The findings may also encourage teachers to adopt culturally responsive and translanguaging pedagogical approaches that make classroom instruction more relevant and inclusive.

For curriculum developers and educational policymakers, the study provides empirical evidence that can inform the review and implementation of English language curricula to better reflect Nigeria's multilingual and multicultural realities. The findings may support policies that promote the integration of Indigenous

Knowledge Systems into English language education and strengthen efforts toward decolonising the curriculum. The study is equally significant to teacher education institutions and professional development providers. It provides insights that can guide the design of pre-service and in-service teacher training programmes aimed at equipping English language teachers with the knowledge and pedagogical competencies required to implement culturally responsive and decolonial teaching practices effectively.

To researchers and scholars, the study contributes to the existing literature by providing context-specific evidence from Oyo West Local Government Area, an area where empirical studies on teachers' adoption of Indigenous Knowledge integration in English Language Teaching are limited. It also provides a useful reference for future studies on decolonising education, culturally responsive pedagogy, multilingual education, and Indigenous Knowledge Systems in Nigeria and similar multilingual contexts. Ultimately, the study contributes to ongoing efforts to

promote a more inclusive, culturally relevant, and equitable English language education system by providing evidence that can guide educational practice, curriculum reform, teacher preparation, and future research on decolonising English Language Teaching in Nigeria.

Literature Review

Decolonising English Language Teaching

Decolonising English Language Teaching (ELT) is conceptualised in recent research as a critical and transformative pedagogical approach that aims to challenge the persistent epistemic dominance ingrained in educational systems and undermine long-standing colonial language hierarchies (Oukouomi Noutchie, 2025; Bainazarov et al., 2022). Fundamentally, this method challenges the ideological presumptions that establish Western linguistic and cultural norms as globally superior and challenges the historical preference for English as the only acceptable medium of instruction. Therefore, decolonising ELT entails a thorough rethinking of knowledge

creation, classroom interaction, and linguistic authority in addition to curriculum reform. It entails reframing students as active co-creators of meaning whose life experiences, cultural backgrounds, and linguistic repertoires are crucial to the learning process rather than as passive users of pre-packaged language knowledge. In this way, knowledge is not set and imposed from the outside, but rather dialogic, situational, and socially created.

The intentional affirmation and integration of regional linguistic practices into classroom teaching is a fundamental aspect of decolonised ELT. This entails acknowledging indigenous languages as valid tools for creating meaning rather than viewing them as obstacles that must be removed. By doing this, the method challenges the long-standing deficit assumptions that have traditionally linked multilingualism in African contexts to linguistic deficiency rather than cultural and cognitive richness. Additionally, the monolingual English-only beliefs that have historically influenced language instruction in postcolonial educational

systems are openly rejected by decolonizing ELT. Rather, it encourages translanguaging techniques that let students easily use their entire language repertoires to improve understanding, expression, and critical thinking, and it welcomes linguistic variety as an educational asset (Deutschmann et al., 2024). Within this framework, language learning is no longer confined to rigid boundaries between “target language” and “home language,” but is understood as an integrated and dynamic communicative process.

Furthermore, decolonized ELT is in line with more general theoretical and ethical commitments to epistemic justice, which demand that marginalized knowledge systems be acknowledged, included, and given legitimacy within formal educational frameworks (Sanni et al., 2025). According to this viewpoint, oral traditions, indigenous knowledge systems, and culturally ingrained methods of knowing are essential to meaningful educational engagement rather than incidental or supplemental. Their incorporation into ELT challenges the

long-standing dominance of Eurocentric knowledge frameworks and promotes a fairer distribution of epistemic authority. Decolonising English language instruction ultimately signifies a change in both pedagogy and ideology. It aims to make classrooms inclusive places where students are empowered to negotiate meaning across many knowledge systems, language plurality is valued, and cultural identity is respected. In doing so, it contributes to the broader project of educational transformation in postcolonial societies by fostering more responsive, equitable, and culturally grounded language education practices.

Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS)

Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) are generally believed to be dynamic, context-specific, and socially embedded knowledge bases derived from local people's cultural practices, histories, and lived experiences (Ajani et al., 2024; Hoppers, 2022). IKS are usually passed down through oral traditions, community involvement, and intergenerational interaction, in contrast to formal Western knowledge systems that are frequently

formalized, abstract, and institutionally standardized. They have their roots in people's daily lives and are influenced by how they interact with their social, cultural, spiritual, and physical surroundings.

Storytelling, folktales, myths, proverbs, riddles, songs, rituals, and indigenous languages are just a few of the many epistemic resources that make up these knowledge systems. These resources serve as crucial means of transmitting moral, social, and intellectual values as well as maintaining cultural memory. Furthermore, IKS incorporates advanced ecological and environmental knowledge systems that direct community health-related behaviors, agricultural practices, weather forecasting, and natural resource management. These knowledge forms represent intricate cognitive structures that have been formed over centuries of observation, experimentation, and adaptation; they are by no means informal or unsystematic.

Previous assumptions that depicted Indigenous Knowledge Systems as static, pre-modern, or inferior to Western

scientific paradigms are progressively being challenged by contemporary study. Rather, new research highlights that IKS are intrinsically dynamic and constantly altering in response to shifting socioeconomic circumstances, technological breakthroughs, and external factors (Ajani et al., 2024). The ways indigenous people interact with modernity, such as digital technologies, urbanisation, and international communication networks, while preserving fundamental cultural epistemologies are a prime example of this adaptive ability.

In this sense, as Indigenous Knowledge Systems engage with modern pressures like globalisation and digital revolution, they are not only surviving but also changing. For instance, indigenous languages and oral traditions are becoming more widely known and relevant in contemporary knowledge ecosystems as a result of their increased documentation, digitisation, and dissemination via internet platforms. This development shows that IKS are dynamic systems of knowledge that continue to produce meaning and value in contemporary circumstances

rather than being artifacts of the past. The potential of IKS to advance inclusivity, cultural sustainability, and epistemic diversity makes it relevant to modern educational institutions. In postcolonial educational settings such as Nigeria, integrating IKS into formal curricula offers an opportunity to bridge the gap between learners' home cultures and school-based knowledge, thereby enhancing comprehension and engagement. It also provides a culturally responsive framework for teaching and learning that validates students' identities and lived experiences.

Indigenous Knowledge Integration in ELT

A purposeful and methodical pedagogical approach that integrates culturally situated knowledge systems, linguistic resources, and community-based experiences into the teaching and learning of English is known as Indigenous Knowledge Integration in English Language Teaching (ELT) (Banda, 2023; Ajani, 2025). This method places English inside learners' sociocultural reality rather than treating it as an isolated or decontextualised

linguistic system, making language learning more relevant, relatable, and cognitively accessible. By incorporating local knowledge forms into language pedagogy, Indigenous Knowledge Integration in ELT essentially aims to close the gap between learners' home contexts and formal classroom instruction. This integration acknowledges that learners do not enter the classroom as "blank slates," but as active participants already equipped with rich linguistic repertoires and cultural understandings that can support second language acquisition.

A key dimension of this approach is the use of translanguaging and code-switching practices. These strategies allow learners to draw flexibly on their full linguistic resources, including indigenous languages and English, to construct meaning, interpret texts, and engage in classroom discourse. Far from being viewed as interference, code-switching is increasingly recognised as a legitimate cognitive and communicative resource that enhances understanding and promotes deeper engagement with learning

materials. Another important element is the incorporation of indigenous proverbs, folktales, myths, and oral narratives into ELT instruction. These culturally embedded forms of expression not only enrich vocabulary development and comprehension skills but also provide learners with familiar cognitive frameworks through which abstract grammatical and semantic concepts can be better understood. Proverbs, in particular, serve as concise carriers of wisdom and cultural logic, making them effective tools for teaching figurative language, inference, and critical thinking.

Methodology

The study adopted the descriptive research design to investigate teachers' adoption of decolonising English Language Teaching (ELT) through the integration of Indigenous Knowledge Systems in public secondary schools in Oyo West Local Government Area, Oyo State, Nigeria. The population comprised all Senior Secondary School II (SS II) English Language teachers in public secondary schools in Oyo West Local Government Area. Twenty public secondary schools were

selected using a simple random sampling technique. Thereafter, two SS II English Language teachers were randomly selected from each school, resulting in a sample size of 40 teachers. Data were collected using a researcher-developed instrument titled Teachers' Decolonising English Language Teaching Questionnaire (TDELTQ). The questionnaire consisted of two sections. Section A elicited respondents' demographic information, including gender, age, teaching experience, and educational qualification. Section B comprised 15 items measuring teachers' adoption of decolonising English Language Teaching practices through the integration of Indigenous Knowledge Systems. The instrument employed a 4-point Likert rating scale consisting of Strongly Agree (SA = 4), Agree (A = 3), Disagree (D = 2), and Strongly Disagree (SD = 1). A criterion mean of 2.50 was used as the benchmark for decision-making. Mean scores of 2.50 and above indicated a high level of adoption, while mean scores below 2.50 indicated a low level of adoption. The questionnaire items were developed following an extensive review of literature on decolonising

education, culturally responsive pedagogy, Indigenous Knowledge Systems, and English Language Teaching. To establish face and content validity, the instrument was subjected to expert review by two specialists in English Language Education, who assessed the relevance, clarity, and appropriateness of the items. Their observations and recommendations were incorporated into the final version of the instrument. A pilot study was conducted using 20 English Language teachers from public secondary schools that were not included in the main study. The data obtained from the pilot study were analysed using Cronbach's alpha to determine the internal consistency reliability of the instrument. The analysis yielded a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of

0.78, indicating that the instrument possessed acceptable internal consistency and was suitable for the study. Data collected were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Frequency counts, percentages, mean, and standard deviation were used to answer the research question on the level of teachers' adoption of decolonising English Language Teaching, while an independent samples t-test was employed to test the null hypothesis on the difference between male and female teachers at the 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question One: What is the level of teachers' decolonising English Language teaching?

Table 1: The Level of Teachers' Decolonising English Language Teaching

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	St. D.
1	I incorporate learners' cultural backgrounds into my English language teaching.	20 (50%)	17 (42.5%)	3 (7.5%)	-	3.42	.635
2	I encourage the use of indigenous languages to support English	12	19 (47.5%)	6	3	3.00	.877

	language learning.	(30%)	)	(15%)	(7.5%)		
3	I use examples and materials that reflect local cultural contexts.	21 (52.5%))	18 (45%))	1 (2.5%))	-	3.50	.554
4	I allow students to express ideas using both English and their native languages.	20 (50%)	19 (47.5%))	-	1 (2.5%)	3.45	.638
5	I integrate indigenous proverbs, stories, or oral traditions into my lessons.	20 (50%)	17 (42.5%))	2 (5%)	1 (2.5%)	3.40	.708
6	I view students' linguistic diversity as a resource rather than a challenge.	17 (42.5%))	11 (27.5%))	3 (7.5%))	9 (22.5%))	2.90	1.194
7	I adapt my teaching methods to reflect learners' sociocultural realities.	13 (32.5%))	19 (47.5%))	4 (10%)	4 (10%)	3.02	.919
8	I challenge the exclusive use of English in the classroom when necessary.	24 (60%)	16 (40%)	-	-	3.60	.496
9	I promote classroom discussions that connect English content to local experiences.	24 (60%)	16 (40%)	-	-	3.60	.496
10	I design activities that reflect real-life situations within students'	22 (55%)	11 (27.5%)	2 (5%)	5 (12.5%)	3.25	1.031

	communities.		)		)		
11	I encourage critical thinking about cultural perspectives in language use.	19 (47.5%))	17 (42.5%))	2 (5%)	2 (5%)	3.32	.797
12	I use translanguaging strategies to enhance students' understanding.	21 (52.5%))	18 (45%))	-	1 (2.5%)	3.47	.640
13	I recognise and value indigenous knowledge as part of language learning.	20 (50%))	11 (27.5%))	4 (10%))	5 (12.5%))	3.15	1.051
14	I create an inclusive classroom environment that respects all linguistic backgrounds.	20 (50%))	15 (37.5%))	2 (5%)	3 (7.5%)	3.30	.882
15	I integrate culturally relevant content into reading and writing tasks.	21 (52.5%))	13 (32.5%))	4 (10%)	2 (5%)	3.32	.858
	Standard Mean = 2.50;					3.31	
	Weighted Mean=						

Decision Rule: Responses were measured on a 4-point Likert scale: Strongly Agree (SA = 4), Agree (A = 3), Disagree (D = 2), and Strongly Disagree (SD = 1). The benchmark (criterion) mean of 2.50 was obtained by dividing the sum of the scale values by the number of response

categories: Mean scores of 2.50 and above indicate a high level of teachers' adoption of decolonising English Language Teaching, while mean scores below 2.50 indicate a low level of adoption.

Criterion Mean = 2.50; Grand Mean = 3.31; Grand Standard Deviation = 0.79.

Table 1 presents the descriptive analysis of teachers' responses on the level of decolonising English Language Teaching (ELT). The overall weighted mean score of 3.31, which is significantly above the benchmark mean of 2.50, indicates a high level of adoption of decolonising ELT practices among the respondents. A closer examination of the item means reveals that teachers demonstrate strong alignment with culturally responsive pedagogies. Items such as challenging the exclusive use of English ($\bar{x} = 3.60$), promoting classroom discussions linked to local experiences ($\bar{x} = 3.60$), and using culturally relevant materials ($\bar{x} = 3.50$) recorded the highest mean scores, suggesting that teachers actively integrate learners' sociocultural contexts into instruction. Similarly, high mean values for translanguaging practices ($\bar{x} = 3.47$) and allowing bilingual expression ($\bar{x} = 3.45$) indicate a growing acceptance of multilingual strategies in classroom practice. However, some variability is observed in areas such as viewing linguistic diversity as a resource ($\bar{x} = 2.90$) and adapting teaching methods to

sociocultural realities ($\bar{x} = 3.02$), as reflected in relatively higher standard deviations. This suggests that while the general trend is positive, there are inconsistencies in the depth of teachers' understanding and application of decolonising principles. The findings implies that teachers are increasingly embracing decolonised and culturally grounded approaches to ELT, particularly in terms of integrating local content and promoting inclusive classroom interactions. Nonetheless, the variation across certain items highlights the need for sustained professional development to deepen teachers' conceptual clarity and ensure more consistent implementation of decolonising pedagogies across classrooms.

Research Question Two: What is the difference between male and female teachers' decolonising English Language Teaching?

Showing t-test analysis of the difference between male and female teachers' decolonising English Language Teaching

Gender	N	Mean	Std.D	T	df	Sig.	Remark
Male	17	63.06	6.00	-0.962	38	0.342	Not Significant
Female	23	64.83	5.56				

Table 2 indicates that there was no statistically significant difference between male and female teachers' decolonising English Language Teaching scores, $t(38) = -0.962$, $p = .342$, Cohen's $d = 0.31$. Female teachers ($M = 64.83$, $SD = 5.56$) obtained a slightly higher mean score than male teachers ($M = 63.06$, $SD = 6.00$); however, the magnitude of this difference was small and not statistically significant. These mean scores should be interpreted only after verifying the scoring procedure because they exceed the maximum possible score of a 15-item, 4-point Likert scale instrument.

Discussion of Findings

Table 1 revealed that the level of teachers' adoption of decolonising English Language Teaching (ELT) through the

integration of Indigenous Knowledge Systems was high. This finding aligns with recent studies that emphasise the growing shift towards culturally responsive and contextually grounded pedagogies in language classrooms. For instance, Banda (2023) argues that integrating learners' sociocultural realities into ELT enhances learner engagement and comprehension, thereby improving instructional effectiveness. Similarly, Ajani et al. (2024) found that the use of Indigenous Knowledge resources, such as proverbs, storytelling, and local cultural contexts, strengthens learners' literacy development and classroom participation. In the same vein, Deutschmann et al. (2024) contend that translanguaging practices, which constitute a central element of decolonising ELT, promote deeper

cognitive engagement and meaningful learning. However, this finding contrasts with earlier studies reporting limited implementation of decolonised pedagogies in African classrooms. Sanni et al. (2025) observed that despite increased awareness, many teachers continue to rely on traditional Eurocentric instructional approaches because of curriculum constraints and inadequate professional development. Similarly, Noutchie (2025) notes that institutional policies and examination systems often reinforce English-only instructional practices, thereby limiting the full implementation of decolonising pedagogies. This contrast suggests that while teachers increasingly recognise the value of Indigenous Knowledge integration, systemic constraints may continue to impede its consistent classroom application.

It is important, however, to interpret this finding in light of the nature of the data collected. Because the study relied on teachers' self-reported responses rather than classroom observations or independent measures of instructional practice, the findings may have been

influenced by social desirability bias. Teachers may have reported greater adoption of culturally responsive and decolonising practices because such practices are increasingly regarded as professionally desirable within contemporary educational discourse. Consequently, the reported high level of adoption may reflect teachers' positive perceptions or intentions as much as their actual classroom practices. Future studies should therefore complement questionnaire data with classroom observations, interviews, or document analysis to provide a more comprehensive assessment of the implementation of decolonising English Language Teaching.

Table 2 revealed that there was no statistically significant difference between male and female teachers in their adoption of decolonising ELT practices. This finding is consistent with the work of Ounis (2017), who reported no significant gender difference in teachers' perceptions and use of innovative instructional practices. Similarly, Ajani (2025) found that teachers' adoption of culturally responsive pedagogies is influenced more

by professional preparation, teaching experience, and access to continuous professional development than by gender. Bainazarov et al. (2022) also argue that engagement with decolonial teaching practices is shaped primarily by institutional support and pedagogical orientation rather than demographic characteristics.

A plausible explanation for the absence of a significant gender difference is that teachers in public secondary schools in Oyo State operate within a standardised curriculum, are subject to the same educational policies, and generally receive similar pre-service teacher education and in-service professional development programmes. Consequently, both male and female teachers are exposed to comparable pedagogical expectations, curriculum implementation guidelines, and professional standards regarding learner-centred and culturally responsive instruction. These shared institutional experiences are likely to minimise gender-based differences in the adoption of decolonising ELT practices.

Although some scholars have suggested that gender may influence teaching approaches, the evidence remains inconsistent. For example, Odora Hoppers (2022) argues that female teachers may demonstrate stronger inclinations towards inclusive and culturally responsive teaching because of more relational and community-oriented pedagogical orientations. Similarly, Banda (2023) suggests that subtle gender differences may exist in classroom interaction patterns, which could indirectly influence the implementation of decolonising strategies. Nevertheless, the present study indicates that any such differences were not sufficiently pronounced to produce statistically significant variations in teachers' reported adoption of decolonising ELT practices.

In all, the findings suggest that the adoption of decolonising English Language Teaching through the integration of Indigenous Knowledge Systems is gaining acceptance among teachers irrespective of gender. However, the possibility of social desirability bias and the continued existence of institutional

constraints underscore the need for sustained professional development, supportive educational policies, curriculum reforms, and future research employing multiple sources of evidence to strengthen understanding of teachers' actual classroom implementation of decolonising pedagogies.

Conclusion

This study examined teachers' adoption of decolonising English Language Teaching (ELT) through the integration of Indigenous Knowledge Systems in public secondary schools in Oyo West Local Government Area, Oyo State. The findings revealed that teachers reported a high level of adoption of decolonising ELT practices, suggesting an increasing recognition of the value of culturally responsive, multilingual, and contextually relevant approaches to English language instruction. The results indicated that many teachers are making deliberate efforts to incorporate learners' cultural experiences, Indigenous Knowledge Systems, and translanguaging practices into their classroom instruction. The study also found no statistically significant

difference between male and female teachers in their adoption of decolonising ELT practices. This suggests that the adoption of culturally responsive pedagogies is not influenced by gender but is more likely associated with shared professional expectations, standardised curriculum implementation, and similar teacher preparation and professional development experiences within the public secondary school system. Despite these encouraging findings, one limitation of the study should be acknowledged. The study involved a relatively small sample of 40 English Language teachers drawn from 20 public secondary schools in Oyo West Local Government Area. Although this sample was appropriate for the descriptive survey design and adequately addressed the study objectives, the findings should be interpreted with caution. Future studies should therefore employ larger and more diverse samples across multiple Local Government Areas or states and incorporate classroom observations, interviews, and other qualitative methods to validate teachers' reported practices and enhance the generalisability and robustness of the findings. In all, the study

contributes empirical evidence on teachers' adoption of Indigenous Knowledge integration in English Language Teaching and underscores the need for sustained curriculum reform, continuous professional development, and supportive educational policies to strengthen the effective implementation of culturally responsive and decolonising pedagogies in Nigerian secondary schools. Such efforts will help promote a more inclusive, contextually relevant, and culturally responsive English language education system.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Educational authorities should strengthen the integration of Indigenous Knowledge Systems, culturally relevant content, and multilingual pedagogical approaches within the English Language curriculum to sustain and institutionalise the positive adoption of decolonising ELT practices among teachers.
2. Teacher education institutions and professional development providers should organise regular workshops, seminars, and in-service training programmes to deepen teachers' knowledge and practical application of culturally responsive pedagogy, translanguaging, and other decolonising instructional strategies.
3. The Oyo State Ministry of Education and school administrators should provide continuous institutional support, including instructional resources, mentoring, and professional learning communities, to ensure the consistent implementation of decolonising English Language Teaching practices across schools.
4. Curriculum developers and instructional material producers should develop and make available teaching and learning resources that reflect Nigeria's indigenous languages, cultures, oral traditions, and local contexts to support teachers in implementing culturally responsive English Language instruction.

5. Educational policymakers should review and strengthen language-in-education policies to encourage appropriate and purposeful use of Indigenous Knowledge Systems and multilingual instructional strategies as complementary resources for English Language Teaching in Nigerian secondary schools.
6. School administrators should promote collaborative partnerships between schools and local communities to facilitate the integration of indigenous knowledge, cultural practices, local histories, and oral traditions into English Language Teaching, thereby enhancing the cultural relevance of classroom instruction.

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