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“The Communicative Language Teaching Method to Foster English Oral Production in 10th Grade B at Unidad Educativa Diocesana Bilingüe.”

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DEDICATORIA

Este trabajo está dedicado a Dios, fuente de fortaleza y guía en cada paso.
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RESUMEN

Resumen

Esta investigación analizó la influencia del enfoque de Enseñanza Comunicativa de Lenguas (Communicative Language Teaching, CLT) en el desarrollo de la producción oral en estudiantes de décimo grado de una escuela pública bilingüe en Ecuador. El problema identificado fue el bajo nivel de fluidez, precisión, pronunciación e interacción en inglés, lo que limitaba la comunicación efectiva en el aula. El propósito del estudio fue determinar en qué medida la aplicación sistemática de tareas comunicativas podía mejorar dichas habilidades orales. El estudio se desarrolló en el contexto ecuatoriano, donde el inglés constituye una materia obligatoria, pero los métodos tradicionales aún predominan. Se utilizó un enfoque mixto con diseño preexperimental y un solo grupo de 30 estudiantes, quienes participaron en una intervención de nueve semanas basada en actividades comunicativas. Los datos se recopilaron mediante pruebas orales antes y después de la intervención (modelo PET B1), encuestas, observaciones de clase y notas de campo. La propuesta pedagógica consistió en la aplicación estructurada de tareas comunicativas como juegos de rol, actividades de intercambio de información, discusiones con imágenes, presentaciones orales y toma de decisiones colaborativas. Esta propuesta buscó fortalecer la competencia comunicativa mediante la práctica significativa y la interacción auténtica. Los resultados evidenciaron una mejora general en todas las dimensiones de la producción oral, acompañada de un incremento en la confianza, la participación y la motivación de los estudiantes. Se concluye que la implementación del enfoque CLT favorece el desarrollo equilibrado de la fluidez, la precisión y la interacción, aun en contextos con recursos limitados, y que la práctica comunicativa constante y el acompañamiento docente son factores clave para lograr aprendizajes duraderos.

Palabras clave: enseñanza comunicativa, producción oral, aprendizaje del inglés, tareas comunicativas, metodología activa.

ABSTRACT

This research analyzed the influence of the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach on the development of oral production skills among tenth-grade students at a public bilingual school in Ecuador. The problem identified was the students' limited fluency, accuracy, pronunciation, and interaction in English, which hindered effective communication in class. The main purpose of the study was to determine the extent to which systematic application of communicative tasks could improve these oral skills. The study was conducted within the Ecuadorian context, where English is a compulsory subject, yet traditional, grammar-centered methods still prevail. A mixed-methods pre-experimental design was applied with one group of 30 students who participated in a nine-week intervention based on communicative activities. Data were collected through pre- and post-speaking tests modeled on the B1 Preliminary English Test (PET), student surveys, classroom observations, and teacher field notes. The pedagogical proposal consisted of a structured application of communicative tasks such as role-plays, information-gap activities, picture-based discussions, oral presentations, and collaborative decision-making. This proposal aimed to strengthen communicative competence through meaningful practice and authentic interaction. Results showed overall improvement across all oral production components, along with increased student confidence, participation, and motivation. It was concluded that implementing CLT promotes balanced development of fluency, accuracy, pronunciation, and interaction, even in low-resource contexts. The study highlights that sustained communicative practice, continuous teacher support, and an encouraging classroom environment are essential factors for achieving effective and lasting learning outcomes.

Keywords: communicative language teaching, oral production, English learning, communicative tasks, active methodology.

Introduction

This research study is organized into three main chapters, each of which addresses key theoretical, methodological, and analytical aspects related to the development of oral production through Communicative Language Teaching.

Chapter One presents the theoretical framework that supports the study. It defines the independent variable, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), and explains its principles, evolution, techniques, and classroom practices. This chapter also examines the dependent variable, oral production, focusing on its definition, importance in EFL learning, key components such as fluency, accuracy, pronunciation, and coherence, as well as the factors that influence students' speaking performance. The chapter concludes by establishing the theoretical relationship between CLT and the development of speaking skills.

Chapter Two describes the methodological design of the research. It outlines the research approach, context, participants, instruments, and procedures used for data collection. This chapter explains the application of the pre-test and post-test speaking assessments based on PET B1 criteria, as well as the pre-survey and post-survey used to gather students' perceptions. Additionally, it details the data analysis process used to compare results before and after the implementation of CLT-based activities.

Chapter Three presents the pedagogical proposal and analysis of results. It describes the CLT-based intervention implemented in the classroom, including the types of activities used and the duration of the intervention. This chapter analyzes the quantitative and qualitative results obtained from the instruments and discusses the impact of the intervention on students' oral production. Finally, it includes the conclusions and recommendations derived from the study.

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CHAPTER I
THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1.1 Research Background

This section examines recent research on how Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) can improve speaking skills for students learning English as a foreign language. Studies from diverse cultural backgrounds, educational settings, and student proficiency levels demonstrate how teachers adapt CLT methods to meet the specific needs of learners and work within their classroom constraints. Research demonstrates that well-implemented CLT approaches create meaningful opportunities for genuine communication, boost student participation, and lead to clear improvements in speaking ability (Teh, 2021). However, the studies also highlight practical obstacles that can impact how well these communicative activities work. Common challenges include limited teaching materials, overcrowded classrooms, and teachers who need more training in CLT methods. These factors can make it harder to maintain consistent, effective speaking practice (Wathawatthana et al., 2025).

By looking at evidence from various educational contexts, this review confirms that CLT-based speaking activities have real pedagogical benefits. Additionally, it helps us better understand the specific circumstances and requirements that must exist for these teaching methods to create long-term improvements in students' English-speaking abilities. The findings show that success with CLT depends not just on the approach itself, but on having the right support systems and resources to implement it effectively.

Wathawatthana and colleagues (2025) ran a study with 30 twelfth-grade students in Thailand to test whether CLT could improve their English speaking skills. The researchers worked with these students for 16 weeks, utilizing carefully designed lesson plans that incorporated real-world communication activities, including role-playing exercises,

information-sharing tasks, and group games. To measure the results, the team used speaking tests before and after the program, surveys about student attitudes, and individual interviews. The numbers showed clear improvement - students' average speaking scores jumped from 61.2 to 69.2, a statistically significant difference ($p < 0.001$). Most students responded positively to the CLT approach. They appreciated how interactive the classes were and felt the methods helped build both their confidence and speaking fluency. However, students also pointed out some difficulties they faced, including nervousness when speaking, limited vocabulary and grammar knowledge, and various classroom environment issues. The researchers concluded that CLT works well for improving speaking skills in foreign language settings, but they emphasized an important caveat: teachers need to address the emotional challenges students face, help them overcome language limitations, and create supportive classroom conditions for the approach to be truly effective.

El-Naggar et al. (2023) used a similar research approach with 45 first-year female high school students in Egypt. During one academic term, these students participated in a specially designed program based on CLT principles. The activities included jigsaw puzzles, role-playing, think-pair-share exercises, hot seating, picture descriptions, and mock interviews. The researchers measured five different aspects of speaking: pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, how well students could be understood, and fluency. They tested students before and after the program and also gave students tools to evaluate their progress. The results showed significant overall improvement in speaking ability, with particularly strong gains in fluency, pronunciation, comprehensibility, and vocabulary. Grammar improvement was more moderate but still meaningful. The researchers credited these improvements to several factors: using real-life communication scenarios, giving students more opportunities to speak during class, and reducing the amount of time teachers spent correcting every mistake. They also noted that students initially felt uncomfortable with these

new types of activities, so creating a relaxed, supportive classroom atmosphere was crucial for success. These findings align closely with what Wathawatthana and colleagues found in Thailand. Both studies demonstrate that CLT-based teaching can lead to substantial speaking improvements when teachers use well-planned activities and create the right classroom conditions to support student learning.

In line with the positive outcomes reported by Wathawatthana et al. (2025) and El-naggar et al. (2023), Nggawu and Thao (2023) explored the use of CLT to enhance the speaking skills of 15 seventh-grade students in Indonesia through a classroom action research design conducted in two cycles. They used an action research approach, working through two complete teaching cycles. Each cycle involved four steps: planning lessons, putting them into practice, observing what happened, and reflecting on the results. The students participated in various communicative activities including storytelling, role-playing, and group discussions. The researchers tracked progress using speaking tests and detailed observation notes. The results showed consistent improvement from one cycle to the next - students got better at speaking fluently, pronouncing words correctly, using vocabulary appropriately, and feeling more confident overall. Most students met the target performance levels by the end of the program. However, the researchers also encountered some persistent problems. Many students still had limited vocabulary, continued making grammar mistakes, and participated unevenly in activities. These issues often stemmed from different motivation levels among students and some students' initial hesitation to speak in front of their classmates. The authors concluded that CLT can make a real difference in helping younger secondary school students develop better English-speaking skills. But they stressed that success requires ongoing teacher support, proper scaffolding techniques to help students gradually build their skills, and consistent encouragement to keep students motivated and willing to overcome their speaking anxiety.

Torres Aguilar and Conza Armijos (2023) took a different research approach by comparing two groups of 25 tenth-grade students in Nicaragua over three months. One group learned through CLT methods using pair work, group discussions, role plays, and problem-solving activities, while the other group received traditional grammar-focused teaching. The CLT group showed significantly better speaking improvement, especially in fluency and vocabulary use. Grammar and pronunciation gains were smaller but still present. Teachers observed that students in the CLT group became more engaged, confident, and willing to speak English. The study did identify some practical challenges: teachers struggled with time limits for communicative activities, student participation varied considerably, and it was sometimes difficult to help students develop fluency without sacrificing grammatical accuracy. The researchers concluded that CLT can greatly improve speaking skills in high school settings, but success depends on having enough class time, providing individualized support for different students, and finding ways to develop both fluency and accuracy together.

The four studies reviewed show that CLT-based teaching can make a real difference in helping EFL students improve their speaking skills, but success depends on thoughtful planning, realistic communication activities, and consistent student support. The research spans multiple countries and demonstrates similar positive outcomes. In Thailand, Wathawatthana and colleagues (2025) found clear improvements in fluency and confidence when students engaged in role plays, information-sharing tasks, and group activities. Similarly, Egyptian students in El-naggar's study (2023) showed particularly strong gains in fluency, pronunciation, and vocabulary through diverse interactive exercises like jigsaw puzzles and hot seating activities.

Meanwhile, the Indonesian study by La Ode Nggawu and colleagues (2023) revealed steady progress over two teaching cycles, though students continued struggling with grammar mistakes and limited vocabulary - showing that ongoing teacher guidance remains essential. In contrast, Torres Aguilar and Conza Armijos (2020) provided direct evidence from Nicaragua that CLT methods work better than traditional grammar-focused teaching, especially for developing fluency and vocabulary, despite facing time pressures and the ongoing challenge of balancing speaking fluency with grammatical accuracy.

While each study encountered specific obstacles, from students' initial speaking anxiety to uneven class participation and practical classroom constraints, all researchers noted positive changes in student attitudes toward learning and greater willingness to participate in speaking activities. These findings indicate that CLT develops both language skills and student motivation, as long as teachers adapt their methods to address local challenges and work to develop all aspects of speaking ability together.

1.2 Communicative Competence

Educators developed the concept of communicative competence because they understood that learning grammar rules by themselves did not prepare students to communicate effectively in real-life situations. Hymes (1974) introduced the idea that successful communication requires more than grammatical accuracy. People also need to know when, where, and how to use language appropriately depending on who they are talking to and what the situation calls for. This insight completely changed how teachers thought about language instruction, moving away from repetitive grammar exercises toward activities that got students engaged in meaningful conversations. This shift made communicative competence the main target for language teachers who wanted their students to use English in authentic ways.

As researchers dug deeper into what communicative competence really meant, they came up with different ways to break it down. Canale and Swain (1980) identified four key areas: knowing the grammar rules, understanding social and cultural expectations, being able to connect ideas coherently, and having strategies to work around communication problems. Later scholars added things like understanding implied meanings and being sensitive to cultural differences as equally crucial for getting your message across (Celce-Murcia et al., 2013). These detailed frameworks show that being a good communicator means juggling multiple skills at once - you need to be accurate, appropriate, and flexible all at the same time. This complex view helps explain why teaching methods based on communicative competence led to more natural language use.

In the classroom, communicative competence shapes the kinds of activities teachers choose and how they structure learning experiences to resemble genuine communication situations. Students learn to create grammatically perfect sentences while developing their ability to resolve misunderstandings and maintain logical conversation flow, and adjust their language according to their audience, which includes friends, teachers, and strangers (Savignon, 2017). This approach gets students actively involved in solving communication challenges and developing backup strategies when they do not know exactly what to say. Essentially, communicative competence connects the theoretical side of language learning with the practical goal of developing strong speaking skills, which makes it the cornerstone of effective speaking instruction (Savignon, 2017).

1.3 Key Principles of Second Language Acquisition (SLA)

The acquisition of a foreign language by non-native speakers is known as Second Language Acquisition. Several theories have been developed to explain this complex process. Krashen (1981) established one of the most recognized concepts in language learning, which

states that students advance through learning when they encounter language that slightly exceeds their current abilities yet remains understandable through contextual hints. The theory demonstrates why teachers dedicate extensive effort to using authentic materials while designing situations that expose students to meaningful language instead of rote memorization of vocabulary lists and grammar rules.

Swain (1995) added another important piece to the puzzle with her Output Hypothesis, which argues that actually producing language - through speaking and writing - does more than just show what students have learned. When learners try to express their ideas, they test out their understanding, discover what they still need to work on, and refine how they use the language. Long (2017) built on this with his Interaction Hypothesis, pointing out that when communication breaks down and people have to work together to understand each other, these moments create powerful learning opportunities where students process language more deeply. These three perspectives work together to show that effective language learning needs input from others, opportunities to produce output, and meaningful interaction where real communication happens.

SLA research has also revealed that successful language learning depends on paying attention to specific language features and managing emotional factors that affect learning. When teachers help students notice particular grammar patterns or vocabulary within natural communication activities, learners can improve their accuracy while still maintaining fluent expression (Ellis, 2015). Meanwhile, psychological elements like motivation, attitudes toward the language, and anxiety levels significantly influence how well students progress (2014). Creating a classroom atmosphere that minimizes stress and builds positive feelings about learning English can dramatically improve student outcomes. This means that SLA

works best when we understand it as a complex process influenced not just by how the brain processes language, but also by social relationships and emotional well-being

1.4 Independent Variable (IV): Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

1.4.1 Definition and Principles of CLT

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) represents a language teaching approach that focuses on helping students develop communicative competence - the ability to use a target language effectively in real-world situations (Hymes, 1974; Richards, 2016). This approach draws from both sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic theories, moving away from traditional methods that emphasized memorizing grammar rules and vocabulary lists toward meaningful interaction and student-centered learning activities (Kanwit & Solon, 2022).

Rather than treating grammar as the primary foundation for language learning, CLT combines linguistic structures with their communicative purposes, allowing students to practice practical skills like making requests, sharing opinions, or working through communication breakdowns in realistic contexts (Otten, 2021). Teachers using this approach typically incorporate interactive techniques such as role-playing exercises, problem-solving activities, and group discussions that mirror authentic communication situations and help students develop fluency, accuracy, and speaking confidence at the same time (Harmer, Jeremy, 2023).

The fundamental principle behind CLT is viewing language as both a social instrument and a means for achieving specific goals, with the ultimate aim of preparing learners to handle real communication challenges they will encounter outside the classroom environment (Savignon, 2017). This perspective recognizes that successful language use requires not just grammatical knowledge, but also the ability to adapt language choices to different social contexts and communication purposes.

1.4.2 Evolution of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

Before CLT emerged, language teaching relied heavily on formal methods that prioritized structural accuracy and controlled practice rather than natural communication. The Grammar-Translation Method focused on translating literary texts, memorizing vocabulary, and mastering grammar rules, which often produced students who could analyze language structures but had difficulty in actual conversations (Savignon, 2017). The Audio-Lingual Method, based on behaviorist learning principles, used drills, pattern practice, and repetition to create language habits. While this method introduced more oral practice, it remained disconnected from meaningful communication (Gass et al., 2020). Although both approaches achieved some success in academic settings, critics pointed out that they created learners who performed well on grammar tests but could not engage in authentic interactions (Vireak & Bunrosy, 2024).

1.4.3 Emergence of CLT in the 1970s

Growing dissatisfaction with these limitations, especially their failure to prepare students for real-world communication, set the stage for CLT's development during the 1970s. This change was particularly evident in Europe, where increased travel and international business created demand for practical language skills (Richards & Rodgers, 1986). As stated by Richards (2016) Wilkins' (1976) notional-functional syllabus influenced how language learning was organized, shifting focus from grammatical categories to communicative functions like making requests or offering apologies. The author also pointed out Dell Hymes' (1972) concept of communicative competence expanded language learning goals to include using language appropriately in different social situations, representing a clear movement toward function-based teaching.

1.4.4 Development and Global Expansion in the 1980s–1990s

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, educational systems worldwide adopted CLT principles, including many in Asia and Latin America, often through curriculum changes that emphasized student-centered and communicative practices (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). This period also saw related approaches emerging, such as Krashen and Terrell's (1983) Natural Approach, which promoted language acquisition through understandable input in relaxed environments, and Task-Based Language Teaching, which centered instruction around real-world tasks (Ellis, 2017). These developments strengthened CLT's focus on meaningful communication, combining fluency and accuracy in ways that reflected how language is actually used. The integration of interactive, problem-solving, and decision-making activities became a key feature, with the goal of developing learners who could participate confidently and effectively in genuine communicative situations.

1.4.5 Current Trends in CLT

Modern developments in CLT show how this approach continues to adapt to new technology, globalization, and the changing needs of today's language learners. One major change has been incorporating digital tools like language learning apps, video conferencing software, and online collaborative platforms that allow communicative practice to happen outside traditional classrooms (Alamri, 2018). These technologies give students opportunities to have real conversations with speakers from different countries and backgrounds, exposing them to various speaking styles, accents, and language registers that support CLT's focus on authentic communication. Another important development involves intercultural communicative competence, which emphasizes helping students understand and respond appropriately to cultural differences in multilingual settings (Corbett, 2022). This addition recognizes that in today's global world, being able to speak a language well isn't enough - students also need cultural awareness to communicate effectively across different contexts.

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) has also become increasingly popular, using the target language to teach academic subjects rather than just focusing on language itself. This approach helps students develop both subject knowledge and communication skills simultaneously, demonstrating how language learning can be naturally integrated with other educational goals (Lasagabaster & de Zarobe, 2010).

Currently, many teachers take a flexible approach, combining CLT principles with techniques from other teaching methods to better meet their students' different proficiency levels, learning needs, and preferences. As Savignon (2017) points out, CLT works best when viewed as an adaptable teaching framework rather than a strict set of rules, allowing educators to modify their approach for different classroom situations while maintaining the core focus on student-centered, communicative learning.

1.4.6 Types of CLT Tasks

CLT uses various task types specifically designed to encourage meaningful interaction and help students develop communicative competence. Task-based language teaching (TBLT) has received significant research attention, with studies showing generally positive but moderate effects on second language learning (Gürdal, 2021). However, researchers continue to express concerns about how reliably and accurately we can measure TBLT's effectiveness (Ellis et al., 2019). Related teaching approaches, such as technology-enhanced language learning, have shown clear improvements in ESL/EFL writing skills (Işık-Taş & Kenny, 2020), while flipped classroom methods have produced moderate gains in English learning among university students (Alsowat, 2016).

When working with young children, language-focused teaching typically falls into two categories: *emergent academic language* and *bridge language*. Both approaches contribute meaningfully to children's language development by combining academic

vocabulary building with accessible communication support (Burke Hadley et al., 2022). Research on EFL writing indicates that planning time before tasks can affect writing quality, though results vary across different studies (Li & Zhang, 2023). Additionally, students' willingness to communicate connects strongly to how confident they feel about their language ability, highlighting the importance of designing tasks that build both skills and confidence (Yashima, 2019) .

Authentic Communication Tasks, including role plays, debates, and structured discussions, form the core of CLT because they mirror real-world interactions. Research from other fields supports their effectiveness. For example, simulation-based training has successfully developed empathy in healthcare students (Chua et al., 2021) and improved teamwork in interprofessional settings (Sezgin & Bektaş, 2022). Similarly, play-based interventions involving parents have enhanced social communication skills in children with autism (Deniz et al., 2022), while psychological approaches like cognitive behavioral therapy and mindfulness have supported mental health in autistic individuals (Linden et al., 2022). In professional education, structured communication skills training has strengthened empathy, interviewing abilities, and interpersonal competence among social work students (Reith-Hall & Montgomery, 2022) and improved communicative behaviors in medical trainees (Bylund et al., 2022). Psychiatric nursing programs have also used simulation methods to enhance both communication and clinical skills (Piot et al., 2021). These findings demonstrate that authentic communication tasks have value beyond language learning, supporting their central role in CLT approaches.

Collaborative Interaction Tasks, such as pair work, group projects, and joint problem-solving activities, also play an essential role in CLT. Research shows that TBLT can significantly improve second language performance (Xuan et al., 2022), though more

investigation is needed to understand its long-term benefits (Boers & Faez, 2023). Studies have found that interventions focusing on comprehension and clarity can produce substantial improvements for second language learners (Hu et al., 2022) and that planning time before tasks positively affects oral fluency and accuracy (Johnson & Abdi Tabari, 2022). However, strategy-focused instruction may work differently across skill areas - for instance, listening strategy training has shown only moderate improvements in comprehension (Dalman & Plonsky, 2022). Technology integration has emerged as a strong supporter of skill development, with clear gains documented in ESL writing (Seyyedrezaei et al., 2022). Other research has identified connections between languages in fluency development (Gao & Sun, 2023) and confirmed how motivational factors like the L2 Motivational Self System influence student engagement and achievement (Yousefi & Mahmoodi, 2022).

Overall, CLT tasks - whether authentic, collaborative, or technology-supported - help bridge the gap between classroom instruction and real-world communication. Role plays, interviews, debates, and task-based projects not only develop language skills but also promote student independence, cultural awareness, and transferable abilities. The research suggests that when these tasks are carefully planned and properly supported, they can lead to significant improvements in both language performance and broader communication effectiveness.

1.4.6 CLT Techniques and Classroom Practices

Role plays and simulations place students in specific scenarios - such as ordering food, negotiating contracts, or resolving conflicts that require spontaneous, functional language use (Duong, 2014). These activities strengthen pragmatic skills like making requests, offering advice, and expressing opinions, while also developing soft skills such as empathy and negotiation (Neupane, 2019). Success depends on ensuring that tasks are

relevant, appropriate for student levels, and supported by an encouraging classroom atmosphere (Duong, 2014).

1.4.7 Information Gap Activities

Information gap tasks require students to exchange missing information to reach a shared goal. Through activities like describing a picture that a partner cannot see or giving directions on a map, students practice forming clear questions, providing explanations, and listening actively (Ismaili & Bajrami, 2016). These tasks not only improve fluency and comprehension but also foster cooperation and accountability within groups (Khamraeva & Berdieva, 2023).

1.4.8 Interviews, Storytelling, Debates, and Problem-Solving Tasks

Interviews foster interpersonal skills and facilitate authentic question-and-answer exchanges, while debates cultivate argumentation and persuasive abilities (Lema Guamán, 2024). Storytelling builds narrative skills, coherence, and expressive intonation, and when connected to cultural or personal experiences, facilitates intercultural exchange (Oradee, 2012). Problem-solving activities combine collaboration, negotiation, and language production under pressure, making language a practical tool for addressing real-world challenges (Lema Guamán, 2024).

1.4.9 Picture-Based Discussions

Picture-based discussions have become a staple in EFL classrooms because they effectively build students' descriptive and comparative abilities while strengthening overall communication skills. When learners describe and contrast visual materials, they naturally expand their vocabulary around people, places, and everyday activities, plus they get solid practice with grammatical forms like comparatives and superlatives (Fujinami, 2017). What makes these activities particularly valuable is how they encourage students to produce longer

stretches of speech and share their own opinions, which boosts both engagement and motivation levels (Mohamadpour & Rahimy, 2016). There's also a practical advantage here: these discussions closely match the PET speaking format, where candidates must compare and analyze pictures, offering genuine test preparation alongside meaningful language practice (Hsieh & Gu, 2019).

1.4.10 Brief Oral Presentations

Brief oral presentations give learners valuable experience with sustained speech production, logical organization of ideas, and public speaking confidence. When students prepare and deliver short talks on familiar subjects such as personal interests or daily activities, they practice using diverse vocabulary and connecting phrases that enhance both fluency and coherence (Keo et al., 2025). These presentation tasks help develop strategic thinking skills, as learners must plan their content, practice their delivery, and adapt their message to suit their listeners (Masmaliyeva, 2014). Beyond exam preparation, presentations connect to authentic communication situations, helping students transfer their speaking abilities to real-world contexts outside the classroom (Worawong et al., 2019).

1.4.11 Advantages and Disadvantages of CLT

Research indicates that CLT can meaningfully improve oral fluency, even in domestic classroom settings, though studying abroad may produce slightly stronger results (Berezenko et al., 2022). The close connection between first and second language fluency - particularly in maintaining smooth speech - highlights the importance of communicative tasks designed to sustain conversation and reduce hesitation (Dantaz Rico, 2023). Programs aimed at improving intelligibility and comprehensibility align directly with CLT principles and have shown consistent benefits (Jacobs, 2020). Task planning represents another clear strength, supporting coherence and structure in student output (Dantaz Rico, 2023). Furthermore,

creating a supportive, interactive classroom environment enhances students' self-confidence and willingness to speak, which are strongly connected to how competent they feel in the language (McConnell et al., 2020). Technology can further enhance CLT's effectiveness. For example, computer-mediated corrective feedback has improved writing proficiency in EFL contexts, suggesting that integrating digital tools can expand CLT's impact beyond just speaking skills (Salam & Luksfinanto, 2024).

However, implementing CLT comes with significant challenges. It requires skilled facilitation, time-intensive preparation, and alignment between communicative goals and assessment methods (Salam & Luksfinanto, 2024). In educational contexts dominated by grammar-focused standardized testing, teachers may face institutional constraints that limit communicative practice (Wei et al., 2018). Addressing these limitations requires curriculum and assessment reforms, as well as professional development that helps educators balance accuracy and fluency within authentic communicative contexts (Ghafar et al., 2023).

1.5 Dependent variable: Oral Production

1.5.1 Definition of Speaking / Oral Production in EFL settings

Speaking stands as one of the four fundamental language skills and serves as the primary vehicle for oral communication when learning a second or foreign language. Most educators define it as the productive oral skill that allows learners to express ideas, feelings, and information within interactive settings (Ur, 2024). What distinguishes speaking from receptive abilities like listening or reading is its demand for immediate processing and the simultaneous coordination of linguistic, cognitive, and sociocultural knowledge. Oral production thus encompasses the actual language output that emerges when learners participate in communicative activities, blending fluency, accuracy, and contextual appropriateness to create meaningful exchanges (Pitura, 2022).

Looking at this from a teaching standpoint, speaking extends far beyond constructing grammatically sound sentences. Instead, it involves deploying language for particular functions like storytelling, explaining concepts, influencing others, or working through misunderstandings (Rodríguez Rodríguez, 2022). Educational researchers emphasize that oral production operates on both cognitive and social dimensions: the cognitive aspect requires speakers to organize thoughts, access vocabulary, and articulate language under time constraints, while the social dimension depends on successful interaction with conversation partners and awareness of situational factors (Peña & Onatra, 2009).

Many experts consider speaking the most demanding skill for EFL learners to develop because it requires managing multiple language systems simultaneously while maintaining confidence and employing effective communication strategies (Afrizal, 2015). Consequently, oral production represents a complex, multi-layered ability that encompasses not just linguistic knowledge but also discourse management, strategic thinking, and cross-cultural awareness that enable learners to navigate authentic communicative contexts successfully.

1.5.2 Importance of Speaking in EFL Learning

Speaking sits at the heart of language learning because it's how students actually know they're getting somewhere with their English. Most learners measure their progress by whether they can have a real conversation or explain something clearly, which makes speaking feel like the truest test of their abilities (Leong & Ahmadi, 2017). In the classroom, speaking is where everything comes together at once - students have to pull together their vocabulary, get their grammar right, and figure out how to structure what they're saying, all while the clock is ticking (Becker & Roos, 2016). Teachers can see right away what's working and what isn't, which makes it easier to jump in with help when students need it.

The value of good speaking skills goes way beyond passing tests or getting good grades. In universities and workplaces, people need to contribute to discussions, convince others of their ideas, and give presentations that actually make sense (Vilímec, 2006). When EFL students can communicate effectively, they suddenly have access to study abroad programs, international job opportunities, and genuine connections with people from different cultures (Goh & Chuen, 2007). Basically, strong speaking skills become a passport to opportunities that would otherwise be out of reach in our connected world.

There's also something deeply personal about speaking progress that affects how students feel about learning English overall. When students notice they can actually say what they want to say, their confidence shoots up, and they become more willing to take risks in conversations (Baker & Westrup, 2005). Classroom activities like debates, presentations, and role plays give students chances to use English creatively and interact with classmates in ways that feel real and purposeful. When teachers create a supportive atmosphere where mistakes are learning opportunities rather than failures, students relax and participate more freely (Holden & Nobre, 2021). This combination of skill building and confidence building creates a positive cycle where students want to keep improving because they can see it's working.

1.5.3 Key Components of Speaking Skills

When students learn to speak in a second language, they're juggling several different pieces that all need to work together for good communication. The main ones that teachers and researchers talk about are: fluency, accuracy, pronunciation, and coherence, basically how smoothly you speak, how correct your grammar is, how clearly people can understand your sounds, and whether your ideas make sense together (Goh & Burns, 2012). These aren't just academic categories; they're the practical things that make the difference between getting

your point across and leaving people confused. Teachers use these four areas to figure out what students are doing well and where they need more help (Thornbury, 2005).

Fluency is usually the first thing people pick up on when they hear someone speaking English confidently; it's that effortless quality that makes conversations feel natural and comfortable (Burns, 2016). This involves maintaining a steady speaking rhythm, connecting ideas without excessive hesitation, and bouncing back smoothly when you momentarily forget what you wanted to say. Research shows that the ability to avoid long, uncomfortable pauses works pretty much the same way in your first language as it does in English (Newton & Nation, 2020). Professional interpreters get evaluated on things like how much time they spend talking versus being silent, how long they can go without stopping, and their overall speaking speed - all things that make listeners think someone really knows what they're doing (Thornbury, 2005). What this tells teachers is that students need both lots of speaking practice and specific tricks for keeping their speech moving when they hit bumps (Goh & Burns, 2012).

Accuracy is all about getting the grammar right so people understand what you mean to say. Studies have found that using technology to give students feedback on their mistakes helps improve their grammar, especially in writing, and this seems to help their speaking too (Thornbury, 2005). But here's the thing - some grammar rules are just harder to learn than others, which means teachers have to adjust their methods depending on what they're teaching (Newton & Nation, 2020). When students get their grammar right, it makes conversations smoother because everyone knows what's being said without having to guess. The challenge for teachers is knowing when to correct errors and when to let students keep talking so they don't lose confidence or stop trying to communicate.

Pronunciation affects whether listeners can figure out what you're saying, but you don't need to sound like someone from London or New York to be understood. Most language instructors now emphasize clarity over achieving a perfect accent, which is more realistic given that English connects people from completely different linguistic backgrounds around the globe (Baker & Westrup, 2005). Studies support this direction, demonstrating that students who concentrate on clear speech become more comprehensible to both native English speakers and fellow language learners (Thornbury, 2005). This teaching philosophy acknowledges that English has become a worldwide tool for communication rather than the property of any particular country or culture. Instead of mimicking specific accents, students focus on producing distinct sounds, maintaining natural rhythm, and placing emphasis appropriately (Crystal, 2003). So instead of trying to sound like someone else, students work on things like clear sounds, good rhythm, and putting stress in the right places.

Coherence is about organizing your thoughts so listeners can follow along from start to finish in conversations or presentations (AbdAlgane & Idris, 2020). This involves using connecting words properly, making clear references, and structuring your speech so ideas build on each other logically (Kelly, 2001). Students who master these organizational skills in their presentations get better grades and communicate more effectively with their audiences (Awadh et al., 2024). But coherence doesn't exist by itself, it comes from combining smooth speech, correct grammar, and good use of linking phrases. It's about having the skills to put together a speech that not only sounds right and flows well but also makes sense and takes listeners where you want them to go.

1.5.4 Factors Influencing Oral Production

Many different things affect how well students develop their speaking skills and how comfortable they feel using English in conversation. Motivation stands out as one of the

biggest game-changers because students who have clear goals and feel good about learning English are much more likely to jump into speaking activities and take risks with the language (Flores & Eduardo, 2021). When students can see why speaking English matters to them personally - whether for travel, career goals, or connecting with people from other cultures - they push themselves to participate even when it feels challenging (Dörnyei & Henry, 2022). On the flip side, students who lack motivation often stay quiet in class even when they know enough English to contribute to discussions, which means they miss out on valuable practice opportunities (Orosz et al., 2021).

Language anxiety presents another major obstacle that can really hold students back from reaching their speaking potential (Tran, 2011). Many learners feel nervous and self-conscious when they have to speak English in front of classmates, usually because they worry about making embarrassing mistakes or being judged harshly by others (Matsuda & Gobel, 2004). This kind of stress affects how smoothly students can speak and makes them less willing to express their ideas spontaneously, which limits how much they benefit from speaking practice. Teachers can help reduce this anxiety by building a classroom culture where mistakes are seen as normal parts of learning, organizing activities where students work together rather than performing alone, and giving feedback that highlights what students are doing well while gently addressing areas for improvement (Boudreau et al., 2018).

The social and environmental aspects of learning also play crucial roles in shaping how students develop their oral skills. Things like classroom atmosphere, how well students get along with each other, and whether the teacher encourages everyone to participate all influence how often students speak up and how confident they feel doing it (Dewaele et al., 2016). Beyond the classroom, students who have access to English through movies, music,

social media, or conversations with fluent speakers get extra input and practice opportunities that can accelerate their progress (Kormos & Csizér, 2008). All of these factors work together to show that speaking development involves much more than just learning vocabulary and grammar; it depends on creating the right emotional, social, and motivational conditions that help students feel ready and eager to communicate.

To wrap up this discussion, speaking development in second language learning works best when we bring together what research tells us about how people acquire languages and what we know about effective classroom teaching methods. SLA studies have shown us that students need meaningful input, chances to produce output, and opportunities for real interaction to develop their speaking skills, while CLT approaches have figured out how to turn these research insights into practical classroom activities that get students communicating for real purposes. When we look at oral production through this lens, we can see it as the place where all of these elements come together - it shows us not just what students know about English grammar and vocabulary, but how well they can use that knowledge to have genuine conversations and express their ideas effectively. This is exactly why oral production sits at the center of this research: it gives us the clearest picture of how modern teaching approaches and natural language learning processes work together in EFL classrooms to help students become confident, capable communicators.

CHAPTER 2:

Methodology and initial diagnosis

2.1 Variables and Operationalization

Breaking down abstract research concepts into things we can actually measure is a key step in any empirical study (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). For this research, *Communicative Language Teaching* (CLT) works as the independent variable, while *oral production skills* serve as the dependent variable. Getting these definitions right matters because it sets clear boundaries for what gets studied and how, which is standard practice in applied linguistics when dealing with teaching methods and language skills (Mackey & Gass, 2021). Both variables got broken down into specific parts that make sense theoretically and work well in actual teaching situations. Each part connects to particular things we can observe and measure using appropriate tools to make sure the results hold up.

The independent variable, CLT, breaks into three related parts: *student interaction*, *communicative tasks*, and *fluency-focused practice*. Student interaction looks at how much and how well students actually talk to each other in English, which really sits at the heart of the communicative approach (Richards, 2006). Long's (1996) Interaction Hypothesis shows that when learners work through meaning together during conversations, they get input they can understand and produce modified output - both things that help language development happen. Watching how often students use English with each other and what that looks like tells us whether classroom activities actually match what CLT is supposed to do.

Communicative tasks refers to using real-life speaking activities that feel like actual communication situations. Things like role-plays, interviews, and working together to solve problems push learners to use their language knowledge for real purposes, which bridges what happens in class with communication in the real world (Ellis, 2003). Task-Based

Language Teaching (TBLT), which shares a lot with CLT, focuses on tasks that center on meaning and get language used in context, helping learners build up their overall ability to communicate (Willis & Willis, 2007). In this study, the communicative tasks part checks whether these kinds of activities actually happen and work well, and how they help create meaningful interaction.

Fluency-focused practice looks at giving learners structured chances to speak for longer stretches without getting interrupted, which helps develop automatic speech and cuts down on hesitation. Nation (2011) points out that when fluency practice gets built into teaching in a systematic way, learners can better pull together their vocabulary and grammar knowledge, which leads to smoother, more connected speech. This matters especially in EFL contexts, where students often get limited chances to use the target language outside class, which restricts opportunities for sustained speaking practice. Looking at how well the teaching design creates extended speaking opportunities shows us something important about how CLT actually gets put into practice.

The dependent variable, oral production skills, splits into four related parts: *fluency*, *accuracy*, *pronunciation*, and *interaction*. Fluency measures how smoothly and naturally students speak, which Skehan (2009) calls a key sign of communicative competence and something closely tied to how well learners can handle language processing in real time. When fluency gets better, it suggests learners can access and use language more easily - a skill that usually develops through regular exposure to communicative activities.

Accuracy looks at correct and appropriate use of grammar and vocabulary when speaking. This has been recognized for a long time as a basic part of communicative competence (Canale & Swain, 1980), since it makes sure messages get across clearly without confusion. This part checks whether learners can keep their grammar straight and choose

appropriate words while having spontaneous conversations, balancing form and meaning in what they say.

Pronunciation focuses on being understood, including getting stress patterns, rhythm, and articulation right. Munro and Derwing (2015) emphasize that understandable pronunciation matters more for successful communication than sounding like a native speaker, since it directly affects whether listeners can understand what gets said. In this study, pronunciation gets looked at not as something separate but as part of the whole communication process, affecting how well learners can actually interact with others.

The interaction part checks how well learners can start, keep going, end conversations, handle turn-taking, and respond appropriately to whoever they are talking with. This matches the interactive side of communicative competence that Bachman (1990) identified, which recognizes that spoken communication works both ways and changes as happens. Good interaction needs not just language knowledge but also understanding how language works in social situations, so learners can adjust how they use language depending on different contexts and conversation demands.

Putting together, these parts give us a solid framework for checking both how CLT gets implemented and what effect it has on oral production skills. Each part connects to specific things we can observe and gets measured through carefully picked instruments, making sure both the teaching approach and what students learn get examined systematically. The complete breakdown of the independent and dependent variables shows up in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1

Independent Variable: Communicative Language Teaching

DIMENSION	INDICATOR	INSTRUMENT

Student interaction	Frequency of peer interaction	Classroom observation checklist
Communicative tasks	Use of real-life speaking activities	Teacher's lesson plan review
Fluency-focused practice	Opportunities for extended speech	Audio recordings / Speaking tasks

Note: Elaborated by Xavier Fariango

Table 2

Dependent Variable: Oral Production

DIMENSION	INDICATOR	INSTRUMENT
Fluency	Smoothness and continuity of speech	Oral production rubric
Accuracy	Correct use of grammar and vocabulary	Oral production rubric
Pronunciation	Intelligibility and stress patterns	Teacher observation / Audio
Interaction	Ability to respond and maintain a conversation	Role-play performance

Note: Elaborated by Xavier Fariango

2.2 Research Approach

This study employed a mixed-methods research approach to investigate the impact of CLT on the oral production skills of 10th-grade students in a public Ecuadorian school. The goal was to gather both measurable and descriptive data about students' performance and attitudes before and after introducing communicative tasks in their English classes. By combining quantitative and qualitative information, the research provided a thorough understanding of how the intervention impacted students' spoken English abilities, particularly their fluency, accuracy, vocabulary use, pronunciation, and interaction skills (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). A mixed-methods approach was selected due to its capacity to provide richer insights into language development processes, as it allows researchers to triangulate numerical data with classroom-based observations (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2017).

The quantitative component involved pre-surveys and post-surveys that used Likert scales to measure students' attitudes and perceptions about their speaking abilities. These surveys included statements about confidence levels, enjoyment of speaking activities, nervousness when speaking English, perceived improvement, and opportunities for oral

participation. Additionally, speaking tests based on the B1 Preliminary English Test (PET) structure were administered before and after the intervention to evaluate oral production. These assessments featured individual questions, collaborative speaking tasks, photo descriptions, and follow-up discussions. A comprehensive rubric evaluated student performance across four key areas: grammar and vocabulary, discourse management, pronunciation, and interactive communication. Quantitative tools such as surveys and rubrics are commonly used in second language acquisition research to capture measurable changes in performance and learner perceptions (Riazi, 2017).

Qualitative data collection involved classroom observation, checklists, and teacher field notes, applied both before and after the intervention period. The observation checklist tracked the frequency and quality of specific behaviors, including students' English usage, participation in pair and group speaking activities, application of newly learned vocabulary, and engagement with real-world communicative tasks. Teacher field notes provided reflective accounts of student behavior, challenges encountered during oral activities, engagement levels, and overall classroom dynamics. Qualitative data collection is particularly valuable when exploring the natural dynamics of classroom interaction and learner engagement with communicative practices (K. Richards et al., 2012). This comprehensive approach enabled the researcher to analyze how students' oral production evolved throughout different phases of the intervention while documenting their changing attitudes and responses within the natural classroom setting. Both students and their legal guardians provided informed consent before data collection began, and all procedures respected participant privacy and integrity.

2.3 Research Method

The study employed a pre-experimental design using a one-group pretest-posttest model. The research focused on a single intact group of 10th grade students (Group B) at Unidad Educativa Diocesana Bilingüe, without including a control group. This design was

chosen due to the institutional and logistical constraints of the school environment, with the primary aim of comparing students' oral production abilities before and after CLT-based instruction. One-group pretest-posttest designs are frequently used in classroom-based research where control groups are not feasible, and still allow researchers to observe significant changes over time within the same group (Dörnyei, 2007).

The intervention involved multiple lessons centered around communicative tasks that promoted student interaction and real-life language application. Activities included role-plays, interviews, and discussions on familiar topics that students could relate to. This implementation was seamlessly integrated into regular English classes across several sessions. The use of communicative tasks aligns with CLT principles, which emphasize meaningful interaction and student-centered learning to develop language competence (Salam & Luksfinanto, 2024).

Data collection occurred in two distinct phases: before and after the pedagogical intervention. The pre-survey collected information about students' initial perceptions regarding speaking English in class, including their confidence levels, anxiety, and participation opportunities. The post-survey captured their reflections following the intervention, focusing on their experiences with communicative tasks and whether they noticed improvements in vocabulary, fluency, and pronunciation. Both surveys utilized five-point Likert scales for consistency (Dikilitas & Reynolds, 2022).

The pre-test and post-test followed the PET speaking format, incorporating four distinct sections: personal questions, collaborative speaking tasks, individual long turns describing photographs, and discussion stages. An analytic rubric assessed student performance using four criteria: grammar and vocabulary, discourse management, pronunciation, and interactive communication. The use of PET-like speaking tasks in research

is well-established for evaluating communicative competence in EFL learners, especially at B1 level (Litosseliti, 2018).

Classroom observation checklists, administered at both the beginning and end of the intervention, monitored students' actual English usage, willingness to speak, and participation in communicative activities. Teacher field notes documented classroom incidents, student reactions, and task engagement levels. This qualitative information supported the analysis of learning behaviors and contextual factors that influenced student performance. Observational methods and reflective teacher notes are widely recommended in practitioner research to uncover subtleties of classroom behavior and pedagogical effectiveness (Privitera & Ahlgrim-Delzell, 2018).

Through this combination of instruments and single-group observation over time, the study sought to identify both the effectiveness of CLT in enhancing oral production and the conditions that either supported or hindered its application in an authentic Ecuadorian classroom context.

2.4 Instruments and Data Collection

This study utilized five distinct instruments to collect both quantitative and qualitative data before and after implementing the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) intervention. The instruments included a pre-survey, post-survey, a speaking test modeled on the B1 Preliminary English Test (PET), an observation checklist, and teacher field notes. Each tool was administered to the same group of 10th grade B students at Unidad Educativa Diocesana Bilingüe and served a specific purpose within the overall research framework. Data collection procedures took place during regular English class sessions and aligned with the pedagogical goals of the intervention. The integration of multiple instruments ensured methodological triangulation, strengthening the reliability and validity of the study's findings (Patton, 2014).

2.4.1 Pre-Survey

The pre-survey aimed to establish baseline data regarding students' perceptions and emotional attitudes toward speaking English before introducing CLT-based instruction. The instrument featured ten statements rated on a five-point Likert scale, with responses ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). Students completed the survey individually at the start of the intervention period.

The pre-survey items explored various aspects of students' confidence, anxiety, motivation, and perceived speaking opportunities in English. Statements like "I feel confident speaking English in class", "I feel nervous when speaking in front of others", and "I feel afraid of making mistakes when speaking English" were included to assess emotional and psychological factors that might influence students' willingness to participate in oral activities. Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014) emphasize that anxiety and fear of negative evaluation represent significant affective variables that can hinder second language oral production. Including these items was therefore crucial for understanding students' emotional readiness and openness to engaging in communicative tasks.

Additional statements such as "I enjoy speaking activities in English", "I often speak English during lessons", and "I have enough opportunities to speak English during my classes" examined students' engagement levels and the extent of communicative practice in their regular classroom setting. These elements are fundamental for understanding the existing classroom dynamics before implementing new teaching approaches. Andrade-Molina (2024) highlights that learner attitudes and classroom conditions play vital roles in shaping language learning outcomes, especially in skill areas requiring active participation like speaking. The pre-survey also incorporated items reflecting students' views on the significance of oral skills, such as "I feel that speaking English is important for my future". This approach aligns with research demonstrating that learners show greater willingness to

participate in oral activities when they recognize speaking skills as relevant to their real-life and academic objectives (Ushioda, 2009).

The pre-survey results established a comprehensive baseline understanding of students' initial attitudes and perspectives, which were subsequently compared with post-survey data to determine whether the CLT intervention affected not only their performance but also their attitudes and emotional responses toward speaking English in classroom settings.

2.4.2 Pre-Test and Post-Test (PET-Based Speaking Assessment)

The study used a speaking test modeled on the B1 Preliminary English Test (PET) developed by Cambridge Assessment to evaluate students' oral production both before and after the intervention. This international exam format was chosen for its well-structured, level-appropriate tasks and its strong alignment with the communicative principles central to the intervention. The PET test emphasizes real-world speaking abilities and assesses learners across key areas including grammar, fluency, pronunciation, and interactive communication.

The assessment occurred in two phases: initially as a pre-test before implementing communicative tasks, and subsequently as a post-test at the conclusion of the instructional period. While the test structure remained consistent across both administrations, the specific prompts and questions were modified in the post-test to prevent repetition and memorization effects. This methodology followed Cambridge's established guidelines, which provide multiple test versions for the same proficiency level, all maintaining identical task types and evaluation standards (Cambridge, 2024). Students therefore encountered familiar formats, including role-plays, photo descriptions, and discussions. They had to respond to fresh, equivalent content during the second assessment.

The speaking test consisted of four distinct sections. Part 1 featured personal questions designed to elicit basic information and everyday language use. Part 2 presented a

collaborative task where students discussed a situation and reached a joint decision. Part 3 required students to complete an individual long turn based on a photo prompt, and Part 4 involved a follow-up discussion related to the photo's topic. Each testing session was conducted with student pairs, with the researcher functioning as both interlocutor and evaluator.

An analytic rubric with four criteria assessed student performance: Grammar and Vocabulary, Discourse Management, Pronunciation, and Interactive Communication. Each criterion received scores ranging from 0 to 5 points, creating a maximum possible total of 20 points. This rubric enabled the researcher to observe and document specific strengths and improvement areas in each student's speaking ability. Bulut (2022) notes that analytic rubrics prove particularly valuable in classroom contexts because they provide detailed insights into multiple dimensions of oral performance.

The pre-test established a clear diagnostic profile of students' initial oral proficiency levels. Observations from this phase revealed that many students relied on short phrases, frequently switched to Spanish, and displayed hesitation during extended speech attempts. The post-test, in contrast, aimed to capture changes in fluency, accuracy, and communicative competence following the CLT-based instruction. This comparative assessment formed a central element of the quantitative analysis, providing measurable evidence of the pedagogical impact that the intervention had on students' spoken English performance.

2.4.3 Classroom Observation Checklist

The study used a classroom observation checklist to collect structured qualitative data throughout the intervention. This instrument was specifically designed to document communicative behaviors that aligned with CLT principles. The checklist featured eight key indicators that enabled the researcher to monitor students' English use in peer interactions, participation in pair and group speaking activities, turn-taking patterns, willingness to speak

without prompting, use of complete sentences, ability to ask and answer relevant questions, engagement with real-world communicative tasks, and application of newly taught vocabulary.

The checklist was implemented on two distinct occasions: once before the CLT-based intervention commenced, and again after its completion. Both observation sessions were conducted by the teacher-researcher during regular English classes, allowing for documentation of communicative behaviors under natural learning conditions. Beyond marking the observed indicators, the teacher added brief qualitative comments to provide context for student performance within each lesson.

Observation checklists represent a widely adopted tool in second language research for collecting consistent and focused data on classroom interaction patterns. O'Leary (2020) notes that these instruments provide a reliable framework for identifying observable aspects of communicative competence within authentic learning environments. In this study, the checklist functioned as a non-intrusive method for gathering data that directly corresponded to the intervention's specific objectives and the communicative tasks being implemented.

2.4.4 Teacher's Field Notes

Alongside the other research instruments, the study incorporated teacher's field notes as a qualitative tool for recording detailed reflections about the teaching and learning process. These notes were compiled by the teacher-researcher following a structured format that included specific prompts addressing vocabulary use, student reactions, task difficulty levels, engagement patterns, and other significant aspects of the classroom experience.

Field notes were documented at various points throughout the study, particularly during the pre-intervention phase and continuously during the CLT-based methodology implementation. This approach allowed the researcher to capture both the initial classroom conditions and the instructional process as it developed. Notes were written immediately

following each observed session, ensuring both accuracy and contextual relevance of the documented information.

Richards (2016) emphasizes that teacher field notes serve as a valuable resource in classroom research because they enable teachers to capture subtle aspects of student interaction and instructional dynamics that quantitative measures might overlook. In this study, the field notes operated as a reflective documentation of the teaching process and the evolving classroom environment, supporting the triangulation of findings within the mixed-methods research framework.

2.5 Population, Sample, and Sampling

The study population comprised students enrolled in tenth grade at Unidad Educativa Diocesana Bilingüe, a public educational institution in Ecuador. From this population, the research focused on 10th Grade B, which consisted of 30 students aged between 14 and 15 years. All participants were regular students at the institution who received English instruction as part of the national curriculum requirements. This particular group was chosen based on its relevance to the research objectives and the practical feasibility of implementing the intervention within a consistent classroom environment.

The study employed a non-probability purposive sampling technique to select the sample group. This approach involves deliberately choosing participants who meet specific criteria that align with the study's purpose (Etikan, 2016). The selection of 10th Grade B was guided by several key factors: (1) the group's noticeable challenges with oral communication in English, (2) the practical advantages of implementing communicative activities within a stable and manageable classroom setting, and (3) strong institutional support for the research, including administrative authorization and active teacher collaboration.

Purposive sampling proves particularly suitable for classroom-based intervention research, where the primary goal involves examining how specific pedagogical strategies affect naturally occurring groups rather than generalizing findings to broader populations (Patton, 2015). In this study, the selected group was considered representative of the wider tenth-grade student body regarding language proficiency levels and educational context, thus providing a practical and pedagogically meaningful environment for implementing CLT strategies.

The research unit of analysis encompassed the entire 10th Grade B student group. All research instruments—including surveys, tests, observation checklists, and field notes—were administered to this group collectively, to document both individual and group-level changes in oral production and classroom engagement throughout the intervention period. The dual role of the researcher as classroom teacher enabled consistent observation and implementation of CLT-base

2.6 Data Analysis

The mixed-methods nature of this study required a data analysis approach conducted in two complementary phases: quantitative analysis of survey and test data, and qualitative analysis of observations and field notes. This dual approach enabled the researcher to examine not only measurable changes in students' oral performance and perceptions, but also the contextual factors and behaviors that emerged during classroom implementation of the CLT method.

2.6.1 Quantitative Data Analysis

Quantitative data was collected through the pre-survey, post-survey, and the pre- and post-tests based on the B1 Preliminary English Test (PET) speaking format. The surveys, which contained Likert-scale items, were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including mean scores and frequency distributions, to identify patterns in students' perceptions before

and after the intervention. This analytical method proved appropriate for summarizing group trends and detecting shifts in student attitudes (Creswell, 2012).

The speaking tests were evaluated using analytic rubric featuring four performance criteria: Grammar and Vocabulary, Discourse Management, Pronunciation, and Interactive Communication. Each criterion received scores ranging from 0 to 5 points. Total scores were compiled and compared between pre-test and post-test phases using comparative descriptive analysis, which enabled the researcher to observe overall trends in oral proficiency development. This analytical approach is frequently employed in educational research when working with a single intact group and aiming to measure changes over time (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011).

2.6.2 Qualitative Data Analysis

Qualitative data emerged from two primary sources: classroom observation checklists and teacher field notes. The checklists, which incorporated open-ended comments, were analyzed through descriptive coding to categorize observable communicative behaviors across key indicators, including language use, participation levels, and vocabulary integration. This coding process was used to detect changes in classroom interaction patterns and identify recurring elements in student engagement during oral tasks.

Teacher field notes were examined through thematic analysis, a process that required careful and repeated reading of entries to identify recurring ideas, behaviors, and reflections connected to students' experiences with communicative tasks. Key themes including willingness to speak, peer collaboration, and task engagement, were identified and organized to support the quantitative findings. Patton (2014) highlighted that thematic analysis proves particularly effective for interpreting meaning across qualitative data sets as it maintains flexibility and stays grounded in context.

The integration of both data types followed a convergent design, where quantitative and qualitative findings were analyzed separately before being compared to enhance interpretation and triangulation. This strategy allowed the researcher to validate observed patterns and obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the intervention's effectiveness in promoting oral production among EFL learners.

2.7 Ethical Considerations

This study was conducted following established ethical standards for educational research, particularly when working with minors in institutional contexts. All procedures followed the core principles of informed consent, voluntary participation, confidentiality, and respect for participants' dignity and well-being.

Before beginning data collection, informed consent was secured from both students and their legal guardians. Participants received clear information about the study's objectives, procedures, and scope, including the use of classroom-based data and their right to withdraw at any time without facing academic or personal consequences. Consent forms were distributed and collected prior to implementing any research instruments, ensuring that participation was completely voluntary and fully understood by all involved parties.

Following best practices in classroom-based research (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014), the study ensured that data collection was seamlessly integrated into regular instructional activities, minimizing disruption while maintaining a natural learning environment. All instruments, surveys, speaking tests, observation checklists, and field notes were administered by the researcher, who simultaneously served as the group's regular English teacher. This dual role helped establish trust and familiarity, which facilitated more authentic responses and observations.

To safeguard participant privacy, no identifying information was revealed during any phase of data analysis or reporting. Student names were used exclusively for internal tracking of pre- and post-intervention performance and were completely removed from all final documentation. The collected data was stored securely and used solely for academic purposes related to this specific research project.

The study also recognized the importance of creating a supportive and low-stress classroom environment, especially when asking students to engage in speaking tasks in a foreign language. All communicative activities were presented as learning experiences rather than formal evaluations, with the goal of reducing pressure and encouraging risk-taking in language use. Dörnyei (2014) emphasizes that establishing a positive emotional climate is crucial for promoting learner engagement and confidence, particularly in skill areas such as oral production.

The ethical design of this study prioritized transparency, participant protection, and educational integrity, ensuring that students' rights were consistently respected throughout the entire research process.

2.8 Findings: Initial Diagnosis

The data was analyzed with a constant focus on the study's objective, which aimed to assess the extent to which the implementation of CLT contributed to the development of students' oral production skills. The results of the PET-based pre-test, administered at the outset of the study to establish baseline speaking proficiency levels, are presented below. These initial measurements served as a reference point for evaluating the impact of the CLT-based instructional intervention on students' oral production performance.

Table 3: Pre-Test Results

Qualitative scales	Frequency	Percentage

Exceeds the learning expectations	2	6.67%
Masters the required learning outcomes	7	23.33%
Achieves the required learning outcomes	10	33.33%
Is close to achieving the required learning outcomes	11	36.67%
Does not achieve the required learning outcomes	---	---
Total	30	100%

Table 3 shows that the largest proportion of students, 36.67% (11 students), fell into the category *Is close to achieving the required learning outcomes*, while 33.33% (10 students) were in *Achieves the required learning outcomes*. A smaller group, 23.33% (7 students), reached *Masters the required learning outcomes*, and only 6.67% (2 students) achieved *Exceeds the learning expectations*. No students were classified as *Does not achieve the required learning outcomes*.

The distribution indicates that most students demonstrated performance at middle proficiency levels, with relatively few reaching the highest categories. This pattern suggests that while a foundational level of oral production skills was present, a considerable portion of the group required targeted instruction to progress toward mastery and higher performance levels. These findings provided a clear rationale for implementing CLT-based strategies to strengthen fluency, accuracy, pronunciation, and interactive communication in subsequent instructional stages.

Table 4. Pre-Survey Results

Nº	**Questions**	**SD**	**D**	**N**	**A**	**SA**
1	I feel confident speaking English in class.	0	2	9	13	6
2	I enjoy speaking activities in English.	0	1	10	11	8
3	I often speak English during lessons.	1	2	19	3	5

Nº	Questions	SD	D	N	A	SA
4	I feel nervous when speaking in front of others.	3	3	8	10	6
5	I think I can communicate clearly in English.	1	4	12	5	8
6	I like working in pairs or small groups to practice speaking.	2	0	5	10	13
7	I feel afraid of making mistakes when speaking English.	0	2	8	9	11
8	I can think quickly in English when speaking.	1	3	13	9	2
9	I feel that speaking English is important for my future.	1	0	2	1	26
10	I have enough opportunities to speak English during my classes.	2	2	8	10	8

The pre-survey results reveal several areas that justify the implementation of the CLT-based proposal. For confidence in speaking English in class, only 20% selected Strongly Agree, while 43.33% chose Agree, indicating that most students feel moderately confident but have not reached the highest level of self-assurance. In enjoyment of speaking activities, 26.67% strongly agreed and 36.67% agreed, suggesting a positive disposition that can be further developed through engaging communicative tasks. In terms of frequency of speaking English during lessons, only 16.67% strongly agreed and 10% agreed, while a large proportion (63.33%) remained neutral, showing limited active use of English in class and highlighting the need for structured interaction opportunities. Regarding nervousness when speaking in front of others, 20% strongly agreed and 33.33% agreed, signalling that anxiety remains a considerable barrier to oral participation.

When assessing clear communication in English, 26.67% strongly agreed and 16.67% agreed, leaving more than half of the students without strong confidence in this skill. Preferences for working in pairs or small groups showed higher positivity (43.33% strongly agree, 33.33% agree), indicating readiness for collaborative communicative activities central to CLT. Fear of making mistakes also emerged as relevant, with 36.67% strongly agreeing

and 30% agreeing, suggesting that error tolerance strategies are essential. The ability to think quickly in English was weaker, with only 6.67% strongly agreeing and 30% agreeing, while 43.33% remained neutral, reinforcing the need for fluency-building practice.

Perceived importance of speaking English was the highest-scoring item, with 86.67% strongly agreeing, showing strong motivation potential. However, for having enough speaking opportunities, only 26.67% strongly agreed and 33.33% agreed, revealing that many students do not perceive sufficient occasions to practice orally in class. Overall, these percentages demonstrate that while motivation and willingness exist, actual opportunities, fluency, and confidence are insufficiently developed—conditions that the CLT approach directly addresses through increased interaction, real-life speaking tasks, and fluency-focused practice.

2.9 Conclusion

The baseline data shows an interesting contradiction: students value English highly but struggle with actual speaking performance. Most students (86.67%) clearly understand that speaking English matters for their future, yet the pre-test results tell a different story. More than 70% of students scored in the middle ranges, with only about one-third reaching the higher performance levels. This gap between motivation and ability creates both a challenge and an opportunity.

Looking at student attitudes, the picture becomes clearer. Few students gave strong positive responses to questions about their speaking confidence or classroom participation. Many chose neutral responses when asked about how often they speak English in class or how quickly they can think in English. This hesitation suggests they want to participate but lack the confidence or skills to do so effectively.

The emotional side of learning English also plays a major role here. Over half the students admitted to feeling nervous or worried about making mistakes when speaking. These feelings create barriers that prevent students from practicing, which then reinforces their lack of confidence. It becomes a cycle that keeps them from improving.

What makes this situation particularly suitable for CLT intervention is how the test scores match what students said about themselves in the survey. Students who scored in the middle range also reported neutral feelings about their participation and processing abilities. This consistency suggests that both their actual skills and their self-perception need work.

The high number of neutral responses about participation and thinking speed points to unused potential. These students might improve significantly if given the right opportunities to practice in a supportive environment. CLT can address this by providing structured speaking activities, building fluency gradually, and using real-world tasks that feel meaningful rather than intimidating.

This combination of moderate skills, uncertain confidence, and clear motivation makes the current group ideal for testing CLT approaches. The method can target both the skill gaps and the emotional barriers simultaneously, potentially moving students from hesitant participants to active English users in classroom discussions.

CHAPTER III

PRESENTATION AND VALIDATION OF THE PROPOSAL

This chapter presents a pedagogical proposal designed to enhance the oral production skills of 10th grade students at Unidad Educativa Diocesana Bilingüe through the implementation of CLT tasks. The chapter begins with the rationale that explains the need for the proposal based on the diagnostic findings, followed by the objectives that guide its implementation. The structure and components of the proposal are then described, including the sequence of communicative activities and the methodological requirements for carrying them out. Finally, the validation section reports the results obtained during the pre- and post-intervention assessments, together with evidence drawn from surveys, classroom observations, and student feedback.

3.1. Rationale for the Proposal

The decision to implement a proposal based on CLT came from the findings obtained during the diagnostic phase of this study. The pre-test modeled on the PET speaking exam showed that most 10th grade students at Unidad Educativa Diocesana Bilingüe performed within the middle ranges of oral proficiency, with few reaching higher levels. Students had clear difficulties with fluency, accuracy, pronunciation, and interaction, which limited their ability to communicate effectively in English. Additional data from the pre-survey confirmed that many learners felt uncertain about their oral abilities, often choosing neutral responses when asked about their confidence in grammar, pronunciation, and participation. Observation checklists and field notes also documented low levels of active English use, hesitation during pair and group work, and recurring anxiety about making mistakes.

These challenges pointed to CLT as an appropriate methodological framework because it focuses on authentic communication and provides learners with structured opportunities to practice the target language in meaningful ways. Unlike traditional approaches that emphasize correctness above use, CLT encourages negotiation of meaning,

spontaneous interaction, and gradual improvement of communicative competence. As Richards and Rodgers (2014) explain, CLT organizes instruction around communicative tasks that mirror real-world situations, which gives learners both a purpose and a context for using English. Research supports the effectiveness of this approach: Harmer (2015) emphasizes that communicative activities promote fluency while sustaining motivation, and Savignon (2018) highlights how role-plays, debates, and group discussions help learners gain confidence and autonomy in oral production.

The proposal was designed to integrate CLT strategies into a nine-week intervention focused on enhancing students' oral performance. Through role-plays, information-gap tasks, picture-based discussions, collaborative decision-making, and short presentations, learners were expected to improve across the four dimensions of oral production defined in this study: fluency, accuracy, pronunciation, and interaction. By aligning communicative tasks with B1-level CEFR descriptors and systematically sequencing them throughout the intervention, the proposal aimed to strengthen students' speaking abilities while also increasing their confidence and willingness to use English actively in the classroom.

3.2. Objectives of the Proposal

The main goal of this proposal is to strengthen oral production skills among 10th grade students at Unidad Educativa Diocesana Bilingüe through the systematic use of CLT strategies. The proposal was designed in response to the diagnostic findings, which showed that students struggled with fluency, accuracy, pronunciation, and interaction, even though they recognized the importance of English for their academic and professional future.

The specific objectives are:

- To improve students’ fluency by engaging them in extended speaking tasks that promote spontaneous language use.

- To enhance accuracy through communicative activities that require appropriate grammar and vocabulary use in meaningful contexts.
- To develop pronunciation and intelligibility by integrating systematic practice in stress, rhythm, and articulation.
- To strengthen interactional competence by encouraging learners to initiate, maintain, and conclude conversations while practicing turn-taking and active listening.
- To build students' confidence and reduce speaking anxiety by creating a supportive environment where they can practice collaboratively.

3.3. Description of the Structure of the Proposal and its Components

The proposal ran for nine weeks between April 21 and June 24, 2025. Students attended three 80-minute sessions each week. Following CLT principles, the intervention was organized into three distinct phases: diagnosis, implementation, and evaluation. During the diagnostic phase (April 21-25, 2025), students completed a pre-survey about their attitudes toward English speaking and took a pre-test based on the PET B1 speaking rubric. This first week also included familiarization activities like warm-up conversations and basic picture descriptions to prepare students for upcoming communicative tasks. These initial activities helped establish where students stood in terms of oral proficiency and informed the planning of subsequent instruction.

The implementation phase lasted seven weeks (April 28-June 20, 2025). Each week tackled a different B1-level theme through tasks that matched the PET exam format. During Week 2 (April 28-May 2), students worked on daily routines and personal information using role-plays and information-gap activities. Week 3 (May 5-9) covered family, friends, and free time through picture-based discussions and collaborative activities about weekend plans. Week 4 (May 12-16) moved to food, shopping, and leisure topics, incorporating role-plays of

everyday situations and brief presentations about preferred meals. Week 5 (May 19-23) focused on school life and responsibilities, with students handling information-gap tasks involving timetables and working together to organize study groups. Week 6 (May 26-30) brought in travel and holidays through picture comparisons of different destinations and group decision-making about planning school trips. Week 7 (June 2-6) dealt with health, environment, and daily problems using doctor-patient role-plays and brief presentations on environmental practices. Week 8 (June 9-13) explored technology and social media through picture discussions and debates about digital communication benefits and drawbacks. The final implementation week (June 16-20) served as review and integration time, featuring a mock PET speaking test and reflective group activities to help students consolidate what they had learned.

The evaluation phase wrapped up the intervention during the last two sessions (June 23-24, 2025). Students completed both the post-survey and post-test using the same PET B1 rubric from the beginning. A feedback session gave students time to think about their performance and progress while identifying areas that still needed work.

This organized progression of activities directly addressed the problems found during initial diagnosis while offering systematic practice across relevant B1-level topics. The approach generated clear evidence of improvement in fluency, accuracy, pronunciation, and interaction skills. Through this nine-week CLT-based program, the goal was to turn routine oral practice into meaningful communication and build students' confidence, motivation, and independence in using English.

Description of the Structure of the Proposal and its Components

This intervention worked with 10th grade students from Unidad Educativa Diocesana Bilingüe over a nine-week program aimed at improving their oral production skills through CLT tasks. The program took place between April 21 and June 24, 2025, using structured

classroom activities based on the PET B1 speaking exam format. As mentioned before, the intervention included three phases: initial diagnosis in Week 1, seven weeks of implementation activities, and final evaluation during the last two days.

The core implementation phase ran from April 28 to June 20 and featured communicative tasks built around B1-level topics like daily routines, family and free time, shopping, school life, travel, health, environment, and social media. The chosen activities—role plays, information-gap tasks, picture-based discussions, collaborative decision-making, and short presentations—were specifically selected to develop fluency, accuracy, pronunciation, and interaction skills while getting students ready for PET exam requirements. The next sections detail the key activities used during this implementation period.

Activity 1: Role-plays – Introducing routines and personal information

During the second week (April 28–May 2), students worked on speaking about daily routines and personal information through role-play activities. Teachers started each session with warm-up questions like "What time do you usually wake up?" and "What do you like doing after school?" to get students thinking. Cue cards with B1-level prompts helped guide the role-plays, covering scenarios like meeting new classmates or discussing hobbies.

Initially, many students gave brief responses such as "I play soccer" or "I watch TV," but they gradually started adding more information: "I usually play soccer with my cousins after school, and then we go for ice cream." The interactive format encouraged natural conversations, with students practicing follow-up questions like "What about you?" and "Do you do that every day?" Each session concluded with brief reflection time where students mentioned which expressions they found most helpful. This activity built confidence around familiar topics while pushing students toward fuller sentences and better vocabulary use.

Activity 2: Picture-based discussions – Talking about family and free time

Week 3 (May 5–9) focused on family, friends, and leisure time. Students paired up to describe and compare pictures showing common free-time activities—going to parks, visiting family, playing video games, and similar scenarios. Teachers introduced comparison phrases like "In this picture, the boy is playing…" and "This one is different because…" and demonstrated the process with volunteer students.

One student might say: "In my picture, the family is eating together. It looks like Sunday lunch." Their partner would respond: "In mine, the children are playing football in the park. I think both are good family activities." These conversations helped students practice elaborating ideas, making connections, and using comparison language effectively. The activity ended with whole-class sharing where students talked about which activities were most typical in their own families. This task gave solid practice in fluency and interaction while building vocabulary around leisure and relationships.

Activity 3: Role-plays and short presentations – Shopping and leisure

Week 4 (May 12–16) had students doing role-plays in everyday situations like ordering restaurant food, shopping for clothes, or buying tickets. Teachers provided conversation starters and essential vocabulary ("How much is this?", "I would like…", "Can I try this on?") before demonstrating brief exchanges with volunteers. Students then worked in pairs, alternating between customer and shop assistant roles, gradually moving from guided prompts to more open conversations.

Later that week, students gave brief presentations about favorite meals or leisure activities, using phrases like "My favorite food is…" or "In my free time, I usually…". Some added personal touches, such as: "My favorite meal is lasagna because my grandmother cooks it every Sunday." These activities let students practice both functional language and

extended speaking. The mix of role-plays and presentations helped strengthen fluency, accuracy, and pronunciation within realistic everyday contexts.

Activity 4: Information-gap and collaborative tasks – School life and responsibilities

The fifth week (May 19–23) concentrated on school-related themes. Students began with information-gap exercises where each person received a different version of a school timetable and needed to ask questions to fill in the missing details. Questions like "What subject do you have on Tuesday morning?" or "At what time is your math class?" demanded precise questioning and careful listening skills.

The week's second component involved groups planning a study schedule collectively, determining when to review for exams and how to distribute responsibilities among members. This collaborative element required negotiation skills, with students employing phrases such as "I think we should study English on Monday" or "Let's prepare science together." The activity strengthened interactional abilities by creating authentic communication scenarios that involved decision-making and finding middle ground.

Activity 5: Picture-based comparisons and decision-making – Travel and holidays

Travel and holidays became the central theme for Week 6 (May 26–30). The opening activity challenged students to compare images of various destinations, beaches, mountains, and cities. Students practiced describing and contrasting locations, offering comments like: "This picture shows the beach. It looks relaxing. The other picture is in the city. It seems very busy."

Subsequently, students engaged in a decision-making exercise: organizing a school trip. Small groups discussed different options, budgets, and personal preferences before presenting their final decisions. Phrases including "I suggest we go to the beach because it is cheaper" or "I prefer the city because there are more activities" supported students in

practicing opinion-giving and consensus-building. The activity promoted sustained interaction and encouraged persuasive language use.

Activity 6: Role-plays and presentations – Health, environment, and everyday problems

Health and environmental themes dominated Week 7 (June 2–6). Students began with doctor-patient role-plays, practicing essential structures like "What's the matter?" and "You should take this medicine." Several students incorporated creative elements, commenting: "I have a headache because I studied too much last night."

The week progressed to brief presentations on environmental habits, covering topics such as recycling or energy conservation. Student examples included: "In my family, we recycle plastic and glass" and "I always turn off the lights when I leave a room." These exercises enabled students to combine health and environmental vocabulary while enhancing fluency and pronunciation skills.

Activity 7: Discussions and debates – Technology and social media

Technology and social media themes characterized Week 8 (June 9–13). The teacher presented helpful opinion-expressing phrases including "In my opinion," "I agree," and "I disagree." Students then formed groups to examine social media's advantages and disadvantages. Throughout the debates, students offered examples such as: "I think social media is good because we can talk with friends," while others responded with: "I disagree, because it wastes too much time." The exercise promoted extended speaking turns, active listening skills, and respectful disagreement. By week's end, students demonstrated increased confidence in defending their positions and using connecting words to structure their thoughts.

Activity 8: PET-style mock test and reflection

The final implementation week (June 16–20) featured a mock PET speaking test that brought together all previously practiced skills. Students paired up to complete the four PET

format stages: personal questions, picture-based comparisons, collaborative decision-making, and brief discussions. The teacher served as both examiner and observer, applying the official rubric to offer feedback on fluency, accuracy, pronunciation, and interaction. Students participated in peer reflection as well, evaluating both their own and their partners' performances. This exercise consolidated learning, provided exam condition practice, and offered students a clear progress indicator.

The evaluation phase occurred on June 23 and 24, 2025, bringing together multiple complementary instruments that documented both quantifiable results and underlying classroom processes. Beyond the PET-based post-test, which demonstrated improvements in grammar and vocabulary, discourse management, pronunciation, and interactive communication, students completed a post-survey examining their confidence, motivation, and overall communicative activity experiences. The observation checklist was reapplied during these final sessions, enabling the researcher to document participation pattern changes, peer interaction developments, and English usage extent compared to initial diagnostic findings. Simultaneously, field notes recorded student engagement subtleties and classroom dynamics that numerical data alone couldn't capture. Through combining surveys, test scores, systematic observation, and reflective documentation, the evaluation presented a comprehensive progress overview. This multi-faceted approach revealed not only quantifiable oral production growth but also significant changes in student attitudes, participation levels, and communicative task engagement willingness.

3.4. Description of the Methodological and/or Technological Requirements

The methodological foundation of this proposal rested on CLT principles, which prioritize meaningful interaction, authentic tasks, and learner-centered approaches. Implementation demanded lesson organization around communicative functions that aligned with B1-level descriptors and classroom activity structures that offered multiple oral

production opportunities. Pair and group configurations formed the intervention's backbone, fostering peer interaction and establishing supportive environments where students could negotiate meaning and practice conversational turn-taking. Every activity aimed to blend fluency-focused practice while preserving attention to accuracy, pronunciation, and interactive skills. An analytic rubric matching the PET exam format guaranteed consistency between teaching and assessment methods in line with study objectives.

Regarding technological aspects, the proposal operated within typical Ecuadorian public high school constraints, where sophisticated digital resources remain scarce. Most exercises depended on affordable and accessible materials—printed handouts, prompt cards, and visual displays. Audio recordings occasionally documented student performance and provided pronunciation and fluency development evidence. These recordings, combined with classroom observation and detailed notes, reinforced the research's qualitative aspects. Paper-based surveys were distributed, with results later organized for systematic analysis.

These combined methodological and technological elements allowed the intervention to proceed without interrupting normal classroom routines. Communicative exercises blended naturally into the existing English curriculum, helping students view them as regular learning components rather than external assessments. Even within this basic technological setting, thoughtful use of straightforward tools, paired with careful observation and thorough documentation, ensured research goals could be achieved while maintaining genuine classroom conditions.

3.5 Analysis and Discussion of the Results Obtained from the Implementation of the Proposal

What differences can be observed in the speaking performance of students before and after implementing the intervention based on the CLT approach and PET speaking tasks?

To address this question, two speaking assessments were administered: a pretest during the first week of the intervention and a posttest during the final week. Both assessments followed the official structure of the PET speaking exam but were scored according to four analytic categories: Grammar and Vocabulary, Discourse Management, Pronunciation, and Interactive Communication. Each category was worth a maximum of 5 points, for a total possible score of 20. While the posttest maintained the same structure, it employed a different version of the PET to avoid predictability. This ensured that students were evaluated using new prompts, alternative discussion topics, and varied speaking tasks, which increased the authenticity and reliability of the assessment process.

Table 5

Summary of the Pretest Results (PET Format)

N	Section	Min	Max	Mean	SD
30	Grammar & Vocabulary (5 pts)	2	5	3.93	0.74
	Discourse Management (5 pts)	2	5	4.00	0.79
	Pronunciation (5 pts)	3	5	4.23	0.50
	Interactive Communication (5 pts)	3	5	3.97	0.76
	Total Score (20 pts)	12	20	16.17	2.17

Note: Elaborated by Xavier Farinango

Discussion

The pretest results revealed that students began the intervention with moderately developed speaking skills, though they consistently fell short of B1 proficiency expectations across multiple areas. Grammar and Vocabulary emerged as the most problematic area (M = 3.93), with students struggling to access varied and accurate vocabulary during spontaneous

speaking situations. This difficulty suggests persistent reliance on basic language structures and limited tools for expressing sophisticated concepts clearly. Interactive Communication scores (M = 3.97) exposed similar weaknesses, particularly in managing speaking turns, sustaining conversations, and responding flexibly to partner contributions—essential skills that underpin successful communication.

Discourse Management performed slightly better (M = 4.00), showing that some students could organize short speech segments while maintaining coherent ideas, although frequent pauses and scarce use of linking words remained problematic. Pronunciation represented the strongest area (M = 4.23), indicating that students generally produced understandable speech, even with occasional stress, rhythm, and clarity issues.

The relatively narrow standard deviations across sections (SDs between 0.50 and 0.79) demonstrate fairly consistent performance throughout the group, yet the complete Total Score (M = 16.17, SD = 2.17) placed most students below reliable B1 speaking standards. This performance pattern highlights the critical need for focused intervention targeting improved grammatical and vocabulary accuracy, stronger interactive skills, and better discourse organization strategies, while reinforcing pronunciation through systematic communicative practice.

Posttest

Table 6

Summary of the Posttest Results (PET Format)

N	Section	Min	Max	Mean	SD
	Grammar & Vocabulary (5 pts)	3	5	4.47	0.57

30	Discourse Management (5 pts)	3	5	4.73	0.52
	Pronunciation (5 pts)	4	5	4.57	0.50
	Interactive Communication (5 pts)	4	5	4.73	0.45
	Total Score (20 pts)	15	20	18.50	1.55

Note: Elaborated by Xavier Farinango

Analysis

The posttest findings reveal remarkable growth in students' speaking capabilities after completing the intervention. Discourse Management showed the most dramatic improvement (M = 4.73), with learners developing much stronger abilities to organize ideas coherently, sustain longer speaking contributions, and use linking expressions with greater precision. Interactive Communication achieved equally striking results (M = 4.73), as students built confidence in negotiating meaning, managing conversational dynamics, and collaborating effectively during partner and group work.

Pronunciation (M = 4.57) remained a consistent strength, with most students producing intelligible speech while demonstrating enhanced control over rhythm and stress placement compared to baseline measurements. Grammar and Vocabulary progressed to a mean of 4.47, showing that students expanded their lexical repertoire and used grammatical structures with improved accuracy, though occasional errors persisted.

Comparing these results with initial performance, the overall Total Score climbed to 18.50 (SD = 1.55), while the smaller standard deviation reflects increased uniformity across participants. This reduced variability suggests that virtually all students experienced substantial gains from the intervention, narrowing performance gaps between higher and lower achievers. These outcomes collectively confirm that systematic CLT-based activity

implementation enhanced specific oral communication components while promoting more balanced progress throughout the entire class.

Pretest–Posttest Contrast Results

Student performance across pretest and posttest stages was analyzed using the four analytical components of the PET speaking evaluation: Grammar and Vocabulary, Discourse Management, Pronunciation, and Interactive Communication. This examination highlights mean score variations between testing phases alongside percentage improvements within each category, providing a clearer understanding of areas where the intervention demonstrated maximum impact.

Table 7

Percentage of Improvement by PET Speaking Section

Section	Pretest Mean	Posttest Mean	Difference (Δ)	% Improvement
Grammar & Vocabulary (5 pts)	3.93	4.47	0.54	13.74%
Discourse Management (5 pts)	4.00	4.73	0.73	18.25%
Pronunciation (5 pts)	4.23	4.57	0.34	8.04%
Interactive Communication (5 pts)	3.97	4.73	0.76	19.14%
Total Score (20 pts)	16.17	18.50	2.33	**14.41%**

Note: Elaborated by Xavier Farinango

Analysis

The comparison between pretest and posttest outcomes confirms meaningful advancement in all four speaking performance areas. Interactive Communication achieved the most dramatic enhancement, rising by 0.76 points (19.14%). This improvement

demonstrates that students became significantly better at maintaining conversations, controlling speaking opportunities, and adapting responsively to their classmates—capabilities that were specifically addressed through communicative activities. Discourse Management likewise displayed considerable growth of 0.73 points (18.25%), showing improved thought organization and increased reliance on linking expressions to preserve speech continuity.

While Grammar and Vocabulary registered more modest progress (+0.54, 13.74%), the data indicates expanded vocabulary usage and enhanced grammatical accuracy relative to initial performance levels. Pronunciation recorded the smallest gain (+0.34, 8.04%), though this development still represents more reliable control over stress placement and rhythmic features, resulting in clearer and more understandable speech delivery. The complete Total Score climbed by 2.33 points (14.41%), validating that the intervention produced beneficial effects on students' spoken communication abilities. The spread of improvements across every category further indicates that progress occurred in a well-rounded manner, supporting the effectiveness of CLT-based activities for cultivating various aspects of communicative proficiency.

Table 8

Summary of Overall Mean Differences

N	Pretest Mean	SD	Posttest Mean	SD	Mean Difference (MD)	% Improvement
30	16.17	2.17	18.50	1.5	2.33	14.41%

Note: Elaborated by Xavier Farinango

Final Remarks

The difference between the overall mean scores—MD = 2.33—reveals substantial growth in students' speaking abilities. While the percentage of improvement (14.41%)

appears moderate, it actually represents consistent and measurable development within the nine-week intervention period. The decrease in standard deviation, dropping from 2.17 in the pretest to 1.55 in the posttest, indicates that performance became more consistent throughout the group. This means that students not only improved collectively, but struggling learners also narrowed some of the distance with their higher-performing classmates, suggesting more balanced outcomes across the board.

These findings show that applying Communicative Language Teaching tasks, organized around the analytical PET categories of grammar and vocabulary, discourse management, pronunciation, and interactive communication, facilitated observable advancement in every aspect of oral production. Students transitioned from delivering brief, less controlled responses to providing more precise, fluent, and interactive contributions during speaking activities. Beyond language development alone, the improvement trends suggest that the intervention created a classroom atmosphere where learners became more self-assured, reliable, and actively involved when using English.

Discussion of Post-Survey Results

The post-survey findings reveal that most students viewed the communicative intervention favorably. An impressive 97% of learners agreed or strongly agreed that they felt more confident speaking in English after the activities, demonstrating CLT's powerful impact on reducing speaking anxiety. This confidence boost directly reflects what Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014) discovered about meaningful communicative contexts enhancing both enjoyment and L2 confidence. The self-assurance development that Savignon (2017) links to effective CLT implementation became clearly visible in student responses, confirming that structured communicative practice effectively addresses hesitation while encouraging active classroom participation.

Engagement and participation patterns showed equally strong trends throughout the survey data. Speaking task enjoyment reached 93% among students, while real-life relevance achieved unanimous recognition. These impressive figures validate the arguments put forward by Salam and Luksfinanto (2024) about communicative activities motivating learners through everyday experience connections. Role-plays, discussions, and problem-solving tasks provided genuine interaction opportunities, supporting what Oradee (2012) identified as the dual development of motivation and fluency through communicative approaches. Such findings confirm CLT's remarkable ability to create meaningful, purposeful language learning experiences that naturally boost classroom participation.

Skill development perceptions proved equally encouraging across multiple areas. Vocabulary and expression learning gained recognition from over 90% of students, while pronunciation improvements reached 93% agreement. The systematic communicative practice benefits that Awadh et al. (2024) documented in EFL pronunciation development became evident in these results. Celce-Murcia et al. (2013) have long advocated for integrating pronunciation within communicative tasks—an approach that clearly resonated with students. Vocabulary growth importance mirrors what Torres and Conza Armijos (2023) found in Ecuadorian secondary settings, where communicative methods effectively facilitate lexical expansion. Students recognized their linguistic progress while directly connecting it to the intervention's communicative characteristics.

Collaboration attitudes and long-term learning perspectives underwent remarkable positive transformations. Mistake-making comfort reached over 93% of students, while universal desire emerged for continued English learning through communicative activities. The motivational power of supportive classroom climates that Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) emphasize in sustaining L2 engagement became clearly apparent. Boudreau et al. (2018) stress how positive emotions like enjoyment foster resilience and persistence in language

acquisition—patterns that emerged strongly in this data. The clear connections between communication willingness, reduced anxiety, and increased classroom support that Khajavy et al. (2018) established directly matched student-reported speaking comfort following the intervention. Overall, survey data demonstrate that CLT enhanced performance while fundamentally transforming speaking attitudes, establishing optimal conditions for sustained motivation and communicative development.

3.5.2 Research Question 3

What changes can be observed in students' communicative development in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) after the implementation of CLT-based tasks?

This question aimed to explore the qualitative dimension of the study by examining how learners' L2 oral performance and classroom engagement evolved during the intervention. The following section outlines the main contrasts identified between the initial and final stages, offering insights into the broader impact of CLT on students' communicative growth in the EFL classroom.

Qualitative Data

Classroom Observation

To complement the pretest and posttest results, observation checklists and teacher's field notes were analyzed to capture classroom processes and student behavior throughout the intervention. These qualitative instruments provided insights into how learners engaged with communicative tasks, interacted with peers, and used English in real time. By contrasting pre- and post-intervention evidence, it was possible to identify not only measurable improvements in oral production but also the changes in confidence, motivation, and classroom dynamics that numerical scores alone could not fully reflect.

Table 9

Observation Checklist Results: Pre vs. Post Intervention

Indicator	Pre-Intervention	Post-Intervention
Students use English when interacting with peers	Most students defaulted to Spanish during interactions.	Most students interacted in English; minor use of Spanish among lower-scoring students.
Students participate in pair/group speaking activities	Participation occurred but with noticeable hesitation.	All students participated; stronger speakers supported their peers.
Students take turns and respond appropriately	Frequent interruptions and long pauses observed.	Students followed turn-taking rules and reacted naturally in conversation.
Students show willingness to speak without being prompted	Few students volunteered to speak; most waited for cues.	Most initiated conversations or continued dialogue independently.
Students complete communicative tasks using full sentences	Answers were mostly one or two words; full sentences were rare.	Majority used full and grammatically correct sentences.
Students ask and answer questions relevant to the topic	Basic questions were asked with teacher support.	Questions were meaningful and topic-based.
Students engage in meaningful, real-world communicative tasks	Responses were mechanical and lacked authentic interaction.	Tasks connected to students' lives increased motivation.
Students use newly taught vocabulary in their oral interactions	Limited use of vocabulary; most relied on familiar words.	Terms like "usually," "never," and routine verbs were used successfully.

Note: Elaborated by Xavier Farinango

Analysis of Observations

Comparing pre- and post-intervention observations shows remarkable progress in how students used English during peer interactions. Spanish initially dominated most classroom conversations, yet by the program's end, learners consistently chose English even for informal exchanges with classmates. This linguistic shift directly supports the intervention's

communicative aims. Student participation patterns also evolved dramatically, moving away from hesitant, teacher-dependent contributions toward confident, self-directed engagement where learners sustained conversations and completed tasks independently in English.

Response quality and organization underwent equally striking transformations. Early observations revealed students offering minimal one- or two-word responses, with frequent communication breakdowns caused by long pauses and vocabulary limitations. Post-intervention sessions showed learners constructing fuller, more grammatically sound sentences while maintaining coherent, fluent exchanges across multiple turns. Changes in interactive dynamics, particularly improved turn-taking etiquette and spontaneous conversation initiation, clearly illustrate developing communicative competence, which stood as a fundamental goal of this educational approach.

Discussion of Observations

The observed improvements in linguistic competence reflect authentic communicative contexts where learners must negotiate meaning to succeed. Berezenko et al. (2022) documented these exact patterns in their research on CLT effectiveness. Students' growing preference for English over their native language demonstrates what Wei et al. (2018) identified as natural target language adoption in communicative classroom environments, simultaneously reducing L1 dependency. Complete sentences and extended speaking contributions became increasingly common, validating Bulut's (2022) work on how analytic rubrics and structured practice enhance both coherence and oral accuracy.

Student motivation and engagement flourished dramatically as collaborative activities gained purpose and energy. The significant speaking improvements that Wathawatthana et al. (2025) linked to increased learner enjoyment and meaningful interaction became clearly visible throughout the intervention. Active vocabulary integration during post-intervention sessions reflected the lexical development patterns that Torres and Conza Armijos (2023)

found in Ecuadorian educational settings, where communicative approaches effectively facilitate contextual expression use. These combined outcomes showcase CLT's remarkable ability to simultaneously advance linguistic competence and learner enthusiasm.

Reduced speaking hesitation and increased spontaneous communication highlight crucial emotional and participatory elements in language acquisition. The direct correlation between enjoyment, reduced anxiety, and improved L2 communication that Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014) established emerged clearly in classroom observations. CLT's inclusive nature became particularly apparent when both introverted and extroverted students benefited equally from participation opportunities, confirming what Nggawu and Thao (2023) discovered about personality-neutral task effectiveness. The supportive learning atmosphere documented throughout this study exemplifies what O'Leary (2020) describes as effective pedagogy made visible through observable behaviors—confidence, appropriate turn-taking, and authentic peer interaction all flourished naturally.

Teacher's Field Notes

In addition to the observation checklist, teachers' field notes were analyzed to document students' behavior, engagement, and use of English throughout the intervention. These notes provided detailed insights into learners' reactions to communicative tasks, their confidence in speaking, and the classroom dynamics that emerged before and after the CLT-based activities. Comparing pre- and post-intervention notes highlights how students' oral performance evolved in real time, adding depth to the statistical results.

Table 10
Summary of Teacher's Field Notes: Pre vs. Post Intervention

Aspect	Pre-Intervention	Post-Intervention
Student behavior	Passive, shy, dependent on teacher prompts.	Highly engaged, collaborative, and enthusiastic.

Aspect	Pre-Intervention	Post-Intervention
Use of English	Frequent use of Spanish; short, hesitant English responses.	English used almost exclusively, even by weaker students.
Engagement with tasks	Low engagement, several incomplete or reluctant attempts.	Very high engagement; all students completed role-plays and interviews.
Challenges	Lack of vocabulary, pauses, avoidance of participation.	Minor pronunciation and fluency hesitations, but communication maintained.
Notable events	Some students avoided participation (e.g., Pablo Salgado).	Same students overcame shyness; others (e.g., Francisco Moreno, Paula Aldas) emerged as leaders.

Note: Elaborated by Xavier Farinango

Analysis

The field notes reveal a striking transformation in classroom dynamics throughout the intervention period. Students initially appeared reluctant, actively avoided speaking opportunities, and required constant teacher encouragement to participate in activities. However, by the program's conclusion, they displayed genuine excitement, engaged in natural collaboration, and even traditionally quiet learners found the confidence to contribute regularly. This evolution signals a fundamental shift in classroom culture, transitioning from teacher-directed instruction toward student-centered, communicative engagement.

Language usage patterns present another significant discovery. Pre-intervention observations showed Spanish controlling most interactions, while English attempts remained brief, uncertain, and frequently unfinished. Conversely, post-intervention documentation reveals English emerging as the dominant communication tool, with virtually all students making extended speaking efforts, despite occasional pronunciation or fluency challenges that remained. This validates that CLT activities established a supportive and encouraging atmosphere for linguistic experimentation and genuine language application.

Discussion

The meaningful contexts created through communicative activities naturally motivate greater student participation, as Harmer (2015) has demonstrated in previous research. Confidence issues and mistake anxiety represent major obstacles to oral production in EFL environments, according to Al Hosni (2014), yet these psychological barriers showed a clear reduction throughout this study. The documented growth in self-assurance and unprompted participation directly reflects this positive change.

Particularly noteworthy was the progress exhibited by struggling students such as Pablo Salgado and Kerly Gómez. Research by Nggawu and Thao (2023) supports these observations, indicating that CLT approaches successfully accommodate diverse personality types while creating equitable participation opportunities for both introverted and extroverted learners.

Students like Francisco Moreno and Paula Aldas began assuming leadership roles during activities, demonstrating the collaborative essence that defines effective CLT implementation. Behaviors such as cooperation, confidence, and active engagement serve as reliable indicators of pedagogical success, according to findings presented by O'Leary (2020). The sustained English usage documented during final sessions provides additional validation for the approach, since communicative classroom environments typically encourage reduced L1 dependence while strengthening target language reliance, as Wei et al. (2018) have shown in their comprehensive studies.

Collectively, the field notes offer compelling evidence that CLT promoted not only linguistic development but also a more self-assured, collaborative, and communicatively rich classroom environment.

3.6 Conclusions

The nine-week implementation of Communicative Language Teaching tasks yielded substantial improvements in students' oral production abilities, as evidenced through multiple assessment instruments and observational data. This comprehensive intervention not only addressed the initial diagnostic concerns but also transformed the overall classroom learning environment in ways that extended beyond the original research objectives.

Quantitative analysis revealed meaningful progress across all evaluated dimensions of oral competence. Students demonstrated a 13.74% improvement in Grammar and Vocabulary, indicating enhanced lexical range and increased accuracy in spontaneous speech production. More significantly, Interactive Communication and Discourse Management showed the strongest gains at 19.14% and 18.25% respectively, suggesting that learners developed sophisticated abilities to maintain conversational flow, utilize appropriate linking devices, and navigate complex communicative exchanges. While Pronunciation improvements were more modest at 8.04%, students nevertheless achieved greater intelligibility and prosodic control. The narrowing of standard deviations between pre- and post-assessments particularly highlights how the intervention benefited all learners rather than privileging only the most proficient students.

Classroom observations painted a complementary picture of transformation. Students who had previously remained silent during English lessons gradually became active participants, initiating conversations and sustaining meaningful dialogue with peers. Field notes documented remarkable shifts in learner behavior, with initially reticent students evolving into confident speakers who voluntarily assumed leadership roles during group activities. This evolution from passive recipients to engaged communicators fundamentally altered classroom dynamics, creating a learner-centered environment where students felt empowered to take linguistic risks.

The affective dimension of learning proved equally significant. Post-intervention surveys revealed that students experienced reduced speaking anxiety while simultaneously developing greater confidence in their communicative abilities. Learners consistently praised the authenticity and relevance of role-plays, debates, and collaborative problem-solving tasks, viewing these activities as valuable opportunities for meaningful language practice rather than artificial academic exercises. Such positive perceptions suggest that the intervention successfully bridged the gap between classroom learning and real-world communication needs.

These findings collectively demonstrate that CLT methodologies can effectively address persistent challenges in Ecuadorian EFL contexts, including speaking anxiety, limited vocabulary activation, and restricted interactional competence. The intervention proved that systematic integration of communicative tasks remains feasible even within resource-constrained educational settings, provided that instructional design aligns with clear pedagogical objectives and appropriate assessment frameworks. Beyond measurable linguistic achievements, the proposal fostered essential qualities for sustained language development: learner autonomy, collaborative skills, and intrinsic motivation. The evidence thus supports broader adoption of communicative approaches in secondary EFL programs, particularly where traditional methodologies have failed to develop students' speaking proficiency effectively.

3.7 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations are proposed to improve the teaching and learning of speaking skills in EFL contexts.

First, English teachers are encouraged to implement Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) tasks consistently in their lessons. Activities such as role plays, information-gap tasks, picture-based discussions, and short oral presentations should be integrated regularly, as they provide students with meaningful opportunities to practice speaking in realistic contexts similar to the PET B1 speaking exam.

Second, it is recommended that teachers create a supportive and low-anxiety classroom environment where students feel confident to express themselves orally. Encouraging participation, accepting mistakes as part of the learning process, and providing constructive feedback can significantly increase students' willingness to communicate and improve their oral production.

Third, assessment practices should align with communicative objectives. Using rubrics based on CEFR B1 criteria—such as fluency, pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and interaction—can help teachers monitor students' progress more effectively and provide clear guidance for improvement.

Finally, future research is recommended to extend the duration of the intervention and include a larger sample size or different educational levels. This would allow for a deeper understanding of the long-term effects of CLT-based activities on students' speaking performance and communicative confidence.

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