

# COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING PRINCIPLES TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' TALKING TIME IN A1- LEVEL STUDENTS

## PRINCIPIOS COMUNICATIVOS DE ENSEÑANZA DEL IDIOMA PARA MEJORAR EL TIEMPO DE CONVERSACION DE LOS ESTUDIANTES DE NIVEL A1

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## COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING PRINCIPLES TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' TALKING TIME IN A1-LEVEL STUDENTS

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**Palabras clave:** enseñanza comunicativa de idiomas, habilidades de expresión oral, aprendizaje colaborativo.

**Keywords:** communicative language teaching, speaking skills, collaborative learning

### RESUMEN

El reconocimiento de la importancia global del inglés y su inclusión en el currículo del Ministerio de Educación de Ecuador toma relevancia en el país. Sin embargo, a pesar de estos esfuerzos,

persisten desafíos para los estudiantes, como oportunidades limitadas para practicar, la percepción de la dificultad del inglés y la falta de recursos para el idioma. Este estudio aborda estos desa-





fíos investigando estrategias para mejorar el tiempo que los estudiantes hablan, con un enfoque en la metodología de Enseñanza Comunicativa de Idiomas. Específicamente, la investigación explora cómo los principios de la Enseñanza Comunicativa de Idiomas pueden mitigar el impacto de las limitaciones en recursos en el tiempo de habla de los estudiantes, particularmente entre estudiantes de quinto grado, en Quito, en el nivel A1. Se recopilaron datos cuantitativos a través de una encuesta, siguiendo la implementación de una clase de demostración, mientras que los conocimientos cualitativos se obtuvieron a través de preguntas abiertas y se estableció un entorno interactivo para el aprendi-

zaje del idioma mediante métodos de Enseñanza Comunicativa de Idiomas. Basándose en teorías del Interaccionismo Social, particularmente la perspectiva de Vygotsky, la investigación enfatiza el aprendizaje colaborativo. Los hallazgos revelan un fuerte interés entre los estudiantes en adoptar los principios de la Enseñanza Comunicativa de Idiomas, con muchos expresando una preferencia por este enfoque pedagógico. Se encontró que las actividades colaborativas, los juegos de roles y el trabajo en parejas impactaron positivamente en las habilidades de habla, desarrollo de vocabulario y habilidades colaborativas para resolver problemas.

## ABSTRACT

The recognition of the global importance of English and its inclusion in the curriculum of the Ministry of Education of Ecuador is significant for the country. However, despite these efforts, challenges persist for students, including limited opportunities to practice, the perception of the difficulty of English, and the lack of language resources. This study addresses these challenges by investigating strategies to improve students' speaking time, focusing on Communicative Language Teaching

methodology. Specifically, the research explores how Communicative Language Teaching principles can mitigate the impact of resource limitations on students' speaking time, particularly among fifth-grade students in Quito at the A1 level. Quantitative data were collected through a survey, following the implementation of a demonstration class. At the same time, qualitative insights were obtained through open-ended questions and the establishment of an interactive environment for language lear-





ning using Communicative Language Teaching methods. Drawing on theories of Social Interactionism, particularly Vygotsky's perspective, the research emphasizes collaborative learning. Findings reveal a strong interest among students in adopting the principles of Commu-

nicative Language Teaching, with many expressing a preference for this pedagogical approach. Collaborative activities, role-plays, and partner work positively impacted speaking skills, vocabulary development, and collaborative problem-solving skills.

## INTRODUCTION

English is now widely recognized as a global language due to its prominent use worldwide, possibly with a quarter of the population of the world as speakers (Roberts, 2004). Gaining proficiency in the English language has become a necessity in nearly every country. Ecuador recognizes the importance of providing students with the opportunity to learn and develop proficiency in English. The Ecuadorian Ministry of Education (2016) designed a new English as a Foreign Language curriculum that addresses the needs of the Ecuadorian context. The language skills in curriculum development are structured in accordance with the Common European Framework for Language Reference standards. Bailly et al. (2001) explain that this framework functions as a curriculum, sequentially developing various levels, such as the A1-level, to ensure learners acquire essential language functions for effective communication.

Despite the inclusion of English as a Foreign Language in the curriculum, according to research by Mulyanah et al. (2018), Ecuadorian students face challenges in speaking English due to limited practice both inside and outside the classroom. The perception of English as difficult is compounded by a lack of proper language environments. Also as cited in Ramos (2023), memorization has traditionally played a role in English language classrooms; yet, it is argued that it does not lead to genuine language acquisition and effective communication by the end of the course.

To tackle this challenge, Communicative Language Teaching is the appropriate methodology to enhance proficiency in the English language and improve students' speaking time, because includes pedagogical principles aimed at developing communicative skills effectively and meaningfully in students. As outlined by Richards (2006), Commu-





nicative Language Teaching incorporates principles relating to language teaching objectives, the learning process, engaging classroom activities, and the roles of both teachers and learners.

Despite its popularity, there are still doubts about whether Communicative Language Teaching is suitable for beginners. Many challenges arise from the limited capacity for meaning negotiation during the initial language acquisition phases, encouraging debates about the efficacy of immersive communicative methods. Some learners may find explicit instruction more beneficial, particularly in the early phases of language learning (Ellis, 1996). This suggests that, while communicative approaches emphasize interaction, there may be instances where learners benefit from direct and clear explanations of language rules and vocabulary, especially in the initial stages of learning a new language.

This research aims to gain insights into the perceptions and experiences of students regarding learning English through the principles of Communicative Language Teaching. It also seeks to identify Communicative Language Teaching principles and activities that enhance speaking time among A1-level students. Additionally, the study aims to explore how these activities contribute to increased active participation in group settings and the development of problem-solving skills.

Previous studies have highlighted the significance of communicative competence in language acquisition. The Communicative Language Teaching approach aligns with this perspective by emphasizing real-life communication and creating an immersive language learning environment. In accordance with Richards (2006), "classroom activities should, as far as possible, mirror the real world and use real world or authentic sources as the basis for classroom learning" (p. 20). While CLT has been extensively studied, there is a need for more targeted investigations into its application for students at the A1 proficiency level. Understanding the specific challenges and opportunities at this stage will contribute to the development of tailored pedagogical strategies.

According to Ghani et al. (2022), the Theory of Social Interactionism, commonly associated with Lev Vygotsky, suggests that environmental factors and experiences gained through social interaction play a significant role in children's language acquisition. Additionally, Guerrou (2020) posits that integrating critical thinking and problem-solving skills into language lessons is increasingly important in language education research. This study aims to integrate these perspectives within the context of A1-level language learners.

While existing literature provides a foundation for understanding CLT and its benefits, in agreement with Brandl (2020)





Communicative Language Teaching stands out for its adaptable and principle-driven nature, offering considerable flexibility to address various programmatic and learner requirements. Crucially, it acknowledges the multifaceted nature of language learning achievement, taking into consideration factors like learner aptitude, motivation, teacher efficacy, and instructional methods.

In the existing literature, there is a lack of studies specifically examining the impact of the communicative approach

on the speaking time of A1-level students. Despite the recognized importance of CLT, as stated by Richards (2006), in language education for its emphasis on communication and interaction, empirical investigations into its practical implications for beginner language learners are limited. Hence, there is a need to address this gap and provide an evidence-based understanding of the effectiveness of communicative language teaching strategies at the beginner level, particularly from the perspectives of students.

## REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Speaking is a language skill that students must master to become effective communicators. Proficiency in speaking English fluently and accurately provides greater opportunities for success in life. Communication relies heavily on speaking, making it a key aspect of connecting with others (Mulyanah et al., 2018). Moreover, Speaking involves conveying information or expressing thoughts and feelings through spoken language. Another definition of speaking skill is using language for a specific purpose (Khieder et al., 2013).

Speaking skills are crucial for effective communication, especially when using English to connect with people from different countries. Teaching stu-

dents how to speak is essential in schools as it helps them improve their language abilities and build relationships in the globalized world. Developing this skill allows them to express themselves and connect with others, fostering meaningful connections with people from diverse backgrounds (Crisianita & Mandasari, 2022).

Speaking situations can be categorized into three types. First, there is the interactive speaking situation, which typically involves face-to-face interaction within a dialogue; the content of what is said relies on the ongoing understanding of the interaction, and statements are connected to prior parts of the conversation. Second, non-interactive speaking situations occur when there is no direct





interaction, such as in recorded speech from radio broadcasts where interpretation is based on listening. Finally, partially interactive situations involve giving a speech to a live audience, where the audience does not interrupt the speaker during the presentation (Khieder et al., 2013).

According to Ankitaben and Desai (2015) "Communicative Language Teaching is an approach which provides opportunity to the learners to communicate in the target language. The use of functional aspect of language makes them able to communicate in the target language in their day to day life" (p. 50). Some of the characteristics of the Communicative Language Teaching aim for students to achieve effective communication skills. In CLT, the teacher is a facilitator, guiding learners to be independent. The syllabus emphasizes practical language use with authentic materials and meaningful tasks for learners. (Ankitaben & Desai, 2015).

Research by Abdelmageed and Omer (2020) indicates that the communicative approach develops speaking skills in students. Communicative Language Teaching aims to develop real-life language skills through engaging, contextualized tasks (Brandl, 2020). Principles of CLT include making the central unit of instruction task-based, promoting learning by doing, providing rich and meaningful

input, promoting cooperative and collaborative learning, focusing on form, and recognizing affective factors of learning.

In Communicative Language Teaching, diverse activity types serve to foster authentic communication and language acquisition. Information-Gap Activities, such as role-plays involving one student assisting another without visual cues, highlight the principle that communication often involves seeking missing information. Jigsaw activities divide the class into groups with partial information, encouraging collaboration to construct a comprehensive understanding. Task-completion activities, including puzzles and games, center on utilizing language resources for specific tasks, while role-plays assign students distinct roles for improvisational language exchanges. These activities, commonly conducted in pairs or small groups, provide advantages such as exposure to varied language use, increased language production, heightened motivation, and opportunities for fluency development. (Brandl, 2020).

Brandl (2020) defines methodological principles that facilitate second language acquisition. These principles, adapted from his work, guide the implementation of Communicative Language Teaching practices and Task-Based Instruction.







**Table 1.** Principles of Communicative Language Teaching

Principle	Description
1. Task-Based Instruction	Emphasizes making tasks central to instruction, ensuring grammar is applied in real-world contexts
2. Learning by Doing	Highlights that learning should be based on engaging, real-world tasks to enhance long-term retention
3. Rich Input	Stresses the importance of providing rich, diverse language input from various speakers to replicate natural exposure
4. Meaningful and Comprehensible Input	Focuses on making input meaningful and comprehensible through strategies like repetition and gestures, helping students connect language to real-life contexts
5. Cooperative and Collaborative Learning	Underscores the benefits of cooperative and collaborative learning, where group work and social interaction enhance language acquisition
6. Focus on Form in Contexts	Emphasizes teaching grammar with real communication and context (Long, 1991) and doesn't isolate grammar rules
7. Error-Corrective Feedback	Highlights the role of error-corrective feedback in adjusting learners' understanding
8. Affective Factors	Recognizes that learners' attitudes, motivation, and anxiety affect their success, and need a supportive environment

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## INTEGRATION OF CELTA SPEAKING LESSON PLAN

In the pursuit of designing the class for this research project, the CELTA speaking lesson plan framework is chosen. The CELTA (Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) speaking lesson plan is highly esteemed for its systematic and efficient structure in EFL instruction, which aligns seamlessly with the objectives of integrating Communicative Language Teaching principles to enhance students' speaking time, particularly among A1-level students. The CELTA speaking lesson plan framework comprises several key stages, including lead-in, pre-speaking, while-speaking, and post-speaking activities. Each stage is meticulously crafted to encourage active participation, critical thinking, and

effective communication (Watkins et al., 2023).

The emphasis on pre-speaking tasks prepares students to engage in oral communication by activating relevant vocabulary and language structures. During the while-speaking phase, interactive activities such as role-plays and group tasks are employed to facilitate meaningful communication and promote language use in authentic contexts. Furthermore, the post-speaking activities in the CELTA lesson plan framework promote reflection and consolidation of learning. Students are provided with opportunities to review and analyze their speaking performance, receive feedback from peers or the teacher, and set goals for improvement (Watkins et al., 2023).

## METHODOLOGY

This project utilized a mixed-methods approach, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative methodologies, to comprehensively investigate the efficacy of implementing Communicative Language Teaching principles in enhancing speaking time among A1-level students.

The mixed-methods paradigm acknowledges that research questions are often complex and multifaceted, and to fully understand the phenomenon under study, it requires integrating different types of data (Creswell, 2014). Through quantitative surveys and qualitative open-ended questions, the study





obtained rich insights into students' perceptions, experiences, and contextual factors influencing the outcomes of Communicative Language Teaching-based activities.

The collected quantitative data were subjected to descriptive statistics. Responses were systematically tabulated, and frequency distributions were calculated to gain insights into the perceptions and experiences of students toward learning English through the

principles of communicative language teaching. On the other hand, the qualitative data employed open-ended questions to obtain responses from students, facilitating the expression of their ideas without limitations. This qualitative data was obtained through the execution of the lesson plan followed by a survey, aiming to capture students' reflections, observations, and personal experiences.

## POPULATION, THE SAMPLE AND SAMPLING

The target population for this research project consists of students registered in the fifth grade at a public school situated in the city of Quito. The small convenience sample for the study was derived from a group of twenty-eight (28) students, representing diverse socioeconomic backgrounds and language learning experiences. Aged between eight and twelve years old, the students are English learners at A1-level based on their performance in standar-

dized language assessments. These students attend English classes three times a week, with each session lasting 45 minutes, resulting in a total of 1 hour and 35 minutes of instruction per week. They belong to the afternoon period at the institution, which is a co-educational school that includes both girls and boys. It is noteworthy that five out of the 28 students in the class chose not to participate, resulting in 23 active participants in the research, 12 males and 11 females.





## DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Quantitative data were collected through surveys administered to participants, which provided valuable insights into the effectiveness of the proposed approach. The participants in this study were the same 28 fifth-grade students registered in the public primary school mentioned earlier. Data were collected through online surveys administered via Google Forms, designed to assess students' perceptions and experiences regarding CLT principles and their impact on the development of speaking skills. The survey was carried out after the execution of an English as a Foreign Language lesson plan grounded in Communicative Language Teaching principles. The survey consisted of 14 questions, with the first two focusing on the age and gender of the participants, while the remaining ten questions were designed to assess the participants' reflections, with response options including Always, Often, Sometimes, Rarely, and Never. Parti-

cipants were provided with clear instructions on how to complete the survey, and anonymity was ensured to encourage candid responses. The estimated time for the survey was 15-20 minutes.

The quantitative data, comprised of numerical responses, facilitated statistical analysis and comparison of perceptions following the implementation of the lesson plan among participants. The qualitative data employed open-ended questions to gather responses from students, facilitating the expression of their ideas without limitations. This qualitative data was obtained through the execution of the lesson plan followed by a survey, aiming to capture students' reflections, observations, and personal experiences. Thematic analysis was conducted to identify recurring patterns, themes, and insights within the narratives and reflections shared by the participants.

## QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

The collected quantitative data were subjected to descriptive statistics. Responses were systematically tabulated, and frequency distributions were calculated to gain insights into the per-

ceptions and experiences of students regarding learning English through the principles of Communicative Language Teaching. Additionally, measures of central tendency such as minimum,





maximum, mean, and standard deviation, were computed to provide a comprehensive understanding of students' responses. The analysis process was detailed addressing validity and reliability concerns related to the methods of ta-

bulation and frequency distribution calculation.. Furthermore, the results were interpreted, identifying significant trends or patterns between variables. Finally, conclusions and recommendations were formulated.

## QUALITATIVE DATA

The qualitative data obtained from open-ended survey questions regarding the integration of the principles of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) to improve students' speaking time in A1-level students will undergo thorough thematic analysis. Each response

will be meticulously examined and coded to uncover recurring themes and patterns, offering valuable insights into participants' perspectives on the perceived benefits of employing CLT methods in language learning.

## ANALYSIS PROCEDURES

Descriptive statistics, including measures such as mean, median, and standard deviation, were utilized to analyze the survey responses, offering valuable insights into students' perceptions and experiences regarding Communicative Language Teaching principles. The following summary statistics provide insights into the frequencies with which students perceive the effectiveness of various aspects of Communi-

cative Language Teaching and its impact on speaking skills development. Additionally, the standard deviation was examined to understand the variability of responses around the mean, shedding light on the consistency and dispersion of opinions among students. The integration of a mixed-methods approach allowed for the triangulation of data, enhancing the validity and reliability of the findings.





## ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

This research study is dedicated to maintaining high ethical standards to safeguard the well-being, privacy, and protection of participants. Prior to involvement, informed consent was secured from both students and their parents or guardians. Participants received comprehensive information about the research

goals, procedures, potential risks and benefits, and their voluntary right to withdraw from the study at any point without facing repercussions. Strict measures were implemented to uphold the privacy and confidentiality of all participants throughout the entirety of the research process.

## RESULTS

This section summarizes findings on students' perceptions and experiences with speaking skills and Communicative Language Teaching principles at the A1-level and aims to enhance

speaking proficiency. The accompanying Table 1 presents statistical metrics for each survey question and provides a comprehensive overview of the data<sup>4</sup>.

**Table 2.** Summary of Survey Results

Items	Min	Max	M	SD
<b>Question 1</b>	0	10	4,60	3,84
<b>Question 2</b>	1	8	4,60	3,04
<b>Question 3</b>	0	11	4,60	4,03
<b>Question 4</b>	0	11	4,60	4,03
<b>Question 5</b>	1	14	4,60	5,50
<b>Question 6</b>	1	10	4,60	3,50

<sup>4</sup> Note: The presented table provides a comprehensive summary of survey results aimed at exploring students' perceptions and experiences regarding speaking skills and Communicative Language Teaching principles in the context of improving students' speaking time at the A1-level.





<b>Question 7</b>	1	8	4,60	3,36
<b>Question 8</b>	1	10	4,60	3,57
<b>Question 9</b>	1	13	4,60	4,92
<b>Question 10</b>	0	12	4,60	4,92

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Table 2 shows that for each question, the minimum (Min) represents the lowest score given, the maximum (Max) indicates the highest score, and the mean (M) signifies the average rating provided by respondents. Notably, while minimum and maximum values vary significantly across questions, the mean consistently rests at 4.6, suggesting a prevailing trend in respondents' assessments. Furthermore, the standard deviation (SD), which varies for each question, highlights differences in response consistency, with higher values indicating greater variability and lower values suggesting more uniformity in respondents' answers.

**Question 1:** The mean rating of 4.6 indicates that, on average, respondents perceive working with a partner as moderately beneficial for improving their English-speaking skills. The majority of respondents selected 'always,' 'often,' or 'sometimes' to describe how beneficial they found working with a partner, indicating a generally positive perception of collaboration. However, the standard deviation of 3.84 suggests variability in res-

ponses, revealing that within the sample, two students indicated that they never perceived benefits when working with a partner, contrasting with the overall consensus.

**Question 2:** With a mean rating of 4.6, respondents generally perceive partner feedback as moderately helpful for improving speaking skills. The standard deviation of 3.05 suggests variability in perceptions, with two students never finding partner feedback helpful, one finding it rarely helpful, while others may perceive it as sometimes, often, and always beneficial.

**Question 3:** The mean rating of 4.6 indicates that respondents generally detect a noticeable improvement in speaking skills during Communicative Language Teaching role-play activities. The standard deviation of 4.03 suggests significant variability in experiences, with four students never observing improvement during role-play, while others may perceive it as sometimes, often, and always beneficial.





**Question 4:** Respondents rate the role-play interaction activity as moderately effective in expanding English vocabulary, with a mean rating of 4.6. The standard deviation of 4.03 suggests diverse perceptions among students, with some always, often, and sometimes finding role-play helpful for vocabulary expansion, while two may perceive it as rarely rarely beneficial and two never find it beneficial.

**Question 5:** With a mean rating of 4.6, respondents generally feel positive about using real-life situations and materials in language learning activities. However, the high standard deviation of 5.50 indicates significant variability in perceptions, with the majority of students always, often, and sometimes consistently finding these activities engaging and relevant, while one student perceives them as rarely and another as never beneficial.

**Question 6:** The mean rating of 4.6 suggests that respondents generally perceive pair work as positively impacting their ability to collaborate on language-related problem-solving tasks. The standard deviation of 3.50 suggests variability in experiences, with one student rarely finding pair work helpful for collaboration, while two students never do. However, others may perceive it as always, often, or sometimes beneficial.

**Question 7:** Respondents rate problem-solving activities as moderately contributing to improvements in critical thinking skills, with a mean rating of 4.6. The standard deviation of 3.36 suggests variability in perceptions, with one student rarely finding problem-solving activities beneficial for critical thinking, while one student never does. In contrast, others may perceive them as always, often, or sometimes helpful.

**Question 8:** The mean rating of 4.6 indicates that respondents generally perceive pair work activities as encouraging them to take more initiative and responsibility for their own language learning. The standard deviation of 3.57 implies variability in experiences, with two students rarely feeling encouraged by pair work and one student never feeling encouraged. However, others may perceive it as always, often, or sometimes encouraging.

**Question 9:** On average, respondents rate the encouragement to communicate even if making mistakes as moderately helpful for expressing themselves effectively in the language, with a mean rating of 4.6. The high standard deviation of 4.92 suggests diverse perceptions, with one student rarely and two students never finding this encouragement helpful, while others may perceive it as always, often, or sometimes effective.







**Question 10:** With a mean rating of 4.6, respondents generally perceive cultural activities as moderately helpful for understanding how people use language in their culture. The standard deviation of 4.92 indicates variability in perceptions, with one student never finding cultural activities helpful for cultural understanding. In contrast, the majority perceive them as always, often, or sometimes beneficial.

Table 3 provides a thematic analysis of participants' responses to Question

11, where students who selected the options 'always', 'sometimes', and 'often' in Question 1 were asked to provide open-ended explanations regarding how pair work positively helps them improve their English speaking skills. These responses have been methodically organized into four main categories, offering valuable insights into the subtle advantages recognized by students when utilizing Communicative Language Teaching strategies to improve speaking proficiency in A1-level learners<sup>5</sup>

**Table 3.** Pair Work's Positive Impact on Language Learning

Theme	Response by participants
Enhancement of Collaboration Skills	<p>"Working with a partner helps me come up with better ideas."</p> <p>"Pair work lets me share different ideas with someone else."</p> <p>"Working together makes it easier to get stuff done."</p> <p>"I like working with a partner because it feels like we're a team."</p> <p>"Working with someone else helps me stay on track when solving language problems."</p>

<sup>5</sup> Note: Responses to Question 11 were analyzed thematically to understand students' perspectives on the positive contributions of pair work to their language learning experience.





Language Learning Enhancement	<p>"Working with a partner helps me practice my language skills."</p> <p>"I learn new ways to study when I work with a partner."</p> <p>"I learn from my partner and they learn from me."</p> <p>"Talking with a partner helps me understand the language better."</p> <p>"I like talking with someone else about what we're learning."</p>
Increased Confidence in Language Use	<p>"Collaborating with a partner boosts my confidence in speaking."</p> <p>"Partner work empowers me to be bolder in using the language."</p> <p>"I feel a greater sense of assurance when partnered with someone."</p> <p>"Working with a partner makes me feel more confident speaking."</p> <p>"I'm not as afraid to try new things with a partner."</p> <p>"I feel better about making mistakes when I'm with someone else."</p> <p>"Partner work helps me feel braver using the language."</p>
Social skills development:	<p>"I like working with a partner because it's fun to chat while we work."</p> <p>"When I work with someone else, I make a new friend."</p> <p>"Working with a partner helps me learn how to listen to others."</p> <p>"Pair work teaches me how to take turns when speaking."</p>

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In contrast, Table 4, addresses Question 12, which targeted students who selected 'never', in response to Question 1. Notably, only two students provided insights on this matter, as they were the only ones who selected that option. Table 3 outlines the primary category that emerged from their responses<sup>6</sup>.

**Table 4.** Perceptions of Never Respondents

Theme	Response by participants
Individual learning preferences	"I get distracted in pairs." "I feel confident alone."

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Table 5 provides a thematic analysis of participants' responses to Question 13, where students who selected the options 'always', 'sometimes', and 'often' in Question 5 were asked to express their feelings about using real-life situations and materials in language learning activities. They were also asked whether they believe these activities make learning the language more relevant and engaging. By providing open-ended explanations, participants shared their perspectives on how the integration of real-life situations and materials influences their language learning experience. These responses have been systematically categorized into four primary themes, offering valuable insights into the nuanced benefits perceived by students when applying the principles of Communicative Language Teaching to enhance their speaking time in A1 level students<sup>7</sup>.

<sup>6</sup> Note: Responses to Question 12 were obtained from students who never perceived partnering as beneficial, as indicated by their selection of 'never' in response to Question 1. Notably, only two students provided insights on this matter, as they were the only ones who selected that option.

<sup>7</sup> Note: Responses to Question 13 were analyzed thematically to understand students' perspectives on the integration of real-life situations and materials in language learning activities. Participants' open-ended explanations were categorized into four primary themes, providing insights into the perceived benefits of applying communicative language teaching principles at the A1 level.





**Table 5.** Students' Perspectives on Real-Life Language Learning

Theme	Response by participants
Relevance of learning	<p>"Real life helps me learn."</p> <p>"Learning is fun with real-life stuff."</p> <p>"Real things help me understand better."</p> <p>"I like learning with real-life things."</p> <p>"Real life makes learning like everyday stuff."</p> <p>"I learn better when it's like real life."</p> <p>"Real stuff helps me learn words."</p> <p>"Real life makes me remember better."</p> <p>"I learn real things for real life."</p> <p>"I love learning with real things."</p>
Level of engagement	<p>"I find myself fully engaged in activities using real-life situations."</p> <p>"Activities based on real-life scenarios often keep me motivated and committed to learning."</p> <p>"I feel invested in learning when real-life situations are incorporated."</p> <p>"I often commit myself to activities using real-life materials, finding them more interesting."</p>



Interest and participation	<p>"I feel interested and engaged in activities with real-life contexts."</p> <p>"I participate in activities based on real-life situations, depending on the topic."</p> <p>"I find myself interested and participating in activities using real-life materials."</p> <p>"Real-life situations capture my interest and motivate my participation in language learning."</p>
Perception of progress	<p>"I feel significant progress when using real-life situations for learning."</p> <p>"Real-life contexts contribute to a noticeable improvement in my language skills."</p> <p>"I perceive considerable progress when working with real-life materials."</p>

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In contrast, Table 6, addresses Question 14, which targeted students who selected rarely and never in response to Question 5. Notably, only two students provided insights on this matter, as they were the only ones who selected those options<sup>8</sup>.

**Table 6.** Insights from Students Rarely or Never Utilizing Real-Life Situations in Learning

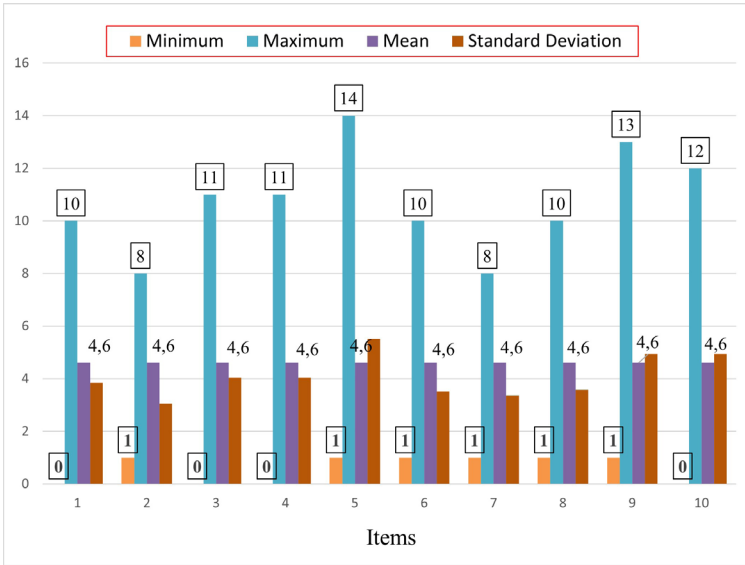
Theme	Response by participants
Activity preference.	<p>"I don't really like using real-life stuff in class because it feels kinda boring to me." "I enjoy games more."</p> <p>"I find games much more enjoyable."</p>

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<sup>8</sup> Note: Responses to Question 14 were obtained from students who rarely or never utilized real-life situations and materials in language learning activities. Due to the limited number of respondents in this category (two students), only one primary category emerged from their insights.



**Figure 1<sup>9</sup>.** Graphical Representation of Summary of Survey Results



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Figure 1 visually summarizes survey results on the effectiveness of Communicative Language Teaching principles in enhancing speaking skills and engagement in language learning activities. Mean scores averaging around 4.6 across all survey items suggest a generally positive perception among students, though varying standard deviation values indicate some diversity in responses. While there is moderate agreement among respondents, higher standard deviations hi-

ghlight areas of more varied perceptions, such as the impact of real-life situations and handling mistakes on language expression. Overall, students perceive activities like pair work and role-plays positively for language learning, emphasizing benefits such as collaboration, problem-solving, and peer support, suggesting a positive contribution of Communicative Language Teaching principles to their learning experiences, with potential areas for improvement.

<sup>9</sup> Note: Figure 1 presents a graphical summary of survey results, displaying the range and central tendency measures for each item, including minimum, maximum, mean, and standard deviation.



## DISCUSSION

The results of the survey conducted to investigate students' perceptions and experiences regarding the use of **Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)** principles to enhance speaking time among A1-level students provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of such pedagogical approaches. The findings reveal a generally positive attitude toward CLT activities and their impact on language learning.

The thematic analysis of participants' responses highlights several key themes regarding the integration of real-life situations and materials in language learning activities. Students expressed a strong sense of relevance and engagement when learning with real-life contexts, indicating that such activities make language learning more meaningful and enjoyable. This aligns with existing literature emphasizing the importance of contextualized tasks and authentic materials in promoting language acquisition (Brandl, 2020). The findings also suggest that activities based on real-life scenarios enhance students' levels of engagement and motivation, fostering a deeper commitment to learning.

Furthermore, participants perceive significant progress in their language skills when working with real-life materials, underscoring the effectiveness of

CLT principles in facilitating language development. This is consistent with previous research suggesting that CLT promotes real-life language skills through contextualized tasks (Abdelmageed & Omer, 2020). By providing opportunities for students to apply language in authentic contexts, CLT fosters meaningful language use and enhances language proficiency.

In contrast, students who expressed reluctance or dislike toward using real-life situations in class cited a preference for alternative activities such as games. This indicates the importance of considering students' individual preferences and interests when designing language learning activities. While CLT principles emphasize the use of authentic materials, it is essential to ensure that activities are engaging and enjoyable for all students to promote active participation and motivation (Ankitaben & Desai, 2015).

Regarding pair work, the thematic analysis of participants' responses reveals several benefits of collaborative learning experiences. Students perceive pair work as conducive to collaboration and idea-sharing, fostering a sense of teamwork and mutual support. This aligns with the cooperative and collaborative learning principle of CLT, which em-





phasizes the importance of interaction and cooperation in language learning (Brandl, 2020). Additionally, students report enhanced language learning and increased confidence in speaking when working with a partner, highlighting the social and linguistic benefits of collaborative learning experiences.

As highlighted by Brandl (2020), role-plays involve assigning students distinct roles for improvisational language exchanges, enabling them to engage in meaningful interactions within a structured context. By immersing students in role-play scenarios, CLT aims to replicate authentic communication situations where language learners must actively negotiate meaning and express themselves effectively. Role-plays provide students with opportunities to practice language in context, enhancing their fluency, vocabulary acquisition, and communication skills.

Comparing these findings to existing research, it is evident that the principles of CLT align closely with the reported benefits of integrating real-life situations and materials in language learning activities. Studies have consistently demonstrated the effectiveness of CLT in developing speaking skills and promoting meaningful language use (Abdelmageed & Omer, 2020). The thematic

analysis of participants' responses provides further support for the value of CLT principles in enhancing speaking time among A1-level students.

The seventh principle outlined by Brandl (2020) underscores the importance of error-corrective feedback in language learning within the framework of Communicative Language Teaching. This principle aligns with the findings of the study, which indicate that feedback from a partner consistently improves English-speaking proficiency among A1-level students. By providing timely and constructive feedback, students can identify areas for improvement, clarify misunderstandings, and refine their language skills.

Overall, the findings of this study contribute to our understanding of the perceptions and experiences of students regarding CLT principles in language learning. By emphasizing the importance of real-life contexts and collaborative learning experiences, CLT offers a promising approach to enhancing speaking time and promoting language proficiency among A1-level students.





## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The research findings highlight the significance of integrating the principles of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) to improve speaking time among A1-level students, providing valuable insights into students' perceptions and experiences. The thematic analysis reveals a positive attitude toward CLT activities, particularly those involving real-life situations and materials. Students express a strong sense of engagement and relevance when learning in authentic contexts, emphasizing the meaningfulness and enjoyment derived from such activities. This aligns with the pedagogical principles of CLT, which prioritize contextualized tasks and authentic materials to promote language acquisition. Moreover, students perceive significant progress in their language skills when exposed to real-life materials, indicating the effectiveness of CLT in facilitating language development.

However, some students express reluctance toward real-life situations, preferring alternative activities such as games, highlighting the importance of considering individual preferences to ensure engagement and motivation. Regarding pair work, participants recognize several benefits, including collaboration, idea-sharing, and increased confidence in speaking. This reflects the cooperative learning principle of CLT, which empha-

sizes interaction and cooperation in language learning. Role-plays are also perceived positively, offering opportunities for meaningful language exchanges and the development of fluency and vocabulary. These findings align with previous research demonstrating the effectiveness of CLT in promoting speaking skills and meaningful language use.

Furthermore, the study highlights the importance of error-corrective feedback, consistent with CLT principles, in improving English-speaking proficiency among A1-level students. Overall, the research contributes to our understanding of CLT's role in enhancing speaking time and promoting language proficiency, emphasizing the value of real-life contexts and collaborative learning experiences in language education.

Based on the findings presented in the study, several recommendations are proposed to enhance the effectiveness of Communicative Language Teaching principles in improving students' speaking time at the A1 level, such as diversifying real-life situations and materials, focusing activities on individual needs, promoting collaborative learning, and providing timely feedback. These recommendations aim to create a dynamic learning environment that maximizes student engagement.





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# ANNEX



## Annex 1: Pre-test

### PRE-TEST

**Objective:** To assess students' English language proficiency across various skills, including oral expression, and determine the proficiency level of 5th-grade students from the evening shift of a public school in Quito in the school year 2024-2025, specifically focusing on the A1 level, before implementing Communicative Language Teaching principles to improve students' speaking time.

**Instructions:** Answer the questions and follow the instructions provided in each section.

**Teacher:** Campoverde Cristina





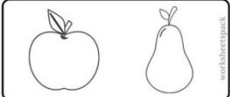
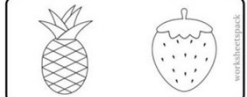



**Class:** 5th grade

EVALUATION	PRETEST		
<b>Student:</b>			
<b>Teacher:</b>	Lic. Cristina Campoverde	<b>Class:</b>	5th
<b>Subject</b>	English	<b>Section:</b>	Evening
<b>Level:</b>	Media	<b>Date:</b>	

INDICATORS EVALUATIONS:	QUANTITATIVE NOTE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learners can record and identify key information from a spoken message of immediate need or interest. (I.2, I.3) (REF I.EFL.3.7.1.)</li> <li>I.EFL.3.11.1. Learners can understand most details in a short simple online or print text and can follow short instructions. (I.3, I.4)</li> <li>Learners can write short simple paragraphs to describe people, places, animals, things and feelings, with limited support. (I.3, S.1) (REF I.EFL.3.17.1.)</li> <li>Learners can match, label and answer simple questions about basic details in a short simple cross-curricular text. (I.2, S.1)( REF I.EFL.3.12.1)</li> <li>Learners can describe simple, familiar situations and talk about experiences. REF I.EFL.3.9.1.(I.3, J.3)</li> </ul>	





<p><b>1. Look at the pictures and answer the questions. 2p.</b></p>	<p><b>1 Mark</b></p>
<p>1. How are you today?  .....</p> <p>2. How are you today?  .....</p> <p>3. How are you today?  .....</p> <p>4. How are you today?  .....</p>	
<p><b>2. Color the correct figures. 2p</b></p>	
<p>apple  pineapple </p> <p>banana  orange </p>	
<p><b>3. Match the pictures with the correct action verb. 9p.</b></p>	
<p>Match</p> 	



<p><b>4.</b> Match the pictures with the correct action verb. 9p.</p>	
<p>Example: You ride a bike.</p> <p>1. ....</p> <p>2. ....</p> <p>3. ....</p> <p>4. ....</p>	
<p><b>5.</b> Please introduce yourself. Tell your name, age, and something interesting about yourself. You can also share your favorite hobby or activity. You have to read your information. Rubric 4p.</p>	
<p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>	
<p><b>6.</b> Tell us about your typical day. Describe your activities during school hours and after school. Answer the questions. 5p</p>	
<p>What time do you wake up? .....</p> <p>What do you do in the morning before school? .....</p> <p>Do you have any responsibilities at home after school? .....</p> <p>How do you usually spend your weekends? .....</p> <p>Is there anything special you do on weekdays that differs from weekends? .....</p>	





<p><b>7.</b> Fill in the blanks with the correct form of the verb. Present simple. 7p.</p>	
<p>She _____ (to read) a book every evening. I _____ (to like) to play tennis on weekends. They _____ (to walk) to school together every day. He _____ (to speak) three languages fluently. We _____ (to eat) dinner at 7 PM every night. The sun _____ (to rise) in the east. My sister _____ (to listen) to music in her room right now.</p>	

Elaborated by: Campoverde, Cristina (2024)



**Annex 2:**

**EVALUATION RUBRIC**

**Objective:** The objective of this rubric is to assess the performance in question 5 of the pretest of 5th-grade students from the evening shift of a public school in Quito during the school year 2024-2025, specifically focusing on their oral expression skills in English. This assessment will be conducted prior to the implementation of Communicative Language Teaching principles.

**Instructions:** Evaluate each student’s response according to the criteria provided in the rubric.

**Teacher:** Campoverde Cristina

**Class:** 5th grade

**Date:** .....

EVALUATION		RUBRIC:			
CRITERIA	EXCELLENT 4	VERY GOOD 3	ACCEPT- ABLE 2	INSUFFI- CIENT 1	SCORE
Oral Fluency	Able to articulate ideas clearly and fluently with natural flow.	Mostly clear and fluent expression with occasional pauses or hesitations.	Some clarity with noticeable hesitations and lack of fluency.	Difficulty in articulating ideas; significant pauses and lack of fluency.	



Vocabulary	Demonstrates a wide range of vocabulary accurately and appropriately used to convey precise meanings.	Shows a good variety of vocabulary with minor inaccuracies in usage.	Uses a sufficient range of vocabulary with occasional inaccuracies or limited variety.	Limited vocabulary range with frequent inaccuracies, hindering effective communication.	
Grammar and Language	Demonstrates mastery of grammar, spelling, and uses language appropriately.	Mostly correct grammar, spelling, and appropriate language use with occasional errors.	Adequate grammar and language use with noticeable errors in grammar, spelling, or language use.	Numerous errors in grammar, spelling, or language usage that impede comprehension.	
Structure	Response is well-structured, coherent, and easy to follow.	Generally well-organized with coherent structure.	Some organization, but may lack coherence or clarity in structure.	Lack of clear structure; difficulty in following the response.	

Elaborated by: Campoverde, Cristina (2024)





**Annex 3:**

**SURVEY**

**Objective:** To gather insights from students regarding their perceptions and experiences related to speaking skills and Communicative Language Teaching principles in the context of improving students' talking time at the A1 level.

**Instructions:** Please respond to each statement by selecting the option that best reflects your experience and opinion. Additionally, we kindly ask you to answer the open-ended questions at the end of the survey honestly, providing detailed thoughts and comments. The estimated time for completing the survey is 15-20 minutes. Your participation is voluntary, and your responses will be anonymous.

**Teacher:** Campoverde Cristina

**Class:** 5th grade

**Date:** .....

<b>SURVEY</b>
Select your age range: a. 8-9 b. 10-11 c. 11-12
Select your gender: a. Male b. Female
Statements about Speaking skills and Communicative Language Teaching:





**1.** Working with a partner significantly enhances English speaking skills.

- a. Always
- b. Often
- c. Sometimes
- d. Rarely
- e. Never

**2.** Feedback from a partner consistently improves English speaking proficiency.

- a. Always
- b. Often
- c. Sometimes
- d. Rarely
- e. Never

**3.** Engaging in Communicative Language Teaching role-play reliably leads to improved speaking abilities.

- a. Always
- b. Often
- c. Sometimes
- d. Rarely
- e. Never

**4.** Role-play interaction activities consistently expand English vocabulary.

- a. Always
- b. Often
- c. Sometimes
- d. Rarely
- e. Never





**5.** Using real-life situations and materials consistently makes language learning more relevant and engaging.

- a. Always
- b. Often
- c. Sometimes
- d. Rarely
- e. Never

**6.** Pair work significantly impacts collaboration on language-related problem-solving tasks.

- a. Always
- b. Often
- c. Sometimes
- d. Rarely
- e. Never

**7.** Problem-solving activities reliably contribute to enhancements in critical thinking skills.

- a. Always
- b. Often
- c. Sometimes
- d. Rarely
- e. Never

**8.** Pair work activities frequently encourage initiative and responsibility for language learning.

- a. Always
- b. Often
- c. Sometimes
- d. Rarely
- e. Never





**9.** Encouragement to communicate despite mistakes often enhances language expression.

- a. Always
- b. Often
- c. Sometimes
- d. Rarely
- e. Never

**10.** Cultural activities often improve understanding of language usage in diverse contexts.

- a. Always
- b. Often
- c. Sometimes
- d. Rarely
- e. Never

Open-ended Questions:

**11.** Express your feelings about using real-life situations and materials in our language learning activities and whether you think these activities make learning the language more relevant and engaging for you.

**12.** Share your reasons for any reluctance or dislike toward using real-life situations when we work in class.

**13.** Describe how pair work positively contributes to your language learning experience and how it enhances your skills and understanding.

Elaborated by: Campoverde, Cristina (2024)





**Annex 4:** Post test

**POST-TEST**

**Objective:** To evaluate students’ progress in their English oral expression skills after the implementation of Communicative Language Teaching principles, specifically focusing on improving students’ speaking time at the A1 level. Additionally, determine if there have been significant improvements in students’ language proficiency compared to the pre-test conducted before the implementation of communicative teaching principles.

**Instructions:** Answer the questions and follow the instructions provided in each section.

**Teacher:** Campoverde Cristina

**Class:** 5th grade

	<b>QUALITATIVE NOTE</b>
<p><b>INDICATORS EVALUATIONS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learners can record and identify key information from a spoken message of immediate need or interest. (I.2, I.3) (REF I.EFL.3.7.1.)</li> <li>• I.EFL.3.11.1. Learners can understand most details in a short simple online or print text and can follow short instructions. (I.3, I.4)</li> <li>• Learners can write short simple paragraphs to describe people, places, animals, things and feelings, with limited support. (I.3, S.1)(REF I.EFL.3.17.1.)</li> <li>• Learners can match, label and answer simple questions about basic details in a short simple cross-curricular text. (I.2, S.1)( REF I.EFL.3.12.1)</li> <li>• Learners can describe simple, familiar situations and talk about experiences. REF I.EFL.3.9.1.(I.3, J.3)</li> </ul>	







1. Look at the pictures and answer the questions. 4p.

How are you doing today?

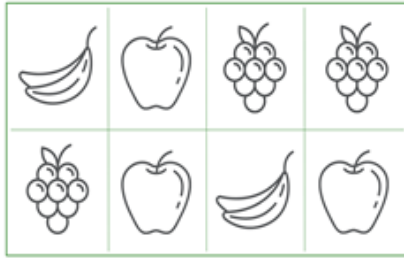
How are you doing today?

How are you doing today?

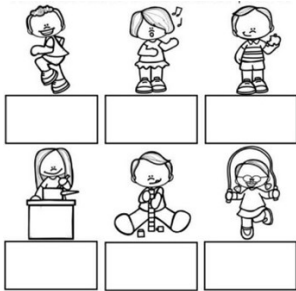
How are you doing today?



2. Color the bananas yellow, the apples green and the grapes purple. 3p.



3. Match the verbs to the correct picture. 6p.



play      cook      skip  
 run      sing      eat





<p><b>4.</b> Look at the pictures above, choose 4 action verbs and make a sentence. 1p.</p>	
<p>Example: She cooks a delicious food.</p> <p>1. ....</p> <p>2. ....</p> <p>3. ....</p> <p>4. ....</p>	
<p><b>5.</b> Share your name, how old you are, and something fun about you. Also, feel free to talk about your favorite hobby or activity. Please read the information that you write. Rubric 4p.</p>	
<p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>	
<p><b>6.</b> Look at the picture provided. Answer the questions. 5p.</p>	
<div data-bbox="255 842 624 1102" data-label="Image"> </div> <p>a) Where are the children? .....</p> <p>b) What are they doing? .....</p> <p>c) How many students are there? .....</p> <p>d) Which animal is on the board? .....</p> <p>e) What is the teacher wearing? .....</p>	



<b>7.</b> Fill in the blanks with the correct form of the verb. Present simple. 7p.	
a) They ..... (to go) to the beach. b) She ..... (to go) to the store. c) I ..... (to write) a letter. d) He .....(to play) soccer every Saturday. e) I .....(to eat) breakfast every morning. f) She .....(to work) at a hospital. g) They .....(to play) soccer on weekends.	

Elaborated by: Campoverde, Cristina (2024)

