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The Use of Communicative Methodology for the Development of Speaking Skills in A1 Level Learners

El uso de la metodología comunicativa para el desarrollo de las destrezas orales en estudiantes de nivel A1

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ABSTRACT

Second language learning processes have changed considerably over the years, and CLT is partly a response to these changes. Previous approaches to language learning focused primarily on mastering grammatical competence. This approach integrates communicative tasks such as: dialogues, expositions, interviews, and role-plays, where students have to interact with each other with these activities inside and outside the classroom. This study focuses on exploring the use of communicative methodology for developing speaking skills in A1-level English learners. The purpose of this study is to use the communicative approach to language teaching to improve oral expression skills in 10-year-old students at a private educational institution. This research also aims to analyze how communicative methodologies foster fluency, motivation, and confidence in students. The study seeks to demonstrate that language learning is strengthened through authentic

communication, in which students use English to express real ideas, needs, and opinions, moving away from the rote memorization of vocabulary or isolated grammatical structures.

Keywords: communicative methodology, speaking skills, learning process, motivation, strategies

RESUMEN

Los procesos de aprendizaje del idioma inglés han cambiado considerablemente a lo largo de los años, y CLT es en parte, una respuesta a estos cambios. Los enfoques anteriores para el aprendizaje de idiomas se centraban principalmente en el dominio de la competencia gramatical. Este enfoque integra tareas comunicativas como diálogos, entrevistas y juegos de rol, donde los estudiantes deben interactuar entre sí mediante estas actividades dentro y fuera del aula. Este estudio se centra en explorar el uso de la metodología comunicativa para el desarrollo de la expresión oral en estudiantes de inglés de nivel A1. Esta investigación tiene como objetivo aplicar el enfoque de la Enseñanza Comunicativa de Lenguas para desarrollar la expresión oral en estudiantes de 10 años de edad pertenecientes a una institución de educación primaria privada. Además, este estudio busca identificar cómo las metodologías comunicativas promueven la fluidez, la motivación y la confianza en los estudiantes. La investigación pretende demostrar que el idioma se aprende mejor a través de una comunicación significativa, en la cual los estudiantes utilizan el inglés para expresar ideas, necesidades y opiniones reales, en lugar de hacerlo mediante la repetición mecánica de palabras o estructuras gramaticales aisladas.

Palabras claves: metodología comunicativa, habilidades de expresión oral, proceso de aprendizaje, motivación, estrategias

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INTRODUCTION

The communicative methodology, also known as Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), is considered a method that focuses on learning English in a real-life situation. In recent years, communicative methodologies have transformed the way students communicate, learn, and improve their speaking abilities to interact with others. According to Purba and Zaki (2021) in CLT diverse number of communicative activities allow learners to achieve oral communicative language learning competencies, such as information gap activities, group discussions, and debates. Those activities are essential to continually develop and expose students to the target language.

On the other hand, oral expression skills include fluency, accuracy, vocabulary, and pronunciation, all of which promote authentic communication. Heras and Camino (2022) explained that fluency is the ability to speak with few grammatical errors and express ideas without hesitation, while accuracy refers to the correct use of grammar and pronunciation when speaking. According to Roeder et al. (2020) fluency is the primary goal and accuracy is secondary. By focusing on important communication instead of isolated grammar skills, this method stimulates learners to engage in conversations, enhancing their confidence.

While the right communicative methodologies have relevant results on students' learning, concerns have been raised about the inefficiency of the correct methodology used in the communicative skills learning process on students, since students don't receive the right motivation to improve their speaking skills. Alharbi (2021) argued that most EFL learners are unable to use English for communicative purposes. Even if the policies and curricula support the adoption of CLT, there are many factors that could contribute to the failure of CLT adaptation in EFL classrooms. Learners often struggle with oral expression because of a lack of confidence and engaging in speaking activities.

Traditional teaching practices still dominate, despite the emphasis on communicative competence in modern curricula, which limits students' ability to participate effectively in real-life conversations. Therefore, a reevaluation of classroom methodology is necessary. According to Dos Santos (2020) although many teachers attempt to employ the CLT approach in their classroom environments as much as possible, they still do not fully understand how to apply and manage the approach effectively for their students. This is because CLT involves different classroom activities. For this reason, the main objective of this article was to explore how the communicative methodology used for English teachers can effectively improve the development of speaking skills in A1 level learners, highlighting its strategies and potential advantages in early language acquisition.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study adopted a quantitative research paradigm, as it aims to explore and understand how the communicative methodology impacts A1 learners' speaking skills development. Quantitative research allows for statistical analysis of learners' speaking skills, classroom interaction, and instructional practices.

Techniques for Data Collection

To collect meaningful and relevant data, the following technique was used: a survey. This tool was used to collect quantitative data from students' answers, based on their attitudes, confidence, and thoughts about communicative activities in English class.

Population, Sample, and Sampling Technique

The population of this study consisted of A1-level students of English as a foreign language (EFL) who were studying at a private educational institution. These learners are 10 years old and are in the initial stages of language acquisition according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

The sample consisted of 10 A1-level learners from a single intact class. The group was chosen considering their availability and willingness to participate in the application based on the Communicative Approach to Language Teaching (CLT). The teacher of the selected class was also involved as both facilitator and participant in the study.

Purposive sampling was employed to ensure that the selected group meets the study's criteria, particularly in relation to their level (A1) and access to or openness toward communicative methodology. This non-random sampling technique allows the researcher to select a context in which the intervention can be meaningfully observed and evaluated.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data: It was collected through a structured survey using Likert-scale questions. According to South et al. (2022) Likert scales are often used to produce quantitative estimates of subjective attributes. The survey measured students' attitudes, confidence, and perceived improvement in speaking skills. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics to summarize students' responses and determine whether the communicative methodology had a significant effect on the development of speaking skills. This approach allowed the research to provide measurable evidence of the effectiveness of communicative activities in improving oral competence in A1-level learners.

This research aimed to examine the implementation of the communicative methodology as a means of enhancing oral expression in A1 level students, who were distinguished by their ability to use simple phrases and sentences to communicate basic needs. The study primarily focused on specific communicative strategies, such as task-based learning, role-playing, pair and

group work, and dialogues contextualized in real-life situations, which contribute to the development of fluency, confidence, and active participation in the oral use of English.

Type of Research

This research adopted a quantitative approach to analyze the use of communicative methodology in developing speaking skills among A1-level English learners. The study was conducted from a practical perspective to provide measurable evidence of how specific communicative strategies impact students' oral performance in a real classroom context.

Ethical Considerations

This study was conducted following ethical research principles. The participants were minors; for that reason, the data collection was obtained with the company of the students' parents or legal guardians. The participation of the students was voluntary, and confidentiality was guaranteed; no personal identifying information was collected. The data were used exclusively for academic purposes. Authorization was also obtained from the educational institution to conduct the research.

RESULTS

This section presented a summary of survey results regarding on student's view and experiences related to speaking skills and Communicative methodology at the A1 level learners, with the purpose of developing the speaking abilities. The results showed that they felt very motivated to speak in English through activities by their teacher.

Table 1

Student Perception of Interactive Activities on Speaking Skills

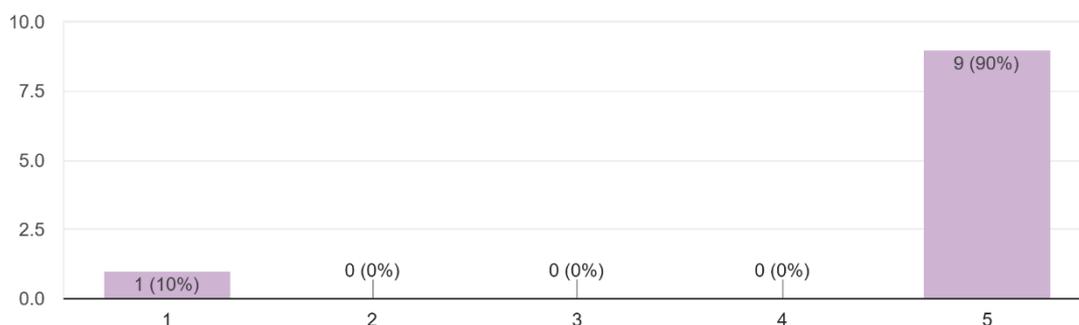
Response Category	Scale Rating	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	5	9	90%
Agree	4	0	0%
Neutral	3	0	0%
Disagree	2	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	1	1	10%
Total		10	100%

Source: Own elaboration based on collected data.

The survey data highlighted a significant positive perception among A1 level learners that the use of interactive activities, such as roleplays, games, or dialogues, positively impacts their speaking abilities.

Figure 1

Distribution of Students Answers



Note. The graph showed the distribution of responses from 10 A1-level English learners regarding the impact of communicative activities on their speaking skills.

Source: Own elaboration.

Table 2

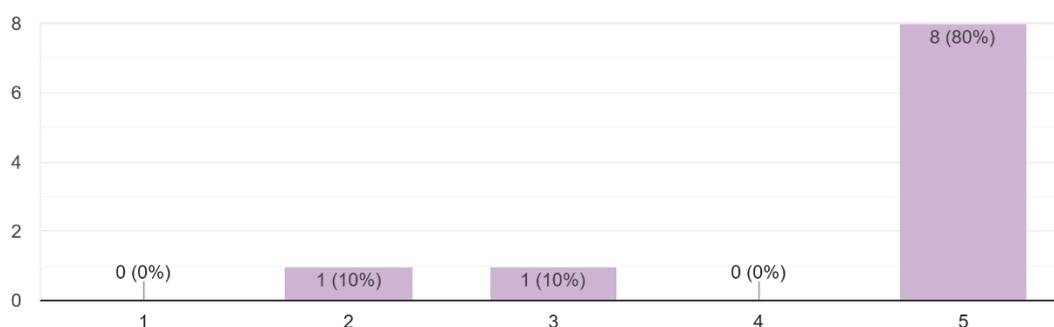
Student Perception of Motivation by their teacher on Speaking Activities

Response Category	Scale Rating	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	5	8	80%
Agree	4	0	0%
Neutral	3	1	10%
Disagree	2	1	10%
Strongly Disagree	1	0	0%
Total		10	100%

Source: Own elaboration based on collected data.

Figure 2

Student Perception of Motivation Results



Note. Survey results show that 80% of students agreed to feel motivated by their teacher to participate in speaking activities.

Source: Own elaboration

Table 3

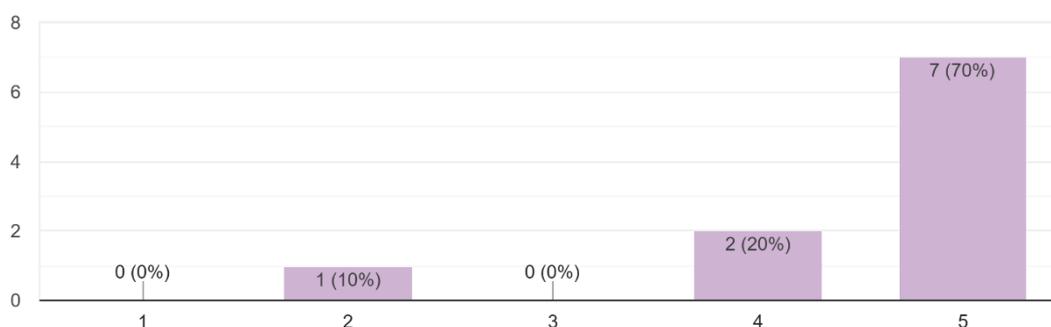
Student Understanding the Use of English in Real Situations through Communicative Activities

Response Category	Scale Rating	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	5	7	70%
Agree	4	2	20%
Neutral	3	0	0%
Disagree	2	1	10%
Strongly Disagree	1	0	0%
Total		10	100%

Source: Own elaboration based on collected data

Figure 3

Student survey results of Communicative Activities



Note. 70% of students show how the communicative activities help them to use English in real situations.

Source: Own elaboration based on collected data.

DISCUSSION

The results of this study indicated a high level of students' approval in respect of the use of communicative methodology to improve their speaking skills. According to Table 1, 90% of the A1 level learners "Strongly Agree" that communicative methodologies, such as games, role plays, and dialogues, positively impact their ability to speak English.

According to Ramos (2023) the role-play technique, where groups of students assume given roles and negotiate meaning to solve a particular problem or situation, resembles how language is used in real life to communicate. This shows that for beginner-level students, interactive activities are not only supplementary but are perceived as essential tools of linguistic development.

The high frequency of "Strongly Agree" responses highlight a very strong relationship between communicative teaching methods and learner motivation. According to the previous results, students feel more motivated when engaging in English through activities, such as roleplays or games, rather than traditional, passive learning methods.

CONCLUSIONS

The communicative language teaching method (CLT) has proven to be an effective method for promoting oral proficiency at the A1 level. Its application strengthens confidence, fluency, and motivation, emphasizing the importance of adopting learner-centered methods in the initial stages of language teaching to optimize speaking competence. The application of CLT has a positive effect on the development of oral skills in English language learners at the A1 level. According to the results of this research, students consider communicative activities to be effective tools for improving their oral expression, particularly in terms of participation and confidence when using the target language.

The quantitative approach provided measurable evidence of the effectiveness of communicative activities in improving oral competence in A1-level learners. In addition, a survey was used; this technique allowed the researcher to select a context in which the intervention can be meaningfully observed and evaluated. Based on the positive results obtained, this research study could contribute to future teaching practices in Ecuador, shifting focus from traditional teaching methodologies to active and real-life tasks, fostering learner autonomy, and taking ownership of their learning process.

The findings of the survey also demonstrated that interactive tasks such as games, role plays, and dialogues create a supportive learning environment that significantly increases students' motivation and encourages students to actively use English, reducing hesitation and anxiety commonly observed at beginner levels. To sum up, the research revealed that promoting authentic communication where students were able to relate classroom activities to meaningful contexts supports the development of functional language and helps learners understand and apply English in real-life situations rather than rote memorization of isolated grammatical structures.

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