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**The Influence of the Communicative Language Teaching  
Approach for Improving English as a Foreign Language  
Speaking Skills in a Public School**

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## **Dedication**

First, I would like to dedicate this work to God who has been holding my hand throughout this wonderful journey of learning. I also want to dedicate this research work to my beloved sons Bryan and Nicolas, whom I would like to become their role model. Finally, I want to especially dedicate this work to my beloved partner of life who always trusted in my capabilities and has always been by my side supporting me every single time that I thought that my goals were too difficult to reach.

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## **Abstract**

The current study aimed to measure the influence of the communicative Language Teaching (CLT) Approach in improving students' English as a Foreign Language (EFL) speaking skills in a public school. The methodology applied to conduct this research study was a mixed design. This experimental study comprised 70 students enrolled in the 7th grade of basic education divided into an experimental and a control group. The instruments used were a pre, and post-test that were applied to the participants with the aim to determine their previous English level and their progress after the main intervention. Likewise, a rubric was used to assign a score to the answers provided by the students in the pre and post-test. Also, a survey was applied to evidence the students' perceptions concerning implementing the CLT Approach to enhance the students' speaking skills. Additionally, the teacher used observation sheets to record the participant's performance during the English lessons. The results of this study revealed that implementing the CLT approach and activities such as role-play, group work, and interviews helped to effectively improve the EFL speaking skills.

*Keywords:* Communicative Language Teaching Approach, English as a Foreign Language, speaking skills.

## Resumen

El presente estudio buscó medir la efectividad del Enfoque Comunicativo para mejorar habilidades del habla de inglés como lengua extranjera en estudiantes de una escuela pública. Este estudio se condujo bajo la aplicación de un diseño mixto que comprendió la recolección de datos cualitativos y cuantitativos. Se incluyeron 70 estudiantes de séptimo grado de educación básica en este estudio experimental y fueron distribuidos en un grupo experimental y de control. Se aplicaron un pre-test y post-test para evaluar el nivel de inglés al inicio y el progreso alcanzado al final de la intervención. Además, se utilizó una rúbrica para evaluar el contenido, vocabulario, gramática, pronunciación y fluidez de las respuestas de los estudiantes. También se aplicó una encuesta para evidenciar la percepción estudiantil sobre la implementación del enfoque comunicativo para mejorar las habilidades orales de los estudiantes. Adicionalmente, la docente usó hojas de observación para registrar la participación de los estudiantes durante las clases de inglés. Los resultados de la investigación revelaron que actividades como juego de roles, trabajo grupal, y entrevistas mejoraron efectivamente las habilidades orales de los estudiantes.

*Palabras claves:* Enfoque Comunicativo, inglés como lengua extranjera, habilidades del habla.

## Introduction

English is well-known as one of the most spoken languages around the world either in educational or in other fields such as work, tourism, and medicine. Therefore it is of paramount importance to develop speaking skills in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students in order to provide them with the necessary tools to be able to express their thoughts, ideas and opinions through the implementation of effective communication processes to successfully overcome language barriers to convey clear messages in our increasingly interconnected world where it is necessary to be to the forefront of EFL learning. For that reason, it is of big concern the implementation of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) Approach to improve EFL speaking skills in a public Educational Institution of Quito, where students have demonstrated their low achievement of the EFL Speaking Skills due to their lack of vocabulary, grammar structures knowledge, and confidence to speak in English. Since developing Speaking skills is one of the core objectives in teaching-learning process when teaching EFL field, it is of main importance to conduct a study where the CLT approach is the main approach focused on improving EFL students' speaking skills due to its essential for their personal, educational and future professional growth.

Furthermore, regarding this issue, many studies have been carried out. To discuss the effectiveness of Communicative language teaching approach in language classrooms. Hence, Dos Santos (2020) concluded that applying this method can help to enhance learners' and teachers' interactions due to the development of active speaking activities to discuss their ideas on specific topics.

Another study was carried out by Toro et al., (2019) who confirmed that the implementation of different CLT teaching strategies such as pair work, modeling, and repetition were the most effective strategies that allow the students to increase their oral skills.

Another study conducted by Mulyanah et al., (2018) in which they were looking forward to finding out whether there was any significant improvement of students' speaking skills after the application of the Communicative Language Teaching Approach. In the end,

the researchers found out that indeed, the use of the CLT approach managed to solve students' limitations on speaking English, their lack of confidence to use the L2 and it was evident the improvement of the students' speaking skills.

At the end of this study, it is sought to answer the following questions, how does the Communicative Language Teaching Approach is related to the improvement of EFL speaking skills? and what are the student's perceptions on the application of the communicative Language Teaching Approach in their English classes? It is of paramount concern in this research to contribute to the Teaching English as a foreign language field because it looks for providing teachers with wider information about how to improve EFL learners' speaking skills (Educación, 2021).

This study was carried out in three main steps. First, chapter one displays relevant information about literature review related to the research topic and a summary of related research studies; second, chapter two contains pertinent information in regards of the settings and participants, and procedures; third, chapter three involves the longest part of this report which involves the results obtained from the pre and post-test, observation sheets and a survey about students' perceptions on the application of role-play, group work and interviews as main the activities that were part of the Communicative Language Teaching Approach implemented during this research intervention. Finally, conclusions and recommendations were drawn.

The conduct of this research study is of paramount importance within the educational field since it is intended to highlight the effectiveness of implementing the CLT approach to enhance students' speaking skills. Moreover, with the obtained results, it is sought to contribute with worthy tools that benefit teachers and students with varied linguistic backgrounds to boost their English lessons experiences.

## Chapter one

### Literature Review

The following section delves into a deep exploration of previous studies conducted by researchers who intended to contribute to the educational field in regards to the implementation of the CLT approach as a means to enhance EFL learners speaking skills in varied scenarios around the world.

#### ***Communicative Language Teaching***

Since its appearance in the 1970s, the Communicative Language teaching Approach (CLT) came to stay and has evolved through the years. Many authors have presented their own definitions regarding this topic. Firstly, Haliwanda (2021) describes CLT as an approach that is used in the teaching English field to emphasize learners' communicative competences to achieve the target language focusing their attention on many aspects such as fluency, accuracy and clarity which are considered when evaluating the English as a Foreign Language learning process.

Secondly, Richards and Rodgers (1986) described some characteristics about CLT approach, they mention that this approach is based on many interactional activities that encourage learners' communicative competences by the application of dialogues, drilling, comprehensive pronunciation, and the use of the effective linguistic system and therefore, it is recognized as a learner-centered approach. Thereby, students are expected to interact with their peers with the aim to become effective communicators who establish genuine interactions.

Harmer (2017) defines CLT as an approach that focuses its attention on encouraging students to communicate within real contexts by using previous language knowledge and based on language functions. Alamri (2018) recognizes CLT as a worldwide predominant teaching approach due to the way that it strengthens teaching and learning processes with a common target medium of teaching language which is communication. Both authors agree that the main objective of this approach is communication, however, they disagree in the sense that not only communication activities must be held to encourage and improve

learners speaking skills, but the same author also remarks the importance of the use of a mix of grammar as well as context to improve learners' communicative skills.

Even when CLT is understood as an approach that shows many positive aspects when teaching and learning in the EFL educative contexts, Asmari (2015) highlights that the implementation of the mentioned approach may represent such a big deal for teachers when they do not count with the necessary materials to successfully carry out a class. In addition, Gabriel (2021) asserts that creating experiential and motivated practices of communicative activities in English classrooms through the application of CLT approach, lead to significant and satisfactory results to enhance learners speaking skills.

According to Lightbown and Spada (2017), foreign language learning refers to the learning of a second language inside a classroom setting in a community where the target language is not used by the community. Therefore, it can be bounded that acquiring the target language may represent such a challenge for learners since they do not have access to an environment where the L2 can be applied and mastered easily.

Finally, it is worth mentioning that according to Mulyanah et al., (2018), Communicative Language Teaching method is appropriate to teach speaking with the aim to help pupils to overcome certain limitations such as lack of motivation and confidence to actively participate in the EFL classroom, this would ensure learners' better skill development.

After gathering many authors' perspectives about which approach should be used inside the English classrooms, it can be asserted that there is not a specific technique, method or approach that ensures total success when teaching EFL. Consequently, it is required that teachers apply an assorted set of materials, techniques, methods, and approaches to get better results on pupils' learning. Nevertheless, the current study aims to compile information related to the effectiveness of the application of the Communicative Language Teaching approach as a means to improve EFL speaking skills.

### ***CLT principles***

Harmer (2017) asserts that CLT Approach derives from two basic guiding principles, the first principle indicates that languages functions are going to be developed by learners according to the use of the language. The second one establishes that when learners are repeatedly exposed to the language and they have more chances to practice and use language in real communicative activities, they will develop and improve their communicative competences in a more natural way. Based on this perspective, it is hoped that after the application of the CLT approach, the participants in this study would be able to carry out more natural conversations with their peers.

Similar to Harmer's assertions, Walia (2012) describes that CLT approach is based on the following principles. First, the practice of communication in real contexts as a means of language acquisition. Second, the integration of different skills in order to enrich communication, and last but not least, is mentioned the importance of fluency as a dimension of effective communication that can be improved after constant trial and error of practicing communicative activities.

Another similar criterion is presented by Desai (2015) who determines the communicative Language Teaching principles based on the application and it is focused on giving importance to meaning and intentions of the speakers. It is also claimed that when applying CLT approach, it would be necessary to focus on mastering the communicative competences of learners and this must go in hand with language teaching and communicative aspects that allow the learners to apply what they have learned structurally. Another principle focusses its attention on the use of the target language inside the English classrooms since this would provide the students with tools to use the target language as well. Likewise, it is established that all language skills are applied, however, it is important to remark on the use of speaking skills to perfectionate them.

The same author also suggests that memorization activities where students learn to repeat specific words, phrases or vocabulary are not an option when developing speaking skills. On the contrary, it is fundamental that teachers look for mastering speaking skills

through the application of cooperative learning activities that foster learners' interaction and therefore functional language would be learned and applied and communicative competences will be developed. As we can see, the teacher plays an important role inside the English classroom due to the fact that they are the ones who make possible the implementation of the CLT Principles with the aim to encourage students to use the target language and consequently, it is expected that speaking skills are developed successfully.

Gapparova (2021) describes 6 basic principles of CLT approach. First, pupils learn to communicate in the target language. Second, different contexts are learned in order to apply language according to the appropriate situations, not just the typical interaction inside the English classroom, but real communicative context, this will provide them with the tools to interact inside formal or informal situations. Third, the author recognizes role-play, games and problems solving tasks as the most effective means to encourage learners to develop their speaking skills. Fourth, continuous interaction provides the learners with the necessary training to use the target language accurately. Fifth, the development of the four macro skills, listening, speaking reading and writing will be put into practice, however, the main focus will be on speaking. Finally, each class topic and activity must be chosen taking into consideration different learning styles and needs with the aim of catching pupils' attention from the very beginning of each class period.

Ma (2009) summarized the Communicative Language Teaching principles as a Communication-centered approach which main focus lies upon ESL/ EFL learners' interactions in situations that should be of course arranged previously to each class with the aim to provide learners with real interactions where tolerance to grammatical errors are accepted but they must be corrected at the end of the students' performance, providing the necessary feedback but after the learners finish their intervention with purpose to avoid that the environment of real communication is interrupted.

It is clearly evident that all the authors agreed on the perspective of CLT as an approach that looks for providing the teachers and learners with the tools to successfully

acquire communicative competences that can be easily applied into real world contexts and loaded of the language structures to used them with the purpose to effectively communicate.

### ***Importance of speaking skills***

Rao (2019), asserts that teachers normally do not give to speaking skills the importance it deserves, on the contrary, they focus their attention on reading and writing skills in order to fulfill knowledge to take evaluations with the aim to obtain a certification instead of acquiring knowledge for real context where practical and real communicative competences are required. The author also emphasizes the idea that the modern world demands that learners develop their communication skills with the purpose of getting better opportunities in the learners near future in which everything seems to be linked with the speaking skills.

A similar perspective was presented by Alrashidi and Plan (2015) who remarked on the importance that students practice their speaking skills in daily activities inside the safety of a classroom for its further application in real world contexts. This would provide them with enough preparation for the possible future real interactions where they would be more confident to use the language by applying implicitly all the background they had gathered when they were involved in a learning process.

According to Dilobar (2022), the importance of speaking skills lies upon its use in face to the modern world where speaking ESL or EFL can mark the difference regarding the English classroom in comparison to real world or any work field where people must have a not just basic, but mastered English level that allow them to carry out their activities establishing natural communication. Therefore, it is necessary to take advantage of the scholar years where a series of resources, activities and techniques can be used to enhance learners' core skills but focusing mainly on speaking skills.

Desai (2015) adds that there is a significant importance on developing speaking on EFL and he also asserts that the functional aspects of language should be exploited and carried out by promoting activities to provoke real communication since that is the main focus on the CLT approach.

Kamolovna (2019) asserted that the importance of teaching speaking skills lied upon the balance of accuracy (the mechanics of the language) and fluency since the combination of both aspects which are considered as productive skills, represent the improvement of the EFL speaking skills. The author also suggested that teachers are the ones who are in charge to form speaking habits in our students, so it would be necessary to maintain a constant upload of a great number of speaking strategies that allow us to increase those skills in our students through the development of efficient conversational lessons.

It is necessary to remark the importance of the development of the core EFL skills; however, the application of the Communicative Language Teaching Approach is based on the importance to include activities that encourage students to use the target language with the purpose to increase learner's speaking skills.

### ***Speaking skills for authentic communication***

One of the most common goals among English teachers is to develop on their students' communicative competences with the aim to fulfill language use demand and in order to carry it out, it will be necessary that teachers foster in their students the four skills of language which are reading, writing, listening and speaking. However, this study will be focused on EFL student's speaking skills through the application of Communicative Language Teaching Approach; therefore, it is necessary to review some of the most common definitions regarding speaking skills (Dos Santos, 2020).

Speaking skills can be easily interpreted as an ability that a student develops inside a classroom. Regarding this topic, Harmer (2017), points out that when learners carry out speaking activities inside a classroom, they could be beneficial for students since they can practice the language in a safe environment in which they can receive timely feedback. The author also mentions that practicing speaking activities could prepare the learners for real communication and therefore, they will become autonomous language users.

Under this perception, as for Ministerio de Educación (2019), developing speaking skills is a fundamental goal in second language acquisition instead of obtaining linguistic content learning. This overview implies that teachers should endow learners with the

necessary tools to become fluent English speakers. Likewise, it is emphasized that learners will be able to become citizens who can establish genuine interactions in their future academic and social contexts.

In similar terms, (Saragih et al., 2022; Nunan, 1995), argument that with the aim to communicate or convey a message successfully, speaking skills must be developed since it will be a means of communication. In the same line, Leong and Ahmadi (2017); Wahyuni et al., (2021) suggested that even though developing speaking skills is very important, learners normally find it to be a very difficult process since they usually cannot match their ideas with the appropriate words to express their thoughts effectively due to many factors such as, lack of confidence, and psychological obstacles when speaking.

### ***Difficulties for teaching and learning speaking skills***

Teaching English as a Foreign Language in a classroom where all or most of students actively participate can be a hard task for teachers. Likewise, the responsibility lies upon teachers who will become facilitators of the learning processes, they step aside and guide students during the class speaking activities. It is necessary to point out on some issues that represent teaching and learning difficulties to develop speaking skills such as the following:

Teaching speaking skills could be a very challenging task for EFL teachers, especially when learners lack of vocabulary and grammar knowledge that support the formation and structure of ideas to convey the desire message, this could cause that teacher and students struggle during the development of speaking skills (Riadil, 2020).

According to Halik and Jayasundara (2021) vocabulary is considered as a large number of words that a person possesses. Since developing speaking skills is a crucial aspect of EFL learning, many researchers agree with the idea that learning vocabulary is the basis of any language due to the fact that this provides the learners with the chance to gather the learned vocabulary on students' brains to create structures that allow them to effectively communicate with others. Thus, the lack of vocabulary could be considered as one of the main difficulties when learning EFL.

Riadil (2019) states that the EFL learners' lack of grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation background can strongly affect learners' performance and hence a psychological side would be affected. Those emotional limitations in the end, could be attributed to the learners' lack of confidence to produce language orally and thus there will not be the expected development of learners speaking skills. Similarly, Halick and Jayasundara (2021) express that the lack of vocabulary knowledge from EFL and ESL speakers represents a barrier in the acquisition of a language. Unfortunately, this is a very common situation among English classrooms that teacher must now how to deal with.

Ulyah et al., (2021) express their refusal to the fact that usually once that teachers focus their attention on planning activities to teach by the application of communicative language teaching approach, they tend to omit the grammar part in their English lessons. The author remarks on the importance of teaching grammar since it would provide learners with bases to structure and convey the desired messages in real communicative situations.

Another main component of language acquisition is comprised by grammar structures that represent a challenge for students when learning EFL since the lack of basic knowledge of grammar could reduce the opportunities to create correct clauses and thus effectively convey messages. In this regard, Rossiter (2020) argued that teaching basic grammar structures can tremendously contribute to the students' progress in language acquisition. By learning grammar, EFL learners would be able to structure in their minds the sentences and messages to be conveyed. Likewise, Hymes (1972) proposed the teaching of grammar as the basis to develop communicative competences on EFL learners in a world that is in constant communication where using English as a foreign language may represent the successful development of communicative skills.

Pronunciation is another aspect that frequently represents a challenge for students in their EFL acquisition since they do not have opportunities to practice the language apart from their English classrooms. In regard to this issue, Jahara and Abdelrady (2021a) argued that by teaching English sounds, practicing, repeating and imitating, EFL learners may reach the desired development and improvement of accurate pronunciation.

EFL learners' lack of pronunciation can become a big deal due to the fact that this issue can lead to students lacking self-confidence of using the target language. As a result, their interaction would be interrupted and limited. For these reasons, it is crucial that EFL teachers constantly motivate their students to practice their pronunciation skills to foster their willingness to actively participate on activities that conduct to enhancing the students' pronunciation (Jahara & Abdelrady, 2021b). Additionally, Gilakjani and Sabouri (2016) highlighted the importance that teacher must be aware of and employ a wide variety of activities, techniques and materials in order to help students to develop their pronunciation skills to be able to convey understandable messages.

Despite EFL teachers from Ecuadorian context use a wide variety of activities to facilitate their students' learning processes and improvement of their speaking skills, a greater number of students tend to struggle when they are required to communicate by applying their English knowledge due to their lack of fluency. In regards of the previously mentioned, Namaziandost et al., (2020) recognized that most of EFL learners' lack of fluency when speaking English. The author also emphasized that implementing cooperative learning or group work activities is an excellent means of developing EFL learners' fluency and as result, their speaking skills would be enhanced as well.

Regarding Foreign language learners' anxiety, much research has been carried out. Oteir and Al-Otavibi (2019) have concluded that anxiety that learners may feel while learning a Second or foreign language, can affect negatively the way learners perceive and acquire the L2, so it is important that the class environment allow pupils to be relaxed in order to enjoy the class and therefore, meaningful learning can contribute to the acquisition of the target language. Similarly, Chou (2018) suggests that in order to help students to reduce their anxiety when speaking, teachers should develop interesting activities inside the classroom. The author also suggests applying real input and real interactions with native speakers. This could encourage learners to continue learning.

In the light of class periods, it is worth mentioning the insufficient time that teachers have to teach English and hence to provide learners with the necessary opportunities to

develop their speaking skills. Regarding this issue, Al Hassan, 2019; Al-Ma'shy, 2011 agree that this is one of the biggest problems teachers must face when developing EFL learner's speaking skills due to the few chances each student may have to interact with their peers.

Besides, Riadil (2020) asserts that the use of learners' mother tongue affects the acquisition of a second language since most EFL students apply L1 inside English classrooms. Another issue that the same author remarks on is that what slows down the learning of a second language is the number of students per classroom. Due to the time assigned for each class period, only some students can be active participants in the Speaking activities proposed by the teachers.

Undoubtedly, the accumulation of all the mentioned issues occurred when learning speaking skills that are described in this section. Further, the evident deficiency in developing speaking skills due to the lack of the second language practice, increases the risk of failure when learners attempt to use the second language in real communication inside or outside the English classrooms and thus, they represent the most common difficulties that both, teachers, and students must face.

### ***Techniques and strategies to develop speaking skills in Communicative Language***

#### ***Teaching***

After gathering many authors' perspectives about which approach should be used inside the English classrooms, it can be asserted that there is not a specific technique, method or approach that ensures total success when teaching EFL. Setiyadi (2020) asserts that it is required that teachers apply an assorted set of materials, techniques, methods, and approaches to have better results on pupil's learning. Similarly, Richards and Rodgers (1986) reported a set of suitable approaches and methods in teaching learning that could help teachers to develop speaking skills on their EFL learners. Such mentioned approaches are Natural Approach, Audio-lingual, Total Physical Response (TPR), Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and others. The author remarks the wide variety that teachers must choose and apply inside their English classroom taking into consideration learners

diverse needs, and learning styles since not only one technique can be used to ensure language learning as desired.

Ashraf (2018) expresses that with the purpose that teachers select effective resources, activities, techniques, and methodologies to be applied in the class, it will be necessary to consider the student's background, needs, learning styles and class objectives. This would allow teachers to manage to develop the class in the sense of reaching the set learning goals inside a well-prepared environment.

Toro et al., (2019) concluded that in order to provide the learners with more opportunities to use English language inside the classroom, it will be necessary to frequently incorporate varied techniques and strategies to encourage and maintain learners motivated. Additionally, it is mentioned that students should receive the necessary feedback on the activities they develop in order to be aware of the mistakes and correct them for future participation.

After reviewing different authors perspectives about the use of Communicative Language Teaching for improving speaking skills, they agree on the use of varied activities that help them to learn by interacting with their peers and overcoming their language limitations in their speaking skills and even would become them more confident when using L2 (Mulyanah, 2018).

Similarly, Kamolovna (2019) asserts that teachers needed to enrich their repertoire of techniques and strategies to be applied in relation to the CLT Approach. Thus, teachers would be able to ensure learners interactions in real contexts that consolidate their speaking skills. Along these lines, some of the techniques that are going to be considered and applied during the development of this intervention, will be the following:

Gusmuliana et al., (2021) describes that one of them is Role play which is one of the most appropriate methods to enhance EFL learners' confidence when developing their speaking skills. They also mention that Role play is understood by many authors as a task in which the students are assigned an activity to represent or perform a role individually, in peer or in group work and eventually, it would increase students' motivation and creativity.

Moreover, the constant practice of role play is essential to perfect any skills that teachers may intend to boost on their students and consequently, it will enhance learners' communication and interpersonal skills. Notwithstanding, role play techniques can be applied to either low- or high-level students.

Krebt (2017) asserted that there are three types of roleplay activities, such subtypes are fully scripted, semi-scripted and non-scripted roleplay. The first one is understood as memorization activities where learners repeat and memorize the role or a specific phrase to participate. The second one involves providing a model of conversation with gaps in the conversation which learners must complete during the development of the activity. Finally, in the third kind of role play, students will be provided with specific words according to the learners' needs in order to create and complete a dialogue. This last one, is more suitable to be applied with students with high English level.

Regarding the application of Roleplay activities in Communicative Language Teaching, Rahmatillah (2019) mentions that one of the boundaries about roleplay activities is that they can be applied inside or even outside the English classroom. The author also enlightens the learners' perceptions about the application of roleplay in CLT approach and they generally find it interesting to be the ones who are able to start a conversation since they have acquired the skill after being applied the mentioned technique.

Group work is considered as another alternative technique to stimulate students' speaking participation in group discussion inside an English classroom. Lobachova (2018) suggests that teachers must create an environment in which students feel comfortable to speak. Besides, teachers should provide a role model to follow in order that students have a clearer idea about what and how to say it. The author also proposes that it is necessary to emphasize the importance that learners express themselves. For instance, the teacher should clarify that students can make mistakes while participating and they will not be punished for it, on the contrary, they could receive the feedback they need. To encourage learners' interactions, teachers should provide students with interesting discussion topics that go according to the learners' level. In addition, students must receive the necessary

information to open and to be active participants in the discussion. Consequently, it is hoped that by applying these techniques, learners improve their speaking skills and become active speakers willing to interact in a group discussion.

Regarding this issue, Dilovar (2022) recommends teachers to adopt several techniques to develop EFL speaking skills, among them, the author mentions that presenting information about themselves and mostly the application of pair or group work since this technique would provide the learners with chances to express their ideas in a reduced group where they could feel more confident in a congenial environment to speak.

Guado and Mayorga (2021) describe that the application of communicative activities and the principles of CLT, provides students with opportunities to process language and demonstrated to be an effective way for students to respond positively to the application of communicative techniques since they were favorable for enhancing learners speaking skills.

The implementation of Gamification in Communicative Language Teaching is also considered in this intervention and it is important to highlight that although the fast advances of technology, current classes especially in the intervened Public School not necessarily count with technological resource, so based on that point of view, English with Cambridge (2019) argument that, in those kinds of situations in which there are not technological resources is where the need to implement face to face activities for English classes is born. Gamification is not necessarily related only to the use of technological resources but using other strategies can provide students with gamification elements to increase learners' motivation.

Similarly, (Liu, et al., 2021; Dewi, et al., 2017) claim that games can provide a set of benefits such as enjoyment, pleasure, structure, and more important motivation when learning a second language. According to Dilovar (2022), playing games is seen as activities that function as catchers of students' attention. Under this perception, it can be said that teachers should use gamification to engage students with a difficult class topic and maintain learners motivated. Considering the fact that students are individuals who differ in their learning styles, the author also remarks the importance of games as means of reaching the

learning goals by reducing the learner's anxiety inside English classrooms, especially if the learners are children. Consequently, educators are invited to make use of this worthy element in the teaching field to enhance their pupils' speaking skills in a way that makes the learning experience into meaningful learning process.

Gómez (2019) argument that teachers normally base their classroom speaking activities on drilling or even on repetition of memorized texts which is not the best alternative to help learners to improve their speaking skills. The same author also asserted that these kinds of activities based on repetitive phrases indeed just foster lack of confidences on students' participations since they have not acquired the skill to speak but to repeat the information that teachers have provided. Moreover, such activities are not considered when learners are evaluated since speaking skills are normally left out of the written evaluations. Therefore, the author mentions the need to include activities that help to boost learner's speaking skills by the application of the CLT approach with gamification in a way that commits and engages pupils in active class participation in a motivated way.

Following the same line of applying gamification inside the EFL classrooms, Urrutia and Vega (2010), enlightened the importance of using games since they represent a motivating experience for learners who usually set apart their fears to speak English in front of their peers and the teachers. Thereby, students reinforce their confidence and perceive speaking as a natural process where mistakes lose prominence to focus on successes.

This perspective goes in hand with Ashraf (2018) argument in which he says that teachers are in charge of providing enjoyable and active classrooms environments where students can engage with their learning process and develop a good relationship with English as a Foreign Language even though they do not have more opportunities to practice the L2 outside the English classroom.

Finally, it can be concluded that based on different researchers' perspective, game elements are a powerful tool for triggering engagement factors with the aim to build motivation on students and foster their active participation inside the English classrooms by following rules that lead to reach the class purposes.

### ***Learners' motivation in EFL classrooms***

Many studies have been carried out by different authors and they have positively demonstrated that motivation is strongly related to EFL engagement in the classroom activities and consequently, second language successful acquisition. According to Harmer (1983), motivation is intended as an internal process that moves a person to keep on doing something. In the light of the previously mentioned, it is hoped that a positive learner's attitude is adopted by the students during the learning process, and this can occur as long as teachers set a motivating environment taking into consideration learners' pace and needs.

Following that line, Lobachova (2019) asserts that teachers must create a good class environment where students can naturally communicate leaving out feelings of shame. Teachers should embrace a very well-organized class in order to encourage learners to express their opinions, avoiding possible negative situations. Henceforth students would feel motivated.

Regarding this topic, Alshenqeeti (2018) asserts that raising motivation is not a role merely in charge of teachers, but it has a big part with what individual learners feel inside as part of the intrinsic motivation to learn. Those assumptions are strongly related to Harmer (2017) who claims that there are two types of motivation which are intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. On one hand, extrinsic motivation involves an external impulse based on rewards or prizes to accomplish a task thus, something from outside that moves one to continue. Under this perception, teachers must be attentive to the use of extrinsic motivation inside their classrooms in order to avoid possible undesired behaviors from learners. On the other hand, intrinsic motivation encompasses a natural and self-desire to move forward, a positive attitude towards life, and the desire to have positive experiences. In addition, Ryan and Deci (2000) conclude that intrinsic motivation tends to reduce with the passing of the school years. Unfortunately, this is reflected in students' lack of interest in the teaching-learning process. Therefore, the better motivated the students feel, the greater improvements in a student's speaking skills can be achieved.

### ***Previous studies***

In order to provide a broader perspective on this research study, the following previous studies are worth mentioning.

Irianti and Muja (2017) conducted a study with two main objectives. First, to find out how the communicative approach improves the students' speaking fluency and second, what was the students' perceptions of the communicative approach implementation. Since the researchers noticed that students had difficulties with their speaking performances, the authors conducted research in which they applied the Communicative Language Teaching approach through Classroom Action Research (CAR) technique. The researchers used a pre-test, a post-test, and an open-ended questions interview on 33 middle-level speaking scores students from SMPN 1 Tenggarong. During the process of data analyses, the results showed that there was no significant distinction between students' levels before the researchers' intervention. On the contrary, after applying the post-test, there was a significant improvement in the student's English level, and it was demonstrated that only four students could have managed to improve their English level. The application of different class activities helped the students to get used to the methodology, and therefore, their fluency in speaking was improved. Finally, it was concluded that applying the CLT approach was an interesting and attractive method for EFL learners, who evidently increased their English-speaking skills.

A similar study was carried out by Haliwanda (2021), which was based on two kinds of problems faced by students from SMK Negeri 1 Bener Meriah. The first factors were internal feelings of shame, insecurity, or lack of confidence, and second, the learners remarked difficulties with their lack of fluency, accuracy, and clarity when using English. His study's main focus was on students' fluency, accuracy, and clarity. The researchers direct their study on the hypothesis that applying the CLT Approach would help solve the learners' inconvenience about their internal limitations and the lack of fluency, accuracy, and clarity when using English. A total of 220 participants from the XI grade of SMK Negeri 1 Benner Meriah were included in this intervention. Consequently, experimental quantitative research

was applied. The main instruments used in this research for data collection were an oral pre and post-test, and after analyzing the collected data, it was found the effectiveness and efficiency of the Communicative Language Teaching approach to teach English and enhance learners' speaking skills regarding their fluency, accuracy, and clarity. In comparison to the results of the pre-test, after the application of the post-test, the effectiveness of the application of the CLT approach was confirmed to improve scores first fluency, then clarity, and finally, accuracy.

The study carried out by Mulyanah et al., (2018) had the objective of helping students to overcome their limitations in using English both inside and outside their English classrooms and overcome their difficulties in mastering their speaking skills. A total of 60 participants from SMPN 21 Tangerang were included in this research, with VIII A as the experimental class taught by CLT and VIII B as the controlled class taught with the conventional method. To carry out this study, an experimental research design was used, and in order to collect data, the researchers applied a pre-test and a post-test to measure learners' speaking skills. At the end of the intervention and after analyzing the gathered data, it was concluded that the implementation of the CLT approach significantly improved students' speaking skills regarding their fluency and confidence when using English.

Guado and Mayorga (2021) carried out a study with the goal of applying CLT activities to determine the effectiveness of the mentioned approach to developing students' speaking skills. A total of 94 students in the second year of Bachelor Education were participants in this study. They were divided into two groups; the first one belonged to the experimental group, in which the researchers applied the CLT approach, and to the control group, in which the traditional method was applied. This study was carried out under the application of a descriptive, prospective, longitudinal, quasi-experimental, and quantitative design. The instrument used to gather information was a pre-test, and a post-test designed on the A1 level according to the CEFR was applied at the beginning and the end of the intervention. At the end of the intervention and based on the positive results learners

achieved in the different class tasks, the researchers concluded that the application of the CLT activities was effective for developing students' development of speaking skills.

A similar study was carried out by Toro et al., (2018) to determine whether applying the CLT approach in the English classroom could improve EFL speaking skills. First, the researchers included a total of 105 students from 2nd, 3rd, and 4th grades and also 6 English teachers from an Elementary Public school. Second, a questionnaire for the teachers, a pre-test and post-test for students, and an observation sheet were the instruments designed and applied at various stages of the intervention, and a mixed method was used to conduct this study. Finally, the outcome of this study disclosed that many of the teachers who participated in the study used modeling, repetition, and pair and group work as their primary methods, and students felt assertive when teachers used modeling. Despite the application of these techniques, the researchers did not obtain the desired results due to the lack of students' oral interaction and the low frequency of the application of the proposed activities.

## Chapter two

### Method

#### ***Settings and Participants***

This research study was carried out in a public educational institution located in the south of Quito, Ecuador. This public institution has arranged a set of 3 English class periods per week in which learners could be intervened. A total of 70 students between 12 to 13 years old were enrolled in the 7th grade of basic education and where participants of this study were distributed in an equal number of students per group.

#### ***Procedures***

Thirty-five students were included in the experimental group, where the CLT approach was implemented by using a set of varied communicative activities such as role-play, group work, interviews, and dialogues that allowed students to communicate authentically with their peers to improve their speaking skills. On the other side, 35 students were assigned to the control group, which was taught within regular classes by following the traditional method, where most of the activities were based on learning vocabulary and grammar structures to develop their speaking skills.

The intervention started by carrying out the process of collecting information about previous studies related to this research work. After that, it was necessary to request the permissions of the authorities from the intervened institution before the primary intervention was conducted. Then, a pre-test was applied to appraise learners' English level before the main intervention of this research study. The pre-test had to be applied in groups since it was a very time-consuming activity that was not possible to accomplish during a class period. Therefore, students were arranged in groups of 4 students in order to answer a total of two closed questions and four open-ended questions that intended to collect reliable information about students' performances on specific parameters such as content, vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and fluency; thus, it was necessary the use of a rubric to assign scores to the student's answers.

During the main intervention, a set of different topics were covered per class in order to teach students varied contents such as free time activities, family members and adjectives vocabulary, rules to create comparative adjectives, be good at, the modal verb can, regular and irregular verbs vocabulary, modal verb should combined with the parts of the school vocabulary, superlative adjectives with animals and adjectives vocabulary, seasons of the year and clothes vocabulary and finally, wh-questions were presented, reviewed and applied.

The main intervention was carried out by the implementation of the CLT approach, including communicative activities such as role-play, group work, and interviews. For each class, students had to perform activities that allowed them to use the language inside the classroom. Observation sheets were also used by the English teacher in order to register the student's progress during the class performances. The parameters considered in the class observation sheet contained the following aspects to be evaluated; the use of grammar structures, games, vocabulary, the implementation of role-play activities, group activities to encourage students' confidence to participate during the English lessons, students' motivation to continue learning and the application of the CLT approach to help the learners to improve their speaking skills.

The post-test was applied at the end of the research intervention, and once the information was gathered, each of the responses was tabulated and analyzed in tables for their easy understanding by following the same parameters as the pre-test with the aim of answering the research questions posed for this research work.

After the researcher's intervention finished, a satisfaction survey graded under the modality of the Likert scale was applied to all the participants, and in order to help students to understand the statements considered in the satisfaction survey easily, there was the need to apply it on the learners' native language. Such a survey was created and applied by using the Google Forms tools. The survey allowed the collection of data regarding the students' perception of how implementing communicative activities inside their English classroom benefited the development of their speaking skills.

The experimental and control groups received the same content in the English lessons, but the differences were the application of the CLT methodology and the materials. Additionally, the results were contrasted with the satisfaction survey focused on collected information about the student's perception of the application of the CLT approach and the observation sheets used by the teacher to evaluate the student's performance within the given lessons. Eventually, and after the data collection process was concluded, the organization, preparation of statistical analysis, and interpretation of the found results had to be done by the researcher.

Since this study intended to measure the magnitude of the application of the Communicative Language Teaching Approach to improve the EFL speaking skills and the perceptions of the participants, a mixed method design has been chosen to conduct this research study (Creswell & Guetterman 2018). Likewise, an experimental design was used since the study intended to establish the cause and effect of change in the dependent and independent variables after the intervention. It was expected that the control group could provide the necessary information to contrast the results of the interventions regarding the application of the Communicative Language Teaching approach in the experimental group and the Traditional method in the control group.

## Chapter three

### Description Analysis and Interpretation of Results

The following section is based on the analysis and interpretation of the results of a Pre-test, Post-test, observation sheet and a satisfaction survey that were conducted with the 7th graded students from a public institution in the south of Quito.

**Table 1**

*Results of the Pre-test and post-test from experimental and control group after the application of CLT approach*

Pre-test and Post-test results						
Parameter	Experimental Group			Control Group		
	Pre-test	Post-test	Improvement	Pre-test	Post-Test	Improvement
Content	1,25	1,75	0,50	1,17	1,53	0,36
Vocabulary	1,23	1,91	0,68	1,15	1,69	0,54
Grammar	1,15	1,74	0,59	1,01	1,44	0,43
Pronunciation	1,03	1,54	0,51	0,98	1,05	0,07
Fluency	0,9	1,46	0,56	0,9	1	0,10
<b>Total Score</b>	5,56	8,4		5,21	6,71	

*Note:* Each parameter was graded out of 2 points giving a total of 10 points for the pre and post-test.

Table 1 displays the results of the pre-test from both Experimental (35 participants) and Control group (35 participants), and the following lines are focused on describing each of the parameters considered for this analysis. It is also important to clarify that each parameter, content, vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and fluency were graded out of 2 points each, which means that the total score of 10/10 points for the pre-test.

Regarding *content*, students from the experimental group obtained an average of 1,25 while the pre-test average from control group was 1,17. This data evidenced that from the beginning, the experimental group demonstrated a better average grade performance in comparison to the use of content on student's answers in the pre-test. It is essential to point out that the assigned grade was focused on evaluating students English background of the learned contents previously to the research intervention have started.

According to the rubric designed for analyzing the pre-test results, most of the students' answers demonstrated to have a regular domain of the class contents since they did not use the adequate words to provide clear and well-structured sentences on their answers. Most of pupil's answers lacked content and it was evident the students' deficiencies on the used content, and another determinant on their performance was that they felt very nervous to speak English in an interview for first time.

The second parameter considered for this analysis was *vocabulary*, where students from experimental group reached a grade of 1,23 .This results showcased that a great number of students used a few words from the learned vocabulary to answer the proposed question form the pre-test. Similarly, the control group obtained an average grade of 1,15. This shows a low but reasonable grasp of vocabulary application in the answers that students provided. Nevertheless, it can be denoted that improvements can be done as well in order to enhance learners' overall language skills that lead to the enrichment of terminology that learners may apply in future English-speaking activities.

During the pre-test application, it was possible to denote that in both control and experimental groups, students had a short amount of background vocabulary. This was easily singled out due to students' answers included a limited range of words related to free time activities such as *play soccer*, that is the most played sport at the intervened school; no more than three or four family members hence, *mother, father, brother* or *sister* which were the most repeated answers, or clothes vocabulary were *pants, coat* and *shoes* were the most common answers provided; likewise, and when students were inquired about their favorite animal, the *dog* and *cat* were the most common answers, only few students provided different answers such as *rabbit, fox, capibara* and *lion*.

Regarding school subject's vocabulary, most of the students' answers included *English* and *Mathematics* as their favorite subject at school; notwithstanding, they were not able to pronounce those words correctly and as it was the beginning of the intervention, the researcher did not provide feedback to students, the process only was focused on collecting students' answers in a peaceful environment in which they could freely use the language.

However, despite pupils possessed vocabulary knowledge it is needed to be extended so the students can actively interact with their peers and communicate accurately otherwise, this issue will become into a barrier on the learning of the target language (Halick & Jayasundara 2021). It is of high importance to mention that according to the study conducted by Riadil (2020), this lack of vocabulary that students presented, can end up into a challenging issue when students want to express their ideas or convey any kind of message and therefore, they may struggle when they have to interact by applying their speaking skills. The lack of vocabulary may restrict the learners' communicative abilities and therefore, their responses to the pre-test questions became vague and imprecise. Likewise, not only speaking may be affected but, the correct and complete transmission of messages and their participation on meaningful real conversations.

*Grammar*, which was the third parameter included in table 1, the experimental group only accounted for 1,15 as the average score. In fact, this data showed a decrease in the average obtained compared to the previously analyzed parameter. According to the rubric used to score the pre-test answers, this meant that students only used some correct structures to provide answers to the questions posed. On the other hand, the control group score was 1,01 which is a lot lower than the experimental group grade. It was possible to come out with the fact that students were applying a few structures when answering questions. During this process, students tended to feel very nervous, so they were not able to answer the questions correctly; therefore, their answer lacked correct grammar structures. In fact, some of the answers that students from both experimental and control groups provided for the question *What is your favorite animal?* were mostly, *play soccer* and *play video games*. Consequently, it was evident that students did not know how to provide full answers to this kind of question. Another question was *Could you compare two people from your family?* and half of the students answered by providing family members vocabulary and some adjectives just to provide a description more than a comparison by applying correct comparative adjectives. According to Ulyah et al., (2021), grammar may represent the basis for learners to create grammatically well-structured ideas, sentences or phrases since it

provides them with the necessary tools to create coherence and include clarity in their communication. Due to the fact that students had deficiency on meaningful background knowledge about grammar structures, their ideas lacked precision and coherence and thus their messages were not conveyed successfully which is reflected on the grade obtained.

While students answered the questions of the pre-test, most of them demonstrated their lack of knowledge on grammar structures since they were not able to answer questions that involved the comparative adjective structure questions and pupils were not able to answer them correctly. Similar observations can be made regarding the students' answers focused on modal verb *should*, where students were not able to answer closed questions about the things they should or should not do in the different parts of the school. In fact, students were not able to identify either the parts of the school or basic verbs included in the questions.

The fourth analyzed parameter was *pronunciation*. In which the experimental group obtained a score of 1,03 from the total obtained by the interviewed students since most of their answers lacked accurate pronunciation. Similarly, the control group only reached a score of 0,98. Unfortunately, this showed the students' poor and insecure pronunciation of the used words, this goes hand in hand with what Riadil (2019) confirmed about EFL lack of pronunciation that is usually linked to the lack of grammar knowledge and thus, it was the case of the intervened students that directly affected their pronunciation which may significantly influence the development of speaking skills among the intervened students since it breaks the natural flow of communication.

When students were asked, *what clothes do you wear when it is winter?* They provided most of their answers only by repeating what their partners were saying, but unfortunately, they were just repeating wrongly the clothes vocabulary provided by their peers. Many of the responses issued by students were for instance, *boots* or *bots* to refer to boots, also, *geivs* or *glais* or *gloves* referring to gloves and *sweet y pants* referring to sweater and pants. Based on these answers, it could be evidenced that students tended to pronounce words as they would do it in their mother tongue, it means that they were

pronouncing each letter and syllable as they would do it in Spanish and moreover, they use *y* instead of using the conjunction *and* to list the clothes from their answers.

The fifth reviewed factor was *fluency*, which had the lowest grade from all the evaluated parameters from both experimental and control group. It is necessary to emphasize that the score of 0,90 was equal for each of the groups. This indicated that since the aforementioned parameters considered for this pre-test obtained low grade, it may directly affect the fluency in the communicative process due to the effect that everything goes in line with students' process and efficient use of, content, vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation and fluency.

During the application of the pre-test, it was possible to notice that students have an acceptable use of the contents they had learned previously to this intervention. However, it was clearly evident that students could improve their speaking skills since they demonstrated to be eager to learn and felt anxious when they wanted to answer the questions.

Pitifully, their limited knowledge of contents, grammar and vocabulary did not allow students to express all their ideas, on the contrary, they tended to stop speaking or even, they tried to use their mother tongue to answer the questions and thus, phrases such as *no teacher* or *no entiendo* were issued. Indeed, it was evident that students felt frustrated because they could not communicate accurately and they were not able to understand the questions and even worse, they did not know how or what to answer. Similar to previous observations, when students were asked about their favorite school subjects and favorite animal, pupils just used their previous knowledge about subjects and animals' vocabulary to answer; however, most of their answer included mispronunciations and even the utilization of Spanish words such as *Natural ciencias*, *estudios sociales* or *inglés*. Likewise, students mispronounced the animals' vocabulary and that situation, negatively impacted the obtained results that were interpreted as a poor and insecure use on the target language. This perception is similar to Wahyuni et al., (2021) suggestions about the difficulties that students may face when using the target language and he also mentioned that some psychological

factors and the lack of confidence may affect the students' performance in regards of matching their ideas with the message they want to convey.

On the other side, there were also a few students who did not have difficulties to answer the posed questions and just answered confidently; however, it could be evidence the need to improve their knowledge of vocabulary, grammar structures, and practice their English pronunciation to be able to provide accurate and coherent answers in a fluent manner when it is required.

The total average from the five parameters taken into consideration from the pre-test of the experimental group was 5,56 out 10 points which is similar to the average grade achieved by the control group that was 5,21 in relation to the total 10 points expected to be obtained in the test that represent the 100% of the total grade. As it is clearly evident, there is a high range of improvements that still can be done on students in order to manage learner's improvements focused on the class content acquisition, grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation and fluency in regards of developing EFL speaking skills.

Once the intervention was completed, and the ten English lessons were given, the post-test was applied in both, the control group and the experimental group in order to evidence the effects of the implementation of the Communicative Language Teaching Approach to improve EFL speaking skills in the experimental group and the Traditional method was applied in the control group.

The first parameter considered in table 2 is *Content* which showcases an increase from 1,25 points in the pre-test to 1,75 points obtained in the post-test. This represents a favorable improvement of 0,50 points in content usage from the experimental group. Similar results can be observed from the control group who denotes an increase from 1,17 in the pre-test results to 1,53 in the post test, representing an improvement of 0,36 in regards of content.

By analyzing these results, it is feasible to appreciate the progress that Experimental and control group exhibited, however, it is necessary to point out that the experimental group reached a greater amount of improvement percentage in comparison to the control group.

Such results suggest that the application of the CLT activities such as role-play, peer and group work, speaking games, dialogues, and interviews, had a more significant impact on their learning process to develop speaking skills in order to convey messages by using the appropriate and learned content to establish effective communicative interactions.

In the same way, the improvement percentage reached by the control group albeit a slightly lesser extend of progress than the one reached by the experimental group, the results indicated that the traditional methodology displayed to provide regular English classroom instructions that include activities such as writing and repeating the vocabulary words, teaching grammar structures, and writing sentences by applying the learned vocabulary, also contributed to the improvement of students target language acquisition, probably not in the same dimension that the CLT Approach did it but it also helped to improve learners' acquisition of language.

By displaying an increase in the average score from 1,23 in the pre-test to 1,91 points in the post-test, the experimental group denoted a rate of improvement of 0,68 in terms of vocabulary. Similar results were displayed by the control group that exhibits an increasing score from 1,15 in the pre-test to 1,69 in the post test from the control group which denoted an improvement of 0,57 in the vocabulary applied to answer the post-test. This showed that once again, both groups showcased a rate of improvement after the application of CLT Approach and Traditional methodology correspondingly.

Most of the answers that the students provided in the post-test, from experimental and control group exhibit the inclusion of a wide range of the learned vocabulary during the intervention. It is of paramount importance to mention that after the researcher's intervention of ten English classes where a set of communicative activities to enhance speaking skills were displayed, most of the students from experimental group were able to utilize a wide and varied set of vocabulary about free time activities, adjectives to describe people and animals, school subjects, parts of the school, verbs, clothes and seasons were considered to answer the post-test questions.

This evidenced that the experimental group continued to outperform the control group even when there was only a slight difference among the two groups; however, the application of CLT activities helped to enhance speaking skills of students from the experimental group by the implementation of a wide list of vocabulary.

The overall responses to this question included in the post-test had a positive connotation in regards of the third parameter which is grammar. For this parameter, the experimental group reached an increasing score from 1,15 in the pre-test to 1,74. This data represents an improvement of 0,59 points in the mentioned parameter. In the same way, the control group increased their score form 1,01 points in the pre-test to 1,44 points in the post-test and thus, an improvement of 0,43 was denoted. The overall gathered information indicated that the experimental group demonstrated a better understanding and use of grammatical rules and structures to provide answers to the post-test questionnaire.

While the post-test was being conducted, students from the experimental group expressed their nervousness about being inquired, however, after the teachers' motivational activities, such as brain gym, games, and rewards based on scores, engage students into the activity and most of the pupils started to answer the questionnaire and the majority of the students provided accurate answers where the grammatical structures were applied.

Answering the question about the things that students should or should not do in their school, it turned to be one of the easiest questions to answer for students since the use of modal verb should was one of the most accurately answers provided from learners due to they really liked to recognize the parts of the school, where they study, and the things they should or should not do there. During the class performances, pupils had to interact by asking questions to their peers in order to ask and provide answers, so students were able to easily recognize the positive or negative answer to the questions. Some of the questions were for instance, *should you eat in the classroom?* or *should you play soccer I the soccer field?* And so, learners could easily identify the positive or negative response such as, *yes, I should* or *no, I shouldn't*, depending on the place from school and the verbs they learned to be applied during the learning of modal verb should. Therefore, it was possible to evidence

the student's accuracy on the correct use of grammar structures regarding the use of modal verb should.

For the third question of the post-test questionnaire, *could you compare two people from your family?* most of the students took a moment to organize their ideas and then answered by applying their new learned vocabulary about family members and the rules to create comparative adjectives. Most of the pupils' answers went for instance, *yes, my mother is more intelligent than my sister, yes, my grandmother is older than my father, yes, my sister is more intelligent than my brother* or *yes, my sister is sportier than my sister*. Based on those responses it is clearly evident that students were able to apply more content, vocabulary and correct grammar structures to convey their ideas about the questions asked.

During the post-test application, it was possible to evidence that despite the given lessons by applying varied contents, activities and strategies to learn English in order to enhance EFL learners speaking skills, there were some cases of students who tended to pronounce all the letters from the verbs in -ing, gerund form; for instance, they say *my favorite free time activity is playing video games* or *my favorite free time activity is going shopping* but they still continued pronouncing wrongly the end of the verbs in gerund form remarking the -ing letters. Some others just continue mentioning the free time activity by using the incorrect structure such as *My favorite free time activity is play video games*. All of these situations were a determinant fact that allowed the improvement and, in some cases, the maintenance of the overall grade for the post test.

There were also some situations during the interview when some students got stuck in some question from the questionnaire so, their partners tended to provide positive and supportive phrases such as *continue*, or *you can do it*, this demonstrates that students also learned to be more empathetic with their partners during their interventions.

It is also important to bear in mind the use of a wide variety of vocabulary in accordance with grammar structures, allowing students to accurately convey comprehensible messages into real situations. This goes hand in hand with Hymes (1972)

proposal of communicative competence in which it is promoted the learning of grammar and vocabulary as the basis to generate real communication and thus, the development of speaking skills.

Despite many authors suggested that English lessons should not be conducted only by teaching grammar, it is recognized by Hymes (1972) as being one of the most important elements when learning a language since it provides students with the basis for their future oral production.

When analyzing the fourth parameter considered for this post-test which is *pronunciation*, our attention mainly focused on the experimental group average grade since increased from 1,03 points in the pre-test to 1,54 points in the post-test indicating an improvement of 0,51 in this parameter. On the other hand, the control group denoted an increase from 0,98 points in the pre-test to 1,03 points in the post-test which represents a very low rate of improvement at 0.07 regarding the students' pronunciation of words.

After comparing both groups, it is observable that the experimental group displayed a significant improvement in comparison to the control group that obtained a small improvement, and which indicates a smaller enhancement in the pronunciation area. This minimal rate of improvement may be caused due to the fact that students from the control group did not develop activities that helped them to improve their pronunciation because the traditional method focused mainly on writing and memorizing vocabulary and grammar structures to be used solely for the purpose of writing short ideas focused on the memorization of grammar rules.

On the contrary, based on the positive results obtained from the experimental group, it is advisable that the intervention focused on improving EFL speaking skills that they received by the development of class activities such as role play, repeating vocabulary, creating short dialogues, interviewing other students, and playing games, had a substantial positive influence on the students' ability to accurately produce oral interaction by using correct pronunciation of words.

The last parameter considered for this analysis of the post-test was *fluency*. In this regard, the experimental group obtained an average grade that increased from 0,90 in the pre-test to 1,46 in the post-test which indicates an improvement of 0,56 points in comparison with the control group that reached an increase from 0,90 in the pre-test to 1 point as average score in the post-test. This represents an increase in the percentage of improvement of 11% regarding students' fluency on their oral interactions.

It is noticeable a substantial progress that can be evidenced in the experimental group where the ability to speak fluently denoted more coherence than the control group since most the answers provided by students were done fluently and applying the learned vocabulary about animals and the adjectives to describe them. During this data collection process, students made use of well-structured sentences combining at least two adjectives to provide a reason about why certain animals were their favorite ones.

Some of the responses that students provided at the beginning of this intervention about pupils' favorite animal, were inhibited by the lack of vocabulary and as a result, students used no more than three animals from the student's answers; however, after the CLT Approach implementation in this research study, the students' answers were extended and enhanced and they could respond in this way, *my favorite animal is dog because they are cute and friendly, or my favorite animal is cat because they are beautiful*. Very few students were able to provide some answers that included a slightly more complicated word formation and combination such as *my favorite animal is the dog because they are cute, fast and big*. These kinds of answers denoted that some students were able to apply the adjectives and animals' vocabulary by using fluently the conjunctions *because* and *and* in their responses.

To sum up, and based on the obtained results from the experimental group in comparison with the control group where the content, grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation and fluency were the evaluated parameters, the experimental group showcased an evident and significant increment in their speaking skills and thus, this suggests that the methodology, techniques, materials and activities implemented as part of the Communicative Language teaching approach impacted positive and significantly on the

students overall language development. Likewise, it is underscored the importance of the implementation of tailored instructional approaches that focus on fostering pupils' language proficiency on safe and comfortable learning environments where students have the opportunity to confidently make use of the language in order to achieve feasible goals such as developing speaking skills (Lobachova, 2019).

After the analysis of each the parameter considered for this intervention, it can be easily recognized that the implementation of the CLT Approach is intricately related to the remarkable improvements of students speaking skills that were intervened along this research study. Now is the moment to analyze the information obtained from the survey about the students' perceptions regarding the implementation of the CLT Approach to improve their speaking skills.

**Table 2**

*Students' perceptions on the implementation of Communicative Language Teaching Approach*

Perception statements	Student's Perceptions on CLT approach							
	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly agree	
The grammar structures that I have learned through the application of CLT Approach helped me to develop my speaking skills.	2	5,70%	6	17,10%	8	22,90%	19	54,30%
I felt motivated to interact with my partners in the group-work activities that promoted speaking development.	2	5,70%	1	2,90%	9	25,70%	23	65,70%
I had the feeling of confidence when participating in speaking activities promoted by the application of CLT.	3	8,60%	3	5,70%	10	28,60%	20	57,10%
The implementation of games, role-play, and group work related to CLT	2	5,70%	2	5,70%	10	28,60%	21	60%

approach allowed me to use the learned grammar structures and vocabulary in real communication activities.

It was more dynamic to learn new vocabulary by participating in games that were part of the CLT Approach.

The acquisition of new vocabulary allowed me to feel more confident when participating in group work activities.

The application of Communicative Language Teaching activities helped me to improve my English speaking skills.

The application of the learned grammar structures helped me to become a fluent English speaker.

I consider that participating in games during the English class helped me to learn grammar structures.

Participating in group work activities helped me to reduce anxiety when speaking in English.

2	5,70%	1	2,90%	8	22,80%	24	68,60%
2	5,70%	2	5,70%	11	31,40%	20	57,20%
1	2,90%	2	5,70%	6	17,20%	26	74,30%
3	8,60%	2	5,70%	14	40%	16	45,70%
2	5,70%	4	11,40%	11	31,5%	18	51,40%
1	2,90%	1	2,90%	12	34,20%	21	60%
<b>M</b>	<b>5,72%</b>	<b>6,57%</b>	<b>28,28%</b>	<b>59,43%</b>			

Note: This table measured the students' perceptions based on a Likert Scale.

Table 2 comprises the students' perceptions regarding the CLT approach to improve their speaking performance.

Regarding the first statement, *the grammar structures that I have learned through the application of CLT Approach helped me to develop my speaking skills*, the results of this

survey showcased that a significant portion of students that represent the 54,30%, strongly agreed with the posed statement. This means that most students considered as positive the implementation of communicative language teaching approach in regards of grammar structures to improve their speaking skill. These results go hand in hand with the post-test results where students demonstrated a good domain on the use of grammatical structures to convey their answer to the researcher. These results also go in accordance with what was observed during the class performance that when students made any mistake during their class interventions, they tried immediately to correct the mistake in order to provide an answer with correct structures. It is necessary to rescue that some students were very supportive and when there was a student that was struggling during speaking tasks, they helped each other and provided the necessary corrections as well to help their peers to provide better results.

At the beginning of the intervention, learners tended to use the conjunction *y* instead of *and* to name the last option of the things they were mentioning in their answers even though this was part of the given lessons. However, after the intervention, pupils were able to use the correct connector in the target language. A lower percentage of 22,90% was depicted from students who agreed about their development of speaking skills thanks to the grammar structures they had learned when using the application of CLT Approach.

Since learning a new language can be a very demanding activity, teachers are in charge of bridging communicative activities with the development of speaking skills. The results of the first parameter about the acquisition of grammatical structures to enhance learners speaking skills though the implementation of CLT approach matches with Riadil (2020) observations where it was described the lack of grammar structures knowledge as a barrier for language skills development and once that learners extended they grammar structures knowledge, they would be able to accurately convey messages.

On the contrary, only 2 students, equivalent to the lowest average of 5,70% of the participants, strongly disagreed with the mentioned statement. This demonstrated the negative perception that these students have regarding the CLT approach to improve their

speaking skills. This average was corroborated with information obtained from the post-test answers since there were some questions that even though students received the necessary training, they still continued using incorrect grammatical structures to provide answer to the questions.

For the second statement of the survey, *I felt motivated to interact with my partners in the group-work activities that promoted speaking development*. The majority of the students represented by the 65,70% strongly agreed with the statement. This indicated that a significant proportion of students have a favorable perception regarding group-work activities that included engaging and stimulating activities that fostered their motivation to actively participate during the class development and thus, their speaking skills were improved.

It is worthy to mention that during the class intervention, most, students felt motivated when they were invited to work in peers or in groups; however, there were some situations in which students tend to use their mother tongue during the development of those activities and they also started to talk about different issues instead of working in the proposed activity; therefore, the teacher had to approach to this groups or peers in order to require them to continue working according to the given instructions to be able to complete the assigned activities correctly and on time. According to the observation sheet handled by the teacher, it was revealed that very often students actively participated in group work during the English classes. These results are aligned to Gabriel (2021) findings where it was asserted that EFL learning can be successfully developed by motivational experiences that mark the way to speaking skills enhancement.

Additionally, students demonstrated to be happy and ready to be part of this research intervention, so they paid attention during the English classes and also participated and interacted with the partners and teachers during the intervention. These results had concordance with the results obtained by Namaziandost et al., (2020) who emphasized the implementation of group work activities when teaching EFL since these kind of activities motivate learners and thus, they become eager language learners that are in constant search of safe environments to improve their communicative skills.

This result was reflected on the students' answers of the post-test were students denoted positive results after providing accurate answers to each question. Moreover, they expressed their feelings of sadness because the intervention had finished. Some students expressed their desire to continue learning with the same methodology applied during the intervention since they had learned much more during the short period of the intervention than throughout the school year.

Students have expressed their positive and negative perceptions about the statement posed. This divergence may yield on different factors such as, the students' individual learning styles or preferences, their prior background, or the effectiveness of the implementation of the CLT approach; however, a predominately majority had expressed their high level of motivation when working in groups to foster their speaking skills.

Opposite to the aforementioned results, with the lowest percentage of 2,90%, it was represented by students who expressed their disagreement to the statement, suggesting that they did not have a significant experience of motivation while interacting with their partners during the development of group work activities.

Regarding the third statement, *I had the feeling of confidence when participating in speaking activities promoted by the application of CLT*, 57.10% of students expressed their strongly agreement and 28,60% expressed to agree with the statement. This fits with the observed during the class performances because there were some cases in which students did not have necessarily the best pronunciation but their fluency was much better in comparison with the pre-test where students made long pauses to think about their answers and in some cases, they tended to use their mother tongue which provoked feelings of lack of confidence among students.

At the end of the intervention, it was evident that participating in CLT activities helped students to promote their confidence to participate in speaking activities. It was also noticeable that despite some errors in the pronunciation, the students' fluency had improved thanks to the knowledge they had acquired during the implementation of CLT activities. Furthermore, the strategic use of communicative activities inside the English classroom

encouraged pupils to lose their fear to use the language and speak in English in order to carry out the assigned activities set by the teacher. Even though most of the students seemed to be very nervous about speaking English in front of their partners, once that the first participants intervened, the other students felt more comfortable to participate in front of the class and it is worthy to mention that they managed to perform successfully. This confirmed the findings of Dilovar (2022) where once again, it was enlightening the adoption of different communicative techniques to increase learners' confidence when using the L2 as a means of improving their speaking skills.

The development and practice of speaking activities in every class from the intervention period allowed students to gain the necessary confidence to speak in English, mostly on students who openly expressed their desire to improve their pronunciation. This is considered as one of the biggest achievements from this intervention since that is what this research study sought, to improve students' pronunciation and therefore, their speaking skills to be able to confidently interact in real conversations. These results go hand in hand with Jahara and Abdelrady (2021b) who reported that motivation, constant practice and willingness to learn, play an important role on student enhancement of pronunciation from EFL students.

In a different fashion, a low rate of 8,60% of students strongly disagreed with the posed statement and the minority of 5,70% of students showcased their disagreement about their feelings of confidence when participating on speaking activities that were part of the CLT approach. This confirmed the information gathered by the teacher's observation sheet where it was illustrated that a low number of students did not feel secure about participating during the class development. In other occasions, students expressed feeling bad and they asked to be resting while the others were interacting. In very few occasions, the students openly expressed their lack of desire to participate on the activities because they did not how to pronounce words correctly.

The fourth statement, *the implementation of games, role-play, and group work related to CLT approach allowed me to use the learned grammar structures and vocabulary*

*in real communication activities* showcased the following results: 88,60% of students agreed and strongly agreed about the posed statement. This result showcased that most students found it beneficial the application of CLT activities to enhance their learning of vocabulary and grammatical structures for their further application on communicative activities. This was exhibited in the teacher's observation sheet where it was registered that there were some students who dared to go in front of their classmates, but there were some others who preferred to perform their dialogues from the safety of their chairs. Some of the students tended to speak with a very low voice tone and they were required to turn up their voice. Even though there were some students that despite being nervous, they felt encouraged by their partners and tended to speak loudly. As a motivating strategy, the teacher asked her students to clap their hands after their partners had finished their interventions so students could feel more confident.

It also is worthy of mentioning that despite not all of the classes were conducted by developing role-play activities because of the time, the students had to carry out other kind of activities that went in hand with the CLT Approach for instance, games, role-play, and peer and group work; this allowed students active interaction on speaking skills and at the end of the intervention, it was evident the benefits of the implementation of such activities on students development of speaking skill because when the teacher asked for volunteers to start with the class interactions, a great number of students wanted to be the first ones to provide their participation.

The results from the survey were also evident in the answers provided by students that were more consistent and coherent during the post-test application since the information obtained during the intervention provided them with the tools to interact accurately by applying correct grammar structures combined with the learned vocabulary; consequently, students increased they knowledge about vocabulary and grammatical structures that help them to successfully communicate in real conversation in the target language.

In contradiction to the previous results, a minority of 5,70% students who either disagreed and 5,70% of students who strongly disagreed with the statement that mentioned

the effectiveness of varied CLT activities such as games, role-play, and group work to foster the use of vocabulary and grammar structures in real communication tasks. These results confirmed that a low number of students did not consider the mentioned activities as effective to enhance their speaking skills because they had not managed to use grammatical structures and vocabulary while interacting with their peers.

This matches with the data obtained in the applied post-test where some students were not able to provide accurate answers to the questions. Likewise, the teachers' observation sheets revealed that due to the students' lack of experience working with role play activities, during the intervention, it was necessary that the teacher provide the students with samples of the dialogues they had to create by including the learned vocabulary for each of the class. This step ensured the students understanding of the assigned activity and how they had to proceed in order to develop the activities. Role play activities demanded a lot of effort from students, and it was a very time-consuming task because students usually asked for time to write and practice the dialogues previously to be applied and performed. Despite students being encouraged by the teacher to participate, they felt afraid to speak in front of their classmates.

For the fifth statement, *it was more dynamic to learn new vocabulary by participating in games that were part of the CLT Approach*. Although 8,60% of students disagreed or strongly disagreed about the implementation of games to become more dynamic the process of vocabulary learning, a great percentage of students 91,40% agreed or strongly agreed about the process of learning vocabulary that became more dynamic for vocabulary acquisition thanks to the implementation of games as part of the CLT approach activities.

This information was corroborated along the performed classes in which at the beginning of the intervention, students showed to be reluctant to participate on class activities; however, once the teacher implemented a new game task inside English classrooms, the majority of the students expressed their desire to be part of it and moreover, they were excited about playing games inside the classroom whereas, they could help their

peers with the instructors and most of the students actively participated in games that were part of the implementation of the CLT approach.

These findings confirmed the results obtained by Liu et al., (2021) who argued that through the application of games, students enjoyed their learning process showing that games contributed to create a more dynamic learning environment in which students feel free to play and learn at the same time.

Regarding the sixth statement, *The acquisition of new vocabulary allowed me to feel more confident when participating in group work activities*, a great number of students represented by the 57,20% strongly agreed and 31,40% of students agreed on the statement about the benefits of the CLT activities that were implemented during the intervention with the aim to reduce the students fears and encouraged them to feel more confident by working with their partners and using the new vocabulary they learned during the classes. Such information was corroborated with the results obtained from the class observation sheet that was completed at the end of each class. Based on those results, it could be depicted that the teacher evidenced that the strategy to have the students to work in groups, contributed to the internalization of new learned vocabulary to enrich their participation since they received the tools that allowed them to convey ideas or messages. Additionally, there were some situations in which students wanted to use something extra in the sentences they produced; some of them wanted to go a little bit further so the teacher asked them to try and apply as much as possible the new learned vocabulary. Consequently, it can be remarked the effectiveness of group work activities to promote the students' confidence and thus ensure their active participation and oral use of the new learned vocabulary since they were constantly supported by all the members of their groups.

An opposite perspective is showed from a percentage of 5,70% of students who strongly disagreed and disagreed about the effectiveness of the new learned vocabulary to help them to feel more confident when working in groups during the English classes performed in the period of intervention. This information was evidenced throughout the class performances when students seemed to feel nervous about speaking English in front of the

class despite, they had received training and they also had practiced the new vocabulary. There were some specific cases in which despite their peers' support, a few students were reluctant to speak loudly because they were afraid to make mistakes in front of their partners. Even though other students and the teacher provided the pupils with examples of how to perform the class activities, there were some students who at the end of the intervention did not reach the necessary confidence to actively participate in the class by applying the new learned vocabulary.

In the same line, table 2 displays on its results that 91,50% of participants expressed their concordance with the seventh statement about the effectiveness *The application of Communicative Language Teaching activities helped me to improve my English-speaking skills*. This information was observable along with the intervention process in which students gradually were involved in the CLT activities and continuously practice the learned contents that would have been reflected on the post-test results in which the majority of the students presented considerable improvement in regards of speaking skills.

It is necessary to highlight that throughout and after the intervention, the 6 principles of CLT approach mentioned by Gapparova (2021), learners learn by communicating in the target language, application of language knowledge in different context, role-play activities, development of language skills and adaptation of activities to the learners varied backgrounds knowledge, were successfully implemented inside the English classrooms. Such principles allowed students to be part of communicative activities derived from the CLT Approach to enhance EFL speaking skills.

Contrary results were evidenced from 8,60% of students who disagreed and strongly disagreed with the statement since they did not consider that their speaking skills were enhanced thanks to the application of the CLT activities. In fact, it is important to highlight that even though students had basic previous knowledge of grammar structures and vocabulary, it was not enough to allow efficient use language from some students; however, after the intervention, the results of the post-test largely overlapped the result obtained in the pre-test due to the fact that after being taught content, vocabulary, grammar structures, and

practice their English pronunciation, many students obtained benefits from the implementation of CLT activities to improve their speaking skills.

Very similar results to the aforementioned, were registered in the eighth statement, *the application of the learned grammar structures helped me to become a fluent English speaker*, since an 85,70% of learners expressed their agreement on the positive contribution that the use of the learned grammatical structures provided to improve their fluency in the English language. These results showcased that the majority of students had managed to improve their fluency thanks to the implementation of grammar structures within the class activities promoted by CLT approach. Since the researcher seek on improving pupils speaking skills, grammar information was taught by using real context in which students could discovered their possible uses instead of learning grammar separately. This was evidenced during the class performances where students reviewed grammatical structures that allowed most of them to create comparisons, express the things they should or should not do in their school, to describe their clothes, to talk about their favorite, animal, school subject or free time activities by implementing correct sentences. These findings corroborated prior research conducted by Tarigan and Stevani (2022), who revealed that teaching grammar in context may collaterally show the teachers skills to manage grammar teaching in a way that students may imply the possible uses of the studied grammatical structures not merely as a separate part of language learning but within real contexts that provide them with wider exemplified manners to apply it. Therefore, after being put into practice, learners L2 acquisition would be ensured and thus, their speaking skills should be developed as well.

On the other hand, a minority of 14,30% of participants disagreed with the eighth statement. It is worthy to mention that these results correspond to the group of the students that for different factors such as absences, lack of motivation and their continuous use of mother tongue, negatively influenced and interrupted their language acquisition process and therefore, participants struggled with the language learning process. As a result, their fluency could not be enhanced to the level that was expected by the researcher. Consisting with

prior research conducted by Liando et al., (2023), our findings revealed that the use of learners' mother tongue may lower their acquisition of L2 and so was what occurred with a low number of the participants at the end of this intervention.

With regard to the ninth parameter which is *I consider that participating in games during the English class helped me to learn grammar structures*, more than half of the students, 51,40%, strongly agreed and 31,5% of the students agreed on the effectiveness of games to learn grammar structures on the effectiveness of the application of games to learn grammar structures. This point of view was evidenced during the class intervention when students play games in groups by displaying their competitive dexterities to enthusiastically organize and accomplish the tasks before their peers do it.

One of the used games required the students' participation by sorting strips of words and phrases by using the correct structures to create sentences applying comparative adjectives to compare their family members. For that activity, most of the students seemed to be engaged in the activity and played and learned at the same time and so they managed to finish the activity and organize correctly the assigned sentences for each group. A lot of laughs involved in hurried work denoted the students' predisposition to develop this kind of activity. After that, students provided their own comparative sentences orally and most of them could use accurate grammar structures in their interventions. Undoubtedly, including games was one of the determinant aspects that helped the teacher to encourage her students' motivation both at the beginning and at the end of each class. These results go hand in hand with the previous research conducted by Liu et al., (2021) in which it was concluded that adding games to the teaching labor, can lead to beneficial results on EFL students' language learning since meaningful knowledge had been stored in the students' brains and would be ready to be applied in real conversation.

Notwithstanding the positive results, 5.70% of students strongly disagree with the ninth statement about the implementation of games for learning grammatical structures. This situation could be observed during the English lessons where a short number of students did not manage to get involved in the games. Very few students did not like to work in groups or

did not get on well with their partners, therefore, they did not want to be an active part of the working groups. That situation played an important role of the students' learning process since it represented a barrier to acquire the studied grammatical structures.

Based on the results obtained with respect to students' perceptions about the tenth statement, *participating in group work activities helped me to reduce anxiety when speaking in English*, it is evident that a significant portion of students had a positive appreciation about participating in group work activities as part of the CLT approach. Firstly, 94,20% of participants which comprises the majority of students, agreed or strongly agreed on the statement, suggesting that collaborative and group work activities can be beneficial to reduce students' anxiety when speaking English.

This information could be compared and confirmed with the teachers' class observations when students were required to hand out group work, students wanted to work only with those ones with whom they had greater affinity, so there was the need to assign at least one student with English background so they could provide support to the group work. By receiving their partners support, students tended to loss shyness, and they seemed to be relaxed and were encouraged to speak in English. The described results are aligned with the findings from Oteir and Al-Otavibi (2019) who ensured that the application of varied activities provides the students with the feel of an entertained environment and thus, it would positively contribute to the acquisition of the target language that eventually, their speaking skills would be enhanced as well.

Secondly, even though there was a great percentage of students who had a positive perception about the tenth statement, the other 5,80% of students disagreed or strongly disagreed with the proposed statement. This indicates despite the application of varied CLT activities during the intervention period, there are some students who do not have the same perceptions and therefore, they feel that they were not benefited by group working activities depicting that not all the participants managed to reduce their anxiety when interacting in English with their peers.

## Conclusions

Implementing the Communicative Language Teaching Approach was demonstrated to have a significant impact on improving EFL speaking skills. The main findings of this study allowed evidence that most participants were enabled to hold effective communication among their peers thanks to the improvement of their oral communication.

After applying the Communicative Language teaching Approach, it was depicted that most of the students from the experimental group, got engaged in group work task that were perceived as the most meaningful activities as a means to improve speaking skills on the participants thanks to the peers interaction that they provided and received from their partners to continue learning.

Integrating authentic resources as part of role-play activities and games gave learners opportunities to practice the dialogues focused on the lesson contents. Therefore, their anxiety was reduced, so they felt motivated and were encouraged by their peers to be active participants in authentic communication during the English lessons.

The acquisition of grammar structures conducted by communicative activities that were part of the CLT Approach demonstrated to have significant improvement and allowed the learners to use the language system in a practical way that led them to organize and convey well-structured messages.

Thanks to the CLT Approach implementation, the acquisition of vocabulary in meaningful contexts was the aspect that reached the highest score of improvement, allowing the learners to expand their lexicon to be employed in a wide range of conversational situations.

Finally, the implementation of instructional activities that were part of the CLT approach was mainly perceived as positive since the majority of students expressed that role-play and group work activities provided them with opportunities to practice and, therefore, improve their speaking skills and gain more confidence to communicate in real conversational situations.

## **Recommendations**

Despite that the implementation of the CLT Approach demonstrated to be effective in improving learners speaking skills, it is highly recommended that teachers continue applying the same approach in regard to involving students in meaningful conversations.

Due to the high range of acceptance of the group work activities, it is suggested that teachers adapt their teaching class contents to teach them by assigning more group work where students can encounter opportunities to strengthen their relationships which would promote meaningful interaction that could lead to the enhancement of their speaking skill.

It is strongly recommended that teachers continue to implement CLT activities such as role-play activities and games with the aim of diminishing the fear they have when speaking so learners would feel motivated when using meaningful information.

It is highly recommended that teachers comprise grammar structures teaching their English lessons so students can understand and reinforce their speaking skills by applying the necessary knowledge to structure correct ideas, opinions, and messages to be successfully conveyed.

Conveniently, EFL teachers should provide their students with a wide range of vocabulary words to enrich and expand their lexicon and thus, improve their communicational abilities by implementing CLT activities.

It is essential to comprise instructional activities such as role-play, group work, and games to continue improving the students' speaking skills to eventually foster their confidence to establish real conversational situations so that, in the end, students' perceptions about the CLT approach continue being favorable for both teaching and learning processes.

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## Appendix

### Appendix A. Students Pre-test

#### UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA PARTICULAR DE LOJA

La Universidad Católica de Loja

**Objective:** The main objective of this questionnaire is to gather information about the application of the Communicative Language Teaching Approach in the English Classrooms.

This is an anonymous questionnaire so it will not be necessary to include your name.

1. What is your favorite free time activity?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Should you eat in the classroom? Should you play soccer in the soccer field?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Could you compare two relatives from your family?  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. What do you wear when it is winter?  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. What are your favorite school subjects?  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. What is your favorite animal?  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Apendix B. Pre-test Evaluation Rubric

**UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA PARTICULAR DE LOJA**  
La Universidad Católica de Loja

Criteria	Grades				Pts.
	Excellent	Good	Regular	Poor	
<b>Content</b>	The student demonstrates an excellent domain of the class contents. <b>2 Pts.</b>	The student demonstrates good domain of the class contents. <b>1.6 Pts</b>	The student demonstrates a regular domain of the class contents. <b>1 Pts.</b>	The student demonstrates a poor domain of the class contents. <b>0.75 Pts.</b>	/2
<b>Vocabulary</b>	The student uses a wide range of vocabulary of the learned contents. <b>2 Pts.</b>	The student uses some vocabulary words of the learned contents. <b>1.6 Pts</b>	The student uses a few words of vocabulary of the learned contents. <b>1 Pts.</b>	The student shows a poor use of vocabulary of the learned contents. <b>0.75 Pts.</b>	/2
<b>Grammar</b>	The student applies a wide variety of grammar structures to answer the questions. <b>2 Pts.</b>	The student applies some grammar structures to answer the questions <b>1.6 Pts</b>	The student applies a few structures to answer the questions <b>1 Pts.</b>	The student does not apply grammar structures to answer the questions. <b>0.75 Pts.</b>	/2
<b>Pronunciation</b>	Students have excellent pronunciation of all the words in a natural way. <b>2 Pts.</b>	Students have good pronunciation of the used words. <b>1.6 Pts</b>	Students have regular pronunciation of the used words. <b>1 Pts.</b>	Students have poor and incorrect pronunciation of the used words. <b>0.75 Pts.</b>	/2
<b>Fluency</b>	The student uses the language fluently without hesitating. <b>2 Pts.</b>	The student has a good use of the language with some hesitation. <b>1.6 Pts</b>	The student has a regular use of the language with a lot of hesitation. <b>1 Pts.</b>	The student has a poor and insecure use of the language. <b>0.75 Pts.</b>	/2
<b>Total Points</b>					<b>/10</b>

### Apendix C. Students Oral Post-test

**UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA PARTICULAR DE LOJA**  
La Universidad Católica de Loja

**Objective:** The main objective of this questionnaire is to gather information about the application of the Communicative Language Teaching Approach in the English Classrooms.

This is an anonymous questionnaire so it will not be necessary to include your name.

1. What is your favorite free time activity?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Should you eat in the classroom? Should you play soccer in the soccer field?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Could you compare two relatives from your family?  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. What do you wear when it is winter?  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. What are your favorite school subjects?  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. What is your favorite animal?  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Appendix D. Post-test Evaluation Rubric

**UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA PARTICULAR DE LOJA**  
La Universidad Católica de Loja

Criteria	Grades				
	Excellent	Good	Regular	Poor	Pts.
<b>Content</b>	The student demonstrates an excellent domain of the class contents. <b>2 Pts.</b>	The student demonstrates good domain of the class contents. <b>1.6 Pts</b>	The student demonstrates a regular domain of the class contents. <b>1 Pts.</b>	The student demonstrates a poor domain of the class contents. <b>0.75 Pts.</b>	/2
<b>Vocabulary</b>	The student uses a wide range of vocabulary of the learned contents. <b>2 Pts.</b>	The student uses some vocabulary words of the learned contents. <b>1.6 Pts</b>	The student uses a few words of vocabulary of the learned contents. <b>1 Pts.</b>	The student shows a poor use of vocabulary of the learned contents. <b>0.75 Pts.</b>	/2
<b>Grammar</b>	The student applies a wide variety of grammar structures to answer the questions. <b>2 Pts.</b>	The student applies some grammar structures to answer the questions <b>1.6 Pts</b>	The student applies a few structures to answer the questions <b>1 Pts.</b>	The student does not apply grammar structures to answer the questions. <b>0.75 Pts.</b>	/2
<b>Pronunciation</b>	Students have excellent pronunciation of all the words in a natural way. <b>2 Pts.</b>	Students have good pronunciation of the used words. <b>1.6 Pts</b>	Students have regular pronunciation of the used words. <b>1 Pts.</b>	Students have poor and incorrect pronunciation of the used words. <b>0.75 Pts.</b>	/2
<b>Fluency</b>	The student uses the language fluently without hesitating. <b>2 Pts.</b>	The student has a good use of the language with some hesitation. <b>1.6 Pts</b>	The student has a regular use of the language with a lot of hesitation. <b>1 Pts.</b>	The student has a poor and insecure use of the language. <b>0.75 Pts.</b>	/2
<b>Total Points</b>					<b>/10</b>

## Appendix E. Students' Satisfaction Survey

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### Students' Perceptions on Communicative Language Teaching Approach

**Objective:** This survey intends to collect data about learners' perceptions on the application of Communicative Language Teaching Approach in the development of English classes during the period of the intervention.

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

Please provide your answer for the following questions.

N.	Statements	Strongly disagree	disagree	agree	Strongly agree
1	The grammar structures I have learned when using the application of CLT Approach helped me to develop my speaking skills.				
2	I felt motivated to interact with my partners in the group-work activities that promoted speaking development.				
3	I had the feeling of confidence when participating in speaking activities promoted by the application of CLT.				
4	The implementation of games, role-play, and group work related to CLT approach allowed me to use the learned grammar structures and vocabulary in real communication activities.				
5	It was more dynamic to learn new vocabulary by participating in games that were part of the CLT Approach.				
6	The acquisition of new vocabulary allowed me to feel more confident when participating in group work activities.				
7	The application of Communicative Language Teaching activities helped me to improve my speaking skills.				
8	The application of the learned grammar structures helped me to become a fluent English speaker.				
9	I consider that participating in games during the English class helped me to learn grammar structures.				
10	Participating in group work activities helped me to reduce anxiety when speaking in English.				

## Appendix F. Teacher's Observation Sheet

### UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA PARTICULAR DE LOJA

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**Objective:** The aim of this Observation Sheet is to check the correct development of the English class.

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Course:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Parallel:** \_\_\_\_\_

N.	Observed Items	Always	Often	Rarely	Never
1	Students demonstrated to be motivated while developing role-play activities promoted by CLT Approach.				
2	Students felt encouraged when they participated in games that allowed them to learn new vocabulary.				
3	Students actively participated in the group work activities during the English class.				
4	The student's anxiety was reduced when they participated in group work activities.				
5	Students applied the new learned vocabulary to interact with their partners during the English class.				
6	It was evident that the learned grammar helped to improved student's speaking skills.				
7	Students applied the learned grammar structures in the Role-play activities.				
8	Students have demonstrated that they felt confident by using different strategies derived from CLT Approach.				
9	Thanks to the application of the CLT Approach, communication among students became more effective.				
10	Students had the opportunity to use worksheets in order to work and to help them to memorize the new vocabulary words.				

**Teachers' Observations:**

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**Observations:**

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**Advisor's signature**