



**UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL DE CHIMBORAZO
FACULTAD DE CIENCIAS DE LA EDUCACIÓN, HUMANAS Y
TECNOLOGÍAS**

**CARRERA DE PEDAGOGÍA DE LOS IDIOMAS NACIONALES
Y EXTRANJEROS**

TITLE OF THE RESEARCH WORK

Communicative Language Teaching Approach to Enhance Speaking
Skill

**Trabajo de Titulación para optar al título de:
Licenciada en Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros**

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Riobamba, Ecuador. 2026

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DEDICATORY

To my lovely parents, Gabriel and Gloria, who demonstrate their effort daily, securing the stability and best opportunities that allow me and my brothers Jeff and Leo to chase our dreams; this achievement is certainly part of yours as well. My sincere thanks to you for never failing to support me and being there every time I needed. After four years of meaningful experiences and learning, I can finally say that our mutual sacrifice has been worth it. Thank you for being one of the most important parts of this process. I love you!

Dayana García Poveda

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Thank God for allowing this process to be more manageable by helping me control my emotions, guiding my path toward goodness, and assisting me in making certain decisions that have strengthened my mind and heart.

Thanks to the Universidad Nacional de Chimborazo and the majestic professors of this career, I can confidently say that your imparted knowledge has prepared me to pursue this profession. Now, at the end, I can highlight how I grew personally and I will be able to strength my professional field.

To my darlings, Edison, Marjorie, and Franck for making this journey a pleasant experience. We faced from the happiest moments to the difficult ones in which we were supporting each other. Thank you for opening your hearts and giving me your friendship; you made the tough times bearable and the good times unforgettable!

Dayana García Poveda

GENERAL INDEX

DECLARATION OF AUTORSHIP	
FAVORABLE OPINION OF THE TUTOR TEACHER	
COMMITTEE MEMBERS CERTIFICATE	
CERTIFICADO ANTIPLAGIO	
DEDICATORY	
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	
GENERAL INDEX	
INDEX OF TABLES	
INDEX OF FIGURES	
RESUMEN	
ABSTRACT	
1. CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION	15
1.1 Introduction	15
1.2 Problem statement	16
1.3 Problem formulation.....	18
1.4 Justification.....	18
1.5 Objectives	19
1.5.1 General objective.....	19
1.5.2 Specific objectives.....	19
2. CHAPTER II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.....	20
2.1 Research Background	20
2.2 State of art.....	21
2.3 Theoretical foundation basis.....	23
2.3.1 Constructivist Theory	23
2.3.2 Humanistic Theory	23
2.3.3 Critical Pedagogy	24
2.3.4 Theory of Second Language Acquisition.....	24
2.3.5 The Input Hypothesis	25

2.3.6	Theory of Meaningful Learning	25
2.3.7	Active Learning Method.....	26
2.3.8	Experiential Learning Method.....	26
2.3.9	Constitución 2008.....	27
2.3.10	The Organic Law of Higher Education (LOES).....	27
2.3.11	What is Communicative Language Teaching?.....	28
2.3.12	Characteristics	29
2.3.13	Communicative Competence.....	29
2.3.14	Language Functions.....	30
2.3.15	Speaking Skill.....	32
2.3.16	Speaking Sub-skills	33
2.3.17	Contribution of Communicative Language Teaching to Speaking Skill.....	34
2.3.18	Classroom Implementation.....	35
2.3.19	Classroom Activities	35
2.3.20	The Role of the Teacher and Student in the Classroom	38
3.	CHAPTER III. METHODOLOGY	39
3.1	Approach	39
3.2	Type of research	39
3.3	Research design	39
3.4	Study Population	40
3.5	Sample	40
3.6	Data Collection Techniques and Instruments	40
3.7	Validation of the data collection instrument.....	41
3.8	Hypothesis	41
3.9	Methods of data analysis and processing	41
3.9.1	Descriptive Analysis.....	42
3.9.2	Inferential Analysis and Hypothesis Testing.....	42

4.	CHAPTER IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	43
4.1	Results	43
4.2	Discussion.....	49
5.	CHAPTER V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	51
5.1	Conclusions	51
5.2	Recommendations	52
6.	BIBLIOGRAPHY	53
7.	ANNEXES	59

INDEX OF TABLES

<i>Table 1. Example of language functions:</i>	31
<i>Table 2. Pre – test and Post – test scores</i>	43
<i>Table 3. Descriptive statistics</i>	44
<i>Table 4. Normality test</i>	45
<i>Table 5. Paired samples t - test</i>	45

INDEX OF FIGURES

<i>Figure 1. Pre-test</i>	46
<i>Figure 2. Post-test</i>	47

RESUMEN

La habilidad oral se considera una de las habilidades esenciales a desarrollar durante el proceso de aprendizaje de un nuevo idioma. El objetivo del presente estudio es analizar cómo el método de la Enseñanza Comunicativa del Lenguaje contribuye al desarrollo de la habilidad oral del inglés en los estudiantes de tercer semestre de la Carrera de Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros de la Universidad Nacional de Chimborazo en Riobamba. El enfoque adoptado para esta investigación es cuantitativo ya que recoge datos cuantificados sujetos a análisis estadístico, aplicando un Pre-test y Post-test. La investigación es de tipo aplicada y al ser un diseño pre-experimental, ambos instrumentos fueron aplicados a la misma muestra de 25 estudiantes. Como instrumento pre y post test se utilizó el Cambridge Preliminary English Test PET. La estrategia de intervención se aplicó durante cuatro semanas con dos horas semanales para que los resultados sean viables. Además, el análisis de datos se realizó usando el programa estadístico SPSS. De esta manera, la hipótesis alternativa fue aceptada ya que la media del Post-test (14.96) fue mayor que la media inicial del Pre-test (12.56). Los resultados de la investigación mostraron mejoras significativas en la habilidad oral, especialmente cuando los estudiantes fueron expuestos a actividades comunicativas como juegos de rol, debates, presentaciones orales y diálogos.

Palabras claves: Enseñanza Comunicativa del Lenguaje, competencia comunicativa, habilidad oral, actividades, aprendizaje

ABSTRACT

Speaking skill is regarded as one of the essential skills to be developed during the process of acquiring a new language. The present study aimed to analyze how the Communicative Language Teaching method contributes to the development of Speaking skill in Third-semester students of Pedagogy of National and Foreign Languages degree at Universidad Nacional de Chimborazo in Riobamba. The investigation adopted a quantitative approach, collecting quantified data subject to statistical analysis using a Pre-test and Post-test. The research is applied in nature, and due to its pre-experimental design, both instruments were applied to the same sample size of 25 students. The Cambridge Preliminary English Test (PET) served as the instrument for both the Pre-test and Post-test. The intervention strategy was implemented over four weeks with two hours of instruction per week to ensure the viability of the results. Furthermore, data analysis was performed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software. As a result, the alternative hypothesis was accepted, as the Post-test mean (14.96) exceeded the initial Pre-test mean (12.56). The research findings demonstrated significant improvements in speaking skill, particularly when students were exposed to communicative activities such as role-plays, debates, oral presentations, and dialogues.

Keywords: Communicative Language Teaching, communicative competence, speaking skill, activities, learning

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1. CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The ability to communicate effectively in English is a crucial skill in the modern world, fostering opportunities in education, employment, and cultural exchange. Among the four core language skills, speaking is fundamental for facilitating interaction and building connections between individuals. However, in many educational contexts, particularly in Ecuador, students face significant challenges in developing their speaking skill. These challenges result from limited opportunities for oral practice and an overemphasis on grammar, losing the heart of the message, which fails to engage students in meaningful communication. Addressing these issues requires a shift towards current approaches that prioritize authentic interaction in real life.

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) emerges as a promising alternative to the challenges in developing speaking skill. This approach emphasizes student-centered learning and the use of tasks that replicate communicative scenarios in real life. Through activities, CLT creates an immersive environment where students can practice and refine their speaking ability (Heng, 2014). By prioritizing interaction and the use of authentic material, this method enables students to go beyond rote memorization of grammar and vocabulary, equipping them to use English effectively in everyday contexts. Furthermore, the principles of CLT align with modern pedagogical trends that support the integration of communication of communication in language teaching.

Despite the benefits of CLT, its implementation in Ecuadorian classrooms remains limited. Most of English classes continue to be dominated by methodologies that prioritize grammar instruction over practical language use. This lack of balance has resulted in students who may excel in written exercises but struggle to express themselves. Furthermore, the lack of exposure to English outside the classroom intensifies the issue, leaving students without sufficient opportunities, those in the third semester of the Pedagogy of National and Foreign Languages degree show deficiencies in their communication skills in English, reflecting these broader challenges. Addressing these gaps requires innovative teaching methods tailored to the specific needs of these learners.

This study aims to analyze the influence of the Communicative Language Teaching Method on the speaking skill development in Third-semester students of Pedagogy of

National and Foreign Languages. By adopting a quantitative approach, the research seeks to diagnose the current speaking proficiency level of the students, implement activities based on the CLT method, and evaluate the outcomes through a pre-test and post-test. This comprehensive approach will provide a rigorous understanding of how CLT can address the speaking skill deficiencies within a university context.

The rationale for conducting this study is rooted in its potential to address a pressing educational need while contributing to the broader field of language teaching. By diagnosing the speaking skill limitations of the students, implementing targeted CLT activities, and evaluating their effectiveness, this research aims to provide actionable insights for educators. The findings are expected to demonstrate how CLT can transform traditional language teaching practices enabling students to enhance their communicative competence and achieve meaningful progress in their speaking abilities.

For a better grasp of information, the paper is organized as follows: Chapter I presents the introduction, problem statement, problem formulation, justification, and objectives; Chapter II provides the research background related to the history of teaching methods since the traditional ones to the current communicative approach, it also showcases the state of art, including recent investigations that ground the study and the theoretical framework, describing the relevant topics; Chapter III implies the methodology section, elucidating the approach, type of research, research design, study population and sample, data collection techniques and instruments, hypothesis, and methods of data analysis and processing; Chapter IV details the quantitative findings after applying the intervention strategy; Chapter V involves the conclusions and recommendations of the study.

1.2 Problem statement

According to Heng (2014), Communicative Language Teaching is a learner-centered approach where the ultimate goal is to develop students' communicative competence through a variety of classroom tasks and activities. In addition, it is considered as a method since it considers an eclectic combination of the contributions of previous methods that goes beyond the teaching of rules, patterns and other knowledge about language to the teaching of spontaneous and meaningful communication.

Communicative Language Teaching is revealed as a highly effective method to optimize the learning of spoken English. According to Mulyanah et al. (2018), CLT emphasizes the review of techniques and the use of authentic material that foster a communicative intention. Based on the author's definition, this method helps students to use language effectively in everyday situations, through activities such as role-plays, projects and tasks that simulate real contexts where the foreign language is used as a means to achieve specific objectives, thus facilitating interaction and the development of speaking skill in participants.

Communicative Language Teaching plays a crucial role in enhancing the speaking skill in English. However, in the Ecuadorian context, English teaching is affected by the lack of practical exposure to the language, both inside and outside the classroom, which causes students to lose their progress in speaking skills. Furthermore, classes continue to be predominantly guided by methodologies focused on grammar, limiting students' opportunities to apply the language in real contexts.

In face of this problem, it is proposed to analyze how the CLT method can contribute to improving the speaking skill of students in third semester of the Pedagogy of National and Foreign Languages degree at Universidad Nacional de Chimborazo, during the 2025-2S academic period. A prestigious higher education institution located in the city of Riobamba, Chimborazo province providing its commitment to educational quality since 1995. The university has pledged its position as an academic benchmark in the region reflecting its institutional mission to offer quality academic, humanistic, technological, and scientific training, fostering reflective and critical thinking skills to analyze and generate solutions to current realities, and promoting participation and responsibility in addressing social challenges (Universidad Nacional de Chimborazo, s. f.).

Given the relevance of this study, the research aligns with the principles of the quantitative approach in order to address the problem raised. Additionally, it is an applied investigation, as it will examine the effectiveness of the intervention strategy. To this end, a pre-test will be used to diagnose the level of speaking skill of the participants. Subsequently, the activities are based on the method under study to gather the interactions and performance of the students during the intervention. Finally, the post-test will be used at the end of the process to determine the progress achieved.

1.3 Problem formulation

How does the Communicative Language Teaching method contribute to the development of Speaking skill in Third-semester students of Pedagogy of National and Foreign Languages degree at Universidad Nacional de Chimborazo in Riobamba?

1.4 Justification

In Ecuador, despite curricular emphasis on English learning, students often struggle to communicate fluently due to limited oral practice both inside and outside the classroom, and the prevalence of grammar-focused instruction. The present study addresses a crucial educational gap by proposing a method that fosters meaningful interaction and real-life communication. Its importance lies in aligning language instruction with global standards that prioritize communicative competence over memorization, thereby contributing to the improvement of speaking skill in English among university students.

This research is highly relevant and pertinent to the context of higher education, particularly within the Universidad Nacional Chimborazo, where fostering students' communicative competence is key to their professional preparation as future language teachers. The application of CLT method responds directly to national education policies and to the principles established in The Organic Law of Higher Education (LOES), which emphasizes equal opportunities, quality, and relevance in higher education, as well as the development of knowledge aligned with social and academic needs. By integrating communicative activities, this study promotes autonomy, participation and meaningful engagement in the classroom (Ley Orgánica de Educación Superior, 2010).

The feasibility of this research is fully supported by the availability of essential resources. Human resources include the researcher, the thesis assessor, and the group of third-semester students from the Pedagogy of National and Foreign Languages program, who will actively participate in the intervention. Bibliographic resources are sufficient, as there is extensive theoretical and empirical literature on CLT and speaking skill development. Technological resources, such as classrooms equipped with projectors and audiovisual tools to facilitate the implementation of interactive and communicative lessons. Economic resources are self-funded by the researcher, covering expenses related to printing and didactic materials, which ensures feasibility and sustainability of the project.

The study's beneficiaries are both direct and indirect. The direct beneficiaries are third-semester students who will participate in the intervention, gaining improved oral proficiency and communicative competence in English. The indirect beneficiaries include future researchers, who may use this study as a reference; educational institutions, which will strengthen their methodological practices; and teachers, who can replicate the innovative method to enhance learning outcomes. Additionally, the findings may inspire other universities and English programs to adopt communicative and active methodologies that align with current pedagogical trends.

This research aims to provide empirical evidence regarding the effectiveness of the CLT method in developing speaking skill. The results are expected to offer valuable insights for curriculum design and methodological improvement. Furthermore, the study seeks to promote communicative practices that foster authentic language use, connecting theoretical perspectives with classroom application. Ultimately, it contributes to the formation of competent professionals capable of effective communication and to the enhancement of quality and innovation in English language teaching within Ecuadorian higher education.

1.5 Objectives

1.5.1 General objective

To analyze how the Communicative Language Teaching method contributes to the development of Speaking skill in Third-semester students of Pedagogy of National and Foreign Languages degree at Universidad Nacional de Chimborazo in Riobamba, during the 2025-2S academic period.

1.5.2 Specific objectives

- To diagnose the level of speaking skill of the study population.
- To apply activities supported by the Communicative Language Teaching method to promote the development of speaking skill in English.
- To determine the effectiveness of the intervention proposal based on the progress of the speaking skill of the study participants.

2. CHAPTER II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Research Background

Throughout history, various contributions have emerged in the search for effective ways to teach English. The Grammar-Translation method, although widely used, was not adequately oriented towards the development of listening and speaking skills, nor did it encourage thinking in the foreign language. Later, in 1878, the Direct Method emerged, already focused on expanding oral skills. According to Armas (2019), this method arose as an opposition to the traditional Grammar-Translation method, based on the premise that learning a foreign language and the native language are similar processes. However, the lack of context and limited practice prompted the search for other methods and approaches to increase oral proficiency.

In the context of World War II and the need to rapidly train interpreters, the Audio-lingual method emerged in the United States in the 1930s. According to Alcalde (2011), this method emphasized the repetition and memorization of dialogues and structural patterns through repetitive oral exercises. The basis of this method lies in the analysis of spoken language, adopting an inductive and descriptive perspective. Although students improved in pronunciation and intonation, the rigorous and mechanical approach did not promote a creative and meaningful use of language.

Subsequently, the Situational method emerged in Britain and spread to other countries in 1950 as a product of the evolution of the oral approach. According to Ozsevik (2010), this method focuses on oral procedures, presenting new words and structures using a variety of situational scenarios. However, this may not be entirely effective in achieving a more comprehensive advancement of speaking skill, as it is essential that students also increase creativity, improvisation, and autonomous language production.

Beginning in the 1960s, there was a “break with the concept of method due to the perception that this term did not encompass all the dimensions involved in language teaching” (Bueno Velazco & Martínez Herrera, 2002, p. 35). This conceptual change allowed for the emergence of the Communicative Approach or Communicative Language Teaching in the 1970s, marking a turning point towards a functional rather than a structural approach, in response to the limitations of traditional methods. Hence, Ozsevik (2010) mentions that, in this approach, English is acquired through communication, allowing

students to explore language functions through interactions. This approach facilitates the negotiation of meaning and the authentic use of language.

The evolution of these methods has reflected a shift towards a more communicative and meaningful teaching of English, where the student is the central axis of the educational process. Since 1970, the approaches developed have integrated the practical use of language in the classroom, improving speaking skill through interaction in real communicative situations. Consequently, Communicative Language Teaching has transformed the pedagogy of English as a foreign language and it is more applied as a method, offering interactive and motivating activities focused on the progress of communicative functions. This methodological evolution has evidenced a shift towards a more communicative teaching of English, where the student is the central pillar of the educational process.

This research was based on the contributions of various authors who address the topic from different theoretical perspectives. The most prominent include: Jones and Brader (2002) provided a constructivist perspective, while Oliveira (2007) focused on second language acquisition. For their part, Mulyanah et al. (2018) delved deeper into the theory of the Communicative Language Teaching method. Brown and Lee (2015) contributed with the characteristics of this method. Likewise, Heng (2014) and Hymes (1972) analyzed the contribution of the method to the teaching of oral skills, what the communicative competence involves, as well as the role of teachers and students in the classroom.

2.2 State of art

The existing literature concerning second language acquisition is dominated by the consensus that Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is the most effective proposal for developing functional oral proficiency (Ghafar et al., 2023). This body of research establishes the theoretical failure of traditional methodologies, which focused on structural analysis. The findings showed that learners possessed strong grammatical knowledge but lacked fluency and confidence for spontaneous interaction.

Recent empirical studies, mainly conducted in tertiary education environments in Asian settings, confirm the positive correlation between the application of CLT principles and the enhancement of productive language skills. For instance, research conducted by Ghafar et al. (2023) synthesized global results, concluding that the communicative approach substantially improves speaking and listening abilities. This is possible when the learning

focus goes from linguistic form to functional use. Similarly, studies in developing contexts, such as the work by Tran (2022) at Hau Giang Community College, have empirically validated that CLT is an appropriate and effective method for improving oral communication through interaction and task-based activities.

This effectiveness is consistent with the nature of CLT activities such as dialogues, role-plays, and information gaps. Those activities encourage students to use the target language necessary to deal with real world problems (Banda, 2023). In the same vein, a study carried out by Guanoquiza and Jiménez (2022) in Cotopaxi province where CLT strategies such as group work, opinion sharing and dramatization were applied to 29 students in the Eighth grade at Naciones Unidas School. The findings mainly demonstrated improvements in fluency, accuracy and pronunciation. The prevailing evidence confirms that CLT is no longer a preference within the pedagogical field. Instead, it represents a consistent method for fostering communicative competence in high schools and undergraduate programs.

Other research within the Ecuadorian context conducted by Silva et al. (2021) showed the results from a survey to 234 high school students from Ambato High School regarding the use of common activities in their English classes. The survey demonstrated that learners retain the information better when they are exposed to interactive activities either in pairs or groups. Those activities include role-plays, conversations, and dialogues that are essential to exchange information. Although the implementation of CLT method is not common in EFL lessons. This research sought to provide teachers and students with a variety of communicative techniques taking into account the persistent practice of the target language.

However, the literature introduces a critical dialogue regarding the feasibility of implementation, demonstrating a gap between practical application and institutional reality. While both teachers and students perceive communicative competence as essential for professional success, a study by Shahid et al. (2022) highlight significant structural impediments. Their findings reveal that student potential is often constrained by teachers' lack of language proficiency and their disinterest in fostering an interactive classroom. Furthermore, they argue that CLT can result affected by a curriculum that is not adapted to the current pedagogical trends, the integration of traditional methods, and lack of teacher training. In other words, this contrast reveals that while the methodology is sound, its implementation is frequently undermined by institutional shortcomings.

2.3 Theoretical foundation basis

2.3.1 Constructivist Theory

Constructivism is a theory based on the idea that students must construct their own knowledge. According to Jones and Brader (2002), they argue that the theory has psychological and religious foundations that aim to provide this detailed contribution to education, demonstrating significant acceptance after the failure of behaviorism in education. Unlike the behaviorist model, which viewed students as passive recipients of data, constructivism highlighted their proactive role in constructing their own understanding.

In the 1960s, constructivist theory burst into the educational scene, challenging the traditional premise of teaching as merely the transmission of information. This new perspective proposed a radically different approach that transformed education by positioning the student as the active constructor of their own learning. In other words, it emphasizes the role of students in constructing their own understanding through research, interaction, and collaboration. In the same vein, it is an active process that involves the construction of meaning through reflection, paving the way for new information based on prior knowledge.

2.3.2 Humanistic Theory

Humanistic theory is widely recognized as an important pedagogical paradigm, with origins in Carl Rogers' psychology. This theory goes beyond the traditional view of education as a mere transmission of material. Thus, learning is perceived as a process aimed at the holistic development of the individual (Rogers, 1983). Furthermore, humans have an intrinsic tendency to self-actualize or fulfill their full potential. As a result, the primary goal of education is to humanize the process, directing it toward self-awareness, self-realization, and the study of the student's own potential. This is possible when empathy, authenticity, and positive acceptance from the facilitator is met (Firdaus, 2017).

Humanistic theory plays an important methodological role in the teaching of foreign languages. It means that this theory differs from simply structural methods by prioritizing the emotive dimension and the student's inner world, putting their thoughts, feelings, and the emotions at the heart of the learning process (Arif, 2017). The goal of using this pedagogical technique is to reduce anxiety and insecurity, which are identified as learning

inhibitors in second language acquisition theory. By creating a supportive and respectful environment in the classroom, the teacher acts as a facilitator who fosters student autonomy, making the acquisition of communicative competence a natural extension of personal growth and genuine expression.

2.3.3 Critical Pedagogy

Critical pedagogy proposed by Paulo Freire is a profoundly transformative educational approach based on raising awareness, dialogue, and the liberation of oppressed people through education. This author proposes that education should not be an act of domestication but rather a liberating process that allows students to understand their reality and critically examine the existing social frameworks in order to transform them (Freire and Mellado, 1974).

In the context of learning English, this pedagogy provides a framework for these skills to be applied socially, reimagining the target language as a tool for action and critical thinking rather than a collection of rules. The main elements mentioned above are integrated into the EFL classroom by requiring students to use the language to understand their own social reality and unjust structures. By engaging students in a “praxis” in which communication serves as a vehicle for reflection and transformation, a strong intrinsic incentive is developed. This process turns the acquisition of communicative competence into an act of social empowerment.

2.3.4 Theory of Second Language Acquisition

According to Oliveira (2007), “Stephen Krashen, an American linguist, has long been influential, especially in his study of second language acquisition/learning” (p. 50). In this paradigm, the Monitor Model proposed by this prominent figure is essential for research on second language acquisition. Furthermore, Martínez et al. (2020) argue that this model highlights the importance of acquisition over learning in terms of fluency. Acquisition, being more closely related to the automation of skills, facilitates a more fluent execution of learned tasks or concepts. In contrast, learning, although it does not directly promote fluency, plays a crucial role in editing or monitoring acquired knowledge.

For a better grasp of knowledge, acquisition is commonly compared to the first language acquisition since it is a subconscious process. This means that spontaneous

communication depends on the input and interaction that learners receive both inside and outside the classroom. On the other hand, learning is a conscious process that presents two major practices considered as beneficial within the conscious language learning: error correction and the explicit presentation of rules. However, the amount to which this feedback operates is still an open academic subject (Krashen, 1981).

The main point is that correcting errors helps learners internalize the proper mental model of linguistic rules. Additionally, this approach mentions the order of learning. Nonetheless, curricula frequently work with the implicit notion that students develop from simple to complicated topics. This sequential structure may not be consistent with the normal sequence of language acquisition (Krashen, 1981).

2.3.5 The Input Hypothesis

The input hypothesis is one of the five hypotheses that was proposed by Stephen Krashen. However, it is important to define what the input is about. Input is essentially a message through which a foreign language learner, when listening to or reading it, has the desire to understand said information. This certainly leads to the need for students of a language other than their own in a learning process to pay attention to certain types of information, for which they must listen to phrases or sentences in order to encode that information (Wong et al., 2011).

So then, the input hypothesis stated by Krashen reveals the well-known $i+1$ that mentions something simple such as the idea of using questions. It is argued that comprehensible contexts such as vocabulary and words to formulate questions are necessary to include in the lessons. That is what is called the “ i ” since students already know this information. At the same time, it will be essential to use other new question words that go a little beyond their current level and explore what is known and what is new to know (Martínez et al., 2020).

2.3.6 Theory of Meaningful Learning

Meaningful learning is recommended in education because it leads students to understand and give meaning to what they have learned, allowing them to use it in their daily lives. According to Valadares (2011), this author states that “David Ausubel’s meaningful learning” is characterized by the individual's ability to establish substantive relationships

between new information and their pre-existing cognitive structure (p. 37). In this sense, meaningful learning is not limited to the mere assimilation of data, but seeks to construct a deep and lasting understanding of knowledge. Additionally, new information is integrated into a network of interconnected concepts and principles, allowing the student to relate it to their experiences.

In the context of language acquisition, it is essential that teachers introduce varied activities. Ausubel (2012) claims that task-based activities need to be applied with a cognitive purpose to engage the learner. In addition, it is noted that meaningful learning serves as a source for explicit instruction in which students are able to develop their knowledge, examples and insights. This theory undoubtedly reflects that learning is tied to the cognitive processes. Consequently, its practical application in EFL settings demonstrates the mechanism by which students can relate new input with their prior knowledge.

2.3.7 Active Learning Method

Building upon the introduction of new methods, active learning emerges as an effective alternative in response to traditional language teaching, characterized by a mechanized and statistic approach. Therefore, Ramos et al. (2019) argue that active learning has a higher level of student involvement compared to standard teaching. This educational modality promotes a deeper interaction with learning content, fostering the active participation of students through numerous tactics such as inquiry, problem-solving, and reflection on what has been learned.

2.3.8 Experiential Learning Method

Similarly, this learning method sets aside traditional methods to make way for a new conception that contributes to language learning. As Vargas (2017) mentions, starting from the idea that the scholars learn by doing, their knowledge is related to experimentation. In this way, apprehension takes place where a new way of thinking, acting, and developing skills is generated. Furthermore, this method follows a series of stages of reflection that generates new knowledge by focusing on the development of communicative competences.

In the field of teaching English as a foreign language, collaborative experiential learning has consolidated itself as an innovative and effective methodology based on the principle that language acquisition is possible when students actively participate in projects

or tasks. The experiential learning includes the following phases to apply in the classroom: exposure, participation, internalization, and dissemination. Teachers introduce the activities by accessing to past experiences of students, then these experiences are essential to construct a unique learning style on each student (Knutson, 2003).

2.3.9 Constitución 2008

Within the political framework, Article 343 of the 2008 Constitution of Ecuador protects education as a fundamental right for all citizens in its first section:

2.3.9.1 *Education*

The Ecuadorian educational system, as established in Article 343 of the Constitution, has as its primary purpose the holistic development of individuals, promoting active learning and the generation of knowledge. This system is characterized by its flexibility, inclusivity, and efficiency, always placing the student at the center of the educational process. (Constitución del Ecuador, 2008, pp. 106-107)

2.3.10 The Organic Law of Higher Education (LOES)

2.3.10.1 *The Right to Higher Education as a Foundational Principles*

The right to higher education is a cornerstone of the Ecuadorian educational system, providing the basis for any research aimed at improving teaching and learning methodologies. This principle ensures the effective exercise of equal opportunities and the production of relevant knowledge of excellence. The development of communicative skills is therefore essential, as it directly contributes to forming competent professionals who can apply their knowledge in a meaningful way. The 2010 Organic Law on Higher Education (LOES) establishes this right, as detailed in Article 4:

The right to higher education consists of the effective exercise of equal opportunities, based on respective merits, in order to access academic and professional training with the production of relevant and excellent knowledge. Citizens, both individually and collectively, communities, people and nationalities have the right and the responsibility to participate in the higher education process, through the mechanisms established in the Constitution and this Law. (Ley Orgánica de Educación Superior, 2010, p. 9)

2.3.10.2 Guiding Principles of the Higher Education System

The Ecuadorian Higher Education System is governed by a set of principles that guide its function and ensure its relevance. Among these principles are quality and relevance, which are key to supporting the implementation of innovative pedagogical approaches such as CLT. The alignment of teaching methodologies with these legal principles is fundamental for demonstrating a study's contribution to the national educational framework. Article 12 of the LOES outlines these foundational principles:

The System of Higher Education shall be governed by the principles of responsible autonomy, co-governance, equal opportunity, quality, relevance, comprehensiveness and self-determination for the production of thought and knowledge within the framework of dialogue of knowledge, universal thought and global scientific and technological production, These principles shall govern in an integrated manner the institutions, actors, processes, norms, resources and other components of the system, under the terms established by this Law. (Ley Orgánica de Educación Superior, 2010, pp. 12-13)

2.3.11 What is Communicative Language Teaching?

Mulyanah et al. (2018) state that Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), as a method, is designed to help English learners use the target language in everyday communication. This pedagogical approach promotes the development of linguistic competencies, particularly oral expression.

Brown (2007) defines CLT as “an eclectic blend of the contributions of previous methods into the best of what a teacher can provide in authentic uses of the second language in the classroom.” Indeed, the challenge in the classrooms is the teaching of rules, patterns and definitions. These difficulties inside the classroom can affect the development of genuine communicative competence. That is the reason why CLT emerges as an innovative method in which grammar receives less attention than fluency development.

Similarly, CLT as a teaching method focuses on the conveyance of meanings in interaction rather than the practice of grammatical forms in isolation. Lightbown and Spada (2013) believe that successful language learning requires not just knowledge of structures

and forms, but also the functions and purposes that a language fulfills in various communicative circumstances.

The exclusive reliance on linguistic forms and structures such as grammar and vocabulary is no longer viewed as the ultimate goal of language learning. Instead, language is now considered in terms of its communicative functions, since mastering the structure of a language alone is insufficient for learners to perform effectively even outside the classroom. Hence, the CLT method seeks to provide learners with opportunities and strategies to develop their communicative competence, a concept that lies at the core of CLT (Heng, 2014).

2.3.12 Characteristics

Rather than offering a precise definition of Communicative Language Teaching, Brown and Lee (2015) describe seven interconnected characteristics that define it:

(1) Emphasis on Comprehensive Communicative Competence: This addresses all components of communicative competence: grammatical, discursive, functional, sociolinguistic, and strategic. **(2) Pragmatic and Functional Use of Language:** The pragmatic, authentic, and functional use of language for meaningful purposes. **(3) Complementary Fluency and Accuracy:** Recognizes the importance of both fluency and accuracy. **(4) Tasks for Communication beyond the classroom:** Equips students with the skills needed for communication in various contexts. **(5) Autonomous learning:** the classroom context can serve as a key foundation for fostering student autonomy in learning a language. **(6) Teacher's roles:** As facilitators and guides not only a knowledge giver. **(7) Active and Collaborative Participation:** Emphasizes the students' leading role in the classroom.

2.3.13 Communicative Competence

According to Hymes (1972), communicative competence is the ability in which interaction takes place with other people. As a result, meaning negotiation is one of the main language functions performed within particular contexts. Similarly, Heng (2014) manifests that communicative competence embraces a connection between the knowledge of the language and the ability to use the implicit knowledge in real communicative contexts. In other words, this means that students are able to communicate effectively regarding aspects

such as time, duration and place. Furthermore, they will know what to say or not, and how to express themselves appropriately with different speakers.

Canale and Swain (1980) proposed 4 components as part of the communicative competence:

2.3.13.1 Grammatical competence

Within a communicative context, this component focuses on the development of accuracy. It includes the application of “lexical items and rules of morphology, syntax, sentence-grammar semantics, and phonology (Canale and Swain, 1980, p. 29).

2.3.13.2 Sociolinguistic competence

It takes place when people know what or how to say at the correct time. This certainly implies understanding the social and cultural contexts, including role relationships, knowledge from the pupils and the communicative intentions through interaction.

2.3.13.3 Discourse competence

It implies a cohesive and coherent connection of words, phrases, and sentences in a text. It means that learners are able to relate previous ideas with new ones that come spontaneously taking into account grammar and vocabulary.

2.3.13.4 Strategic competence

It is the ability to start, maintain, and terminate meaningful communication. This component is crucial as it equips speakers with the necessary confidence and communication strategies to overcome particular issues that arise during interaction.

2.3.14 Language Functions

The communicative approach is founded on the concept of language as communication. Within this interaction, an action is performed by using language to fulfill diverse functions, including “arguing, persuading, excusing, inviting, describing, narrating, apologizing, instructing, promising, and so on”. Additionally, these language functions are carried out in a social environment. This means that communication goes beyond just

connecting words together. It implies the transmission of information and ideas to a specific audience considering intention and current emotional state (Torres, 2017).

Likewise, since communication is a dynamic process, it is not enough for pupils to just memorize the forms, meanings, and grammatical features of language they are acquiring. Torres (2017) argues that the critical step for them is to learn how to apply this knowledge in the negotiation of meaning. Essentially, the process of negotiation embraces a commitment to fostering increased communicative interaction among participants. It happens whether they are a speaker and a listener, or a reader and a writer.

Table 1. Example of language functions:

Function of the language	Example	Grammatical form
Expressing wishes	I wish I could travel to Germany.	Future wishes, affirmative form.
Asking permission	Daughter: Would you mind if I go to my friend's party? Mom: No, I wouldn't mind my dear daughter.	Modal verb "Would". Interrogative form.
Inviting to do something	Speaker A: Would you like to come to the Maldonado Park with me tonight? Speaker B: Yes, I'd like that.	Modal verb "Would like" + main infinitive verb. Interrogative form.
Apologizing	Speaker A: I must apologize for screaming at you. Speaker B: Never mind. Don't worry about it.	Modal verb. Affirmative form.
Comparing	The Unach University is better than the Espoach.	Comparative, affirmative form.
Greeting	Andrea: Hello, how are you doing? Dayana: I cannot complain and you?	Formal greeting. Present tense.

	<p>Andrea: Fine, thanks. Nice to see you.</p> <p>Dayana: Nice to see you too.</p> <p>Kate: I forgot to bring my pencil box. May I borrow a pencil, Franklin?</p> <p>Franklin: I'm sorry, Kate. I don't lend my pencils. I will sell you a pencil for 1 dollar.</p>
Requesting something	
Describing plans	<p>I plan to have a meeting with my team members later today to discuss the Grammar Project.</p>
Giving opinions	<p>From my point of view the organization of the Christmas events was a disaster.</p>
Making instructions	<p>Speaker A: How do I bake a cake?</p> <p>Speaker B: First, measure the ingredients. Second, mix the ingredients. Then, slide the cake pan into the preheated oven. Finally, remove it from the oven after 40 minutes and enjoy it.</p> <p>Imperative verb. Commands and directions are included in this function as well.</p>

Note. The examples in this table were compiled by the author

2.3.15 Speaking Skill

The skill emerges as crucial element in language learning, as it enables individuals to actively construct and share knowledge, enriching their understanding of different perspectives and fostering social interaction. According to Mulyanah et al. (2018), speaking skill is a fundamental pillar of education because it allows students to connect thought with

language. By producing their own statements, students demonstrate their ability to conceptualize and effectively communicate ideas in daily life.

Likewise, Tran (2022) claims that speaking is a common human communication action that can occur everywhere and at any time. It is an act that connects the speaker and the listener. In English classrooms, the most difficult and vital skill is oral expression, which refers to the ability to convey thoughts, opinions, or feelings. This protocol undoubtedly takes place within a specific context using both verbal and body language.

Students often struggle with social communication, such as being able to express their opinions or thoughts or understanding what others say but being able to convey it. This can be due to various factors, including a lack of a regular environment for practicing oral expression, motivation to learn, and students' self-confidence. Islam et al. (2022) stated that the importance of oral skills is clearly demonstrated through communication and interaction.

2.3.16 Speaking Sub-skills

Lackman (2010) believes that training certain sub-speaking skills is more effective than simply encouraging pupils to talk in class. The variety and type of sub-skills required for the target language's output reflect the complexities of learning to speak in another language. In contrast, Richards (2006) considers that Communicative Language Teaching aims to develop the main sub-skills, fluency and precision, through the practice of interactive activities.

2.3.16.1 Fluency

Fluency occurs when the speakers are able to maintain comprehensible communication without interruptions despite their limitations (Oviedo & Mayorga, 2021). Furthermore, fluency should be developed naturally by proposing classroom activities where the negotiating of meaning and the use of communication strategies are the central focus. This does not imply speaking very fast or very slow. Instead, the goal is to ensure clear communication and foster natural, spontaneous interaction.

2.3.16.2 Accuracy

It is the practice of using words, phrases, and thoughts accurately to produce a meaningful interactive moment. It encompasses the ability to employ the correct forms of

language, primarily concerning the accurate use of grammatical structures. In this specific regard, Skehan and Foster (1999) define accuracy as the ability to avoid errors in performance, regulate the language, and avoid problematic structures that may cause errors. For the attainment of accuracy, “controlled practice activities are the most common way of working on spoken accuracy” (Lackman, 2010, p.3).

2.3.16.3 Pronunciation

It refers to the speech sound production at the syllabic level, which makes language learners sound when talking vocally. From this standpoint, listeners will clearly understand the message with correct pronunciation (Pennington, 2021). One important highlight is that it supports other speaking sub-skills such as fluency by reducing hesitation. Nevertheless, Spanish EFL learners frequently struggle when pronouncing some words in the target language due to divergences between the Spanish and English phonological systems.

The main problem for EFL students is the presence of unique sounds that do not exist in their native languages. This includes specific phonemes that are absent in major linguistic families. Another problem is the lack of grapheme-phoneme correspondence which means that a single sound can be represented by various spellings. In simple words, the pronunciation of a letter or syllable can vary significantly based on its position (Uribe et al., 2019).

2.3.16.4 Discourse Management

This phrase refers to the combination of coherence and cohesiveness, as well as the arrangement of speech. This corresponds to the capacity to examine and frame individuals' thoughts and ideas in a logical manner to ensure audience understands the message. Furthermore, this sub-skill requires the application of approaches and strategies to continue the flow of conversation, such as asking for information, clarifying, providing ideas, or expressing remarks (Hardy et al., 2020).

2.3.17 Contribution of Communicative Language Teaching to Speaking Skill

Heng (2014) argues that, given the evident need for a paradigm shift in language teaching, Communicative Language Teaching emerges as a method to meet learners' needs by offering a more participatory and communicative approach. This enables students to perform successfully in real-life situations. In contrast, Mulyanah et al. (2018) suggest that

teachers can employ a strategy of varied activities that integrate linguistic input and communicative output to help students develop communicative effectiveness in speaking. Today, many linguists and instructors agree that “interaction” is how students learn a new language.

2.3.18 Classroom Implementation

According to Heng (2014), to support the application of CLT, more attention must be given to students’ communicative skills. This can be achieved by increasing the number of speaking and listening exercises in the classroom and establishing an atmosphere where students’ communicative abilities are continuously assessed and encouraged to grow. Additionally, educators should focus more on fluency practice rather than precision and should exercise caution and judgement when selecting speaking exercises for their students. In other words, time limits and explicit guidelines should be set. Educators must also foster students’ openness to communication in the classroom by creating a safe environment where students feel less afraid to take risks and speak in front of their peers.

2.3.19 Classroom Activities

An effective complement to the implementation of Communicative Language Teaching is the inclusion of classroom activities. Among the most notable are:

2.3.19.1 Role-play

It is one of the meaningful activities used in CLT to facilitate communication in many social circumstances. Role-play involves establishing conditions and rules, but there is no predetermined script. This allows students and teachers to develop strategies based on their experiences both inside and outside of the classroom (Quinteros & Fajardo, 2022). The most common benefit is the enhancement of speaking skill due to interaction in pairs or groups.

Banda (2023) considers some factors that contribute to the success of a role-play:

- a. Careful and clear presentation of the instructions.
- b. Ensuring that the required language is within the ability level.
- c. Being enthusiastic.
- d. A previous presentation, together with the teacher, would help a lot.

2.3.19.2 Games

Games are considered activities to encourage, amuse, and improve fluency. These have been demonstrated to be beneficial and helpful in teaching vocabulary in a variety of ways. Firstly, games bring advantages for learners by offering relaxation and fun. This helps them learn and retain new words more easily. Secondly, playing games enhance communicative competence and motivates them to learn English. In this way, learners continue to be engaged and actively take part in learning activities. Thirdly, vocabulary games encourage more adaptable and conversational English usage. It appears that kids learn English through games in a similar way to how they study their mother tongue without realizing it, thus they can learn a lot without experiencing anxiety.

2.3.19.3 Oral Presentations

These activities make it possible to cover a large amount of material in a comparatively short amount of time. Students' oral expression abilities are enhanced to make the process of sharing information with a significant group of people easier. Additionally, learners can display an activity related to their experiences or their lives. For instance, when a student is asked to present a family tree, this pupil will be required to look up information about their ancestors, learn about each of their relatives' personal histories, and ultimately gain value from their family environment and self-esteem (Banda, 2023).

2.3.19.4 Debate

The debate is characterized as a dialogue among individuals, designed not as a conflict but as a forum for reasoned exchange. Thus, it functions as a conversation between respectful humans, prioritizing mutual understanding over adversarial positioning. Participants should be knowledgeable about the topic at hand and able to contribute to the discussion. The dispute should be substantiated and supported by relevant documentation, statistics, or other sources to provide credibility to one's position (Vite, 2016).

In the classroom, the teacher's primary role is to dynamically organize the group's work. This type of strategy allows the student to develop the communicative skills. As stated by Vite (2016), it also focuses on responsibility, with each student for their part of the process and the group responsible for completing the work. It also develops the ability to argue, synthesize, analyze, and comprehension skills through reading techniques and strategies.

2.3.19.5 Dialogue

The dialogue takes place when there are two or more speakers interacting and sharing knowledge. According to Swain and Watanabe (2012), the dialogue refers to the use of words to convey arguments or questions. As a result, dialogue in education is the process of creating meaning through a deeper understanding of any situation or conversation. This activity is seen as a resource for language acquisition and problem-solving growth.

2.3.19.6 Information Gap

One of the most important ideas in the field of communicative education is the information gap. As Liao (2000) highlights that activities in the classroom should be examples of authentic communication based on a true interaction gap. In real life, two people communicate when one of them is aware of something that the other is not and the goal is to close this knowledge gap. When one student in an exchange understands information that the other student does not, there is a gap in the classroom. For instance, the discussion is not truly communicative if one student knows it is Monday and the other asks, "What day is today?"

2.3.19.7 Opinion Sharing

The activity of exchanging opinions is intended to practice pupils' oral expression skills or to focus on fundamental competency. As noted by Guanoquiza and Jiménez (2022), teachers are expected to serve as facilitators in order to arrange and coordinate the acquisition process. The role of the teacher as a coordinator is to help students become proficient English speakers. Under the guidance of the professors, the students' responsibility is to contribute as much as they can to create a message that is comprehensible.

2.3.19.8 Group Work

Since students are more engaged, joyful, and ready to learn English speaking skill, group work is a distinctive activity. Consistent with Tweedie and Johnson (2018), the CLT method allows for the sharing and exchange of peer evaluations and contributions between each other. For instance, to enhance the chances of communicating and sharing ideas. In order to improve students' English proficiency and give them an active approach to learn the language, group work in the classroom mixes individual with teamwork strategies.

2.3.20 The Role of the Teacher and Student in the Classroom

Both teachers and students have an important role inside the classroom since the class starts until the final stage of the CLT lesson. In one hand, teachers are mainly facilitators since they are in charge of designing the lessons, proposing the communicative activities and organizing the resources for the input and subsequent phases. Correspondingly, Heng (2014) affirms that prompter is another role in which teachers support students when offering and suggesting words or phrases during an activity, namely, a role-play. Furthermore, in order to prevent pupils from becoming dependent on their teachers, they must restrict the type of assistance they provide their learners. Finally, teachers assume diverse roles such as advisor and feedback provider based on specific situations and student needs. This adaptability is essential as they should create classroom environments that actively promote communication.

On the other hand, Richards (2006) asserts that “learners now had to participate in classroom strategies that were based on a cooperative rather than individualistic approach to learning” (p. 5). In addition, the students become the focus of the classroom as they are active agents, this certainly helps them to growth personally (Oviedo & Mayorga, 2021). Another role is that pupils are communicators and the speech skills are reinforced through interactive activities in pairs or groups. The main idea is that they need to comprehend others and make themselves understand during conversations with the other classmates. To put it simply, learners tend to participate in classroom environments where in-person interactions take place and they must negotiate meanings, share information, and work with peers to complete tasks by using the target language.

3. CHAPTER III. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Approach

The approach adopted for this research is quantitative. Sampieri et al. (2014) state that quantitative approach embraces sequential processes by testing hypothesis or beliefs in order to reflect changes, behavioral patterns in the population or phenomena. Furthermore, the researcher needs to be as objective as possible not allowing emotions or biases to interfere in the statistical results of the study. Under this guideline, the intention is to apply a pre-test and a post-test that enables the collection of quantitative results.

3.2 Type of research

This study is framed as applied research characterized by its practical orientation and emphasis on solving specific challenges in the educational context. As Rodríguez mentions, “the distinctive feature of applied research lies in its focus on the applicability and practical implications of the acquired knowledge, with the purpose of anticipating specific behaviors in defined scenarios” (2020, p. 5). The results of applied research will not only benefit the specific educational context in which it is conducted but may also contribute to expanding the body of general knowledge in the field of teaching speaking skills using the Communicative Language Teaching method.

3.3 Research design

Given the nature of this study, it is essential to select the design aligned with the purpose of addressing the problem statement. The pre-experimental design was used to analyze the alternative hypothesis ($H_1: \mu_{Post} > \mu_{Pre}$) established in a particular context. The independent variable in this design of the experimental investigation has only one level: the experimental group, which receives the intervention that the researcher applies. It means that the Pre-test and Post-test measurements of the dependent variable must be made using an instrument (Ramos, 2021). It is important to mention that the same group received the pre-test, then the intervention, and finally the pos-test, as this procedure represented the essence of the pre-experimental design.

3.4 Study Population

The population for this study consisted of 25 students from the Third-semester students of Pedagogy of National and Foreign Languages degree at Universidad Nacional de Chimborazo in the city of Riobamba, during the 2025-2S academic period. This group possesses the aptitude and conducive environment to the adoption of the CLT method, which arises from these objectives and the need to communicate effectively in the target language.

Furthermore, the population was selected because they are at an intermediate stage of their learning process, corresponding to B1 proficiency level. At this stage, they are beginning to be exposed to the current and communicative approaches, which makes them ideal participants for the implementation of the method proposed. Therefore, enhancing their speaking skill through innovative methods.

3.5 Sample

The sample was not considered since the population was relatively small.

3.6 Data Collection Techniques and Instruments

The pre-test and post-test were administered as part of the same assessment process to diagnose students' initial level of oral expression and evaluate the effectiveness of the implemented strategy. Both instruments were based on questions from the Cambridge B1 Preliminary Speaking Test, developed by Cambridge Assessment English. Additionally, these instruments were assessed using the Cambridge B1 Speaking Rubric, which includes four criteria: *Grammar and Vocabulary, Discourse Management, Pronunciation, and Interactive Communication*. The rubric elucidates a total score of 20 points, being 5 the maximum score and 0 the minimum.

In the same vein, the pre-test was administered at the beginning of the study, while the post-test was administered at the end of the intervention, maintaining the same procedure to ensure comparability of the results. For each assessment, students recorded a single audio file with a maximum duration of 2 minutes and sent it to a WhatsApp group created by the researcher. Although both tests retained the format of the Cambridge Speaking Test, the post-test incorporated an original scenario with questions adapted by the researcher and the images used were sourced from Google Images.

During the phase of intervention supported by the Communicative Language Teaching method, communicative activities were implemented after planning the lessons and the materials needed. The intervention was carried out over a period of 4 weeks to ensure the attainment of reliable and viable results. In this regard, the activities applied were role-plays, debates, oral presentations, and dialogues, allowing students to actively practice and focus on real communication.

3.7 Validation of the data collection instrument

It should be emphasized that the post-test instrument was adapted from the valid pre-test questions; therefore, it was validated by two EFL professors from the Pedagogy of National and Foreign Languages program at Universidad Nacional de Chimborazo. First, the instrument was reviewed by the academic tutor and then by the experts, who provided observations and suggestions. After making the necessary adjustments, data collection was carried out.

Furthermore, to ensure appropriate management of the participants, informed consent was obtained. This allowed participants to understand how their information would be used. Students participated voluntarily and were free to withdraw at any time. In addition, the participants' identities were protected, avoiding the disclosure of any information or responses that could identify them. Finally, the collected information was reliable and remained intact, without any manipulation.

3.8 Hypothesis

Null hypothesis (H₀): The implementation of the CLT method does not produce a significant improvement in the students' speaking skill.

Alternative hypothesis (H₁): The implementation of the CLT method produces a significant improvement in the students' speaking skill.

3.9 Methods of data analysis and processing

First, the scores were registered in an Excel file and later transferred to SPSS software to allow the researcher to identify and interpret performance changes throughout the study. To accomplish this process, the specialized software SPSS Statistics was used to analyze the statistical data from the pre-test and post-test. The raw scores obtained from the

four criteria of the Cambridge B1 Speaking Rubric were coded and organized into two dependent variables: Pre-test Scores and Post-test Scores.

3.9.1 Descriptive Analysis

It was used to summarize the central tendencies and dispersion of the sample's performance. The metrics reported include the Mean (M), Median, Mode, Standard Deviation (SD), minimum, and maximum scores. This initial analysis provided a quantitative overview of the student's speaking performance before and after the implementation of the CLT method.

3.9.2 Inferential Analysis and Hypothesis Testing

To test the research hypothesis and conclude whether the CLT method resulted in a significant improvement, a formal inferential procedure was conducted at a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$. This means that to reject the H_0 , the probability value (p) must be lower than the significance level. Subsequently, the normality testing was applied by using the Shapiro-Wilk test to verify the assumption of normal data distribution. Finally, the hypothesis testing is important to compare the means of two related samples based on the normality assumption: when the data met the assumption of normality ($p > 0.05$), the Paired-Samples t-test is applied.

4. CHAPTER IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Results

The following chapter embraces the results of the data obtained from the third-semester students enrolled in the Pedagogy of National and Foreign Languages program at Universidad Nacional de Chimborazo.

Hypothesis statement

$$H_0: \mu_{\text{Post}} \leq \mu_{\text{Pre}}$$

The intervention of the CLT method does not improve the students' speaking skill

$$H_1: \mu_{\text{Post}} > \mu_{\text{Pre}}$$

The intervention of the CLT method significantly improves the students' speaking skill.

Pre – test and Post – test results

Table 2. Pre – test and Post – test scores

Nº Students	Pre – test	Post – test
S1	8	10
S2	17	18
S3	11	15
S4	17	18
S5	9	13
S6	13	15
S7	13	16
S8	10	13
S9	15	17
S10	17	19
S11	10	12
S12	12	16
S13	14	16
S14	9	11
S15	10	13
S16	16	17
S17	11	15

S18	11	12
S19	13	15
S20	8	13
S21	16	18
S22	16	18
S23	16	17
S24	12	15
S25	10	12

Note. The scores of the sample before and after the intervention.

Table 2 presents the comparative scores gathered from the pre – test and post – test instruments applied to the study sample. Both instruments were administered to a total of 25 participants. This comparison shows an overall improvement in students' oral performance after the intervention, with most participants obtaining higher scores in the pos-test.

Descriptive Statistics

Table 3 presents the descriptive statistics of the average scores obtained by the students in the speaking test before and after the intervention with the CLT method:

Table 3. Descriptive statistics

		Pre-test	Post-test
N	Valid	25	25
Mean		12.56	14.96
Median		12.00	15.00
Mode		10	15
Std. Deviation		3.001	2.508
Variance		9.007	6.290
Range		9	9
Minimum		8	10
Maximum		17	19

Note. N=25 Scores were obtained from the Cambridge speaking test.

The student's average score in the Pre-test was 12.56 with a standard deviation of 3.001. After the implementation of the CLT method, the average score in the Post-test increased to 14.96 with a standard deviation of 2.508. Furthermore, the data become more homogeneous after the intervention, as evidenced by the reduction in the Standard Deviation. This suggests that the scores clustered more tightly around the higher Post-test mean. The median also showed an upward trend, rising from 12.00 to 15.00.

Normality Test

Table 4. Normality test

Shapiro-Wilk			
	Statistic	df	Sig.
Pre-test	.920	24	.051
Post-test	.948	24	.228

Note. Results of the Shapiro-Wilk normality test before and after the intervention.

Prior to using the paired-samples *t*-test, the assumption of data normality was assessed. The Shapiro-Wilk test results showed that both the Pre-test (Sig.=.051) and the Post-test (Sig.=.228) had significance values more than 0.05. Therefore, it is concluded that the calculations are adjusted to a normal distribution, validating the use of the parametric *t*-test.

Paired samples t - test

After checking the normality test, a paired-samples *t* – test was conducted to test the research hypothesis.

Table 5. Paired samples t - test

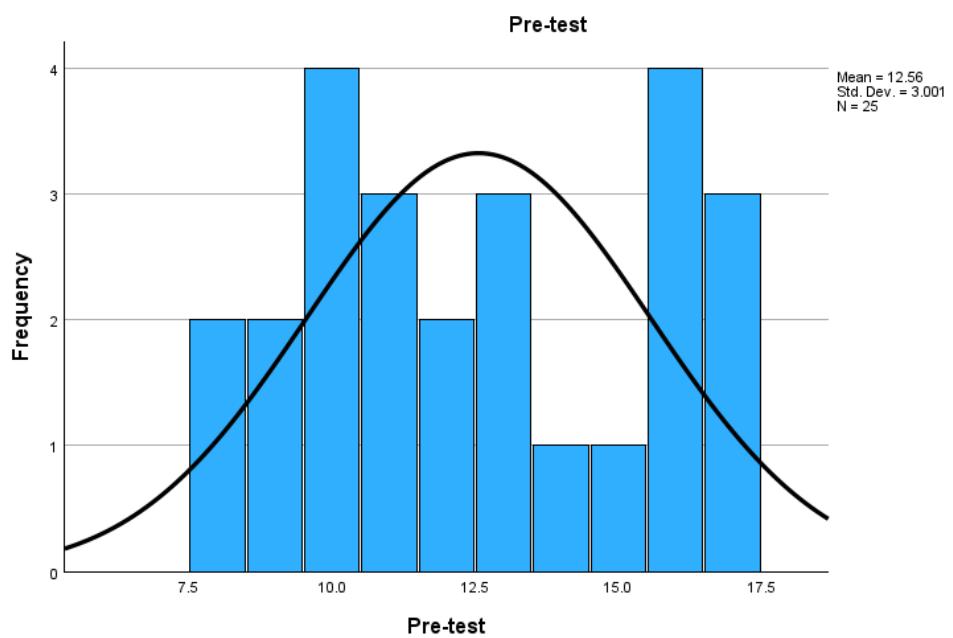
	Mean	<i>t</i> – Statistic	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i> – Value (two-tailed)
Pre – test	-2.400	-10.733	24	< 0.001
Post – test				

*Note. The *p* – Value is considered to determine the significance after the intervention.*

The test calculated the mean difference between the Pre-test and Post-test scores. This reflected a Mean Difference of -2.400. The negative value proves that the Post-test scores were 2.400 higher than the Pre-test scores. The t – statistic was -10.733, with 24 degrees of freedom (df). The significance value (p) obtained was < 0.001 (two-tailed), which showcases a value lower than the established alpha level of $\alpha = 0.05$. In this context, the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, it is concluded that the CLT method produced progress in speaking skill after the intervention.

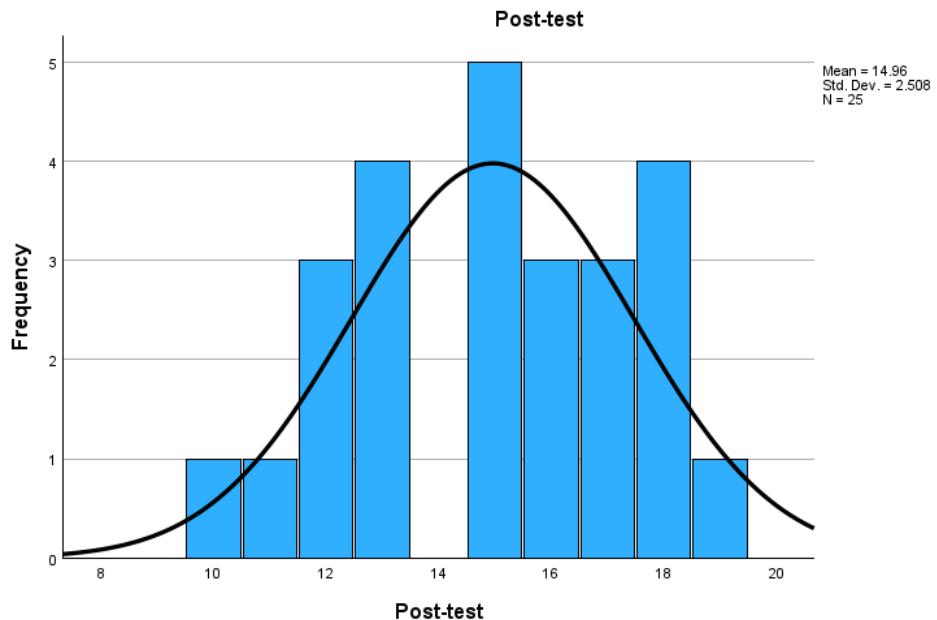
Frequency distribution graph

Figure 1. Pre-test



Note. Frequency histogram of the scores obtained in the Pre-test.

Figure 2. Post-test



Note. Frequency histogram of the scores obtained in the Post-test.

The observations mentioned were supported by the visual representation of the frequency distribution graphs. On one hand, the pre-test graph reflects a very wide distribution with a standard deviation of 3.001 and a mean of 12.56 as it was mentioned before within the descriptive statistics. On the other hand, the post-test graph demonstrates that the distribution of the scores has shifted to the right with a mean value of 14.96. The standard deviation became more aggregated and steadier with a value of 2.508. In conclusion, the results provided enough support to accept the alternative hypothesis, showing that activities based on the Communicative Language Teaching method improved student performance.

Following the diagnosis of the initial level of speaking skill, strategies based on the Communicative Language Teaching method were implemented, the effects of which were evidenced in the improvement of the post-test results.

Week 1: Role-play activity

The activity consisted of a role-play based on the topic of extreme sports, designed to enhance students' overall speaking performance, particularly in terms of fluency and pronunciation. In this context, students were instructed to choose one extreme sport and imagine that they were planning to practice it. One student assumed the role of the person

seeking advice (Student A), while the partner took the role of the advisor (Student B), who provided recommendations regarding appropriate clothing, equipment, and necessary safety measures. In addition, to support their performance, students were provided with a set of useful phrases and structures for asking for and giving advice, which they then applied during the role-play. By presenting this activity, students engaged in meaningful spoken exchanges within a simulated context, allowing them to practice spontaneous oral communication.

Week 2: Debate

This activity focused on the topic of the use of cellphones in the classroom, designed to further develop students' speaking skills through meaningful oral interaction. Students were divided into groups and assigned positions either in favor of or against the use of cellphones in class. In order to support their participation, the teacher provided a set of useful phrases to help students express opinions, agree or disagree, and justify their viewpoints. Throughout this activity, students engaged in spoken communication by presenting arguments, responding to opposing ideas, and interacting with their peers.

Week 3: Oral presentations

The activity consisted of an oral presentation designed to strengthen students' speaking skills through the contextualized use of phrasal verbs. As input, the teacher presented an authentic movie scene in which phrasal verbs were naturally used in spoken interaction. In the main phase of the speaking activity, students prepared and delivered an oral presentation using slides created in Canva, which included images and key phrases from a movie scene of their choice. During the presentation, students explained orally the real-life message or lesson conveyed by the selected phrase or scene and incorporated several phrasal verbs into their spoken production. This activity promoted meaningful oral communication while reinforcing vocabulary use and supporting overall speaking development.

Week 4: Dialogues

The topic of this activity was procrastination, an activity designed to promote authentic communication. The topic reflected real-life situations in which students talked about delaying academic tasks, managing deadlines, and deciding how to organize their time effectively. During the speaking task, students worked in small groups to create and perform

their own dialogues addressing situations such as postponing assignments, prioritizing tasks, or choosing strategies to overcome procrastination. During the activity, students exchanged opinions, suggested solutions, and justified their decisions while interacting with peers. This activity certainly allowed students to develop their speaking skill, particularly in terms of fluency, coherence, and spontaneity.

4.2 Discussion

In response to the research question, this study aimed to analyze how the Communicative Language Teaching method contributes to the development of speaking skill in third-semester students of the Pedagogy of National and Foreign Languages degree at Universidad Nacional de Chimborazo in Riobamba. The study sought to determine whether an improvement was recognized after the intervention and, to this end, was complemented by a comparative review of studies supporting the contribution of CLT to the improvement of speaking skills.

The positive results obtained in this study validates the findings of previous studies that advocate for the relevance of the implementation of the CLT method. For instance, Richards (2006) highlights that the communication over grammatical perfection, increases the student engagement and participation, leading to the mastery of fluency. Furthermore, the findings are consistent with other studies conducted by Shahid et al. (2022), establishing that communicative competence must be measured active and dynamically through activities mainly focused on situations related to their real lives. Thus, there is an existing contrast between the statistical improvement and the theoretical arguments in favor of CLT.

Despite the positive results, this study presents certain methodological limitations related to its scope. The research was conducted with a limited sample size and within a defined intervention period, which may limit the extent to which the findings can be generalized. Furthermore, the analysis focused on the overall development of speaking skill rather than on individual components of performance.

On the other hand, previous research has indicated that the development of speaking skill in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts can be influenced by contextual factors such as learners' motivation and their initial level of English proficiency (Parrales & Dajely, 2022; Romero, 2025). Some studies on affective variables suggest that higher motivation and lower anxiety contribute to a greater willingness to participate orally, while

a high level of affective filters can hinder oral performance (Negrete & Suntasig, 2025; Tovar & Yaguarzhungo, 2024). Additional research revealed findings related to the meaningful input suggesting the development of receptive and productive skills, supporting a better performance on speaking skill (Yufra et al., 2024). These factors that were reported in the literature provide a contextual framework for understanding the development of speaking skill in environments where the CLT method is implemented.

Since this study has demonstrated the positive influence of the Communicative Language Teaching method on speaking skill, it is suggested that future research explore several avenues to further refine pedagogical practice. Initially, to determine the sustained effectiveness of the CLT method, subsequent research should employ a longitudinal design, applied over a period of many months, to measure the retention of participants' acquired speaking skills. Lastly, future researchers could employ a mixed approach by incorporating qualitative data through student interviews to better understand which task they perceive as most effective and why.

5. CHAPTER V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

In terms of the first specific objective, which was to diagnose the level of speaking skill of the study population, this was carried out using a pre-test validated by Cambridge B1 and calculated using the official rubric. The test revealed that the students obtained low to average scores in their initial speaking performance. These results provided an overview of the students' speaking skill and established a starting point for comparison after the intervention strategy.

In fulfillment of the second objective, the research focused on the application of activities supported by the Communicative Language Teaching method to promote the development of speaking skill in English. In this context, the application of the CLT method through a variety of communicative activities such as role-plays, debates, oral presentations, and dialogues promoted interaction, collaboration, and participation that provided students with meaningful opportunities to use the target language in communicative contexts.

Regarding the third objective, which was to determine the effectiveness of the intervention proposal based on the progress of the speaking skill of the study participants, the statistical data between the pre-test and post-test results confirmed a clear improvement in their speaking skill. These findings support the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis, confirming that the implementation of the activities based on the CLT method contributed positively to the enhancement of speaking skill.

5.2 Recommendations

It is recommended to use regular diagnostic and follow-up assessments, such as portfolios, to monitor student progress and adjust teaching strategies according to their needs.

It is recommended to continue implementing communication activities based on the CLT method such as role-plays, debates, oral presentations, and dialogues to reinforce and strengthen the communicative competence in pupils. The proposal for these activities could be included into lesson plans by taking advantage of the technological resources offered by the University.

It is recommended to encourage students to practice speaking in interactive contexts to consolidate the progress observed in post-tests and promote confidence in expressing oneself.

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7. ANNEXES

Data Collection Instruments

Pre-test



UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL DE CHIMBORAZO PEDAGOGY OF NATIONAL AND FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Description: The purpose of this pre-test is to diagnose the level of speaking skill of the study population and the limitations that compromise their development, using the Cambridge B1 Preliminary exam developed by Cambridge Assessment English. The test was slightly adapted from the B1 Preliminary Speaking Test section, specifically in Part 4. Although this part includes 5 questions, only the first three will be administered.

Diagnose test

Third Semester PINE

Date:

Instructions:

- Record an audio of 2 minutes maximum based on the situation given (Part 3) and the questions (Part 4). The audio must include both parts.
- In Part 3 of your audio, you must definitively choose **one** of the activities you proposed and explain why it is the superior choice for the young man in his specific situation
- In Part 4 of your audio, you need to answer 3 questions using information about yourself and providing reasons for your answers.

PART 3

Situation:

A young man works very hard and has only one free day a week. He wants to find an activity to help him relax.

Activities to help the man relax



PART 4

Answer these questions:

What do you do when you want to relax? (Why?)

Do you prefer to relax with friends or alone? (Why?)

Is it important to do exercise in your free time? (Why?/Why not?)

Post-test



UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL DE CHIMBORAZO PEDAGOGY OF NATIONAL AND FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Description: The purpose of this post-test is to evaluate the improvement in the speaking skill level of the study population following the intervention. The test maintains the same structure and criteria as the original Cambridge B1 Preliminary Speaking Test but features an original scenario and related questions created by the researcher for Part 3 and 4. Finally, the pictures were sourced from Google Images.

Final test

Third Semester PINE

Date:

Instructions:

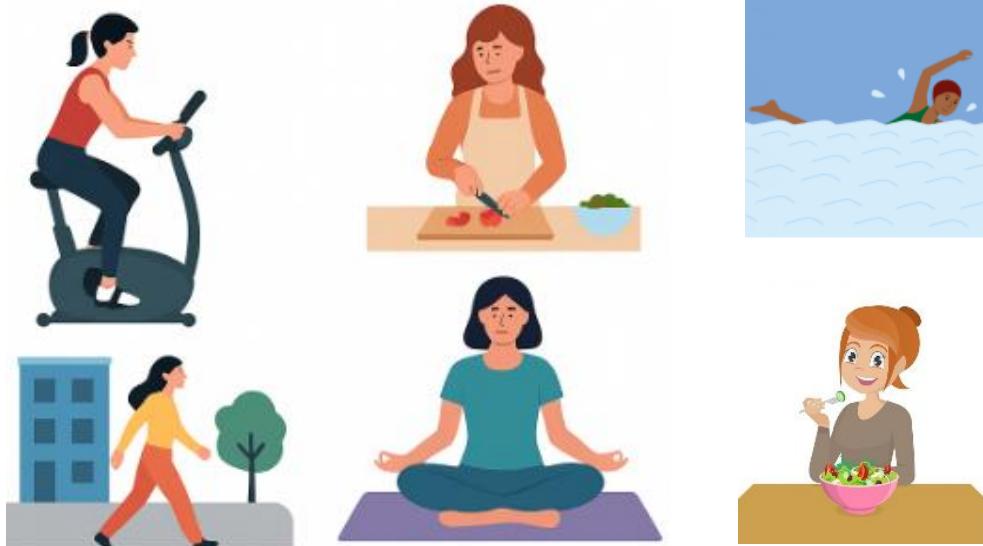
- Record an audio of 2 minutes maximum based on the situation (Part 3) and the questions (Part 4). The audio must include both parts.
- Part 3: In your audio, you must definitively choose one of the activities you would propose for the young woman and explain why it is the superior choice for her specific situation.
- Part 4: In your audio, you need to answer the 3 questions using information about yourself and providing reasons for your answers.

Part 3

Situation:

A young woman wants to live a healthier lifestyle. She is very busy with work and does not have much time. She wants to find ways to be healthier.

Activities to help the woman improve her lifestyle



Part 4

Answer these questions:

Do you think young people today are healthy? (Why?/Why not?)

What do you usually do to stay healthy? (Why?)

Do you think it's easy or difficult to live a healthy life? (Why?)

Post-test instrument validation

EXPERT EVALUATION MATRIX

Title of the research:	Communicative Language Teaching approach to enhance Speaking skill
Line of research:	Higher education and vocational training
The measuring instrument belongs to the variable:	Post-test
Independent variable:	Communicative Language Teaching approach
Dependent variable:	Speaking skill.

Using the expert evaluation matrix, you have the power to evaluate each question by marking an "X" in the YES or NO columns. We also encourage you to correct the items, indicating your observations and/or suggestions, in order to improve the coherence of the questions on the variable under study.

Items	Questions	YES	NO	Observations
1	Is the measuring instrument of appropriate design?	X		
2	Is the data collection instrument related to the research title?	X		
3	Are the research variables mentioned in the data collection instrument?		X	
4	Will the data collection instrument facilitate the achievement of the research objectives?	X		
5	Is the data collection instrument related to the study variables?	X		
6	Are the questions worded coherently and not biased?	X		
7	Will the design of the measuring instrument facilitate data analysis and processing?	X		
8	Are the response alternatives of the measuring instrument understandable?	X		
9	Will the measuring instrument be accessible to the study population?	X		
10	Is the measuring instrument clear, precise and easy to answer in order to obtain the required data?	X		

Suggestions: Review the research variables

Signature : 

Full name: Monica Naomi Cadena Figueroa

C. I: 0602935926

Profession: EFL Teacher

EXPERT EVALUATION MATRIX

Title of the research:	Communicative Language Teaching approach to enhance Speaking skill
Line of research:	Higher education and vocational training
The measuring instrument belongs to the variable:	Post-test
Independent variable:	Communicative Language Teaching approach
Dependent variable:	Speaking skill.

Using the expert evaluation matrix, you have the power to evaluate each question by marking an "X" in the YES or NO columns. We also encourage you to correct the items, indicating your observations and/or suggestions, in order to improve the coherence of the questions on the variable under study.

Items	Questions	YES	NO	Observations
1	Is the measuring instrument of appropriate design?	X		
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4	Will the data collection instrument facilitate the achievement of the research objectives?	X		
5	Is the data collection instrument related to the study variables?	X		
6	Are the questions worded coherently and not biased?	X		
7	Will the design of the measuring instrument facilitate data analysis and processing?	X		
8	Are the response alternatives of the measuring instrument understandable?	X		
9	Will the measuring instrument be accessible to the study population?	X		
10	Is the measuring instrument clear, precise and easy to answer in order to obtain the required data?	X		

Suggestions: Include the factors of speaking you will assess.

Full name: César Augusto Narváez Jilemo

C. I.: 06034727-7

Profession: EFL teacher.



Rubric Speaking Performance_B1



English Qualifications

Assessing speaking performance – Level B1

B1	Grammar and Vocabulary	Discourse Management	Pronunciation	Interactive Communication
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shows a good degree of control of simple grammatical forms, and attempts some complex grammatical forms. Uses a range of appropriate vocabulary to give and exchange views on familiar topics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produces extended stretches of language despite some hesitation. Contributions are relevant despite some repetition. Uses a range of cohesive devices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is intelligible. Intonation is generally appropriate. Sentence and word stress is generally accurately placed. Individual sounds are generally articulated clearly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiates and responds appropriately. Maintains and develops the interaction and negotiates towards an outcome with very little support.
4	<i>Performance shares features of Bands 3 and 5.</i>			
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shows a good degree of control of simple grammatical forms. Uses a range of appropriate vocabulary when talking about familiar topics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produces responses which are extended beyond short phrases, despite hesitation. Contributions are mostly relevant, but there may be some repetition. Uses basic cohesive devices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is mostly intelligible, and has some control of phonological features at both utterance and word levels. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiates and responds appropriately. Keeps the interaction going with very little prompting and support.
2	<i>Performance shares features of Bands 1 and 3.</i>			
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shows sufficient control of simple grammatical forms. Uses a limited range of appropriate vocabulary to talk about familiar topics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produces responses which are characterised by short phrases and frequent hesitation. Repeats information or digresses from the topic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is mostly intelligible, despite limited control of phonological features. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintains simple exchanges, despite some difficulty. Requires prompting and support.
0	<i>Performance below Band 1.</i>			

Informed consent

INFORMED CONSENT

I, Brigette...Anahis...Velasco...Sarmiento with ID No. 1424150466..... declare that I have been informed and invited to participate in the research titled: "Communicative Language Teaching Approach to enhance Speaking skill"

I understand that this study seeks to **analyze how the Communicative Language Teaching method contributes to the development of the Speaking skill** in Third-semester students of Pedagogy of National and Foreign Languages at the Universidad Nacional de Chimborazo (UNACH).

I am aware that my participation will be carried out within the context of my Third-Semester studies and will consist of the following activities:

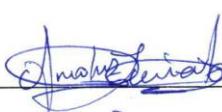
- **Pre-Test:** A speaking test to diagnose my initial level of speaking skill and its limitations.
- **Intervention Phase:** Participation in classes involving **communicative activities** based on the CLT approach.
- **Post-Test:** A final speaking test to determine the effectiveness of the intervention.

I have been informed that the information recorded with my authorization will be **strictly confidential**.

- The names of the participants will be associated with a series number, which means my answers and data will not be made known to others or be identified in the publication phase of the results.
- I understand that I am providing my explicit consent for the researcher to **record videos and audios** of my speaking performance during the tests and activities, as this material is necessary evidence for the thesis.
- I grant my **explicit authorization** for the researcher to use these recordings as necessary evidence for the thesis.

I understand that the data will not be provided to me, and there will be no compensation for participation in this study. However, this information may provide **indirect benefit** and therefore holds value for society given the research being conducted.

Yes. I voluntarily agree to participate in this study

Participant's Signature: 

Date: October 14th, 2025

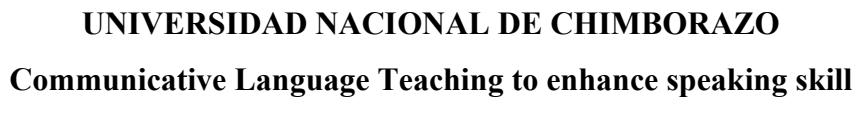
If you have any questions during any stage of the study, you may contact: Mgs. Daysi Fierro López, dfierro@unach.edu.ec

Intervention

Example of Role play activity

Topic: Extreme Sports	English Level B1	Class Hour: 2
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Classwork for students



GROUP•

Date:

Classwork N.1

EXTREME SPORTS

Discuss in pairs:

What kind of sports do you like?

What sport do you practice currently?

Vocabulary activity:

- Match the pictures with the extreme sports. Good luck!



Surfing **Paragliding** **Parkour** **Ice climbing** **Rock climbing**

Reading: Living on the Edge — The World of Extreme Sports

Many people love sports, but some people want more adventure. They prefer *extreme sports*, activities that are exciting and sometimes dangerous. These sports test people's courage, strength, and balance.

One popular extreme sport is **rock climbing**. Climbers use ropes and harnesses to go up natural rock walls or artificial climbing walls. It requires not only strong arms and legs but also concentration and planning. A more difficult version is **ice climbing**, where athletes

climb frozen waterfalls or icy mountains. They need special equipment such as ice axes and crampons to stay safe.

For those who enjoy the ocean, **surfing** is a perfect challenge. Surfers use a board to ride the waves, trying to keep their balance while the sea moves under them. It can be dangerous when the waves are high, so beginners **should** always surf with an instructor. Another exciting sport is **paragliding**. People run from the top of a hill and fly through the air using a large parachute. It's peaceful and thrilling at the same time. You **might want to** check the weather before you go, because strong winds can be risky. In the city, some young people practice **parkour**. They jump, climb, and run over buildings, walls, and stairs. The goal is to move smoothly and creatively through the environment. It looks easy, but it actually takes a lot of training and control.

Finally, there's **bouldering**, a type of climbing done without ropes on short walls or rocks. Climbers use crash pads for safety and focus on solving short routes called "problems." It's great for improving strength and technique.

Extreme sports are not for everyone, but they can teach valuable lessons about confidence, focus, and teamwork. Whether it's on a mountain, in the air, or in the city, these sports show how far humans can go when they challenge themselves.

PREPARE YOUR ROLE-PLAY:

Phrases to express suggestions



Expressing suggestions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• It's just an idea, but you could...• I suggest...• My recommendation would be to...• Shouldn't you...?• Maybe, you should...• Perhaps you could...

- Choose one extreme sport and imagine that you are planning to practice it (student A) and your partner will be the person who advises you what you should wear or the necessary safety measures for your sport (student B).
- Make the suggestions according to the extreme sport. You can use some phrases from the table.
- The suggestions could be about the equipment (safety harness, helmet, ropes...), clothing (gloves, climbing shoes, wet suit...) or safety measures to prevent injuries.
- You have 15 minutes to prepare the conversation. Finally, present to the whole class. Be creative.

Photographic record

Slide for presenting the grammar

GRAMMAR FOCUS

Modal	Use / Meaning	Example	Tone
should	To give general or strong advice	You should wear a helmet when rock climbing.	Neutral / Common
could	To make polite or possible suggestions	You could try surfing if you like the ocean.	Soft / Polite
would	To give conditional or hypothetical advice	If I were you, I would start with an easier sport.	Conditional
might want to	To give friendly or indirect suggestions	You might want to check the weather before paragliding.	Informal / Friendly

WHAT WOULD YOU ADVISE ...?



Presentation of role-plays



Debates



Oral presentations



Dialogues

