



Teaching and learning  
cross-cultural  
British history  
in the KS2 classroom

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# Context

My paper is based upon my professional doctorate (EdD) study which reconceptualises **the story of Britain's migrant past** as framed by the Key Stage 2 national curriculum (KS2 NC) (DfE, 2013).

I used **autoethnography** as a method of narrative inquiry to develop my personal and professional understanding of minority-ethnic group mass-migration and settlement (**MEGroMMaS**) in Britain over the ages.

In my analysis and evaluation, I connected migration of minority-ethnic group Saxons from the 5th century AD and Vikings from 8th century AD to that of Afro-Caribbean people of post World War Two Britain circa 1948.

# Key terms of the study

ethnogenesis; interculturalism; hybridity; diasporic imagination; acculturation; enculturation; interactive introspection; white-privilege; teacher identity; pedagogy and practice; critical race theory; critical multiculturalism; coding; discourse analysis.

**historical consciousness**  
**critical multiculturalism**  
**cultural diversity**  
**autoethnography**  
**sociological imagination**  
**critical pedagogy**

# Historical consciousness

(Clark, 2014; Rüsen, 2006)

How do we orientate ourselves, exist and function in the now through our knowing the past as a guide for future perspectives?

# Historical consciousness (Rüsen, 2006)

Historical consciousness achieves its function of orientation through stories (**histories**).

These are based upon four narrative perspectives (competencies):

Traditional, Exemplary,  
Critical, *and* Genetic

# Multiculturalism and Ethnogenesis

My view of multiculturalism is in line with Banks' (1986) theory of multicultural education as 'an *inclusive concept* to help children from diverse groups to experience *educational equality*'.

I use a **critical multicultural** perspective to influence a **critical pedagogy** for teaching, learning and knowing about the broad histories of migration to Britain and the multiple ethnic identities of British people as a result of **ethnogenesis** (Harke, 2011).

# Autoethnography

My narrative inquiry of MEGroMMaS in Britain; my identity and history is juxtaposed with the traditional national curriculum mono-cultural meta-narrative of migration, identity and history.

**Autoethnography** is an attractive method of inquiry where focused reflection through the lens of life experience is at the heart of the matter (see Hayler, 2011).

The individual (**auto**) experience is used in relation to the reality and experience of the people [or, group] (**ethno**) to whom one belongs [or, with whom one is affiliated]. My narrative inquiry writing was done with my mother.

# Reflections and dialogue on a 'story of Britain's migrant past

My mother and I narrated our personal experiences of the Brixton uprisings of 1981. My family lived there at the time. Some still do today.



The majority of those people who took part in the 1981 uprisings in Brixton would have been **the children and grandchildren of a migrant Afro-Caribbean community invited by the British government to work in Britain (the Windrush Generation of post World War Two)**

These uprisings (race-riots) of the 1980s were not confined to Brixton, London but **widespread across Britain** most notably in Bristol; Birmingham; Liverpool, Nottingham and Manchester. **This is BRITISH HISTORY**



# Sociological imagination

(Wright Mills, 1959)

My mother and I applied a reflective approach to learning about the relations between history and biography within society. Using a sociological imagination provided us a chance to reflect deeply and critically about our shared life experiences. It enabled us to explore how identity and power are linked intrinsically 'with the relation between individual agency and social structure' (Bathmaker, 2010, p.1).

# **Testing KS2 teachers' perceptions and orientations with multicultural British history**

Clark (2014) suggests historical consciousness is something that is both learnt (through the disciplinary skills of history) and innate (in that we recollect).

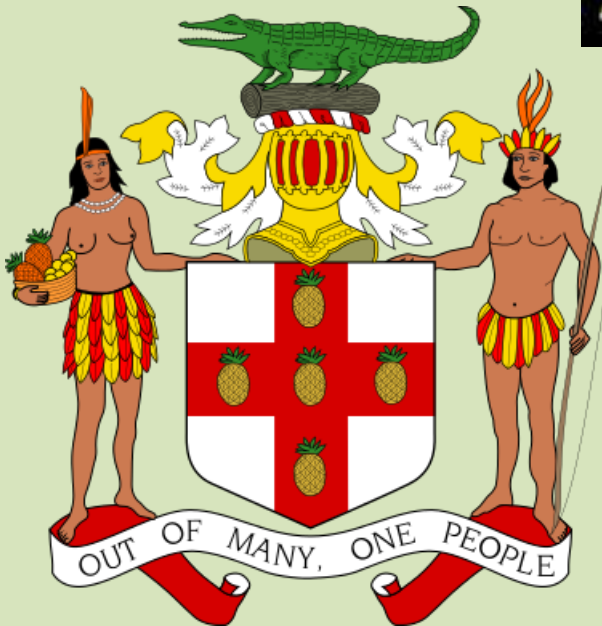
# Reconceptualising the KS2 NC: from a **traditional** framework to **genetic** outlook

My findings are indicating that KS2 primary school teachers of history thinking and potential practice concerning the 'story of Britain's migrant past' as framed by the (KS2 NC) (DfE, 2013) is advanced and broadened through their engagement with alternative and more diverse accounts of MEGroMMaS in Britain which they are not exposed to through their engagement with the KS2 NC.

Teaching the story of Britain's migrant past over the ages through the lens of **critical multiculturalism** helps KS2 primary school teachers of history to **embrace diversity and difference** in seeing and knowing MEGroMMaS in Britain as a perpetual process and in understanding better the identity and history of Britain's multicultural people.

# Teaching Diversity and Difference

Education policymakers in Britain could learn from this Jamaican motto and apply the philosophy behind this for telling a more inclusive story of Britain's migrant past instead of the exclusive Anglo-centric mono-cultural story



JAMAICA'S MOTTO WILL BE:  
**OUT OF MANY,  
ONE PEOPLE**

**J**AMAICA'S MOTTO in Independence will be OUT OF MANY, ONE PEOPLE. On the authority of the Premier and Cabinet Leader of the Opposition, this announcement was made yesterday by the Chairman of the Independence Celebrations Committee.