
Repositioning English Education for Economic Empowerment and Self-Sustainability among Nigerian Graduates

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Abstract

Graduate unemployment in Nigeria continues to raise critical concerns about the relevance of higher education to economic realities. Despite the central role of English as the medium of instruction and a key tool for professional engagement, its teaching remains largely academic, with limited emphasis on practical and economic application. This paper argues that English education must be repositioned as a strategic instrument for economic empowerment and self-sustainability among Nigerian graduates. Drawing on Human Capital Theory and the Employability Skills Framework, the study adopts a conceptual approach to examine the disconnect between English language instruction and labour market demands. It contends that the current curriculum fails to equip graduates with essential competencies in professional communication, digital literacy, and entrepreneurial engagement. The paper advances a shift toward functional, skill-based English education that integrates business communication, digital practices, and entrepreneurial language skills. It further highlights the importance of curriculum reform, innovative pedagogy, industry collaboration, and teacher capacity development. The study concludes that aligning English education with contemporary economic demands can enhance employability, foster self-reliance, and support sustainable national development.

Keywords: English Education, Economic Empowerment, Self-Sustainability, Employability Skills, Nigeria

Introduction

The relationship between education and economic development has long been established in both policy and scholarship. Education is widely regarded as a key driver of human capital development, innovation, and national productivity (Becker, 1993; Schultz, 1961). In Nigeria, tertiary education is expected to play a transformative role in equipping graduates with the knowledge and competencies required for meaningful participation in the economy. Ideally, university education should not only impart theoretical knowledge but also foster practical skills that enhance employability and promote self-reliance.

However, the reality of graduate unemployment presents a stark contradiction to this expectation. Despite the proliferation of universities and the increasing number of graduates entering the labour market annually, many remain unemployed or underemployed (National Bureau of Statistics, 2023). This persistent challenge has intensified concerns about the relevance and effectiveness of higher education in Nigeria, particularly in its capacity to respond to the dynamic needs of the labour market and the broader economy.

A growing body of literature attributes this disconnect to a skills mismatch between university education and labour market demands (Okolie et al., 2020; Ogunode & Musa, 2020; Osmani et al., 2019). Employers frequently report that graduates lack critical employability competencies such as effective communication, critical thinking, adaptability, and digital literacy (Jackson & Bridgstock, 2021; Suleman, 2018). These deficiencies significantly limit graduates' ability to secure employment, perform efficiently in professional settings, or create independent economic opportunities.

Within this broader challenge, English education programmes occupy a unique and strategic position. English serves as Nigeria's official language and the primary medium of instruction across all levels of education. It is also the dominant language of business, governance, and international communication (Bamgbose, 2021). Consequently, proficiency in English is fundamental to success in virtually all professional domains. Beyond its communicative function, English education has the potential to develop essential cognitive and socio-economic skills, including articulation, persuasion, negotiation, and knowledge dissemination, all of which are critical for economic productivity.

There is, therefore, a strong link between language competence and economic empowerment. In an increasingly globalised and digital economy, the ability to communicate effectively in English enhances access to employment opportunities, facilitates participation in remote and freelance work, and supports entrepreneurial ventures. Graduates with strong communicative competence are better positioned to engage with global markets, attract investment, and build sustainable careers. Conversely, limited proficiency in functional and professional English constrains economic participation and reinforces cycles of unemployment and dependency.

Despite its strategic importance, the current structure of English education in Nigeria appears inadequate in addressing these realities. The curriculum remains largely oriented towards theoretical knowledge, literary studies, and examination performance, with insufficient emphasis on practical, professional, and entrepreneurial communication skills. As a result, many graduates lack the functional language competencies required to navigate the demands of the modern workplace or to leverage emerging opportunities in the digital economy. This gap highlights a fundamental misalignment between English education and the socio-economic needs of contemporary Nigerian society.

Against this backdrop, this paper argues for a critical repositioning of English education as a tool for economic empowerment and self-sustainability among Nigerian graduates. Specifically, the objectives of the paper are to: (i) examine the relationship between English language competence and graduate employability; (ii) identify the limitations inherent in the current English education framework; and (iii) propose strategic reforms aimed at aligning English education with the demands of the modern economy.

The significance of this study lies in its contribution to ongoing debates on educational reform, youth empowerment, and sustainable development in Nigeria. By reframing English education as a functional and economically relevant discipline, the paper provides insights that can inform curriculum innovation, pedagogical practices, and policy interventions. Ultimately, repositioning English education in this manner holds the potential to reduce graduate unemployment, enhance self-reliance, and drive inclusive economic growth.

Conceptual Clarifications**English Education**

English education is commonly defined as the formal instruction of the English language, encompassing grammar, literature, and communicative skills within educational institutions (Adeyemi, 2020). This definition reflects the traditional orientation of the discipline, where emphasis is placed on linguistic structures, literary appreciation, and general communicative competence. However, such a framing has increasingly been considered insufficient for capturing the broader intellectual and functional dimensions of the field.

Scholars have therefore extended this conventional view in significant ways. Bangbose (2021), in his work on English in the Nigerian environment, conceptualises English education not merely as language instruction but as a critical instrument for national integration and participation in formal domains such as governance, education, and business. Similarly, Olaoye (2013) situates language education within the broader context of national development, arguing that proficiency in English facilitates socio-political engagement, economic participation, and democratic consolidation. These perspectives reposition English education as a socio-functional resource that operates beyond the confines of the classroom.

From a pedagogical standpoint, Richards and Rodgers (2014) trace the evolution of English language teaching from structure-based approaches toward communicative competence. Their analysis underscores a shift from grammar-dominated instruction to more interactive and learner-centred models, suggesting that effective English education should prioritise meaningful communication over mere linguistic accuracy. This pedagogical transition signals an important reorientation of the discipline toward functionality and real-world application.

More recent contributions have further expanded the scope of English education by incorporating digital and economic dimensions. Igiri and Ngwoke (2025) argue that English language education must be reengineered to align with the demands of a digitalised knowledge economy, where multilingual competence, digital communication, and global interaction are increasingly indispensable. In a similar vein, Hasanah and Muin (2025) demonstrate that digital platforms, particularly social media, enhance the employability of English education graduates by enabling portfolio development, professional networking, and access to labour market opportunities. Collectively, these studies reframe English education as a dynamic and evolving field shaped by technological transformation.

In addition, emerging research has begun to interrogate the intersection between English education and entrepreneurship. Sama and Dikko (2025) highlight how English language teacher education can incorporate entrepreneurial competencies, enabling graduates to engage in diverse activities such as freelance writing, translation services, and corporate communication. Empirical evidence from Ojo et al. (2025) further reinforces this position, demonstrating that the integration of an entrepreneurial mindset into English curricula significantly improves students' employability and practical skill acquisition. These contributions challenge the long-standing assumption that English education primarily leads to teaching careers, instead presenting it as a versatile discipline with multiple economic pathways.

Against this backdrop, this paper advances a reconceptualisation of English education that moves beyond its traditional and fragmented interpretations. While existing scholarship variously presents English education as a linguistic discipline, a socio-functional resource, a

pedagogical framework, or an emerging digital and entrepreneurial platform, this paper argues that these perspectives, when treated in isolation, are insufficient for addressing contemporary economic realities. In this study, English education is conceptualised as an integrated, practice-oriented domain that combines linguistic competence with digital communication, professional writing, and entrepreneurial application. This reconceptualisation shifts the focus from knowledge acquisition to value creation, positioning English education as a strategic mechanism for enhancing employability, adaptability, and self-sustainability among Nigerian graduates. By embedding economic functionality within its core structure rather than treating it as an external outcome, this conceptualisation aligns the discipline with the demands of a dynamic, technology-driven labour market while remaining responsive to the socio-economic constraints that shape educational outcomes in Nigeria.

Economic Empowerment

Economic empowerment is understood as the process through which individuals gain the ability to generate income, exercise economic agency, and improve their standard of living (Omeje, Jideofor, and Ugwu, 2020). In this sense, the concept is often associated with financial independence and access to economic opportunities. While this definition captures its foundational meaning, it presents economic empowerment largely as an outcome rather than a

Oviawe (2015) expanded this understanding by situating economic empowerment within the framework of entrepreneurship education, arguing that the development of creativity, innovation, and problem-solving abilities is central to enabling individuals to become economically productive. In a similar vein, Adewumi and Cele (2023) emphasise the role of curriculum design in fostering entrepreneurial intention, suggesting that empowerment is closely linked to the acquisition of competencies that allow graduates to initiate and sustain economic ventures rather than depend solely on wage employment.

At a broader level, economic empowerment is also conditioned by structural realities that shape the translation of skills into tangible outcomes. Omeje et al. (2020) indicate that although entrepreneurship initiatives have contributed to job creation and economic diversification in Nigeria, their impact is often constrained by factors such as limited access to finance, infrastructural deficits, and policy inconsistencies. This highlights the fact that empowerment cannot be reduced to individual capability alone but must be understood within a wider socioeconomic environment that either enables or restricts opportunity. Other studies draw attention to the importance of adaptable and future-oriented skills in achieving sustainable economic outcomes. Gidado and Diffang (2024) demonstrate that problem-solving and creative thinking significantly enhance students' employability and self-reliance, reinforcing the argument that empowerment is closely tied to the ability to navigate complex and evolving labour markets. Such findings shift the focus from static notions of employment toward more dynamic forms of economic participation.

Even with these advances, the literature often treats economic empowerment as either a policy objective or an individual achievement, with limited attention to how specific fields of study contribute to its realisation. In this study, economic empowerment is understood as the capacity of graduates to mobilise their knowledge, skills, and competencies to create, access, and sustain economic opportunities across diverse contexts. This perspective moves beyond income generation to include adaptability, innovation, and strategic engagement with changing labour market conditions.

Within the framework of this paper, economic empowerment is therefore positioned as a product of an educational approach that deliberately integrates communication proficiency with digital and entrepreneurial capabilities. By doing so, it underscores the role of English education not merely as a means of linguistic development but as a critical resource for economic participation and value creation among Nigerian graduates.

Self-Sustainability

Self-sustainability refers to the ability of individuals to maintain their livelihoods independently over time without excessive reliance on external support (Scholar, year). At a basic level, the concept is often associated with financial independence and the capacity to meet one’s needs through stable sources of income. Scholars have increasingly approached self-sustainability as a multidimensional construct that extends beyond income generation to include resilience, adaptability, and continuous skill development. Oviawe (2015), in his discussion of entrepreneurship education in Nigeria, emphasises that self-sustainability is closely linked to the development of creative and problem-solving abilities that enable individuals to navigate economic challenges and create alternative pathways for survival. This perspective shifts the focus from dependence on formal employment to the capacity for self-directed economic engagement. Gidado and Diffang (2024) demonstrate that problem-solving and creative thinking significantly enhance students’ readiness for self-reliance, suggesting that sustainability is not achieved through static knowledge but through the ability to respond effectively to changing labour market conditions. In this sense, self-sustainability is better understood as a dynamic process rather than a fixed state.

At the same time, structural and contextual factors play a crucial role in shaping individuals’ capacity for self-sustainability. Omeje, Jideofor, and Ugwu (2020) show that while entrepreneurial initiatives can foster economic independence, their long-term viability is often influenced by external conditions such as access to capital, infrastructure, and policy support. Sama and Dikko (2025) argue that integrating entrepreneurial competencies into English language teacher education expands graduates’ career possibilities beyond traditional teaching roles, enabling them to engage in diverse income-generating activities. Similarly, Ojo et al. (2025) provide empirical evidence that embedding an entrepreneurial mindset within language education enhances students’ capacity to apply their skills in practical and economically productive ways.

This paper sees self-sustainability as the capacity of graduates to independently initiate, manage, and sustain viable economic activities over time through the effective application of their skills and knowledge. This definition emphasises not only income generation but also adaptability, resilience, and the ability to continuously reconfigure one’s competencies in response to evolving economic conditions. Within the framework of this study, self-sustainability is positioned as a critical outcome of a reoriented English education that integrates communication expertise with digital and entrepreneurial skills. Such an approach enables graduates to move beyond dependence on limited formal employment opportunities and instead engage in diverse, flexible, and sustainable forms of economic participation.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on Human Capital Theory and the Employability Skills Framework, which together provide a complementary lens for examining the relationship between education, skill acquisition, and economic outcomes.

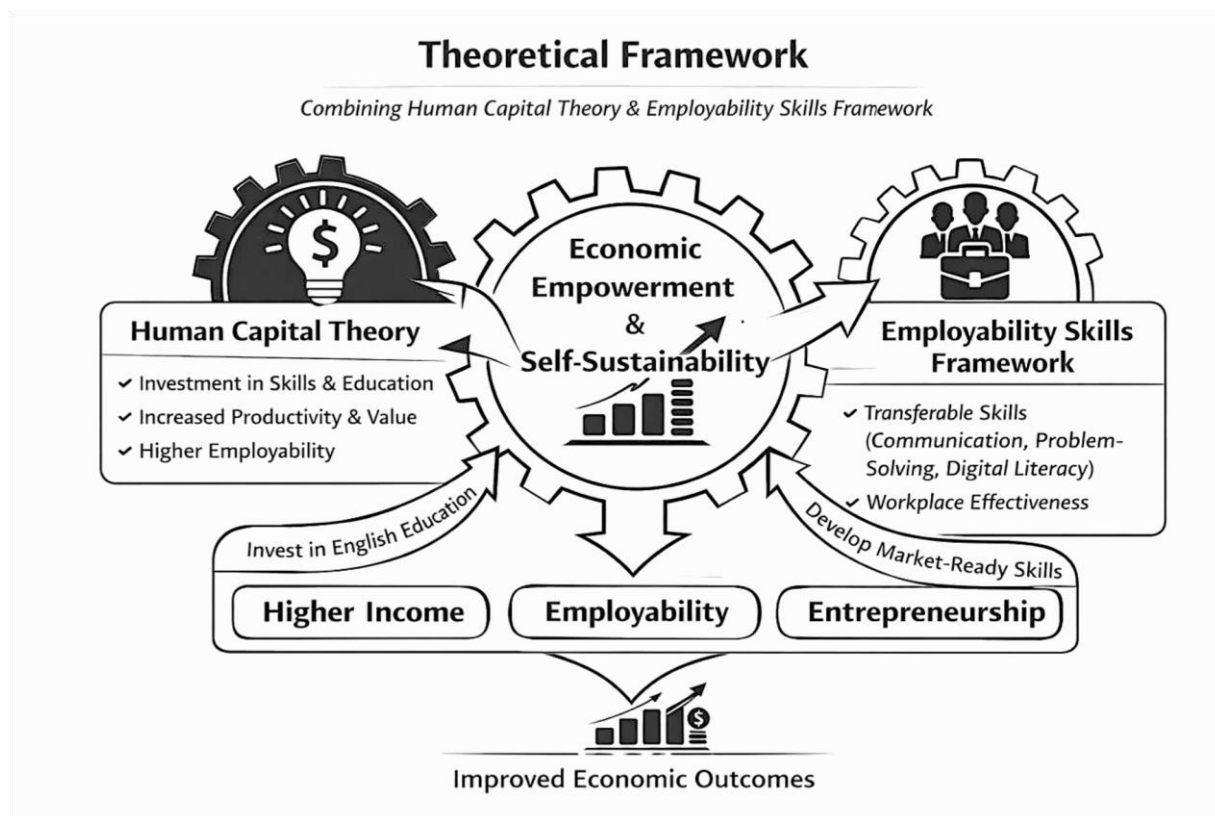


Figure 1: The Study’s Theoretical Framework

Human Capital Theory

Human Capital Theory, originally advanced by Becker (1993) and Schultz (1961), posits that education is a form of investment that enhances individuals’ productivity and economic value. Within this perspective, the acquisition of knowledge and skills is expected to translate into improved employability, higher earnings, and broader economic participation. Applied to the context of this study, English education represents a critical component of human capital formation, given its central role in communication, knowledge dissemination, and access to opportunities in both local and global labour markets (Bamgbose, 2021). From a human capital perspective, competence in English can thus be seen as an investment that increases graduates’ economic potential.

However, despite its analytical strength, Human Capital Theory has been criticised for assuming a relatively linear relationship between educational attainment and labour market outcomes. This assumption is increasingly difficult to sustain in contexts such as Nigeria, where high levels of graduate unemployment persist despite expanded access to higher education (National Bureau of Statistics, 2023). The theory, in its classical

formulation, pays insufficient attention to the quality, relevance, and applicability of the skills acquired, as well as to structural constraints that may limit the translation of education into economic opportunities.

This limitation suggests that education, in itself, is not inherently transformative unless it is aligned with the demands of the labour market. Consequently, there is a need to move beyond a purely quantitative understanding of education (years of schooling, certification) toward a qualitative emphasis on the kinds of competencies that enable graduates to function productively in real-world contexts.

Employability Skills Framework

Building on this gap, the Employability Skills Framework offers a more nuanced understanding of the competencies required for labour market success. Yorke (2006) defines employability as a set of achievements, including skills, understandings, and personal attributes that increase the likelihood of gaining employment and performing effectively in the workplace. Similarly, Andrews and Higson (2008) emphasise the importance of transferable skills such as communication, teamwork, and adaptability in enhancing graduate outcomes.

Unlike Human Capital Theory, which foregrounds education as investment, the Employability Skills Framework shifts attention to the content and application of what is learned. It highlights competencies such as critical thinking, problem-solving, digital literacy, and, crucially, communication skills as central to navigating contemporary labour markets (Jackson & Bridgstock, 2021; Suleman, 2018). This orientation is particularly relevant in a global economy characterised by rapid technological change, flexible work arrangements, and the rise of nontraditional career pathways.

Nevertheless, even within this framework, employability is often implicitly tied to formal employment, thereby underrepresenting alternative economic pathways such as entrepreneurship, freelancing, and self-employment modes of engagement that are increasingly significant in the Nigerian context. Moreover, while communication is frequently listed as a core employability skill, its foundational role in enabling other competencies is not always sufficiently theorised.

In response, this study extends the Employability Skills Framework by positioning communicative competence developed through English education as the central mechanism through which employability is enacted. This reconceptualisation aligns the framework with the realities of a digital and knowledge-driven economy, where language-mediated practices such as negotiation, content creation, and virtual collaboration are critical to economic participation.

Review of Related Literature

English Education in Nigeria

The development of English education in Nigeria is deeply rooted in the colonial and postcolonial evolution of the Nigerian education system. Scholars such as Ayo Bamgbose (2021) argue that English has become institutionalised as the dominant language of instruction, governance, and formal communication due to Nigeria's multilingual composition. This functional positioning has made English central to educational access and national integration.

However, despite its entrenched position in the educational system, the curriculum structure of English education in Nigeria has been widely criticised. Alabi (2020) and Oluwole Adegbite (2018) suggest that the curriculum remains heavily weighted toward grammatical competence, literature analysis, and examination preparation. This traditional orientation tends to prioritise theoretical mastery over functional application. As a result, English education is often disconnected from the practical communicative demands of contemporary society. Muhammad et al. (2018) emphasise that English teaching in Nigerian schools remains constrained by teachercentred methods that prioritise rote learning over communicative practice. Usman (2022) reveals that despite curriculum revisions under the Universal Basic Education framework, English language instruction still largely focuses on grammar translation and examination preparation. This has resulted in learners who may perform well academically but lack functional communicative competence in real-life contexts.

Graduate Unemployment and Skill Gap

Graduate unemployment in Nigeria remains a major policy and scholarly concern. The National Bureau of Statistics (2023) reports persistently high levels of unemployment and underemployment among tertiary education graduates, raising questions about the effectiveness of higher education in producing job-ready individuals.

A major explanation advanced in the literature is the mismatch between university training and labour market requirements. Chijioko et al. (2020) and Ibrahim (2020) argue that many graduates lack essential employability skills demanded by employers. These include communication competence, digital literacy, critical thinking, and problem-solving abilities. Extending this view, Jackson and Bridgstock (2021) observe that employers increasingly prioritise adaptable graduates who can communicate effectively, collaborate in teams, and respond to rapidly changing workplace demands. However, many graduates are perceived as over-reliant on theoretical knowledge with limited practical or applied skills.

Dahunsi (2017) also described Nigerian graduates as ‘theoretically knowledgeable but practically underprepared for workplace demands’. This reinforces the argument that the problem is not merely access to education, but the nature and relevance of the skills being developed within educational institutions.

English Proficiency and Economic Outcomes

A substantial body of literature establishes a strong link between English proficiency and socio-economic advancement. Graddol (2006) argues that English functions as a global lingua franca, essential for participation in international business, science, and technology. In this regard, English competence becomes a gateway to global labour markets and digital economies. Holmes (2013) highlights that language proficiency plays a critical role in workplace interaction, professional identity formation, and career progression. Communication skills determine not only employability but also effectiveness in collaborative and leadership roles. A study by Robles (2012) further shows that communication is consistently ranked among the most important skills across industries. In a related study, Tom Jackson (2016) argues that effective communication enhances employability by improving problem-solving, teamwork, and organisational performance.

In Nigeria, Bamgbose (2021) reiterates that English is not merely an academic subject but a socio-economic necessity due to its dominance in education, governance, and commerce. However, despite its importance, several studies report that many Nigerian

graduates still struggle with functional English usage, particularly in professional writing, oral communication, and digital communication contexts (Dahunsi, 2017).

Gaps in Existing Literature

Although existing scholarship provides valuable insights into English education and employability, several gaps remain evident. First, most studies focus heavily on English proficiency in academic or formal workplace settings, with limited attention to its role in entrepreneurial communication, such as freelancing, digital marketing, content creation, and business pitching. This represents a significant omission in a rapidly evolving digital economy. Second, while employability studies acknowledge communication as an important skill, they rarely position English education itself as a strategic economic tool capable of directly enabling self-sustainability. Instead, English is often treated as a supporting competence rather than a central mechanism for economic empowerment.

Second, there is limited integration between language education reform and Nigeria’s informal and digital economies. Existing literature tends to assume formal employment as the primary outcome of education, thereby neglecting the growing importance of self-employment, gig work, and entrepreneurial pathways.

Finally, context-specific studies that explicitly connect English education reform to graduate self-sustainability in Nigeria remain scarce. This gap underscores the need for a reconceptualisation of English education as a functional, economically oriented discipline capable of addressing the realities of Nigeria’s labour market.

Position Statement

This paper advances the position that English education in Nigeria must undergo a fundamental shift from a predominantly academic literacy orientation centred on grammatical knowledge, literary analysis, and examination performance toward a more functional, economic, and entrepreneurial literacy framework. While traditional approaches have succeeded in developing foundational linguistic competence, they have not adequately prepared graduates for the realities of a labour market characterised by instability, digital transformation, and expanding informal economic opportunities.

In its current form, English education tends to privilege theoretical mastery of language over its practical deployment in real-world contexts. This narrow orientation limits graduates’ ability to translate linguistic knowledge into economically productive outcomes. In contrast, a functional and economically responsive model of English education would prioritise the application of language as a tool for solving practical problems, creating value, and engaging meaningfully in diverse economic spaces.

Repositioning English Education

From Academic Literacy to Economic & Entrepreneurial Literacy



Figure 2: Framework for repositioning English education for Economic Empowerment and Self-sustainability.

Within this reconfigured framework, English education should be repositioned as a strategic instrument for:

- **Job creation**, by equipping graduates with the communicative and persuasive skills required to initiate and manage entrepreneurial ventures, develop business proposals, and access funding opportunities.
- **Freelancing and global participation** enable graduates to function effectively in digital labour markets where English serves as the dominant medium for client communication, service delivery, and cross-border collaboration.
- **Business communication**, by strengthening competencies in professional writing, negotiation, presentation, branding, and organisational communication, all of which are essential for workplace effectiveness and career advancement.
- **Digital economy engagement** by developing language skills required for content creation, social media communication, online marketing, and participation in platform-based economies.

This paper, therefore, argues that English education should no longer be conceptualised merely as a subject of academic study, but as a practical economic enabler that directly contributes to graduate empowerment and self-sustainability. By repositioning English education in this manner, it becomes possible to bridge the persistent gap between educational outcomes and labour market realities in Nigeria, while simultaneously enhancing

graduates’ capacity to generate sustainable livelihoods in both formal and informal economic sectors.

Strategies for Repositioning English Education 1. Curriculum Reform

At the core of repositioning is the need to redesign the English curriculum to reflect contemporary economic realities. Traditional curricula, which emphasise grammar and literary studies, must be expanded to incorporate functional and professional language use.

First, the integration of business communication is essential. This includes training in workplace correspondence, report writing, negotiation, and presentation skills—competencies that directly influence employability and career progression. Studies have shown that employers increasingly prioritise communication abilities in recruitment decisions (Robles, 2012; Jackson & Bridgstock, 2021).

Second, the inclusion of technical and professional writing is critical. Graduates should be equipped to produce documents such as proposals, policy briefs, emails, and digital content, which are central to both corporate and entrepreneurial environments.

Third, the adoption of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) provides a targeted approach to language instruction. ESP aligns language learning with specific professional fields (e.g., business, law, technology), thereby enhancing relevance and applicability (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). This ensures that English education is not generic but tailored to real-world domains of practice.

2. Skill-Based Pedagogy

Reform must also extend to how English is taught, not just what is taught. A shift toward skillbased pedagogy is necessary to bridge the gap between knowledge and application.

Project-based learning allows students to engage in extended tasks such as developing business proposals, creating content portfolios, or simulating workplace communication scenarios. This approach fosters critical thinking, collaboration, and practical language use.

Similarly, problem-solving tasks encourage students to apply language skills to real-life challenges, such as drafting responses to client complaints or designing communication strategies for hypothetical organisations. In addition, incorporating real-world communication scenarios—including role-plays, simulations, and case studies—helps students develop confidence and competence in professional interactions. These approaches align with communicative language teaching principles, which emphasise language use over rote memorisation (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

3. Digital and Global Communication Skills

In a rapidly evolving digital economy, English education must prepare graduates for global and technology-mediated communication. Key competencies include content writing and copywriting, which enable graduates to participate in digital industries such as blogging, marketing, and freelance writing. These skills are increasingly monetisable on global platforms. Training in remote work communication is also essential. Graduates must learn how to communicate effectively in virtual environments, including email etiquette, video conferencing, and collaborative digital tools. Furthermore, social media literacy is critical for both personal branding and business development. The ability to create, manage, and

strategically deploy online content is now a key economic skill, particularly within platform-based economies.

- 4. Teacher Capacity Development** The success of repositioning English education depends largely on teachers’ capacity to implement reforms effectively. As Shulman (1987) argues, effective teaching requires both content knowledge and the ability to translate it into practical learning. However, many English teachers in Nigeria still rely on traditional, exam-focused methods, limiting the development of functional communication skills (Muhammad et al., 2018; Okoro, 2025).

To address this, continuous professional development is essential, particularly in modern communication practices such as digital writing, online interaction, and multimodal communication (Kress, 2010). Additionally, integrating ICT into teaching is critical. Punya Mishra and Matthew Koehler (2006) emphasise that effective teaching requires combining pedagogy, content, and technology. Tools such as learning platforms and collaborative applications can enhance practical learning. Ultimately, strengthening teacher capacity ensures that curriculum reforms translate into meaningful, skill-based learning outcomes.

Conclusion

This paper has advanced the argument that repositioning English education is central to achieving economic empowerment and self-sustainability among Nigerian graduates. It has been shown that the prevailing academic orientation that focuses largely on grammatical competence and literary knowledge does not adequately equip graduates with the functional, digital, and entrepreneurial communication skills required in today’s labour market. Consequently, English education must be restructured as a practical, skill-driven discipline that enables graduates not only to seek employment but also to create and sustain economic opportunities.

The urgency of this reform is underscored by the persistent realities of graduate unemployment, underemployment, and the rapid expansion of digital and informal economic spaces. Without a deliberate shift toward economically relevant language competencies, graduates will continue to face barriers in translating education into meaningful livelihoods.

In the long term, repositioning English education holds significant implications for national development. It can foster a more adaptable and innovative workforce, promote entrepreneurship, reduce dependency on scarce formal employment, and enhance participation in the global digital economy. Ultimately, aligning English education with the goals of economic empowerment and self-sustainability is not only desirable but essential for Nigeria’s sustainable growth and competitiveness.

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