




# Uso del Enfoque Comunicativo para Mejorar las Habilidades Orales en Estudiantes de Nivel A2

## Using Communicative Language Teaching to Improve Oral Skills in A2 Level Students

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### RESUMEN

Este estudio explora cómo la Enseñanza Comunicativa de Lenguas (CLT) mejora las habilidades orales entre los estudiantes de inglés de nivel A2, quienes enfrentan dificultades debido a la falta de práctica en contextos reales. Mediante un enfoque mixto (pruebas iniciales, pruebas finales y cuestionario) el estudio se realizó con 27 estudiantes de segundo año de Bachillerato en Cuenca, Ecuador. Los resultados indican que actividades basadas en CLT, como dramatizaciones y discusiones en grupo, fortalecen la confianza, la fluidez y la precisión gramatical al hablar. La investigación destaca la importancia de métodos interactivos y no tradicionales para fomentar la comunicación oral en el nivel A2, sugiriendo que CLT es una estrategia eficaz para potenciar la competencia lingüística en el aula.

**Palabras clave:** CLT, habilidades orales, estudiantes A2, métodos de enseñanza

### ABSTRACT

This article demonstrates how Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) helps to improve oral skills in A2 level English learners. This students most of the time struggle with oral communication since there is a lack of real-life speaking practice. In this study, a mixed methods approach was used (pre-test, post-tests and questionnaires). 27 second year of Baccalaureate students in Cuenca, Ecuador participated in this study to show that CLT activities can boost speaking confidence, fluency and grammar accuracy. This study highlights the importance of using non-traditional teaching to develop oral communication skills at A2 level, suggesting CLT is an effective approach for enhancing both engagement and language proficiency in classroom settings.

**Keywords:** CLT, oral skills, A2 students, teaching methods



## INTRODUCTION

The ability to communicate successfully in a foreign language is the main objective of language instruction. One of the most important and difficult abilities for students to master when learning English as a foreign language (EFL) is oral communication. They are an essential component of language learning since they are necessary for communicating with people in social, intellectual, and professional contexts. However, because English is not commonly spoken outside of the classroom, many students in non-English speaking nations find it difficult to express themselves clearly, communicate coherently, and have impromptu conversations. In response to these challenges, the independent variable in this study, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), has become well-known as an effective technique for improving oral competence. Contextualized language use, purposeful engagement, and practical communication exercises are all highly valued in CLT, which prioritizes student engagement and fluency over exactitude. According to Hasan et al. (2021), CLT allows students to connect meaningfully, which encourages the use of natural language. As mentioned by Ahmed and Pawar (2022), communicative tasks also help students feel less nervous and increase their confidence when speaking. Jabeen and Kazemian (2021) highlight how CLT motivates students to actively participate by integrating relevant, problem-based projects, while Nguyen (2023) observes that the approach helps close the gap between classroom instruction and real-world language application. Consistent with Solís (2021), CLT emphasizes the development of communicative competence through meaningful language usage in real-world contexts, rather than teaching grammar separately. The underlying premise of this method is that children may learn a language more effectively if they actively utilize it to solve problems, express their viewpoints, and negotiate meaning in authentic situations. In this study, the CLT method is operationalized through instructional strategies and activities that engage students, promote authentic language use, and support learner-centered practices. During English classes, they use role-plays, interviews, pair work, small group discussions, and task-based speaking exercises to simulate genuine conversation and encourage active participation.

On the other hand, the dependent variable, oral skills, characterizes the ability to speak English appropriately, fluently, and correctly in interactive contexts. This includes subskills such as the use of vocabulary, correct grammar, pronunciation, and interactive methods. Oral skills are crucial for learner confidence and communicative competence, claim Derwing and Munro (2021). This variable includes fluency, pronunciation, grammatical accuracy, vocabulary variety, and engagement. Numerous recent studies support the importance of these components. For example, Bui and Nguyen (2022) emphasize that being able to speak clearly is facilitated by having good grammar. Cerezo-Moreno and Fernández-Corbacho (2020) assert that interaction enhances students' capacity for response and delegation. Derwing and Munro (2021) stress pronunciation and clarity, while Sharma and Chandra (2021) link vocabulary depth to fluency and ease of expression. Conceptually, oral skills as Derwing and Munro (2021) emphasize, oral skills contribute significantly to learner confidence and fluency, especially when students feel understood by others, which enhances their willingness to engage in further communication. Operationally, in this study, oral skills are evaluated as observable speaking performance during class activities and formal assessments. This includes observable public speaking in class activities or assessments, considering fluency, accuracy, and intelligibility.

That is why this study aims to explore the effectiveness of the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach in enhancing oral communication skills among A2-level English language learners by employing a mixed-methods approach. Based on the general objective, specifically seeks to assess the impact of this approach on A2 students' fluency, pronunciation, and interactional competence by using a Pre-test and a post-test. It also aims to use interactive and communication-based activities to improve their speaking skills, gathered through a questionnaire. These objectives form the foundation for answering the research questions.

This article explores the use of a communicative approach to language teaching in improving the oral communication skills of A2-level students in the second Baccalaureate. It aims to examine the challenges these students face when speaking a second language and how a method focused on real-life interaction can help address those difficulties. The study also looks into how this interactive method can

increase learners' motivation and confidence, two crucial elements in lowering speaking anxiety and promoting long-term language development.

This study was carried out in a Cuenca, Ecuadorian high school. This private high school is situated in a rural Ricaurte neighborhood on the intersection of Cordillera del Cóndor and Abdón Calderón streets. Students from low-income families and those with more stable financial situations made up the population, which was selected because of its varied socio-economic backgrounds. They are a special group for researching instructional design and language learning strategies because they all want to study abroad. Lastly, ethical guidelines were strictly adhered to in order to protect the rights, privacy, and welfare of research participants. Informed consent, confidentiality, voluntary involvement, and reducing potential harm are the main ethical factors. Anonymization is used to safeguard participants' privacy, guaranteeing that the final report does not contain students' names or other identifying information. Pupils are guaranteed that participation is completely voluntary and that they will not be penalized academically if they decide to stop at any time. By putting these ethical safeguards in place, the study upholds high ethical standards while honoring each participant's rights, privacy, and dignity.

## METHODOLOGY

The research design, participants, instruments, procedures, and analysis methods utilized to examine the effect of the CLT approach on A2-level students' oral skills are all covered in this section. In order to collect both quantitative and qualitative information about the performance and perceptions of learners, a mixed-methods approach was selected. The methodology was thoughtfully designed to address the particular goals and research questions that served as the study's guide while guaranteeing validity, reliability, and ethical compliance.

By using objective pre-tests and post-tests, the study used the quantitative method to measure improvements in students' oral skills, specifically in pronunciation and grammatical accuracy. This method produced numerical data that showed how the students' speaking skills changed throughout the research project. Conversely, the qualitative approach investigated how people perceive and learn in a classroom setting that emphasizes real-world communication. This section

of the study used open-ended feedback and classroom observations to look at the motivational elements of language learning. The research offers a more thorough understanding of the learning process by fusing quantifiable outcomes with firsthand knowledge.

The majority of the research was explanatory and descriptive. Students' baseline oral competency for the descriptive component was assessed using a placement exam. The findings showed common problems, such as incorrect tense usage, limited vocabulary, and poor pronunciation. In light of these results, the study put into practice a number of meaningful interaction-focused activities, including interactive role-plays, group discussions, and digital content like songs and TikTok videos.

The exercises were designed to increase student participation and support the use of suitable language. The explanatory component aimed to assess the effectiveness of these interventions through post-tests and classroom observations. It attempted to elucidate how and to what degree the communicative approach enhanced students' confidence and fluency. This setting enabled direct observation and interaction with learners during the implementation of interactive activities, particularly role-plays designed to develop speaking skills. This method was essential for comprehending how CLT techniques, including situational role-plays and pair work, operated in a particular classroom environment. Therefore, field research was the most effective method for generating perceptive results and practical suggestions for language instructors.

Because it sought to determine how well CLT-oriented role-play exercises improved students' speaking abilities, the study was also experimental. To assess students' development in domains including fluency, pronunciation, and grammatical accuracy, the research design compared their performance before and after the intervention using pre-tests and post-tests, even though no control group was utilized. In addition to test results, qualitative data from student answers provide further insight into the impact of communicative actions on learner engagement and confidence. The study made a connection between theory and classroom practice by connecting experimental, role-playing exercises to gains in speech competency. In the end, it offered insightful suggestions for communicative methods in English language instruction.

Data was gathered using a few tools. Students first completed a placement exam (Annex 1). Prior to the intervention, the placement exam was meant to assess the student's level of English proficiency. A set of multiple-choice questions covering fundamental grammar and vocabulary were part of this diagnostic tool. Each of the 11 possible points was awarded for a correct response on the test, which had an objective scoring system. The results provided crucial details about the students' lexical and grammatical proficiency. Second, students' speaking abilities were evaluated both before and after the intervention using the oral activities pre- and post-test (Annex 2). In order to establish guidelines for fluency, grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and interaction, the pre-test asked participants to describe a daily routine and an event from the previous weekend. The post-test assessed students' ability to effectively communicate, use appropriate language structures, and organize their thoughts by having them recount a personal experience of overcoming a challenge.

Third, opinions of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in enhancing speaking abilities were investigated using a student survey (Annex 3). In order to collect comprehensive feedback, the questionnaire featured open-ended questions, Likert-scale items on classroom experiences with CLT, and background questions.

The population of interest in this High School is 1800 students. However, the sample chosen for this study is 27 students, including seven women and 20 men. The sampling method used in this study is purposive sampling. (Rehman et al, 2023). The criteria we used to select this sample: 1) The students' English level. 2) Ages of students. 3) Students go to the same classroom. 4) Time for students to participate in this study. 5) Parents' permission to participate in this study.

## ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS

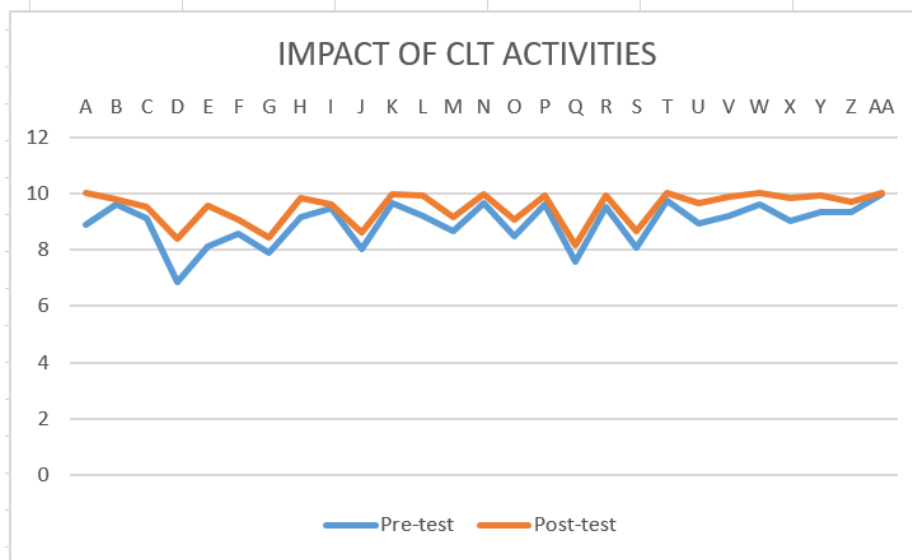
Twenty-seven students participated in this research study. The data was analyzed according to two main categories that enable evaluation of the achievement of the study's goals. First, assessing the impact on A2 students' fluency, pronunciation, and interactional competence by using a Pre-test and a Post-test. Second, exploring the perceptions of students regarding the use of CLT to improve speaking skills through the use of a questionnaire.

### 4.1. Impact on A2 students' fluency, pronunciation, and interactional competence

**Table 1**  
Results of Pre- and Post tests.

Participants	Pre-test	Post-test
A	8.87	10
B	9.61	9.79
C	9.12	9.5
D	6.87	8.38
E	8.12	9.58
F	8.56	9.09
G	7.9	8.43
H	9.14	9.84
I	9.47	9.62
J	8.03	8.63
K	9.65	9.95
L	9.19	9.93
M	8.68	9.16
N	9.64	9.99
O	8.47	9.07
P	9.63	9.93
Q	7.59	8.15
R	9.54	9.92
S	8.08	8.66
T	9.73	10
U	8.95	9.64
V	9.21	9.9
W	9.6	10
X	9.03	9.82
Y	9.32	9.94
Z	9.33	9.7
AA	9.95	10

**Graphic 1**  
**Comparison of Impact of CLT activities.**



The analysis of pre- and post-test scores reveals a consistent improvement in students’ oral proficiency following the implementation of CLT approach. Pre-test scores ranged from 6.87 to 9.95, with a mean of 8.94 (SD = 0.76). The post-test mean was 9.50 (SD = 0.58), with scores ranging from 8.15 to 10. This represents an average improvement of 0.57 points annually, or a performance gain of 6.36%. The standard deviation decreased after the intervention, indicating that students’ performance improved in consistency.

At every level of proficiency, each person made notable progress. Students with lower initial scores, like D (from 6.87 to 8.38) and Q (from 7.59 to 8.15), showed a significant improvement in speaking abilities. Higher achievers like AA (9.95 to 10) and W (9.6 to 10), who also showed upward progress, provided additional proof that CLT helped both advanced and struggling students. According to the study’s findings, students’ speaking abilities steadily improved as a result of this teaching strategy, demonstrating its effectiveness as a teaching strategy. Similar to Nguyen’s (2020) observations that communicative approaches frequently give struggling learners more opportunities to participate and practice in meaningful contexts, the progress was

particularly noticeable in students who initially presented lower scores. This was evident in the current study, as students who had pre-test scores below average demonstrated greater gains than those who were already close to the top of the scale.

Another important aspect is that, according to Rahman (2020), using authentic communicative tasks seems to foster more natural language use. He discovered that this approach pushed students to use grammar and vocabulary in real-world contexts, which is consistent with the group’s trend: despite varying numerical gains, students reported feeling more confident and seemed more involved when speaking. However, the modest increases among high-achieving students are indicative of the “plateau effect,” as defined by Li and Zhu (2020). Their research suggests that because their mistakes are more difficult to correct and less frequent, learners who are already proficient may see less noticeable improvement. Students who scored nearly at the maximum level from the start of the study, such as N or AA, limited the discernible difference in their post-test scores. This subtlety demonstrates that while CLT helps all students, the extent of quantifiable progress varies depending in part on where they are coming from.

Overall, these findings support the claim that teaching language through meaningful, real-world interaction is not only interesting but also successful in improving oral communication abilities at all proficiency levels. The unequal magnitude of the gains, however, indicates that teachers ought to use this strategy in conjunction with other strategies to push more advanced students, maybe by adding increasingly difficult assignments or concentrating on more nuanced facets of discourse and pronunciation.

#### 4.2. Exploring the perceptions of students regarding the use of CLT to improve speaking skills

**Table 2**  
Questionnaire results.

Participant	Q1. My English classes include many opportunities to speak with classmates.	Q2. Pair or group work helps me improve my speaking skills.	Q3. I feel more confident speaking English after doing communicative activities.	Q4. Activities like role-plays, interviews, and discussions are useful for speaking.	Q5. I enjoy speaking tasks more than grammar-focused lessons.	Q6. The speaking activities in class reflect real-life communication.	Q7. My teacher encourages me to speak even if I make mistakes.	Q8. I think CLT activities have improved my fluency.	Q9. I think CLT activities have improved my pronunciation and accuracy.	Q10. I prefer to learn English through communication rather than memorization.
A	4	5	4	5	4	4	5	4	4	5
B	2	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	5
C	4	4	4	3	4	3	4	4	4	3
D	3	3	4	3	4	3	3	4	3	3
E	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5
F	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	4	4
G	5	5	4	5	5	4	5	5	5	5
H	4	4	4	4	5	3	4	4	4	4
I	3	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3
J	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
K	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
L	4	4	5	4	5	4	4	5	4	4

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M	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
N	3	3	4	3	4	3	3	4	3	3
O	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	5
P	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	4	4
Q	4	4	5	4	5	4	5	5	5	4
R	3	3	4	3	4	3	3	3	3	3
S	4	4	4	4	5	4	4	5	4	4
T	5	5	5	4	5	4	5	5	5	5
U	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
V	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
W	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	5
X	4	4	5	4	4	3	4	5	4	4
Y	4	4	4	3	4	3	3	4	4	3
Z	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	5
AA	4	4	4	4	5	4	4	5	4	4

The results show that most students have a positive view of communicative activities in their English classes. A large majority agreed that pair and group work help them improve their speaking skills. They find activities like role-plays, interviews, and discussions both useful and enjoyable.

Students also noted that communicative tasks boost their confidence when speaking English and provide real-life practice. Most participants said their teachers encourage them to speak, even when they make mistakes. This creates a relaxed and motivating atmosphere.

However, some students preferred courses that focused more on grammar. They felt that although their fluency had improved, their accuracy and pronunciation had not. This suggests that while conversational methods effectively boost confidence and fluency, more targeted grammar practice may be helpful. These findings corroborate Littlewood's (2014) claim that communicative methods encourage engagement and practical language use, which boost learners' self-assurance and fluency. Similar to this, Richards (2006) argues that students' enjoyment of role-plays and debates is evidence that communicative teaching promotes meaningful communication, which raises motivation and engagement.

A few pupils did voice concerns regarding grammatical correctness and pronunciation. This backs up Harmer's (2015) assertion that, even though communicative methods increase fluency, they should be counterbalanced with form-focused exercises to guarantee accuracy. In conclusion, students' perspectives support the authors' assertion that while communicative approaches successfully increase fluency and confidence, accuracy still requires more focus to make language learning more comprehensive. Speaking performance could be improved with more pronunciation practice.

## CONCLUSIONS

The findings indicate that the majority of students view communicative activities in their English classes favorably. The vast majority concurred that working in groups and pairs is beneficial. This study demonstrates how well the communicative approach enhances the oral communication abilities of A2 students. The steady increase in post-test scores demonstrates that interactive, authentic speaking exercises promote motivation, fluency, and self-assurance in language acquisition. Students who started out with lower skill levels improved more, indicating that this approach provides worthwhile opportunities for all students to engage and improve their speaking abilities.

The favorable opinions of the students also emphasize how crucial communication techniques are to fostering a vibrant and encouraging learning environment. Discussions, role-plays, and pair and group work encouraged authentic English usage, raised student interest, and reduced speaking anxiety. These outcomes are consistent with research by Rahman et al. (2018) and Nguyen (2023), which emphasizes the benefits of interaction-based instruction for enhancing communication and confidence.

Nonetheless, the study discovered that some students continued to struggle with grammar and pronunciation. This is consistent with the "plateau effect" proposed by Li and Zhu (2020), which states that advanced students may make fewer and more complex mistakes, leading to less progress. As a result, even though the communicative approach is a great way to increase fluency, it should also incorporate targeted practice for pronunciation and accuracy.

In conclusion, communication-based instruction was an engaging and effective teaching strategy for improving oral performance at the A2 level. Combining it with form-focused techniques could lead to a better balance between fluency and language accuracy, supporting long-term growth in proficiency among EFL learners.

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