



ENGLISH FOR SOCIAL EMPOWERMENT: TOWARDS AN ADD-ON- COURSE FOR LOW ACHIEVING LEARNERS

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Abstract

English has become one of the main tools that contribute to the development of education, employment, and inclusion of the learners in the present-day globalized world. Nevertheless, numerous underachievers still have problems learning English owing to their lack of communicative skills, confidence, poor learning opportunities and examination-centred methods of instruction. This article aims at considering the role of English as the means of social empowerment and pointing out its contribution to the improvement of employability, economic success, self-confidence and inclusion of the learners. The article also pays attention to the main difficulties faced by underachievers while learning English. From the above discussion, the study suggests an organized add-on English course that builds on the current curriculum through practical application, use of technology, teamwork, and assessment. This course is designed to improve the language skills, employability, confidence, and learning capacity of the learners while ensuring educational equity. In conclusion, the research shows that the inclusion of a skill-based add-on English course can empower low-performing learners and enable them to participate in modern society.

Keywords: English language education; Social empowerment; Add-on English course; Low-achieving learners; Communicative language teaching; Employability; Learner-centred learning

1. INTRODUCTION

English has emerged as one of the most powerful languages in today's world and has been used as the means of communication in fields such as education, commerce, science and technology, and international cooperation (Corbett). The increased popularity of English has resulted in English not only becoming a mere subject but an integral part of one's life, which enables them to get knowledge, employment, and socialize. In multilingual societies, the proficiency of a person in English has become an indispensable part of their educational attainment and career success (Tomlinson).

In spite of its increasing significance, there are still a lot of learners who face problems with learning English language (Ahmadi 115–25). Poor learners have to deal with the problem of having a limited vocabulary, poor communication abilities, lack of confidence, and limited opportunities for practicing English (Nunan). The traditional system of teaching in the classroom focuses on getting good results during tests and learning grammar, which leaves no time for developing communication abilities (Korikana). Due to that, learners finish school without having sufficient English language skills.

There is now the need for empowerment of underachieving learners through the medium of English language education (Alghamdi and Siddiqui 204–12). It is therefore important that an English language program should not just confine itself to classroom bookish learning but rather concentrate on building the skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing in a learner-centered manner and by using activity-based methods (Wang 374–90). This kind of training can boost the confidence of the learners, make them better communicators socially and professionally, and help them be more effective participants in academic and other settings (Jeyaraj 50–58).

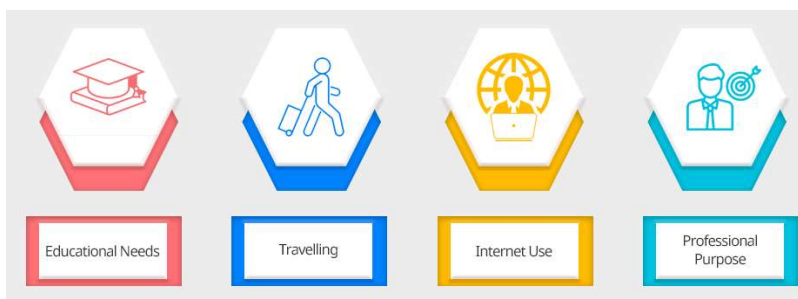


Figure 1: Major Reasons for Learning the English Language in Contemporary Society

Taking all this into consideration, the current research suggests the implementation of a supplementary English language course targeted at underperforming students (Mafela 735). This course is intended to be a part of the existing curriculum but with a focus on functional usage of the language, collaborative learning, and skill building. Its purpose is to investigate the potential of English language as a means of social empowerment, analyze the problems of underperforming students, and develop a systematic approach to an inclusive course (Hannah).

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

Bond (2020) discussed how English for Academic Purposes (EAP) could contribute to internationalizing higher education. The study pointed out that while teaching English, attention needs to be paid not only to its grammar and vocabulary but also to the development of academic communication and critical thinking skills. It stressed the necessity of developing English courses aimed at communication.

Narayan (2021) examined the incorporation of second language acquisition theory in the syllabi of English in Fiji. The research revealed that learner-centered and contextualized teaching methodologies yielded better results in enhancing communicative competence than the conventional methodologies. The research recommended that there should be meaningful contexts of language usage in English syllabi.

Ruman (2025) explored the issues and challenges involved in English language instruction in Quami Madrasas in Bangladesh. Some of the challenges that were found included limited learning materials, conventional instruction methods, and demotivated students. The study therefore suggested supplemental language programs that focused on communicative skills.

Pasquarelli et al. (2023) dealt with the development of culturally oriented educational programs based on experiential learning and intercultural communication. The study showed how experiential learning increased students' self-confidence, communication abilities, and active involvement. Thus, it proved the necessity to integrate practical experience in English language teaching.

Erarslan (2016) assessed teachers' perception about the implementation of second-grade English language curriculum. According to the study, lack of sufficient resources, time, and problems within the classroom hindered the successful implementation of communicative language teaching. The study emphasized the need for using learner-centered approaches and development of curriculum.

According to the reviewed literature, an efficient approach towards teaching the English language requires the use of the communicative, learner-centered, and activity-based approach. Nevertheless, little emphasis has been paid to the design of specialized English language courses meant to improve the social empowerment and employability of underperforming learners. This created the rationale for this study.



2. ENGLISH LANGUAGE AS A TOOL FOR SOCIAL EMPOWERMENT

The language of English has become a source of power and empowerment for learners in the twenty-first century because it has gone past being simply an academic subject to help advance educationally, socially, and professionally. Being able to speak English functionally means that learners can gain more access to learning experiences, speak with confidence, and learn how to operate within an academic environment as well as a professional one. For underachieving learners, an English add-on program may be useful in developing life skills.

2.1 English, Employability and Economic Mobility

Knowledge of English has emerged as one of the essential ingredients for boosting employability in different areas of the economy. Many companies demand from their workers the development of communication skills that help them communicate with other people in a professional context. Those who know English can be ready for the recruitment process, for the interview, for interaction with other people at work, and for further promotion in their careers. Therefore, learning English can help people improve their employment prospects.



Figure 2: Key Employability Skills Enhanced through English Language Learning

Another important benefit of learning English as a language is effective communication in the workplace. Contemporary business requires workers to be able to write emails, make reports, take part in meetings, give presentations, and cooperate with diverse teams. This requires practical skills of communication rather than knowledge of grammar rules. The additional English course which includes vocabulary, role-plays, group discussions and professional communication would assist poor-performing learners to acquire the skills which are needed in modern workplaces.

Aside from the job, English becomes an important social capital which helps people open up more possibilities for themselves educationally, economically and professionally. Knowledge of English makes it possible for people to join professional trainings, online certifications, entrepreneurial projects and knowledge networks across the globe. It also makes people capable of accessing information, acquiring new skills and adapting to new requirements of the labour market. Thus, learning English brings about economic mobility for individuals as well as reduces educational disparities by providing additional opportunities for disadvantaged learners.

Table 1:Contribution of English Language to Employability and Economic Mobility

Dimension	Role of English Language	Expected Outcome
Employment	Enhances interview and job application skills	Increased employment opportunities



Workplace Communication	Improves oral, written, and interpersonal communication	Better professional performance
Career Development	Supports leadership and professional growth	Higher career advancement
Digital Employability	Facilitates access to online learning and employment platforms	Improved digital readiness
Entrepreneurship	Strengthens communication with clients and business partners	Better business opportunities
Social Capital	Expands professional networking and knowledge sharing	Greater economic mobility

2.2 English for Confidence, Identity and Social Inclusion

Speaking English helps in the growth of self-respect and self-expression skills. Learners who are poor performers face difficulties in communication due to their poor language skills and fear of making mistakes. Creating an environment of learning that supports interaction, cooperative learning, and practical communication skills is one of the ways to overcome the fears of communication. As learners get used to communicating in English, they start actively taking part in classroom discussion and public speaking sessions, and also interact within the community.

The ability to speak English also helps in the process of social inclusion. This skill helps learners to interact with others who belong to other cultural, linguistic, and social backgrounds. Learners become actively involved in their schools, workplace, and organizations in the community without losing their cultural and linguistic identity. Instead of losing their mother tongue, English helps in enhancing their multilingual skills and helps in participating actively within the society.

Moreover, English is very important for the process of digital inclusion and lifelong learning. There is a great deal of educational materials, professional development programs, webinars, and other online learning opportunities in English. Learners with adequate English language competence able to access these resources independently and constantly increase their knowledge and develop skills. Thus, an add-on English course that combines digital literacy and communicative language learning provide low-achieving learners with all the tools needed for their personal development and lifelong learning.

To sum up, English is a very effective means of social empowerment that increases employability, improves communication in the workplace, builds confidence, fosters social inclusion, and promotes lifelong learning. All these aspects make it reasonable to create an inclusive add-on English course for low-achieving learners.

3. DESIGNING AN ADD-ON ENGLISH COURSE FOR LOW ACHIEVING LEARNERS

The success of teaching English is primarily determined by the capacity of this educational discipline to cater to various needs of learners. Underperforming learners usually need some extra educational assistance as traditional classroom education is mostly geared towards exams and is not concerned about teaching communicative skills. The add-on English course can become a supplementary one which offers a learner-centred approach, engages students, and enhances their communicative competence. In addition to improving language skills, such a course should boost learners' confidence and motivation for communicating.

3.1 Challenges Faced by Low Achieving Learners in Learning English

One of the biggest problems associated with underperforming students is that they are scared of learning and speaking English. Students refrain from speaking in class due to the fear of making mistakes, getting ridiculed by other students, or



receiving criticism from the teacher. This communication apprehension not only discourages participation but also keeps students away from frequent language practice, thus making them passive learners.

Another serious problem associated with these learners is the deficiency in language proficiency, especially in terms of vocabulary and grammar. The poor vocabulary hinders their understanding of texts and the construction of sentences and discourages them from speaking English fluently. Likewise, grammar problems also discourage them from participating in classroom activities because they are more worried about making grammatical errors than communicating meaningfully in class.

Low-achieving learners also have problems related to differences between rural and urban areas, lack of exposure to oral English, and low motivation. Low-income students, who come from poor rural backgrounds, rarely have chances to communicate in English outside the classroom, and they may not have access to proper educational material and technological devices. Moreover, conventional methods of teaching, which include memorization techniques, do not help in maintaining learners' motivation. It is crucial to build a friendly atmosphere that includes activities to motivate learners to communicate and practice.

Learning English presents a number of difficulties for low-achieving learners: fear of communicating in English, vocabulary and grammar problems, lack of opportunities to use oral language, lack of access to good educational materials, and low motivation. These obstacles lower learners' self-confidence and affect their participation in class and communication. Implementation of learner-centered and activity-based approaches can solve these problems.

3.2 Framework for an Add-on English Course

A good additional course of English should be based on the idea of its compatibility with the curriculum, and it should focus on functional communication. The main goals of such a course include the improvement of listening, speaking, reading and writing skills, the development of confidence, professional and interpersonal communication skills, and autonomous learning. Such a course should be built on the principles of communicative approach that would encourage students to apply English in meaningful real-life situations, not just learn grammar.

The process of teaching and learning should employ different learner-centered and activity-based strategies. Role-playing, group discussion, pair activities, presentation, story-telling, language games, and problem solving allow learners to apply their knowledge of English in meaningful real-life situations. Besides, using digital technologies in learning English, including language-learning applications, educational videos, online quizzes, interactive presentation, and virtual learning environments, adds additional meaning to the whole process of learning. It allows turning the classroom into a place of active construction of linguistic competences through participation.

Continuous assessment must be an important component of the add-on course since it helps track the progress of the learners and gives feedback. Rather than depending only on written tests, assessment must encompass class discussion, speech, presentations, projects, peer assessment, reflective exercises, and quick performance-based assessments. These forms of assessment ensure continuous learning and also acknowledge improvement. The anticipated results of the course include improved communicative ability, increased self-confidence, good academic performance, increased employability, increased computer literacy, and greater preparation for lifelong learning.

Table 2:Proposed Framework for an Add-on English Course

Course Component	Description
Course Objectives	Develop functional English communication, confidence, and employability skills



Learning Outcomes	Improved listening, speaking, reading, writing, and interpersonal communication
Teaching Approach	Communicative, learner-centred, and activity-based learning
Learning Activities	Role plays, group discussions, presentations, storytelling, language games, and pair work
Digital Integration	Language-learning applications, online resources, educational videos, and interactive platforms
Assessment Methods	Continuous assessment through participation, projects, presentations, and speaking tasks
Expected Outcomes	Enhanced confidence, communication skills, academic success, employability, and social empowerment

The recommended English supplement course fosters practical, inclusionary, and communicative learning to improve language skills, academic results, and social as well as professional development for the underperforming students.

4. CONCLUSION

English has emerged as an essential tool for ensuring equality in education, employability, and empowerment of learners, especially low achievers who are likely to experience difficulties in communication and academic success. The discussion within this research shows that an additional English language class which is centered on the learner and based on skills can help overcome these problems by improving functional proficiency in language, self-confidence, workplace communication, and lifelong learning abilities. Through incorporating communicative teaching approaches, active learning through activities, use of technologies, and assessment, this type of course can supplement the current curriculum and provide inclusive learning possibilities. Empowering low achievers through learning of English language led to success both in academia and career.

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