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عنوان المذكرة : Exploring the Effectiveness of Communicative


Language Teaching in Enhancing EFL

Learner's Speaking Proficiency The Case of
First year Students at Akli Mohand Oulhadj
Bouira university.

: Didactics and Applied Linguistics

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**Exploring The Effectiveness of Communicative Language
Teaching in Enhancing EFL Learner's Speaking Proficiency
The Case of First Year EFL Students at Akli Mouhand Oulhadj Bouira University**

A Thesis Submitted to the Department of English Language and Literature - University of Bouira –
in Partial Fulfillment for the Requirement of Master's Degree in
Didactics and Applied Languages

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Dedication

"Man Proposes, God Disposes"

*To my beloved mother and father,
whose endless love and support have shaped the person I am today.*

*To my dear supervisor,
for the invaluable guidance, patience, and encouragement throughout this
journey.*

*To my wonderful sisters,
for always being there with love, laughter, and strength.
To my precious daughter, You are the greatest gift I have yet to receive, and
the love of my life. I hope to meet you in health and happiness.*

*And to my loving husband,
for his unwavering support, understanding, and belief in me every step of the
way.*

Thank you all from the depths of my heart

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Abstract

Speaking fluently and effectively is a primary goal in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instruction and a key marker of communicative competence. Despite its importance, speaking remains one of the most challenging skills for learners, largely due to traditional teaching methods that restrict meaningful interaction. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), which prioritizes authentic communication, learner-centeredness, and interaction, presents a promising alternative. This study explores the effectiveness of CLT in enhancing the speaking proficiency of first-year EFL students at Bouira University. It seeks to answer three main research questions: (1) Does CLT improve students' speaking skills and motivation? (2) What challenges do learners face when applying CLT techniques? (3) How do students perceive traditional methods compared to CLT in improving their speaking proficiency? Two hypotheses guided this research: that CLT improves speaking skills more effectively than traditional methods, and that student engagement in communicative activities enhances speaking development. A mixed-methods approach was employed, using a student questionnaire and semi-structured teacher interviews. The questionnaire gathered both quantitative and qualitative data on students' confidence, participation, and classroom experiences, while the interviews offered in-depth perspectives from teachers on the implementation and challenges of CLT. Findings reveal that CLT positively influences students' speaking abilities by increasing motivation, participation, and fluency. However, its full implementation is hindered by obstacles such as large class sizes, time limitations, and insufficient teacher training. The study recommends further research in diverse educational contexts and calls for greater institutional support in training teachers and providing resources to enable more effective communicative language teaching.

Key words: Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), speaking skills, EFL learners, motivation, student engagement

الملخص

يُعدّ التحدث بطلاقة وفعالية هدفاً رئيسياً في تعليم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية ومؤشراً أساسياً للكفاءة التواصلية. وعلى الرغم من أهميته، يظل التحدث من أكثر المهارات صعوبة بالنسبة للمتعلمين، ويرجع ذلك غالباً إلى أساليب التدريس التقليدية التي تحدّ من التفاعل الحقيقي. ويُعدّ التدريس التواصلي (CLT) ، الذي يركز على التواصل الأصيل وتمركز المتعلم والتفاعل داخل القسم، بديلاً واعداً. تستكشف هذه الدراسة فعالية التدريس التواصلي في تحسين مهارات التحدث لدى طلاب السنة الأولى بقسم اللغة الإنجليزية في جامعة البويرة. وتهدف للإجابة عن ثلاثة أسئلة رئيسية: (1) هل يُحسّن التدريس التواصلي مهارات التحدث لدى الطلاب ويزيد من دافعيّتهم؟ (2) ما التحديات التي يواجهها المتعلمون عند تطبيق تقنيات التدريس التواصلي؟ (3) كيف ينظر الطلاب إلى الطرق التقليدية مقارنة بالتدريس التواصلي في تحسين مهارات التحدث؟ وقد استندت الدراسة إلى فرضيتين: أن التدريس التواصلي يحسّن مهارات التحدث بشكل أكثر فعالية من الطرق التقليدية، وأن مشاركة الطلاب في الأنشطة التواصلية تُسهم في تطوير مهاراتهم الشفوية. تم اعتماد منهج مختلط، يشمل استبياناً موجهاً للطلاب ومقابلات شبه مهيكلة مع الأساتذة. جمع الاستبيان بيانات كمية ونوعية حول ثقة الطلاب بأنفسهم ومشاركتهم وتجاربهم داخل القسم، في حين قدّمت المقابلات رؤى معمقة من الأساتذة حول تطبيق التدريس التواصلي والتحديات المرتبطة به. كشفت النتائج أن التدريس التواصلي يؤثر بشكل إيجابي على قدرات الطلاب في التحدث من خلال تعزيز دافعيّتهم وتفاعلهم وطلاقتهم.

ومع ذلك، فإن تطبيقه الكامل يواجه عدة عقبات، مثل الاكتظاظ في الأقسام، وضيق الوقت، ونقص تكوين الأساتذة. توصي الدراسة بإجراء أبحاث إضافية في سياقات تعليمية متنوعة، وتوفير دعم مؤسسي أكبر لتكوين الأساتذة وتوفير الموارد اللازمة لتعزيز التدريس التواصلي الفعّال.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التدريس التواصلي ، مهارات التحدث ، متعلمو اللغة الانجليزية كلغة أجنبية، التحفيز ، تفاعل الطلاب.

List of Abbreviations

CLT	Communicative Language Teaching
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
GTM	Grammar Translation Method
ALM	Audio-Lingual Method
CBI	Content-Based Instruction
TBI	Task-Based Instruction
ESP	English for Specific Purposes
LMD	Licence, Master, Doctorate (Algerian higher education system)
TEFL	Teaching English as a Foreign Language

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General Introduction

General Introduction

General Introduction

In an increasingly globalized world, effective communication skills have become essential for academic, professional, and social success. As the most widely spoken international language, English functions as a primary medium of communication for millions of non-native speakers worldwide (Crystal, 2003, p. 3). Recognizing the importance of English proficiency, many countries including Algeria have incorporated English language instruction into their educational systems to equip students with the skills necessary for meaningful global engagement.

The growing demand for communicative competence has introduced new challenges in foreign language instruction, as traditional teaching methods often fall short in preparing learners for authentic, real-world interactions. Among the four language skills, speaking is particularly critical, as it empowers students to engage confidently in diverse academic and professional environments beyond the classroom. In this context, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) has emerged as a prominent instructional approach, praised for its emphasis on real-life communication, learner autonomy, and active classroom interaction. However, the effectiveness of CLT in improving speaking proficiency remains a subject of debate among language educators. While some studies report encouraging outcomes, others highlight significant barriers to successful implementation, such as limited resources, insufficient teacher training, and contextual constraints. These mixed findings highlight the need for further investigation into how CLT can be effectively adapted to specific educational environments.

This study aims to examine the impact of CLT on the speaking proficiency of first-year EFL students at Bouira University. It seeks to explore how communicative teaching practices influence students' oral performance and perceptions of language learning. By identifying both the benefits and limitations of CLT in this specific context, the research intends to provide practical recommendations for enhancing teaching strategies at Bouira University. The findings are expected to contribute to a deeper understanding of CLT's role in promoting speaking skills and to offer insights that support the development of more effective and contextually appropriate EFL teaching practices in Algeria.

General Introduction

1.1. Background of the Study

Effective speaking skills are essential for English language learners, yet many students face significant difficulties in developing these skills due to various challenges within the classroom environment. At Bouira University, first-year EFL students encounter substantial obstacles in engaging in meaningful spoken interactions, primarily due to limited opportunities for speaking practice. Many students struggle to articulate their thoughts clearly, while others experience anxiety about making mistakes, which impacts their willingness to participate in classroom discussions. These issues are further compounded by several contributing factors, including the lack of a well-equipped language laboratory, the persistent use of traditional, teacher-centered instructional methods, and the repetitive application of the same curriculum, materials, and teaching techniques. Classroom instruction typically focuses on theoretical explanations of grammar and vocabulary, providing few opportunities for guided speaking practice or interactive, communicative learning. Consequently, students are rarely exposed to authentic communication scenarios, limiting their ability to develop effective speaking skills.

These ongoing challenges highlight the pressing need for a teaching approach that fosters the development of speaking proficiency in a more practical and engaging manner. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), which emphasizes real-life communication, interaction, and student participation, offers a promising solution to overcome the limitations of traditional instructional methods. This study aims to investigate the effectiveness of CLT in enhancing the speaking skills of first-year EFL students at Bouira University. By exploring the impact of CLT, this research seeks to contribute to the development of more dynamic, learner-centered teaching strategies that bridge the gap between theoretical language instruction and real-world communication.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

A primary concern in foreign language instruction is achieving proficiency in communication in the target language. However, speaking and communication remain significant challenges for EFL students at Bouira University. While many of them can write in English to a satisfactory degree, they are not effective conversationalists. To help EFL students gain the ability to engage in communicative interaction, effective classroom activities are

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essential. In this context, it is the role of instructors to create the conditions necessary for students to participate in meaningful communicative activities.

1.3. Objectives of the Study

This research aims to identify Communicative Language Teaching as the suitable method for teachers to employ in the classroom for instructing English as a foreign language. We also try to highlight the shortcomings of traditional teaching approaches.

- 1- To assess the impact of CLT on EFL learner's speaking proficiency
- 2- To explore effective CLT strategies for improving EFL learner's oral communication.

1.4. Research Questions

This research seeks to answer the following research questions:

- Q1-** Does the application of communicative language teaching activities enhance students' speaking skills and boost their motivation?
- Q2-** What are the challenges and barriers faced by first-year EFL students in adopting CLT to improve their speaking proficiency?
- Q3-** What are the attitudes and perceptions of first-year EFL students at Bouira University towards traditional teaching methods compared to communicative language teaching (CLT) in enhancing their speaking proficiency?

1.5. Research Hypothesis

Based on the above research questions, the following hypotheses are suggested:

- RH1-** We suppose that exposure to Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) methods will significantly enhance the speaking proficiency of first-year EFL students at Bouira University compared to traditional teaching methods
- RH2-** We suppose that the level of student engagement and active participation in communicative activities will have a positive impact on the improvement of speaking proficiency among first-year EFL students at Bouira University exposed to CLT methods.

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1.6. Significance of the Study

By exploring the effectiveness of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), this research aims to show how CLT strategies can improve EFL learners' speaking proficiency and classroom communication. Understanding how to implement CLT effectively will not only benefit EFL students in overcoming language barriers but also help teachers refine their instructional approaches. Ultimately, this study contributes to the development of more effective language learning environments that foster better communication skills and greater learner engagement.

Furthermore, this research will provide valuable insights into the practical application of CLT techniques in diverse classroom settings, empowering teachers with strategies that enhance student interaction and language use in real-world contexts. By investigating the impact of CLT on speaking proficiency, this study also offers a framework for addressing common challenges faced by EFL learners, such as overcoming speaking anxiety, improving fluency, and facilitating spontaneous communication. The findings of this study could also inform curriculum design and teacher professional development, ensuring that CLT strategies are tailored to meet the needs of learners across different proficiency levels. In doing so, it aims to bridge the gap between theory and practice, leading to more dynamic and engaging language learning experiences for students while enhancing the overall effectiveness of English language instruction.

1.7. Research Methodology

1.7.1. Research Design

This study adopts a descriptive research design with a mixed-methods approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative methodologies to investigate the effectiveness of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in enhancing EFL students' speaking proficiency.

The quantitative component consists of a questionnaire that includes both closed-ended items such as Likert-scale and multiple-choice questions and open-ended questions, aimed at collecting both numerical data and qualitative insights on students' self-reported confidence, participation, and experiences in speaking activities. Complementing this, the qualitative component involves interviews with EFL teachers to gain a deeper understanding of the practical application of CLT from an instructional perspective. As practitioners, teachers offer valuable insights into classroom realities, shedding light on the

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challenges and successes encountered in implementing CLT in EFL contexts. Their experiences provide context-specific information that enriches the student data and helps identify factors influencing speaking proficiency.

By integrating these two methods, the study aims to provide a well-rounded analysis of CLT's impact on students' speaking skills.

1.7.2. The Sample Population

The questionnaires were distributed to EFL learners at Bouira University, targeting a randomly selected sample of sixty (60) first-year students to gather diverse perspectives on their learning experiences. Meanwhile, interviews were conducted with five (5) EFL teachers to gain insights that contextualize the student data, uncover potential systemic limitations, and highlight practical considerations that may not be evident through questionnaires alone.

1.7.3. Data Collection Methods

Data collection involved a combination of structured questionnaires and teacher interviews. The structured questionnaires offered comprehensive insights into students' perceptions and experiences with Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), while the teacher interviews provided valuable professional perspectives on instructional challenges, classroom dynamics, and contextual factors influencing the implementation of CLT. Together, these methods complemented each other, enabling a more holistic understanding of CLT's effectiveness from both learner and educator viewpoints.

1.7.4. Limitation of the Study

Despite efforts to ensure reliability and validity, this study has several limitations. It focuses exclusively on first-year EFL students at Bouira University, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other contexts or proficiency levels. Additionally, time constraints restricted a more in-depth investigation of CLT's long-term impact on speaking proficiency. Furthermore, the study relies on questionnaires and teacher's interview, which may introduce potential bias students might provide socially desirable responses, and interviews with teachers provide real insights about CLT application. Despite these limitations, the study offers valuable insights into CLT's role in enhancing EFL learners' speaking skills, contributing to a deeper understanding of its effectiveness in language learning contexts.

General Introduction

1.7.5. Structure of the Study

This dissertation is structured into two primary chapters. It begins with a general introduction, which presents the rationale behind the study, defines the research problem, and outlines the study's objectives. Additionally, it highlights the significance of the research, formulates the research questions, and proposes a predictive hypothesis. The introduction concludes with an overview of the dissertation's structure. The first chapter focuses on the theoretical framework and is divided into two sections, offering a comprehensive literature review. The first section examines the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach from multiple perspectives, discussing its core principles and effectiveness in classroom instruction. The second section explores the importance of speaking as a language skill and communication tool, emphasizing its role in the teaching-learning process. The second chapter constitutes the practical component of the study, encompassing data collection, analysis, and findings. It first presents the students' questionnaire, including its design, description, and discussion of results. This is followed by Teachers interview, detailing the implementation of CLT in practice and the extent of student participation in CLT activities. The chapter concludes with pedagogical implications for enhancing students' speaking proficiency and a discussion of the study's limitations.

Chapter One: Literature Review

Chapter One : Literature Review

2.1. Introduction

This chapter reviews literature on “Exploring the effectiveness of communicative language teaching in enhancing EFL learner’s speaking proficiency. The case of first year EFL students at Bouira University.” As the main title of the current research indicates, this study consists of two main sections: The first section provides a concise review of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), covering its historical background, development, and core principles. It highlights key aspects of the communicative classroom, with particular attention to the role of interaction, as well as the roles of both the teacher and the student within this approach. Additionally, this section examines the types of activities used in CLT and explores a structured framework for its effective implementation. This includes an analysis of the CLT syllabus, which emphasizes functional language use in real-life situations, and explores how activities like role plays, problem-solving tasks, and group discussions help engage learners in authentic communication.

The second section offers an in-depth analysis of the speaking skill, focusing on its definition, its classification as a productive skill, and the fundamental types of speaking. Additionally, it explores the essential components of speaking proficiency, underscores its importance in language acquisition, and examines the factors that contribute to its complexity. Furthermore, it investigates the specific challenges encountered by EFL learners in developing speaking abilities and presents a range of activities and strategies aimed at enhancing oral communication skills. This section also examines the impact of CLT on fluency and accuracy, focusing on how fluency is prioritized over accuracy in speaking tasks, as well as the interactive learning techniques that foster learners’ confidence, pronunciation, and conversational skills. Additionally, challenges such as limited resources, large class sizes, and traditional teaching methods are discussed, emphasizing the need for tailored teacher training and contextual adaptation of CLT principles to address these barriers effectively.

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2.2 Historical Background of Communicative Language Teaching

The development of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) can be traced back to the 1960s in Great Britain as a response to the limitations of earlier structural methods. During this period, applied linguists began to challenge the assumptions underlying situational language teaching (Richards and Rodgers, 2001, p. 153). The emergence of CLT was also influenced by Chomsky's (1965) critique of structural theories, as well as the contributions of British functional linguists such as Firth and Halliday, and American sociolinguists like Hymes and Labov (Brumfit, 1984, pp. 24–25).

As a movement, CLT diverged from traditional teaching methods that focused on mastering grammar particularly the Grammar Translation Method (GTM) and the Audio-Lingual Method by incorporating planned and structured activities such as memorizing dialogues, role-plays, and project work (Richards, 2006). CLT is described as a set of "activities where practice in using language within a real communicative context is the focus, where real information is exchanged, and where the language used is not totally predictable" (Richards, 2006, p. 16).

2.2.1 The Grammar Translation Method (GTM)

The Grammar Translation Method (GTM) is one of the oldest approaches to foreign language teaching, with origins tracing back to classical language instruction in Latin and Greek. It gained prominence in the late 19th and early 20th centuries as a structured way to teach modern languages (Brown, 2000, p. 18). This method is based on the belief that mastering grammatical rules is essential for translating between the target and native languages.

According to Prator and Celce-Murcia (1979, cited in Brown, 2000, p. 3), the key principles of GTM include:

1. Instruction is primarily conducted in the learners' native language, with minimal use of the target language.
2. Vocabulary is introduced through isolated word lists.
3. Translation exercises, often involving disconnected sentences, serve as the main practice activity.

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4. Detailed grammatical explanations take precedence over communicative use.
5. Pronunciation receives little to no attention.

This method, while useful for developing reading and writing skills, has been criticized for its lack of emphasis on speaking and listening, making it less effective for fostering communicative competence.

2.2.2 The Audio-Lingual Method (ALM)

The Audio-Lingual Method (ALM) is rooted in behaviorist principles, emphasizing habit formation as the core process of language learning (Harmer, 2001, p. 79). This approach operates on the idea that learners' behaviors can be shaped through reinforcement: correct responses receive positive feedback, while incorrect ones are met with negative feedback. Additionally, drills and repetition play a central role in reinforcing language habits (Harmer, 2001, p. 79).

According to Richards and Rodgers (2001, pp. 156–157), the key characteristics of ALM include:

1. Emphasis on mimicry and memorization of fixed phrases.
2. Teaching structural patterns through repetitive drills.
3. Avoidance of explicit grammatical explanations to encourage natural acquisition.
4. Use of visual aids and cues to support learning.
5. Immediate reinforcement of correct responses.

While ALM was widely used in the mid-20th century, it was later criticized for its overemphasis on drills and lack of focus on meaningful communication. This led to the rise of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), which prioritized real-life interaction over habit formation.

A key figure in shaping Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) was the American sociolinguist Dell Hymes, who introduced the concept of communicative competence. This idea built on Chomsky's distinction between competence and performance. According to Brown (2007, p. 35), competence refers to “a non-observable ability to do something, to perform something.” Similarly, Widdowson (1978, p. 26) defines competence as the

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knowledge required to recognize and use sentences appropriately for communicative purposes.

2.2.3 Communicative Competence

Dell Hymes introduced the concept of communicative competence in response to Chomsky's distinction between competence and performance. He argued that language acquisition goes beyond mastering grammatical rules; learners must also know how to use these rules effectively in real communication. Hymes defined communicative competence as “the aspect of our competence that enables us to convey and interpret messages and negotiate meanings interpersonally within specific contexts” (Brown, 2007, p. 219).

Building on Hymes' work, Bachman (1990) expanded the concept by introducing communicative language ability, which encompasses both language knowledge and the ability to use it in various communicative situations (Hedge, 2000, pp. 44–46). Similarly, Canale and Swain (1980), later developed by Savignon (2000), conceptualized communicative competence as consisting of four key components: grammatical competence (knowledge of syntax, vocabulary, and rules), discourse competence (the ability to connect sentences cohesively and coherently), sociocultural competence (understanding the social context of language use), and strategic competence (the ability to compensate for communication breakdowns) (Savignon, 2001, in Celce-Murcia, 2001, p. 17).

2.2.3.1 Components of Communicative Competence

2.2.3.1.1. Grammatical Competence

Canale and Swain (1980, as cited in Brown, 2007, p. 29) define grammatical competence as the knowledge of lexical items and the rules governing morphology, syntax, sentence structure, semantics, and phonology. In other words, it is the ability of learners to construct grammatically accurate and comprehensible utterances.

2.2.3.1.2. Sociolinguistic Competence

Sociolinguistic competence refers to the ability to use language appropriately within a given social and cultural context. Hedge (2000, p. 50) explains that this competence enables

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speakers to convey socio-cultural messages in a meaningful and contextually appropriate manner.

2.2.3.1.3. Discourse Competence

Brown (2007, p. 220) defines discourse competence as “the ability to connect sentences ... and to form meaningful wholes out of a series of utterances.” Essentially, it refers to a speaker’s ability to structure and communicate messages effectively through cohesion and coherence, ensuring logical flow and clarity.

2.2.3.1.4. Strategic Competence

Strategic competence involves the ability to overcome communication difficulties and maintain the flow of interaction. Canale and Swain (1980, as cited in Hedge, 2000, p. 53) describe it as the use of strategies such as paraphrasing, asking for clarification, and using gestures to enhance communication effectiveness, particularly when linguistic gaps or misunderstandings arise.

2.2.4. Principles of Communicative Language Teaching

Brown (2000, p. 46) outlines several key principles that define Communicative Language Teaching (CLT):

2.2.4.1. Comprehensive Focus on Communicative Competence

CLT emphasizes all components of communicative competence, including grammatical, discourse, functional, sociolinguistic, and strategic aspects. This means that students should not only learn grammatical structures and vocabulary but also develop the ability to use them effectively in real-life situations (Brown 2000, p.46).

2.2.4.2. Emphasizing Meaningful Language Use

Language activities in CLT are designed to engage learners in authentic, functional communication rather than focusing solely on structural aspects. The goal is to help students use language meaningfully through interactive tasks and real-world applications (Brown 2000, p.46).

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2.2.4.3. Balancing Fluency and Accuracy

While both fluency and accuracy are important, CLT prioritizes fluency to ensure that learners remain actively engaged in meaningful communication. Accuracy is developed gradually through contextual feedback rather than immediate correction, allowing students to refine their language skills naturally over time (Brown 2000, p.46).

2.2.4.4. Encouraging Real-World Language Use

CLT promotes the use of language in both receptive (listening and reading) and productive (speaking and writing) skills within real-world, unrehearsed contexts. Classroom activities should prepare learners to communicate effectively beyond the classroom environment (Brown 2000, p.46).

2.2.4.5. Promoting Learner Autonomy

Students are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning by understanding their individual learning styles and developing independent language acquisition strategies. This fosters self-directed learning and long-term language development (Brown 2000, p.46)

2.2.4.6. Redefining the Teacher's Role as a Facilitator

In CLT, the teacher takes on the role of a facilitator rather than a traditional instructor, guiding students and promoting interactive, student-centered learning. The focus is on creating opportunities for meaningful communication rather than direct language instruction (Brown 2000, p.46).

2.2.5. The Communicative Classroom

A communicative classroom differs significantly from traditional, teacher-centered learning environments. As Taylor (1983, p. 69) explains, such a classroom should encourage learners to take initiative in communication while providing a comfortable setting for natural interaction (ibid, p. 70). The primary goal is to develop EFL learners' fluency and confidence, with a strong emphasis on real-life communication and practical language use.

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2.2.5.1. The Role of Interaction

Interaction is central to Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) as it engages students in meaningful communication. Brown (2000, p. 165) defines interaction as “a collaborative exchange of thoughts, feelings, or ideas between two or more people, resulting in a reciprocal effort on each other.” This highlights the dynamic and cooperative nature of language learning.

Rivers (1987, cited in Brown, 2000, p. 165) stresses that an interactive classroom allows students to apply both formally learned and informally acquired language skills in real-life exchanges. This reinforces learning through authentic communication opportunities.

2.2.5.2. The Teacher’s Role in the Communicative Approach

In CLT, the teacher’s role shifts from traditional instructor to facilitator. According to Gutiérrez (2005, p. 7), teachers engage with students by providing feedback, guiding collaborative activities, and fostering interactive learning. Littlewood (1981, pp. 92–93) describes the teacher’s role as multifaceted, encompassing responsibilities such as guide, organizer, assessor, resource provider, and curriculum developer. Unlike in the audio-lingual method, where lessons are rigidly structured, Knight (2003, p. 158) notes that CLT teachers enjoy greater autonomy, as classroom activities often involve spontaneous, real-life conversations. While CLT reduces teacher-centered instruction, it does not diminish the teacher’s authority. Instead, the teacher facilitates meaningful language use while maintaining an instructional role.

2.2.5.3. The Student’s Role

In a communicative classroom, students take an active role in learning, shifting from passive recipients of knowledge to autonomous language users (Taylor, 1983, p. 70). This approach fosters independence, particularly in peer interactions and group tasks. Breen and Candlin (1980, cited in Richards and Rodgers, 2001, p. 166) describe learners as negotiators both in relation to their learning process and within group interactions. This means students contribute as much as they learn, creating a dynamic and interactive classroom environment.

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CLT moves away from rigid teacher-led instruction and emphasizes student-centered learning, encouraging learners to express themselves freely and engage in meaningful communication.

2.2.6. Activities Used in Communicative Language Teaching

Communicative activities are essential in providing students with opportunities to use the target language meaningfully. These activities, which are generally fluency-based (Teat, 2001, p. 1), encourage learners to engage in interactive and contextualized language use. However, for these activities to be effective, the classroom environment must be student-centered, fostering interaction, authenticity, and real-world application (Richards and Rodgers, 1982, p. 163).

According to Finocchiaro and Brumfit (1983, pp. 141–142), students should actively participate in collaborative tasks with their peers and instructors to enhance their speaking skills. Some widely used communicative activities include:

- Responding to directions or questions from the teacher or classmates.
- Giving instructions to peers.
- Constructing original sentences using newly introduced structures and expressions.
- Engaging in discussions about in-class or out-of-class experiences.
- Asking and answering questions related to readings or shared experiences.
- Describing images, objects, or charts.
- Retelling stories or personal experiences using their own words.
- Presenting a prepared topic and responding to follow-up questions.
- Participating in role-plays and real-life simulations, such as shopping or library interactions.
- Engaging in communicative language games.
- Taking part in structured group discussions, debates, and forums requiring active listening and critical responses.
- Summarizing and presenting reports in the target language based on articles written in their native language.

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By engaging in these activities, learners develop communicative competence in meaningful, real-life contexts, ensuring they can confidently apply their language skills beyond the classroom.

2.2.7. Frameworks for Communicative Language Teaching

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) encompasses various instructional frameworks that prioritize meaningful communication, learner autonomy, and interaction. Brown (2000, pp. 46–50) identifies several key frameworks that shape this approach.

2.2.7.1 Learner-Centered Instruction

Learner-centered instruction shifts the focus from teacher-led learning to active student engagement and autonomy. This approach involves:

- Tailoring instruction to students' needs, learning styles, and goals.
- Encouraging group work and strategy training.
- Designing flexible curricula that integrate student input.
- Promoting creativity, innovation, and self-confidence.

Despite concerns that beginner-level students may lack proficiency for independent learning, even novice learners can benefit from structured choices that foster a sense of ownership and intrinsic motivation (Brown, 2000, p. 47).

2.2.7.2. Cooperative and Collaborative Learning

A cooperative classroom fosters teamwork rather than competition. Students work in pairs or groups to achieve shared goals, leading to benefits such as higher motivation, improved self-esteem, and reduced anxiety. However, challenges include cultural differences, learning styles, and over-reliance on the first language.

- Cooperative learning involves structured activities where students actively exchange information.
- Collaborative learning emphasizes peer interaction, often guided by teachers or more proficient classmates, aligning with social constructivist principles (Oxford, 1997; in Brown, 2000, p. 47).

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2.2.7.3. Interactive Learning

Interaction is fundamental to communicative competence. Language learning involves a dynamic exchange between speakers, ensuring messages are understood through negotiation of meaning. Interactive classrooms incorporate:

- Pair work and group discussions.
- Exposure to authentic language in real-world contexts.
- Spontaneous, conversational exchanges.
- Writing for real audiences, rather than artificial classroom settings.

The Interaction Hypothesis (Long, 1985, 1996) emphasizes that learners develop communicative skills through both input and output, enhancing their ability to negotiate meaning (Brown, 2000, p. 48).

2.2.7.4. Whole Language Approach

The whole language approach treats language as an interconnected system, not isolated components. Originally used for reading instruction, it now includes:

- Cooperative learning and participatory methods.
- Authentic, natural language exposure.
- Integration of the four skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing).
- Holistic assessment techniques.

By viewing language holistically, students engage in meaningful learning while developing communicative competence (Brown, 2000, pp. 48–49).

2.2.7.5. Content-Based Instruction (CBI)

CBI integrates language learning with subject matter instruction, making language acquisition more contextual and relevant. This approach:

- Uses real-world content as a medium for learning.
- Enhances intrinsic motivation by linking language to practical applications.
- Encourages autonomy and competence in academic and professional settings.

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For CBI to be effective, teachers require specialized training and materials to seamlessly integrate language instruction with academic content (Brown, 2000, p. 49).

2.2.7.6. Task-Based Instruction (TBI)

Task-Based Instruction places communicative tasks at the center of language learning. According to Skehan (1998, in Brown, 2001, p. 50), a task involves:

- A primary focus on meaning rather than form.
- A real-world communication problem to solve.
- A clear outcome-based assessment.

TBI ensures that classroom activities:

- Extend beyond linguistic structures to real-world application.
- Align with communicative learning goals.
- Are well-structured with clear outcomes.
- Encourage problem-solving and meaningful interaction.

Each of these instructional frameworks contributes uniquely to the Communicative Language Teaching approach. While learner-centered instruction promotes autonomy, interactive learning fosters engagement, and task-based instruction ensures practical application. A well-rounded CLT curriculum integrates multiple frameworks to create a student-centered, communicative learning environment that prepares learners for real-life language use.

2.2.7.7. Communication Language Teaching (CLT) Syllabus

The evolution of syllabus design within the framework of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) reflects a shift from traditional grammar-based instruction to a more functional and learner-centered approach. As Richards (2006, p. 16) notes, communicative syllabi are organized around practical language functions that learners need in real-life contexts such as requesting information, making suggestions, or apologizing. This represents a move beyond the mere presentation of grammatical structures, focusing instead on meaningful communication, which lies at the heart of CLT. By prioritizing the communicative purposes of language, such syllabi aim to enhance learners' fluency, confidence, and ability to interact effectively in diverse situations. This approach is

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particularly valuable in EFL contexts, where students often struggle with speaking due to test-oriented instruction and limited opportunities for authentic use. Implementing a communicative syllabus helps bridge the gap between classroom learning and real-world language use, making it a powerful strategy for improving oral proficiency among university students.

2.2.8. Communication Language Teaching (CLT) Activities

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) emphasizes the use of language in real-life situations and prioritizes interaction as both the means and goal of learning. According to Richards (2006), CLT activities are designed to engage learners in authentic communication and can be broadly categorized into functional communication activities and social interaction activities. Functional communication tasks require learners to share information in order to complete a task such as comparing sets of pictures, following directions, or solving problems collaboratively. Richards (2006, p. 20) explains that these tasks “involve communication in which the information communicated is unknown to the receiver” and are intended to develop learners’ ability to interpret and convey meaning effectively. In contrast, social interaction activities emphasize the social uses of language and include role plays, simulations, and discussions. As Richards notes, “they are intended to develop students’ ability to use language in a variety of social situations and for a range of purposes” (p. 21). Together, these activities help learners build fluency and confidence in using the language meaningfully beyond the classroom.

After outlining the theoretical foundations, core principles, and practical applications of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), it is essential to shift the focus toward one of the primary language skills it aims to develop speaking. As a central component of communicative competence, speaking plays a crucial role in real-life language use and is a key area where the impact of CLT can be observed. The following section provides a detailed exploration of the speaking skill, its characteristics, and its relevance within the framework of CLT.

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2.3 Speaking Skill

2.3.1. Definition of Speaking

Speaking is a fundamental component of foreign language teaching and learning. Its significance has become increasingly prominent, particularly with the rise of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and the growing emphasis on performance-based assessment. Various scholars have defined speaking from different perspectives. The Oxford Dictionary of Current English (2009, p. 414) defines speaking as “the action of conveying information or expressing one’s thoughts and feelings in spoken language”. Hybels et al. (2001, p. 6) describe speaking as the exchange of ideas, information, and emotions through both verbal and non-verbal means. They note that time constraints can impact a speaker’s ability to plan and structure messages, often leading to false starts, extended sentences, or instances of forgetting and repetition. However, Chaney (1998, p. 13) characterizes speaking as “the process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal and non-verbal symbols in a variety of contexts”. Hedge (2000, p. 261) highlights the social dimension of speaking, asserting that it is “a skill by which they [people] are judged while first impressions are being formed.”

These definitions emphasize different aspects of speaking. While the Oxford Dictionary (2009) focuses on the transmission of information, Hybels et al. (2001, p. 6) and Chaney (1998) underscore its interactive nature, incorporating both verbal and non-verbal elements. Additionally, Mackey (1978, p. 263) emphasizes the cognitive complexity of speaking, describing it as “the most complex of linguistic skills, since it involves thinking of what is to be said while saying what has been thought.” Hedge (2000, p. 216) further highlights its social significance, reinforcing the idea that speaking is not only a means of communication but also a determinant of social perceptions and interactions. A speaker’s ability to articulate thoughts clearly and confidently can significantly influence their personal and professional image.

In the context of English language teaching and learning, speaking is considered a skill that requires active practice and mastery. Many learners perceive their ability to speak as a primary indicator of overall language proficiency. However, speaking poses significant challenges for foreign language learners, as it demands not only linguistic competence but also the ability to navigate social interactions effectively. Given these complexities, effective

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speaking instruction should focus on fluency, interactional strategies, and real-world communicative needs.

2.3.1.1. Speaking as a productive skill

Speaking is a productive skill and one of the four core language skills, alongside reading, listening, and writing. Spratt et al. (2005, p. 34) define speaking as a productive skill that involves using speech to convey meaning to others. Effective speaking requires attention to fluency, pronunciation, grammatical accuracy, and body language, all of which contribute to successful communication. Moreover, various factors including context, prior experiences, physical surroundings, and communicative purpose shape the way individuals express themselves verbally.

Speaking is inherently spontaneous and interactive, often requiring speakers to formulate and adapt their messages in real-time. While it allows for open-ended expression, it also involves recurrent language functions, such as asking questions, making requests, or expressing opinions. Cole et al. (2007, p. 12) emphasize the interactive and collaborative nature of speaking, noting that conversations often involve interruptions, disagreements, and the co-construction of ideas, where individuals build on each other's statements. This highlights the essential role of speaking in expressing thoughts, exchanging knowledge, and facilitating meaningful communication in both academic and real-world contexts.

2.3.2. Fundamental Types of Speaking

Brown and Abeywickrama (2019, pp. 157–158) classify speaking performance into five distinct types, ranging from simple imitation to complex and interactive communication. These categories reflect varying levels of linguistic competence and communicative ability.

2.3.2.1. Imitative Speaking

Imitative speaking refers to the ability to reproduce isolated words, phrases, or sentences without necessarily comprehending their meaning. This type of oral production primarily focuses on phonetic accuracy, including pronunciation, intonation, and rhythm. The primary objective is to assess a learner's ability to replicate sounds rather than engage in meaningful communication (Brown and Abeywickrama, 2019 p.157).

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Example:

- **Teacher:** Repeat after me: “The sun is shining brightly.”
- **Student:** The sun is shining brightly.

2.3.2.2. Intensive Speaking

Intensive speaking involves the production of short stretches of language that demonstrate mastery of specific linguistic features, such as grammatical structures, vocabulary, and phonological elements (e.g., stress and rhythm). While comprehension plays a secondary role, these tasks typically require minimal interaction with an interlocutor. Common assessment activities in this category include reading aloud, completing sentences, responding to structured prompts, and performing simple translations (Brown and Abeywickrama, 2019 p.158).

Example:

- **Directed response:**
 - **Examiner:** Use the past tense to say: “I go to school every day.”
 - **Student:** I went to school every day.

2.3.2.3 Responsive Speaking

Responsive speaking requires learners to engage in brief conversational exchanges, such as standard greetings, small talk, and simple question-answer interactions. Although these exchanges remain limited in complexity, they necessitate both comprehension and appropriate verbal responses. Common examples include responding to a request for information, acknowledging a greeting, or expressing an opinion on a straightforward topic (Brown and Abeywickrama, 2019 p.158).

Example:

- **Greetings and small talk:**

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A: Hey, how's it going?

B: Not bad. How about you?

A: I'm good. Thanks!

2.3.2.4. Interactive Speaking

Interactive speaking differs from responsive speaking in both complexity and length. Unlike brief exchanges, interactive speech often involves multiple interactions and may include more than two participants. Brown and Abeywickrama (2019) classify interactive speech into two subcategories:

2.3.2.4.1 Transactional Interactions

which are primarily goal-oriented and focus on exchanging specific information.

2.3.2.4.2 Interpersonal Interactions

which serve to establish or maintain social relationships. Interpersonal exchanges tend to be pragmatically more complex, as they require the use of informal language, colloquialisms, ellipsis, humor, and other sociolinguistic features (Brown and Abeywickrama, 2019).

Examples

- **Transactional Interaction (goal-oriented exchange of information):**

Customer: I'd like to order a pizza, please.

Employee: Sure! What toppings would you like?

Customer: Just cheese and mushrooms, please.

Employee: Got it. That will be \$12.50.

- **Interpersonal Interaction (building social relationships):**

A: Hi, Sarah! I haven't seen you in a while. How have you been?

B: Oh, I've been busy with work. How about you?

A: Same here. We should catch up soon.

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2.3.2.5. Extensive Speaking

Extensive speaking refers to monologic discourse, such as speeches, presentations, and storytelling. Unlike interactive speaking, this mode of communication minimizes or eliminates direct listener engagement. While extensive speaking is typically more structured and formal, it can also encompass informal monologues, such as narrating personal experiences or summarizing a book or film (Brown and Abeywickrama, 2019).

Example

- **Storytelling:**

“Last summer, I visited Italy. One of the most memorable experiences was seeing the Colosseum. Standing in a place with such a rich historical background was truly fascinating.”

2.3.3. The Components of Language Speaking Proficiency

Speaking proficiency extends beyond the verbal articulation of ideas; it comprises several key components that learners must develop to communicate effectively. These components include pronunciation, fluency, accuracy, and vocabulary, all of which contribute to clarity and coherence in spoken discourse. Mastering these elements enables speakers to express their thoughts with confidence while minimizing misunderstandings. Additionally, Brown (2004) expanded this framework by incorporating comprehension, highlighting the significance of understanding spoken discourse alongside its production. Each of these components plays a crucial role in enhancing overall speaking proficiency and facilitating successful communication (Brown, 2001, p. 268; Brown, 2004, pp. 172–173).

2.3.3.1. Pronunciation

Effective pronunciation is essential for clear communication, as it enables speakers to convey their messages accurately. Mastering pronunciation involves key phonetic and prosodic elements, including individual speech sounds, intonation patterns, rhythm, and connected speech features such as linking and assimilation. According to Corblet and Carter (2001, p. 18), these elements enhance the natural flow of speech, improving intelligibility and reducing misunderstandings. Poor pronunciation can hinder comprehension, even when a speaker possesses strong vocabulary and grammatical knowledge. Therefore, developing

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pronunciation skills is fundamental to achieving effective spoken communication (Corbleet & Carter, 2001, p. 18).

2.3.3.2. Fluency

Fluency refers to the ability to speak smoothly and naturally without excessive pauses or disruptions. Harris and Hodges (1995, p. 14) define fluency as the capacity to produce speech effortlessly and spontaneously. Fluent speakers engage in conversations without frequently pausing to search for words or correct grammatical structures. Achieving fluency requires a balance of facilitation and compensation strategies. Facilitation strategies involve techniques such as using familiar phrases, paraphrasing, and anticipating upcoming words in conversation. Compensation strategies, on the other hand, include the use of nonverbal cues, fillers, or gestures to maintain speech flow. Developing fluency is crucial for effective communication, as it enables speakers to express themselves confidently in real-time interactions (Harris and Hodges, 1995, p. 14).

2.3.3.3. Accuracy

Accuracy in speaking refers to a speaker's adherence to linguistic rules, including grammar, syntax, and pronunciation. Brown (2001, p. 268) defines an accurate speaker as one who produces grammatically correct, structurally coherent, and phonologically clear speech. This entails proper use of verb tenses, subject-verb agreement, and word order while minimizing errors. Accuracy ensures precise and meaningful communication, reducing the likelihood of misunderstandings. While fluency emphasizes the ease and speed of speech production, accuracy ensures linguistic correctness, making it a vital component of oral proficiency, particularly in academic and professional settings (Brown, 2001, p. 268).

2.3.3.4. Vocabulary

Vocabulary plays a fundamental role in effective communication by providing speakers with the necessary words and expressions to articulate their thoughts. The Longman Dictionary (2002, p. 580) defines vocabulary as the set of lexemes commonly used in spoken and written communication. Luoma (2004, p. 24) highlights vocabulary acquisition as essential for achieving fluency and accuracy in English. A broad vocabulary enables speakers to express ideas clearly and precisely, adapting their word choices to various social and

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professional contexts. Additionally, an extensive vocabulary enhances fluency by enabling speakers to construct sentences efficiently without frequent pauses. Furthermore, vocabulary knowledge improves comprehension, allowing speakers to understand and respond to conversations more effectively (Luoma, 2004, p. 24; Longman Dictionary, 2002, p. 580).

2.3.3.5. Comprehension (Comprehensibility)

Comprehension, also referred to as comprehensibility in this study, involves the ability to understand spoken language and interpret meaning accurately. Cohen et al. (2005, p. 51) define comprehensibility as the capacity to process and analyze extended speech, particularly in complex communicative situations where accurate understanding is essential. Comprehension extends beyond recognizing individual words; it entails grasping the overall meaning of conversations, following logical sequences, and interpreting contextual cues. This skill is critical in spoken interactions, as misunderstandings can result in communication breakdowns. Moreover, strong comprehension skills enhance fluency and accuracy by enabling speakers to engage meaningfully in dialogue and respond appropriately. In academic and professional settings, effective comprehension is fundamental for active participation in discussions, understanding lectures, and collaborating with peers (Cohen et al., 2005, p. 51).

2.3.4. The Significance of Speaking Skills

In today's globalized world, English serves as a primary medium of communication, enabling individuals from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds to interact effectively. Proficiency in spoken communication is crucial for success across various fields, making speaking skills a primary goal for many EFL learners. As language learners often perceive speaking as the key to using a second language in real-life interactions, fluency becomes a fundamental necessity. Among the four core language skills listening, speaking, reading, and writing, speaking is widely regarded as the most essential for acquiring a foreign language. Brown and Yule (1983, p. 25) emphasize the importance of speaking, noting that learners are most frequently assessed based on their spoken abilities in real-life situations. Unlike other language skills, speaking is often prioritized because it directly reflects one's ability to communicate in the target language. Similarly, Nunan (1991, p. 39) asserts that language learning progress is primarily measured by one's ability to engage in conversation, reinforcing the idea that speaking proficiency supports the development of other language skills.

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Furthermore, effective speaking skills enhance communicative competence by enabling learners to express ideas, share information, and convey emotions clearly. Bygate (1987, p. 2) argues that speaking deserves as much emphasis as literacy skills in both first and second language acquisition. Deficiencies in oral communication can lead to misunderstandings, underscoring the necessity for EFL learners to develop their speaking abilities to approach native-like proficiency. Mastering spoken English provides numerous advantages, including access to higher education, improved employment prospects, and greater confidence in diverse communicative settings. As Baker and Westrup (2003, p. 5) highlight, students who achieve fluency in English have enhanced opportunities for academic advancement, career growth, and professional success.

2.3.5. Factors That Make Speaking Difficult

Acquiring proficiency in spoken language is a complex process that presents numerous challenges for learners. Brown (2000, pp. 270–271) identifies several difficulties that hinder the development of oral communication skills.

2.3.5.1. Clustering

Fluent speech is typically structured in meaningful phrases rather than isolated words. However, second-language learners often struggle with this aspect, producing speech in fragmented words, which disrupts fluency. To overcome this challenge, teachers should guide students in organizing their speech into natural, phrase-based clusters, thereby enhancing fluency and coherence (Brown, 2000, p. 270).

2.3.5.2. Redundancy

Spoken language inherently contains redundancy, allowing speakers to repeat or rephrase statements for clarity. Learners can employ discourse markers such as “I mean” or “you know” to reinforce their intended meaning. Encouraging students to integrate these natural fillers into their speech can improve their communicative effectiveness and conversational fluency (Brown, 2000, p. 270).

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2.3.5.3. Reduced Forms

Spoken English frequently features reductions at the phonological, morphological, and syntactic levels, such as contractions (gonna instead of going to). Many learners struggle with understanding and using these reduced forms because they are primarily exposed to full, formal versions of words and structures. This gap can hinder both comprehension and fluency. To address this issue, instructors should familiarize students with common reductions in natural speech (Brown, 2000, p. 270).

2.3.5.4. Performance Variables

During speech production, second-language learners often hesitate, make false starts, or self-correct their utterances. While these performance variables can disrupt fluency, they are natural aspects of spoken communication. Teachers should help students manage hesitations effectively by encouraging the use of common fillers such as “uh” and “um” while maintaining conversational flow (Brown, 2000, p. 271).

2.3.5.5. Colloquial Language

Understanding and using informal expressions, including idioms, slang, and culturally specific phrases, present challenges for learners. Since colloquial language differs significantly from the structured forms found in textbooks, exposure to authentic conversational English is essential. Teachers should incorporate real-world dialogues and media to help students adapt to informal speech patterns (Brown, 2000, p. 271).

2.3.5.6. Rate of Delivery

Fluent speech requires maintaining a natural pace, which can be challenging for second-language learners. Many struggle to match the speed of native speakers while preserving accuracy. To support learners, teachers should model fluent speech at an appropriate pace and encourage students to practice speaking at a natural, consistent speed (Brown, 2000, p. 271).

2.3.5.7. Stress, Rhythm, and Intonation

Pronunciation in English is shaped by stress patterns, rhythm, and intonation, all of which contribute to speech clarity and meaning. Since these prosodic features are essential for effective communication, learners must develop awareness of them through extensive listening and speaking practice (Brown, 2000, p. 271).

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2.3.5.8. Interaction

Interaction plays a crucial role in language development by enabling learners to negotiate meaning, seek clarification, and receive feedback. Through interactive communication, students acquire new vocabulary and grammatical structures, ultimately enhancing their speaking proficiency. Therefore, incorporating interactive tasks in language learning fosters more effective and confident communication (Brown, 2000, p. 271).

2.3.6. Speaking Difficulties for EFL Learners

In EFL classrooms, students often struggle with speaking fluency due to various challenges, which can be broadly categorized into linguistic difficulties and psychological barriers.

2.3.6.1. Linguistic Difficulties

Thornbury (2005, p. 11) emphasizes the importance of linguistic knowledge in developing speaking skills, noting that deficiencies in this area hinder student participation in oral activities. The primary linguistic challenges include limited vocabulary, grammatical inaccuracies, and pronunciation difficulties.

2.3.6.1.1. Limited Vocabulary

Oral proficiency requires learners to select and use words appropriately in conversation. Thornbury (2005, p. 22) highlights that spoken language consists of a high proportion of words and expressions, making vocabulary acquisition essential for communication. However, many EFL students struggle with a restricted vocabulary range, which negatively impacts their ability to express ideas fluently and engage in speaking activities.

2.3.6.1.2. Grammar Mistakes

Grammatical accuracy is crucial for effective communication in a foreign language. Davies and Pearse (2000, p. 82) observe that many individuals feel uncomfortable speaking in front of large groups, a challenge that is amplified in EFL settings where learners fear making grammatical mistakes. This anxiety often reduces their willingness to participate in class discussions, further hindering their speaking development.

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2.3.6.1.3. Pronunciation Errors

Pronunciation plays a vital role in spoken communication, as it significantly influences intelligibility and listener perception. Bada et al. (2011, p. 122) stress that pronunciation is a fundamental aspect of speaking, requiring learners to recall words accurately while adhering to phonetic rules such as stress and intonation. Many EFL students struggle with pronunciation due to limited exposure to native speech patterns, poor listening skills, or influence from non-native teachers. These difficulties reduce their confidence and make participation in speaking activities more challenging.

2.3.6.2. Psychological Barriers

According to Thornbury (2005, p. 24), foreign language learners often face psychological obstacles that hinder their ability to communicate effectively in spoken English. These barriers typically involve negative emotional states, such as anxiety and low self-confidence, which can interfere with their performance.

Researchers have extensively examined these factors and their influence on language acquisition.

2.3.6.2.1. Lack of Confidence

Self-confidence plays a crucial role in foreign language acquisition, as it directly affects learners' willingness to engage in spoken communication. Confidence is shaped by self-evaluation and belief in one's linguistic abilities, ultimately influencing language learning outcomes (Xiaolu 2007, p.11)

Xiaolu (2006, p. 11) highlights that confidence provides learners with motivation and energy, fostering a positive attitude toward language learning. Moreover, it is often associated with higher levels of success, satisfaction, and stronger interpersonal relationships. Ebota (2008, N.p) explains that learners who doubt their ability to use the target language tend to hesitate in speaking tasks, leading to poor performance and limited participation. Similarly, Ni (2012, p. 1509) notes that students with low confidence often experience heightened anxiety, reluctance to speak, and difficulty forming coherent sentences in classroom settings. A lack of confidence frequently stems from negative self-perception regarding speaking ability, making students feel incapable of producing grammatically correct and meaningful speech. To address this issue, language instructors should implement supportive teaching strategies that

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foster students' confidence, enabling them to communicate more independently and effectively.

2.3.6.2.2 Lack of Motivation

Motivation is a crucial factor in language learning, influencing learners' engagement, effort, and persistence in speaking activities. Littlewood (1984, p. 53) describes motivation as the driving force behind a learner's willingness to participate in tasks. Without sufficient motivation, students may perceive speaking English as unnecessary, leading to reduced participation in oral activities. The development of communicative competence is only possible when learners actively seek opportunities to express themselves and interact with others. As Littlewood (1981, N.P) emphasizes, motivation is key to language learning success, as highly motivated students tend to outperform those with lower motivation levels. However, many FL learners struggle with motivation, which negatively impacts their speaking proficiency. Little (2001, p. 27) argues that low ability often leads to decreased motivation, resulting in reduced effort and poor achievement.

To address this issue, educators should implement strategies to enhance student motivation, such as incorporating engaging classroom activities, fostering a positive learning environment, and promoting learner autonomy. By increasing students' intrinsic motivation, teachers can encourage active participation in speaking tasks and improve overall language proficiency.

2.3.6.2.3 Anxiety

Anxiety is another significant psychological factor that affects EFL learners' speaking performance. Horwitz (2001, p. 112) defines anxiety as a subjective feeling of tension, nervousness, and worry, often triggered by situations that cause discomfort. High levels of anxiety can severely hinder learners' ability to engage in speaking activities and demonstrate their linguistic competence.

Numerous studies have explored the impact of anxiety on language learning, as it is one of the primary obstacles EFL learners face. Scovel (1978, N.P) describes anxiety as a sense of fear that influences an individual's behavior, while Horwitz (2001, pp. 121–122) notes that anxious learners often struggle to perform at their actual proficiency level, leading to discrepancies in learning outcomes. Arnold and Brown (1999, p. 8) further emphasize that

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anxiety is one of the most influential emotional barriers to language acquisition, particularly in speaking tasks. It frequently results in hesitation, avoidance, and a fear of failure, all of which negatively impact speaking performance. To mitigate the effects of anxiety, teachers should create a supportive and encouraging learning environment. Implementing stress-reducing techniques, such as collaborative speaking activities, positive reinforcement, and gradual exposure to speaking tasks, can help learners develop confidence and reduce anxiety. By fostering a low-stress classroom atmosphere, educators can enhance students' comfort levels and facilitate better speaking performance.

2.3.7. Speaking Activities for Enhancing Oral Skills

Speaking activities play a crucial role in developing learners' oral proficiency by providing structured opportunities for practice under teacher guidance. Lazarton et al. (2014, p. 116) emphasize the importance of designing engaging, meaningful, and diverse speaking activities that motivate learners and foster communicative competence. To enhance oral production, educators must implement effective strategies that encourage active participation and language use in authentic contexts.

2.3.7.1. Role-Play

Role-play is an interactive activity in which learners assume specific roles in simulated real-life or fictional scenarios. Ladousse (1987, p. 5) highlights that role-play allows students to experiment with language in a creative and low-pressure environment, reducing anxiety and increasing confidence. This method is particularly beneficial for learners who may feel apprehensive about speaking, as it provides a “mask” that helps them overcome hesitation. Depending on learners' proficiency levels, role-play can be scripted or spontaneous (Klippel, 1983, p. 121). To maximize effectiveness, teachers should select topics that align with students' interests to ensure higher motivation and engagement.

2.3.7.2. Problem-Solving Activities

Problem-solving activities require students to analyze situations, identify issues, and propose viable solutions. Klippel (1983, p. 103) states that these activities enhance learners' decision-making abilities while fostering critical thinking and negotiation skills. Engaging in problem-solving tasks encourages active speaking, as students must articulate their reasoning and justify their viewpoints. For instance, a scenario might involve an ethical dilemma, such

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as witnessing a colleague committing a minor workplace infraction. Students must discuss potential responses and defend their choices (Pearse and Davies, 2000). These activities provide a meaningful context for language use, reinforcing both fluency and accuracy.

2.3.7.3. Discussions and Debates

Discussions and debates are fundamental speaking activities that promote language use in interactive settings. Harmer (2001, p. 272) considers discussion one of the most effective tools for fostering oral proficiency, as it encourages students to exchange perspectives and develop their communicative competence. Similarly, Littlewood (1981, p. 47) asserts that discussions allow learners to express personal experiences and viewpoints, making language learning more engaging and meaningful.

Debates, in particular, provide structured opportunities for argumentation, critical thinking, and persuasion. According to Hedge (2000, p. 277), the benefits of discussions and debates include:

1. Increased motivation to use English in extended discourse.
2. Development of interpersonal communication strategies.
3. Enhanced retention of linguistic input through active participation.

Encouraging students to select discussion topics based on their interests can further improve engagement and facilitate authentic language use.

2.3.7.4. Presentations

Presentations involve students delivering structured oral reports on specific topics, allowing them to practice organized speech production. Harmer (1988, p. 130) notes that students should be given sufficient time to research, prepare, and structure their presentations effectively. Teachers can provide guidelines and models to support students in organizing their content and improving delivery. Additionally, audience engagement can be encouraged through note-taking tasks and post-presentation discussions.

2.3.7.5. Group Work

Group work, a form of collaborative learning, fosters interaction and peer-assisted learning, enabling students to exchange ideas and refine their communicative abilities. Baker

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and Westrup (2000, p. 135) highlight that group activities allow students to support one another in language development while gaining confidence in oral expression. Brown (1994, p. 8) defines group work as a cooperative learning method in which individuals collaborate to solve problems, share insights, and enhance language proficiency. Nunan (1998, p. 84) further asserts that group work simulates real-world communication, providing learners with authentic interaction opportunities that extend beyond the classroom. Assigning specific roles and responsibilities within groups can enhance motivation and engagement.

2.3.7.6. Games as Language Learning Tools

Integrating games into language instruction provides a dynamic and engaging way to develop speaking skills. Games reduce anxiety, promote interaction, and reinforce linguistic structures in an enjoyable manner. Shirts (1972, as cited in Sharan & Sharan, 1976, p. 188) defines games as structured activities governed by specific rules that lead to an intended outcome. Finocchiaro and Brumfit (1983) argue that games serve as a valuable pedagogical tool, offering a break from conventional instruction while reinforcing communicative competence. Similarly, McCallum (1980, p. 4) asserts that games enhance fluency by encouraging risk-taking and spontaneous language use in a relaxed setting. When thoughtfully integrated, games can be among the most effective and motivating techniques in the language classroom.

2.3.7.7. Conversational Activities

Conversation-based activities promote authentic language use by simulating real-life dialogues. Wilkins (1976, p. 81) emphasizes that conversational exercises should mirror natural speech patterns rather than focusing solely on grammatical structures. Through role-based dialogues, students can practice expressing opinions, agreeing and disagreeing, and negotiating meaning. Such activities empower learners to take ownership of their language development while building confidence in verbal interactions.

To cultivate an effective communicative environment in EFL classrooms, educators must integrate diverse speaking activities that align with students' linguistic needs and interests. Role-play, discussions, debates, and problem-solving tasks provide meaningful contexts for interaction, while games and group work create an engaging and supportive atmosphere. By offering structured opportunities for practice, teachers can help learners develop fluency, accuracy, and confidence in spoken English.

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2.3.8. CLT and Speaking Proficiency

The Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach has become a widely advocated method in language education, particularly for enhancing learners' speaking proficiency. Unlike traditional methods that emphasize grammatical accuracy and rote memorization, CLT focuses on real-life communication, interaction, and the meaningful use of language (Richards, 2006, p. 2). It aims to develop learners' ability to express themselves fluently and appropriately in diverse contexts. In EFL settings such as Algeria, CLT presents a promising strategy for improving students' communicative competence by promoting active engagement in conversations, role plays, group discussions, and other interactive tasks that reflect authentic language use. A key objective of CLT is to equip learners not only with linguistic knowledge but also with strategic competence the ability to manage communication effectively, even when gaps in language knowledge arise (Brown, 2001, p. 43). As such, CLT offers a practical and learner-centered framework for fostering real-world language skills.

2.3.8.1. Fluency Over Accuracy and Interactive Learning

One of the central principles of CLT is placing fluency above accuracy during oral practice. While grammatical correctness remains important, CLT prioritizes learners' ability to communicate ideas smoothly and understandably. During speaking activities, students are encouraged to express their thoughts freely, without constant interruption for error correction, which helps build confidence and lowers anxiety (Thornbury, 2005, p. 39). Supporting this fluency-first approach is interactive learning, another core feature of CLT, which fosters a learner-centered classroom where communication unfolds through meaningful interaction. Activities such as pair work, group discussions, interviews, and information-gap tasks provide students with opportunities to use language naturally, negotiate meaning, take conversational turns, and develop real-world speaking skills (Richards and Rodgers, 2001, p. 165). This interaction-driven environment supports not only fluency but also the development of social and pragmatic competence in language use.

2.3.8.2. Effectiveness of CLT in Enhancing Confidence, Pronunciation, and Conversational Skills

CLT has been found to significantly enhance learners' confidence, particularly in oral communication. When students are given the freedom to speak and make mistakes without

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fear of judgment, they gradually overcome anxiety and shyness. This supportive environment encourages risk-taking and active participation in speaking tasks (Nunan, 2003, p. 50). In addition to building confidence, CLT also improves pronunciation by exposing learners to authentic speech models and providing repeated practice in context. As a result, students become more aware of features like intonation, stress, and rhythm elements essential for effective spoken communication (Thornbury, 2005, p. 22). Furthermore, CLT strengthens conversational skills by promoting spontaneous, meaningful use of language. Through simulated real-life interactions, learners practice initiating, maintaining, and closing conversations, as well as responding appropriately across various situations. This experience not only boosts their proficiency but also makes them more confident, capable communicators (Harmer, 2007, p. 123).

2.3.9. Challenges of Implementing CLT in EFL Classrooms

Despite its advantages, the implementation of CLT in EFL classrooms faces several significant obstacles. One major challenge is the continued reliance on traditional, teacher-centered methodologies that emphasize grammar and written accuracy, often at the expense of communicative activities. Many teachers are not adequately trained in CLT and may lack the confidence or pedagogical knowledge to adopt a more interactive approach (Li, 1998). In addition, large class sizes and limited classroom resources make it difficult to manage pair or group work effectively. Learners' low English proficiency and passive learning habits further hinder active participation in communicative tasks. Moreover, cultural and societal norms that view the teacher as the sole authority in the classroom conflict with CLT's emphasis on learner autonomy and collaboration (Li, 1998). These challenges underscore the need for context-sensitive teacher training, stronger institutional support, and the gradual adaptation of CLT principles to suit local realities without losing sight of its core goal: meaningful, student-centered communication.

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2.3.10. Conclusion

As a conclusion, this chapter has aimed to explore and discuss the effectiveness of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in enhancing EFL learners' speaking proficiency. The chapter has been divided into two main sections. The first section provided a comprehensive review of CLT, including its historical development, core principles, and the role of interaction in the communicative classroom. It also examined the types of activities used in CLT and explored a structured framework for its implementation. The second section focused on speaking proficiency, emphasizing its importance in language acquisition, the role of fluency over accuracy in CLT, and the interactive learning techniques that contribute to developing learners' confidence, pronunciation, and conversational skills. Furthermore, the chapter highlighted the challenges of implementing CLT, such as limited resources and insufficient teacher training, and suggested strategies for overcoming these challenges. Through this discussion, the chapter has underscored the potential of CLT in improving speaking proficiency, while also recognizing the need for context-sensitive adaptations and professional development to ensure its successful implementation.

Having explored the theoretical foundations and key principles of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), as well as its impact on speaking proficiency, the next chapter turns to the practical aspect of this study. It presents the field work conducted to investigate how CLT is implemented in real classroom settings and to assess its effectiveness in enhancing the speaking skills of first-year EFL students.

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3.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the practical aspect of the research by outlining the procedures followed during the investigation. The study aims to explore both teachers' and students' attitudes toward the role of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in developing learners' speaking proficiency. To address the research questions and test the validity of the hypothesis, two main data collection tools were employed: a student questionnaire and teacher interviews. The questionnaire was selected for its practicality and efficiency in gathering information from a large number of participants within the limited timeframe of the study. The interview, in contrast, was used to obtain in-depth and detailed insights from teachers. It provided a flexible and open format that allowed participants to share their experiences, beliefs, and challenges in implementing CLT- insights that might not be fully captured through structured questionnaires. This qualitative method added depth to the data and helped clarify key points that emerged from the students' responses.

The students' questionnaire included both closed and open-ended questions. The closed questions aimed to collect quantifiable data on learners' engagement in speaking activities, while the open-ended questions gave students the opportunity to share their suggestions and personal reflections on their learning experiences. Meanwhile, the teacher interviews focused on their perceptions of CLT, how they apply it in their teaching practices, and the extent to which they promote interaction and oral participation in the classroom. The use of both instruments offered a comprehensive and balanced perspective on the implementation and reception of CLT in the EFL context. This chapter concludes with a discussion of the findings, an analysis of the results, and pedagogical recommendations for improving learners' speaking skills.

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3.2. Research Design

A research design serves as the overall strategy that integrates the various components of a study in a coherent and logical manner, ensuring that the research problem is effectively addressed. As Creswell (2014) explains, "Research design is the plan or proposal to conduct research, involving the intersection of philosophy, strategies of inquiry, and specific methods" (p. 3). According to Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004), "Mixed methods research is formally defined as the class of research where the researcher mixes or combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts, or language into a single study" (p. 17).

In the present study, a mixed-methods case study design was adopted to investigate the effectiveness of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in enhancing the speaking proficiency of first-year EFL students at Bouira University. This design integrates both quantitative and qualitative approaches, allowing the researcher to capitalize on the strengths of each and provide a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon. The choice of a case study aligns with the aim of gaining an in-depth exploration of a specific educational setting. As Baxter and Jack (2008) note, "A case study is a research approach that facilitates exploration of a phenomenon within its context using a variety of data sources" (p. 544).

In this research, the quantitative strand was represented by a student questionnaire featuring closed-ended items (e.g., Likert scales) to measure students' attitudes and experiences. The qualitative strand consisted of open-ended questionnaire items and semi-structured teacher interviews, which provided deeper insights into teaching practices and perceptions related to CLT. By employing a mixed-methods case study design, the research aims to offer both breadth and depth of analysis. The use of multiple sources of evidence enhances the validity of the findings and allows for triangulation, which, as Denzin (1978) suggests, strengthens the credibility of the results.

3.3. Context and Sampling

A sample refers to a subset of individuals selected from a larger population with the purpose of representing the characteristics of that population in a research study. As Fraenkel, Wallen, and Hyun (2012) explain, "A sample is a group of subjects on which information is obtained; ideally, it should represent the population from which it is drawn" (p. 91). In the present study, the sample

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consisted of sixty (60) EFL students and five (5) EFL teachers from the Department of English at Bouira University. These participants were purposively selected to take part in the research, as they were deemed capable of providing relevant and informed responses to the research instruments: a student questionnaire and semi-structured teacher interviews. This purposive sampling ensured that the selected individuals reflected key characteristics of EFL learners and instructors within this specific educational context.

The students and teachers provided valuable insights into the implementation of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and its perceived effectiveness in enhancing students' speaking proficiency. The representativeness and relevance of the sample contributed to the credibility and contextual richness of the study's findings.

3.3.1. participants

This study involved two main groups of participants: first-year EFL students and EFL teachers at Bouira University. The first group comprised sixty (60) first-year LMD students enrolled in the English Department. These students were selected because they are currently receiving instruction in oral expression and are aware of the challenges they face in speaking English. Both male and female students participated. They completed a questionnaire designed to explore their attitudes and opinions regarding the use of communicative activities and strategies to enhance speaking skills. First-year students were specifically chosen because they are in the early stages of developing oral proficiency and are generally more receptive to adopting new instructional approaches such as Communicative Language Teaching (CLT).

The second group consisted of five (5) English language teachers who have experience teaching first-year students at Bouira University. These educators hold various academic qualifications and specializations, including Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) and English for Specific Purposes (ESP), and have varying years of teaching experience. Although they teach different English language courses, they were selected based on their familiarity with CLT and their ability to provide informed perspectives on students' speaking challenges. Their insights were collected through semi-structured interviews aimed at gaining a deeper understanding of the role of CLT and communicative activities in developing students' speaking proficiency.

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3.3.2. Setting

The data of the present study were collected from the Department of English at Bouira University, where the researcher is currently enrolled. Bouira University follows the LMD system (Licence, Master, Doctorate), which was implemented in Algerian universities during the 2004/2005 academic year (Sarnou et al., 2012). The English Department at Bouira is relatively modest in size compared to departments in other Algerian universities and offers a single Master's specialization in Applied Linguistics. Despite its limited scale, the department plays a significant role in training future EFL teachers and researchers. The Oral Expression module, a core component of the first-year curriculum, serves as a central context for this study, as it offers direct insight into students' speaking difficulties and the teaching practices employed to address them.

3.4. Data Collection Instruments

To collect data for the present study, two primary instruments were employed: a student questionnaire and semi-structured interviews with teachers. These tools were selected to align with the mixed-methods nature of the research, allowing for the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data on the role of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in enhancing students' speaking proficiency. The student questionnaire included both closed-ended and open-ended questions designed to explore learners' attitudes, preferences, and challenges related to oral expression. As Dörnyei (2003) notes, "Questionnaires are particularly suited for collecting information on participants' attitudes, opinions, and self-reported behaviors in a relatively economical and structured way" (p. 9).

In parallel, semi-structured interviews were conducted with five (5) EFL teachers to obtain deeper insights into their experiences and perspectives regarding the implementation of CLT. Semi-structured interviews are especially valuable for combining consistency in questioning with the flexibility to explore emerging themes. According to Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2011), "Interviews enable participants to discuss their interpretations of the world in which they live, and to express how they regard situations from their own point of view" (p. 409).

The integration of both instruments allowed for data triangulation, enriching the findings by drawing from multiple sources and offering a more comprehensive understanding of the research problem.

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3.4.1. The Students' Questionnaire

The students' questionnaire is designed to explore learners' attitudes toward the use of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in their speaking lessons. It aims to assess the extent to which students value communicative activities, interaction, and real-life communication within the classroom. Furthermore, the questionnaire investigates the challenges learners encounter when speaking English and collects their suggestions for improving speaking instruction. Overall, it provides valuable insights into students' perceptions of CLT and its impact on their oral proficiency and classroom engagement.

3.4.1.1. Description of the Students' Questionnaire

The students' questionnaire was administered to first-year EFL students at “Akli Mohaned Olhadj” - Bouira University. It was distributed in printed form during regular class sessions with the cooperation of their teachers, which facilitated smooth delivery and encouraged active participation. Before completing the questionnaire, students were briefly informed about the purpose of the research and were assured that their responses would remain anonymous and confidential, used solely for academic purposes. The administration process proceeded smoothly, with most students responding positively and showing genuine interest in sharing their views. Their contributions provided valuable data for understanding their perceptions of speaking lessons and the role of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in enhancing their speaking proficiency.

Moreover, First-year students were chosen for this study because they are at the beginning of their academic journey in English language learning, making their perceptions particularly insightful. At this early stage, their experiences with speaking lessons and exposure to Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) methods can significantly shape their language development. Understanding their views provides valuable feedback on how effectively current teaching practices support the development of speaking skills from the outset.

The students' questionnaire consists of 23 questions, thoughtfully organized into four main sections, each aimed at gathering specific information about students' experiences, perceptions, and suggestions concerning speaking skills and the implementation of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT).

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Section One: Background Information

This section includes basic demographic information, such as students' gender and the number of years they have been studying English. These details help contextualize the responses and allow for the identification of general trends based on learners' educational backgrounds.

Section Two: Students' Perceptions of Speaking Skills

This section explores learners' attitudes toward oral communication and includes their self-assessment of speaking proficiency. It addresses key aspects such as students' perceptions of the Oral Expression module's effectiveness in enhancing their speaking skills, their current speaking level, the difficulties they encounter when speaking English, and their use of English outside the classroom. Additionally, it examines the most challenging aspects of speaking, the frequency of students' participation in Oral Expression sessions, and their comfort level when speaking during these classes.

Section Three: Classroom Practice and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

This section examines the use of communicative activities in the classroom and explores how learners perceive their effectiveness. It includes questions about the frequency with which students are exposed to communicative tasks, the types of activities they find most beneficial, the extent of teacher encouragement during speaking practice, and the regularity of feedback received. Additionally, this section investigates learners' views on the impact of CLT on their speaking skills, the areas that have shown the most improvement through communicative activities, their confidence during speaking tasks, and their overall opinion on the effectiveness of CLT in addressing speaking-related challenges.

Section Four: Suggestions and Feedback

This section invites students to share their opinions and provide recommendations for enhancing speaking lessons. It includes open-ended questions that allow learners to reflect on their experiences and express any additional thoughts they believe could contribute to the improvement of oral skill development in the EFL classroom.

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The questionnaire uses a combination of multiple-choice, Likert-scale, and open-ended questions to ensure both quantitative and qualitative data are collected, providing a well-rounded understanding of learners' perspectives.

3.4.2. The Teachers' Interview

The main aim of the teachers' interview was to gather qualitative insights into how Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is applied and how effective it is in enhancing first-year EFL students' speaking proficiency. Specifically, the interview explored teachers' experiences, perceptions, challenges, and strategies in teaching speaking skills using CLT principles, in order to better understand the practical realities of its implementation in an EFL context.

3.2.1. Description of the Teachers' Interview

Interviews were conducted with five EFL teachers from Bouira University, all of whom had experience teaching first-year students. Each interview was held individually and online via Gmail, scheduled according to the participants' availability and convenience. A semi-structured format was used, featuring prepared open-ended questions to guide the conversation while allowing flexibility for follow-up inquiries. Prior to the interviews, participants were informed about the purpose of the study, assured of the confidentiality of their responses, and asked to provide voluntary consent. The collected data were analyzed qualitatively to identify key themes and variations in teachers' perspectives regarding the effectiveness of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in improving EFL students' speaking proficiency.

A total of five EFL teachers were interviewed to explore their experiences and perceptions regarding the effectiveness of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in enhancing students' speaking proficiency. The interviews focused on collecting in-depth qualitative data about the application of CLT principles in the classroom, the challenges teachers face, and the impact of CLT-based activities on learners' speaking development. Thirteen open-ended questions guided the interviews, encouraging participants to elaborate on their experiences. The questions covered topics such as the teachers' years of experience, their approach to teaching speaking skills to first-year students, and the common difficulties learners face. Teachers were also asked about their familiarity with CLT, how they define it, and the extent to which they integrate its principles into their lessons,

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with specific examples. Other questions explored how CLT differs from traditional methods, the challenges of implementing CLT, and how students respond to communicative activities. Additionally, the interview sought insights into which CLT activities are most effective, the overall impact of CLT on speaking proficiency and confidence, and suggestions for improving CLT implementation. The final question invited teachers to share any further thoughts or experiences related to CLT and its role in speaking development.

4.1. Data Analysis

4.1.1 Analysis of Students' Questionnaire

4.1.1.1. Section One: Background Information

Question 01: Gender

Gender	Subjects	Percentage
Female	49	82%
Male	11	18%
Total	60	100%

Table 01: Students' Gender Distribution

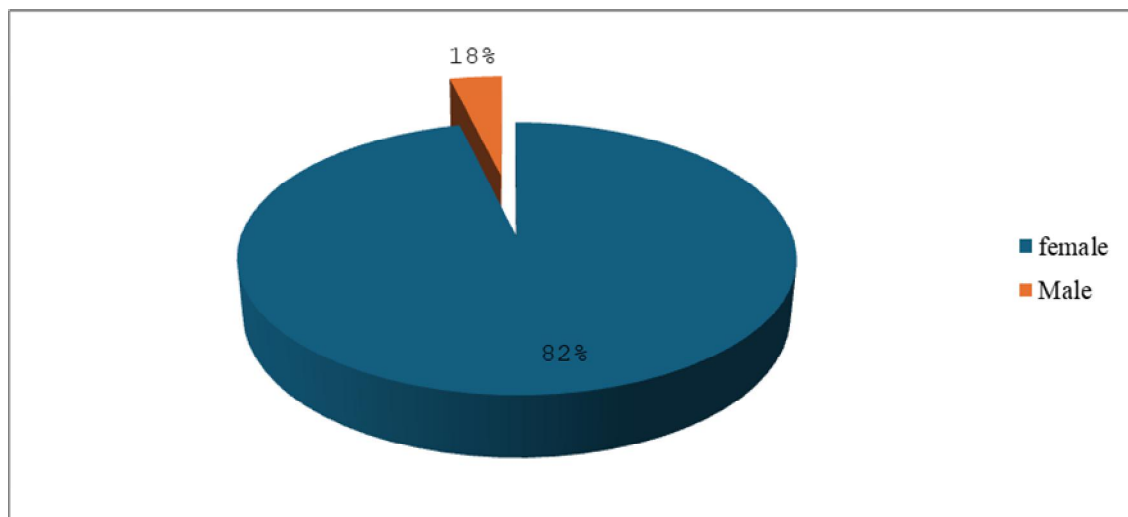


Figure 01: Students' Gender Distribution

An analysis of the table reveals a higher representation of female participants compared to their male counterparts. Specifically, male participants make up 11 of the total 60 participants (18%),

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while female participants account for 49 (82%). This shows that the sample is predominantly composed of female respondents.

Question 02: How long have you been studying English?

Years of Study	Number of Participants	Percentage
Less than 5 years	7	11.7%
5-8 years	42	70%
More than 8 years	10	16.7%
Total	60	100%

Table 02: Students' Years of Studying English

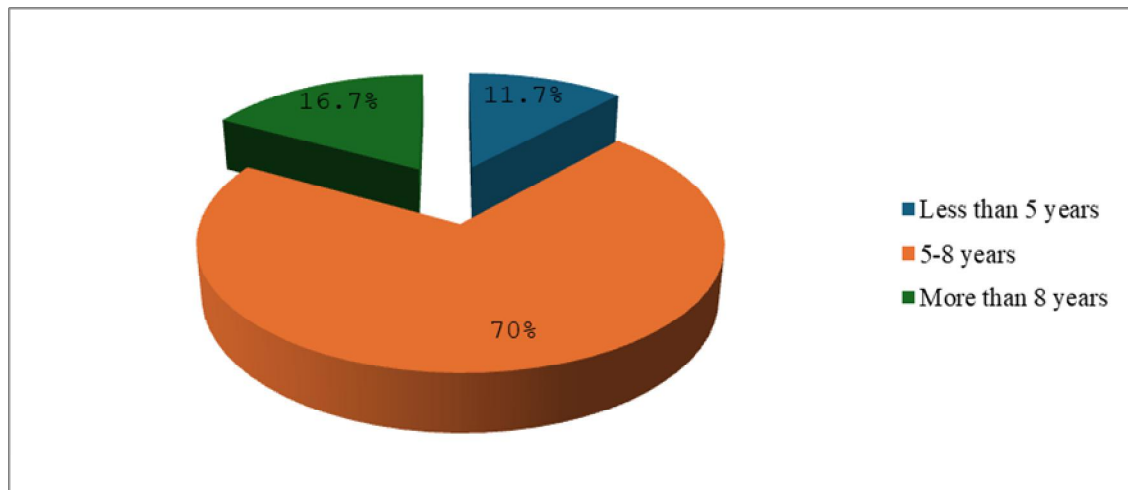


Figure 02: Students' Years of Studying English

The data in Table 2 shows that the majority of participants (70%) have been studying English for 5 to 8 years. A smaller proportion (16.7%) reported having studied English for more than 8 years, while only 11.7% have been studying the language for less than 5 years. This suggests that most participants have a moderate level of exposure to English learning.

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4.1.1.2. Section Two: Student's Perception of Speaking Skills

Question 03: How is speaking skills important to you?

Options	Subjects	Percentage
Very Important	52	88.13%
Rather Important	7	11.86%
Little Important	1	1.69%
Not Important at All	0	0%
Total	60	100%

Table 03: Importance of Speaking Skills: Participant Responses

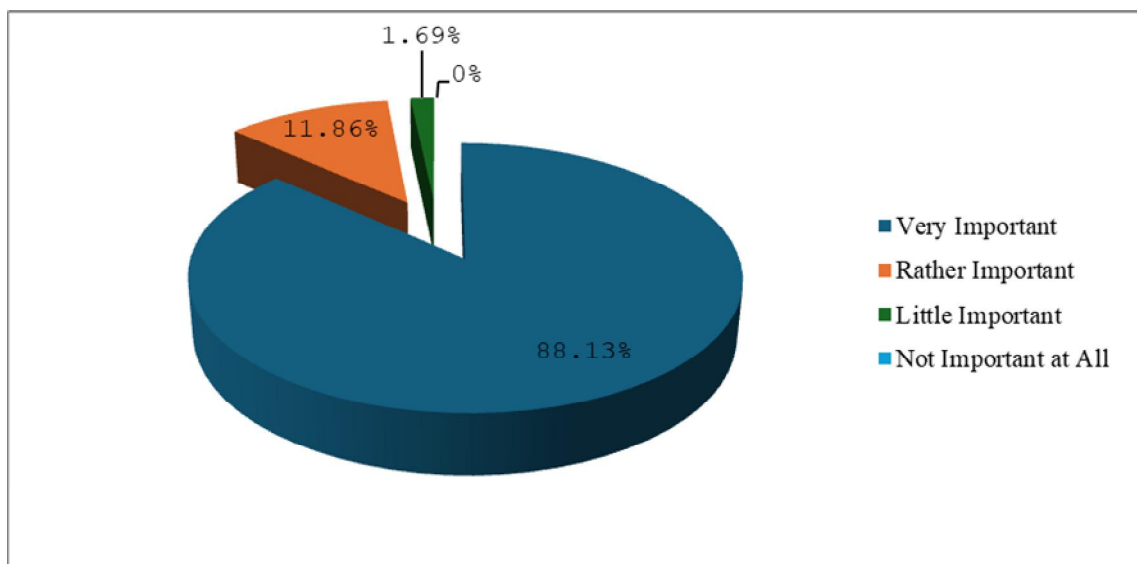


Figure 03: Importance of Speaking Skills: Participant Responses

The majority of participants (88.13%) consider speaking skills "Very Important," highlighting the significant value they place on speaking proficiency. A smaller proportion (11.86%) consider speaking skills "Rather Important," while only 1.69% regard them as "Little Important." No participants consider speaking skills "Not Important at All." This indicates that speaking skills are deemed essential by most participants.

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Question 04: How do you rate your current speaking proficiency in English?

Options	Subjects	Percentage
Poor	2	3.33%
Average	22	36.66%
Good	34	56.66%
Excellent	3	5%
Total	60	100%

Table 04: Participants' Self-Rating of Their Current Speaking Proficiency in English

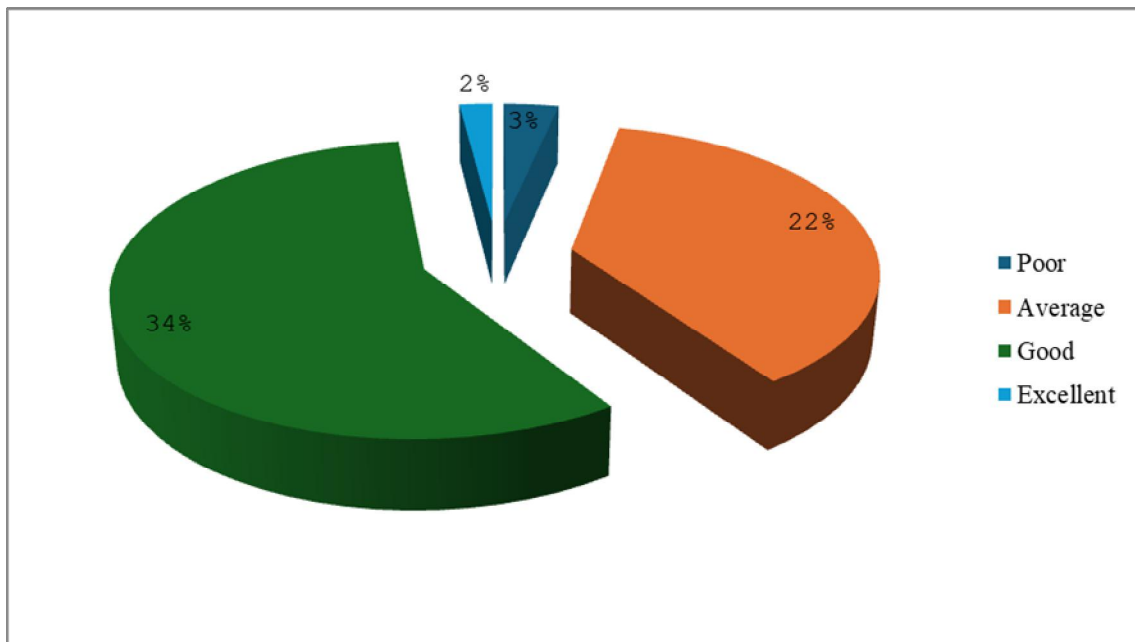


Figure 04: Participants' Self-Rating of Their Current Speaking Proficiency in English

The results show that more than half of the participants (56.66%) rated their speaking proficiency as "Good," while 36.66% considered it "Average." A smaller proportion rated themselves as "Excellent" (5%) or "Poor" (3.33%). These findings suggest a generally positive self-assessment of speaking proficiency among the participants, though there is still room for improvement.

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Question 05: Do you find speaking in English...?

Options	Subjects	Percentage
Very Easy	8	13.33%
Easy	46	76.66%
Difficult	6	10%
Very Difficult	0	0%
Total	60	100%

Table 05: Participants' Perception of Difficulty in Speaking English

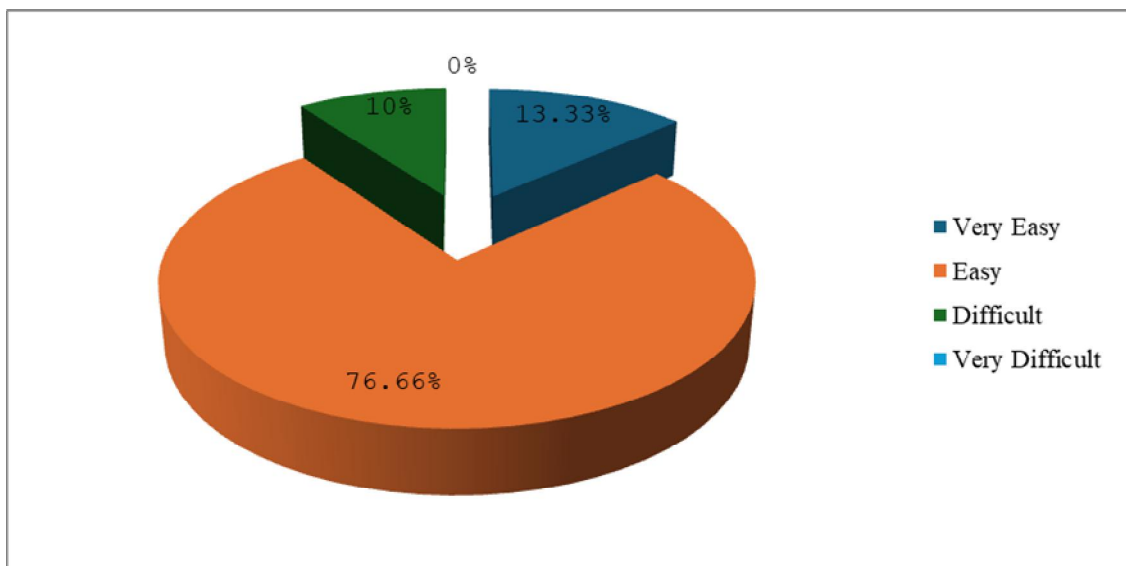


Figure 05: Participants' Perception of Difficulty in Speaking English

The majority of participants (76.66%) find speaking English "Easy," while 13.33% consider it "Very Easy." Only a small percentage (10%) find it "Difficult," and none rated it as "Very Difficult." These results suggest that most participants feel fairly comfortable speaking in English.

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Question 06: Do you speak English outside the classroom?

Options	Subjects	Percentage
Yes	37	61.66%
No	23	38.33 %
Total	60	100%

Table 06: Participants' Use of English Outside the Classroom

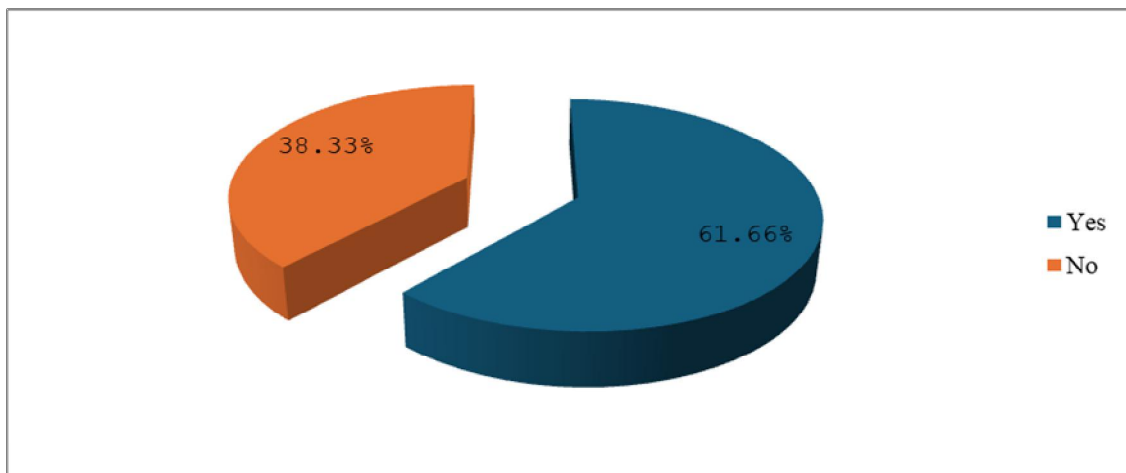


Figure 06: Participants' Use of English Outside the Classroom

A majority of participants (61.66%) reported speaking English outside the classroom, while 38.33% do not. This indicates that a significant portion of students engage with English beyond academic settings, which may positively impact their speaking proficiency and confidence.

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Question 07: What do you find most challenging about speaking English?

Options	Subjects	Percentage
A) Vocabulary	5	8.33%
B) Pronunciation	7	11.66%
C) Fluency	5	13.33%
A) Confidence	8	8.33%
A + B	5	8.33%
B + C	5	8.33%
A + D	6	10%
A + C	4	6.66%
C + D	6	10%
B + D	2	3.33%
A + B + D	3	5%
A + B + C + D	4	6.66%
Total	60	100%

Table 07: Participants' Perceptions of the Most Challenging Aspects of Speaking English

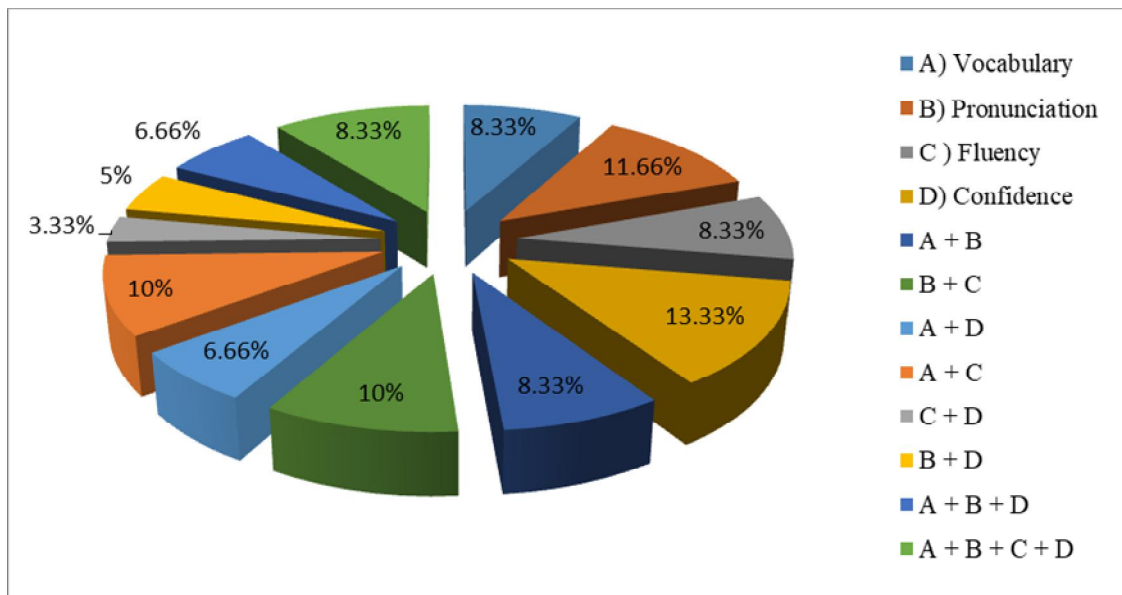


Figure 07: Participants' Perceptions of the Most Challenging Aspects of Speaking English

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The responses indicate that confidence (13.33%) and pronunciation (11.66%) are the most frequently cited individual challenges. However, many participants also reported a combination of overlapping difficulties, such as issues with vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency, and confidence. This suggests that speaking difficulties are often multifaceted, rather than isolated, highlighting the need for integrated support for speaking skills.

Question 08: How often do you participate in the Oral Expression module?

Options	Subjects	Percentage
Often	20	33.33%
Sometimes	33	55%
Rarely	7	11.66%
Never	0	0%
Total	60	100%

Table 08: Frequency of Participation in the Oral Expression Module

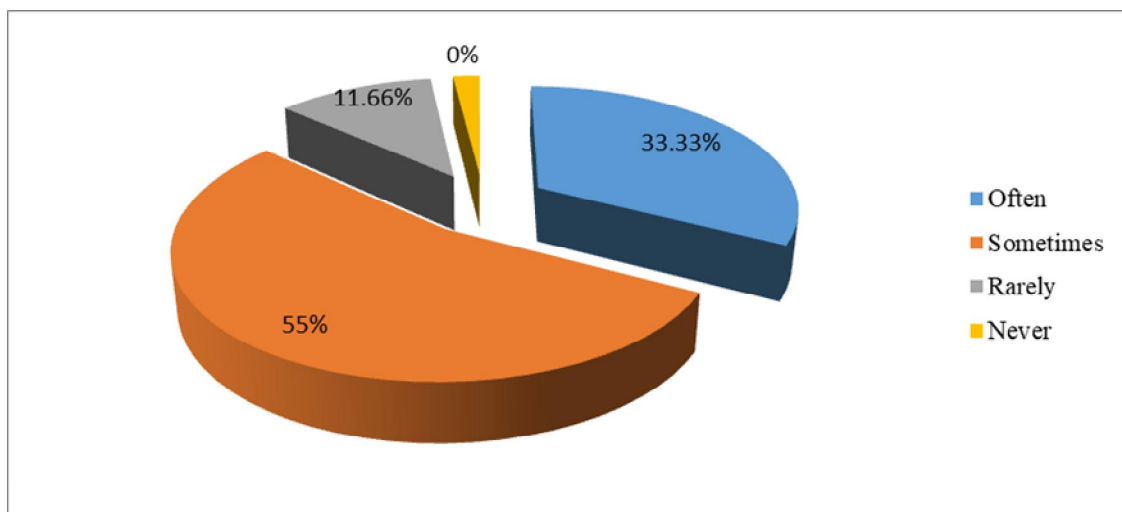


Figure 08: Frequency of Participation in the Oral Expression Module

Most participants (55%) reported that they "Sometimes" participate in the Oral Expression module, while 33.33% participate "Often." A smaller group (11.66%) participates "Rarely," and none reported "Never" participating. These results suggest that, while engagement is generally positive, there is still room to encourage more consistent and active participation in oral expression activities.

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Question Item 09: Do you feel comfortable in the Oral Expression class?

Options	Subjects	Percentage
A) Yes	46	76.7%
B) No	14	23.3%
Total	60	100%

Table 09: Students' Comfort Level in the Oral Expression Class

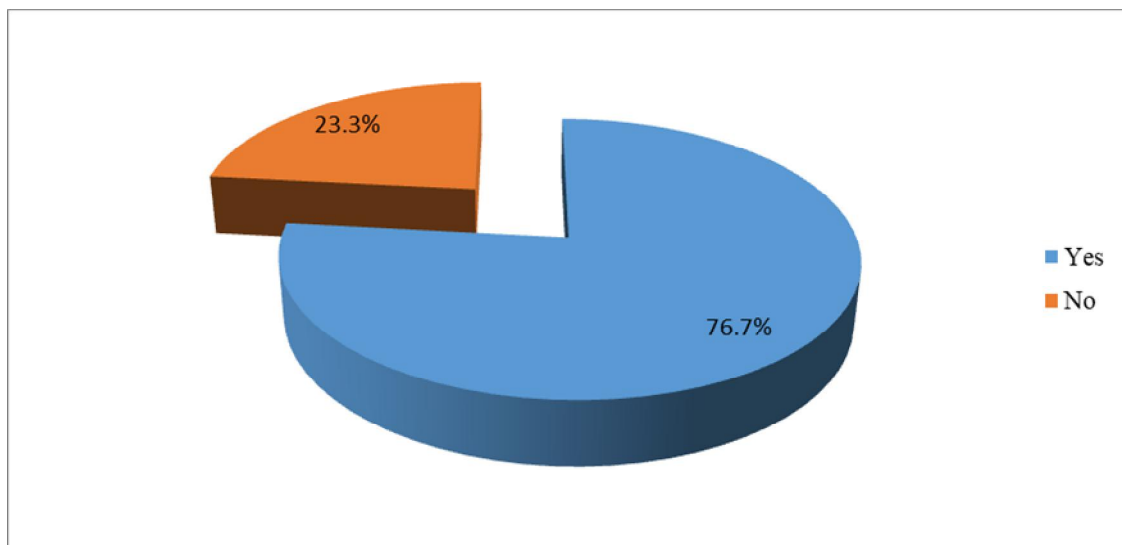


Figure 09: Students' Comfort Level in the Oral Expression Class

The majority of participants (76.7%) reported feeling comfortable in the Oral Expression class, indicating a generally positive learning atmosphere. However, a notable minority (23.3%) expressed discomfort, suggesting that there may be challenges that need to be addressed in order to improve the classroom experience for all students.

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Question 10: whatever you answer say why?

Comfort in the Oral Expression module seems to stem from a combination of pedagogical and interpersonal factors. Many students highlighted the learning environment as a key factor in their positive experience, emphasizing the importance of a supportive and engaging classroom atmosphere. They noted that when teachers use interactive strategies, encourage participation, and create space for open dialogue, students are more likely to feel at ease speaking in front of others.

Peer collaboration also emerged as a significant factor. Working in groups and participating in discussions with classmates helped reduce performance pressure and fostered a sense of mutual support. These collaborative settings seemed to alleviate the fear of making mistakes, allowing students to develop greater fluency and confidence.

On a personal level, some students attributed their comfort to self-assurance in language use. Confidence in vocabulary and grammatical accuracy gave them the courage to speak up, view errors as learning opportunities, and remain resilient in the face of potential criticism.

Interestingly, a few students saw the Oral Expression module as distinct from other courses in the curriculum. Unlike more rigid modules, they felt this course offered them the freedom to voice their opinions and express themselves openly, which in turn enhanced their motivation and participation.

Conversely, discomfort in the module was mainly linked to instructional practices. Students expressed dissatisfaction with repetitive activities and traditional methods that failed to engage them or develop their speaking skills. This lack of innovation contributed to classroom anxiety and a reluctance to participate. Additionally, limited student interaction and a lack of inclusive group work were seen as barriers to effective communication and performance.

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Question 11: To what extent did the Oral Expression module help you enhance your oral proficiency?

Options	Subjects	Percentage
A) Very much	22	37.3%
B) Somehow	24	40.7%
C) Not very much	10	16.9%
D) Not at all	3	5.1%
Total	59	100%

Table 10: Students' Perceptions of the Oral Expression Module's Role in Enhancing Oral Proficiency

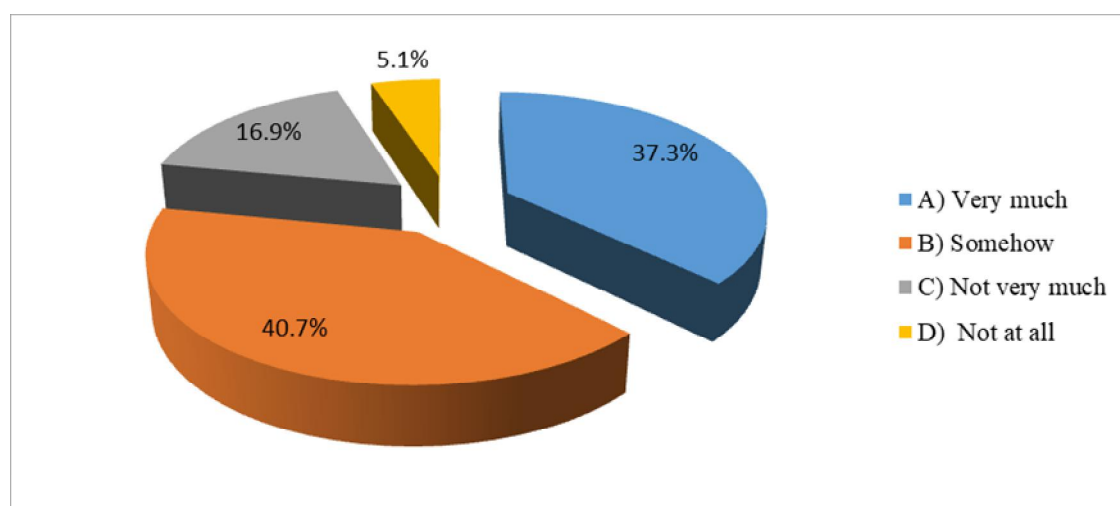


Figure 10: Students' Perceptions of the Oral Expression Module's Role in Enhancing Oral Proficiency

The results show that the majority of students (78%) perceived the Oral Expression module as beneficial to their oral proficiency, with 37.3% indicating "very much" and 40.7% indicating "somehow." In contrast, 16.9% felt it helped "not very much," and a small percentage (5.1%) stated it did "not at all." These responses highlight the overall effectiveness of the module in improving speaking skills, though they also point to the need for adjustments to better support students who found it less impactful. These findings suggest that while the module has a generally positive effect, further refinement and adaptation could enhance its reach and effectiveness for all students.

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4.1.1.3. Section Three: Classroom Practices and CLT

Question 12: How often do your speaking lessons involve communicative activities (e.g., role-plays, group discussions, debates)?

Options	Subjects	Percentage
A) Always	29	30%
B) Often	24	41.4%
C) Rarely	10	14.3%
D) Never	0	0%
Total	60	100%

Table 11: Students' Frequency of Exposure to Communicative Activities in Speaking Lessons

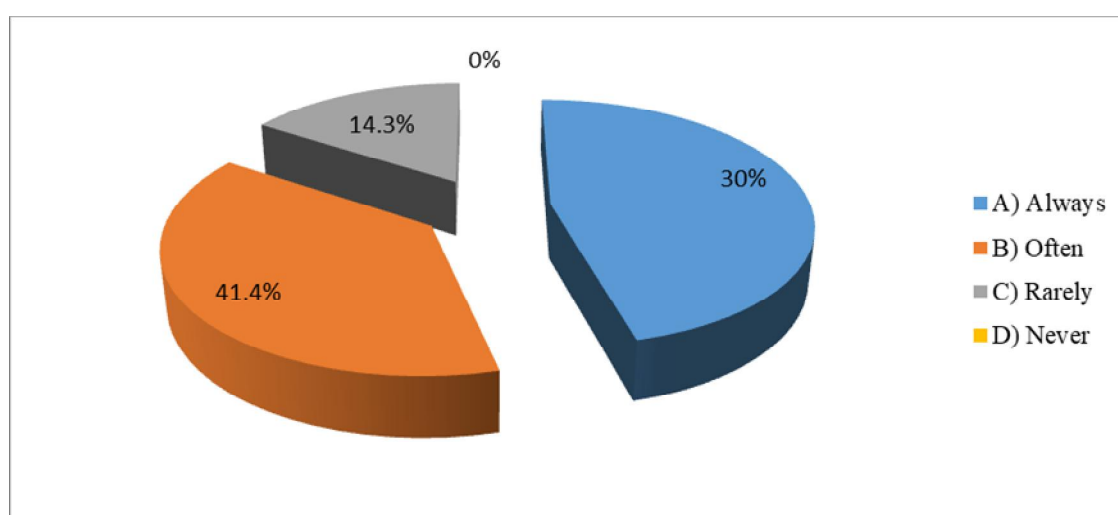


Figure 11: Students' Frequency of Exposure to Communicative Activities in Speaking Lessons

The table reveals that a significant portion of students (41.4%) stated that their speaking lessons often involve communicative activities, while 30% reported they always experience such activities. Only a small percentage (14.3%) indicated rare involvement, and no participants reported a complete absence of communicative activities. This suggests a general tendency towards incorporating communicative methods in oral classes, with most students being exposed to communicative tasks regularly. This trend highlights the importance of interactive learning in enhancing students' speaking proficiency and suggests that further emphasis on such activities could contribute to more effective language acquisition.

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Question 13: What type of activities do you find most effective in improving your speaking skills?

Options	Subjects	Percentage
A) Grammar-basd exercises	6	10%
B) Communicative activities (e.g., conversations, group tasks)	45	75%
C) Listening exercises	9	15%
Total	60	100%

Table 12: Students' Perceptions of the Most Effective Activities for Enhancing Speaking Skills

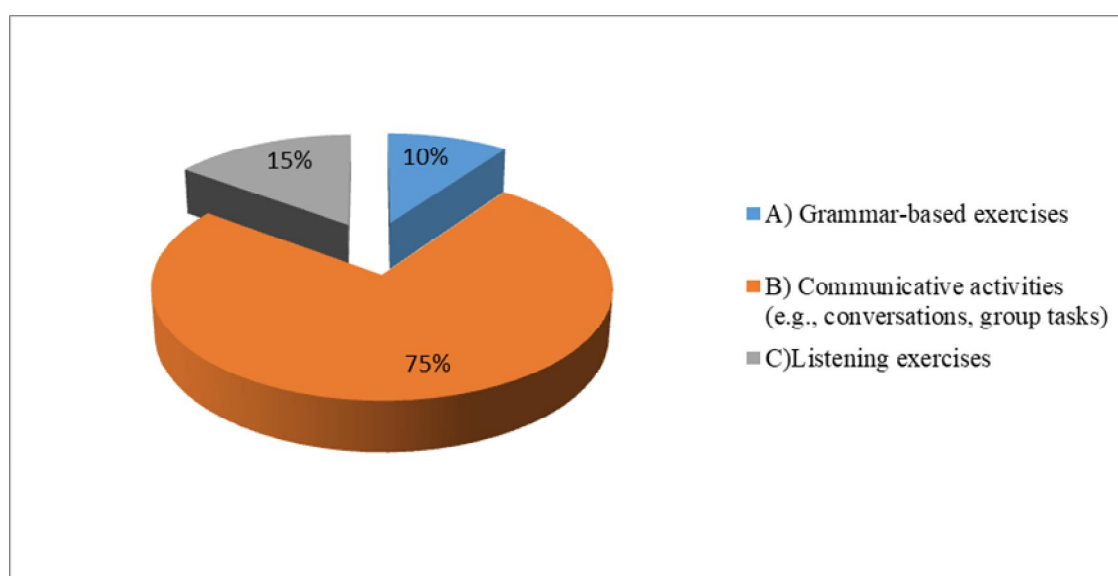


Figure 12: Students' Perceptions of the Most Effective Activities for Enhancing Speaking Skills

As shown in the table, 75% of the students selected communicative activities as the most effective for improving speaking proficiency. Listening exercises were chosen by 15% of participants, while only 10% preferred grammar-based exercises. This strongly reflects a learner-centered preference for interactive and meaningful communication tasks in speaking development. The overwhelming preference for communicative activities indicates that students recognize the importance of real-world language use in enhancing their speaking skills, reinforcing the effectiveness of communicative language teaching (CLT) in promoting practical and engaging language learning experiences.

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Question 14: Do your teachers encourage you to express your ideas freely during speaking activities?

Options	Subjects	Percentage
A) Always	41	68.3%
B) Sometimes	45	18.3%
C) Rarely	5	8.3%
D) No	4	6.6%
Total	60	100%

Table 13: Learners' Perceptions of Teachers' Encouragement During Speaking Activities

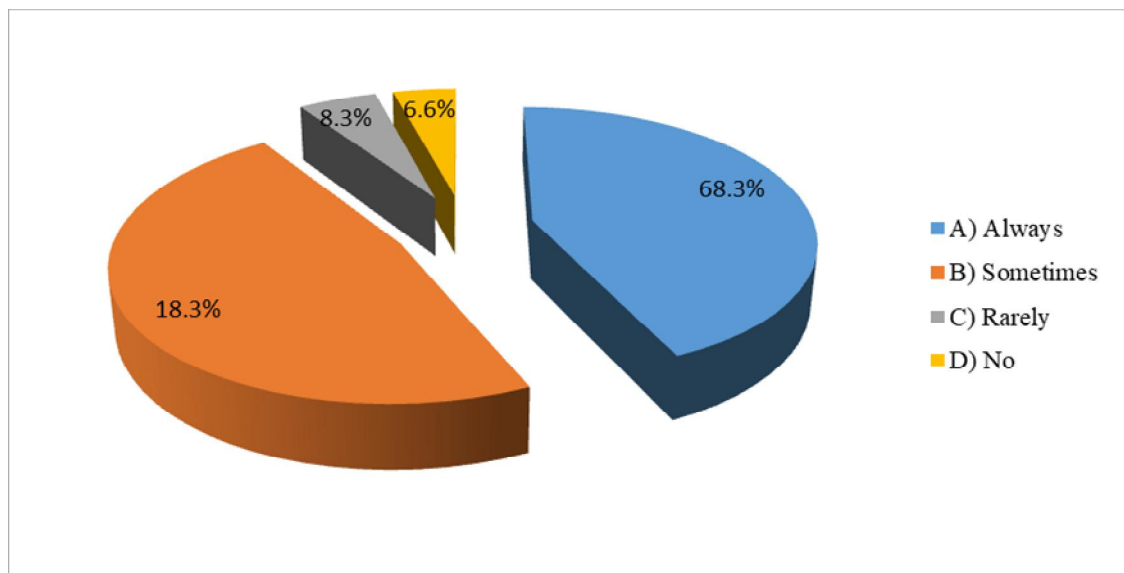


Figure 13: Learners' Perceptions of Teachers' Encouragement During Speaking Activities

The results show that a significant majority of students (68.3%) reported that their teachers always encourage them to express their ideas freely, while only a small percentage (6.6%) felt they were not encouraged at all. This suggests a generally positive classroom environment that promotes student expression in speaking tasks. The high level of encouragement indicates that teachers are creating an atmosphere that supports active participation, which is essential for enhancing students' speaking skills and building their confidence in oral communication.

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Question 15: How often do you receive feedback from your teacher about your speaking performance?

Options	Subjects	Percentage
A) After every activity	13	21.7%
B) Occasionally	27	45%
C) Rarely	5	8.3%
D) Never	4	6.6%
Total	60	100%

Table 14: Frequency of Teachers' Feedback on Students' Speaking Performance

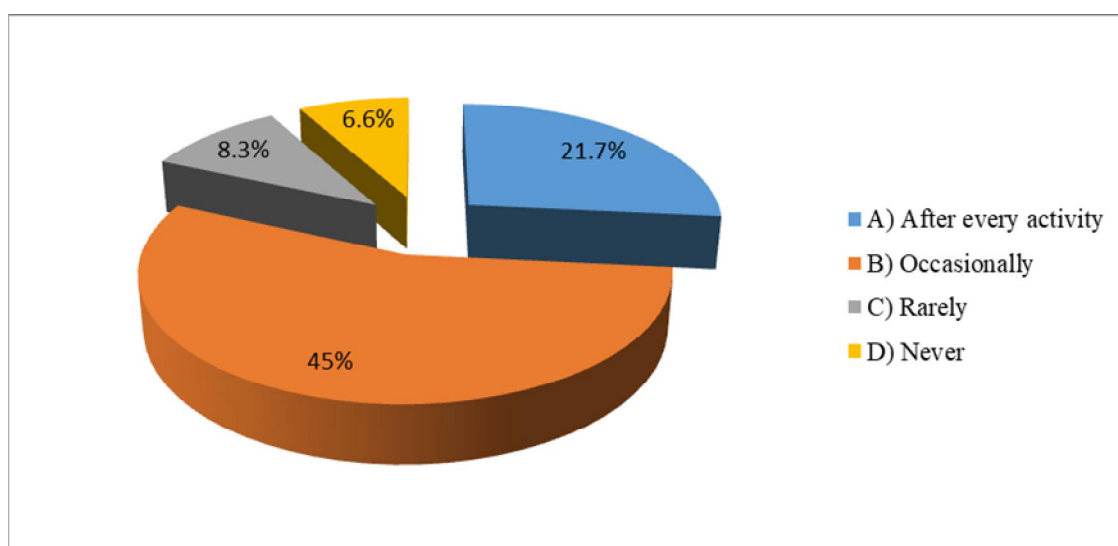


Figure 14: Frequency of Teachers' Feedback on Students' Speaking Performance

The majority of students (45%) stated that they occasionally receive feedback on their speaking performance, while only 21.7% reported receiving consistent feedback. This indicates that while feedback is present, it is not always regular, which might impact learners' ability to improve their speaking skills effectively. Regular, constructive feedback is crucial for helping students identify areas of improvement and reinforcing positive speaking habits, suggesting that a more systematic approach to feedback could enhance learners' speaking proficiency.

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4.1.1.4. Section Four: Impact of CLT on Speaking Proficiency

Question 16: Do you feel that communicative activities improve your speaking skills?

Options	Subjects	Percentage
A) Significantly	34	56.6%
B) To some extent	23	38.3%
C) Not much	2	3.3%
D) Not at all	1	1.6%
Total	60	100%

Table 15: Students' Perceptions of the Impact of Communicative Activities on Speaking Skill

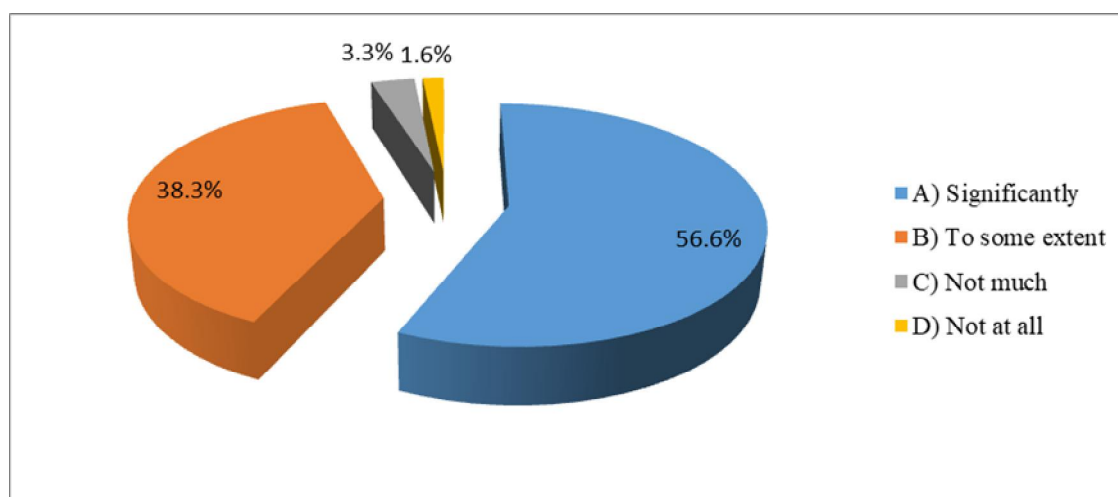


Figure 15: Students' Perceptions of the Impact of Communicative Activities on Speaking Skill

The results reveal that a majority of students (56.6%) believe that communicative activities significantly enhance their speaking skills, while a small fraction (4.9%) feel that such activities have little to no impact. This reflects the overall effectiveness of communicative approaches in developing oral proficiency among EFL learners, suggesting that most students recognize the value of interactive and meaningful communication tasks in improving their speaking abilities. The relatively low percentage of students who feel less impacted by these activities highlights the potential need for further adjustments or variety in communicative tasks to cater to all learners' needs.

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Question 17: Which aspects of speaking have improved the most through CLT-based activities?

Options	Subjects	Percentage
A) Vocabulary usage	13	21.7%
B) Fluency	3	5 %
C) Pronunciation	13	21.7%
D) Confidence	7	11.7%
A + B	2	3.3%
A + D	3	5%
A + C	5	8.3%
B + D	3	5%
A + C + D	3	5%
B + C + D	2	3.3%
A + B + C + D	1	1.6%
Nothing	1	1.6%
Total	60	100%

Table 16: Learners' Views on the Most Improved Speaking Aspects through CLT-based Activities

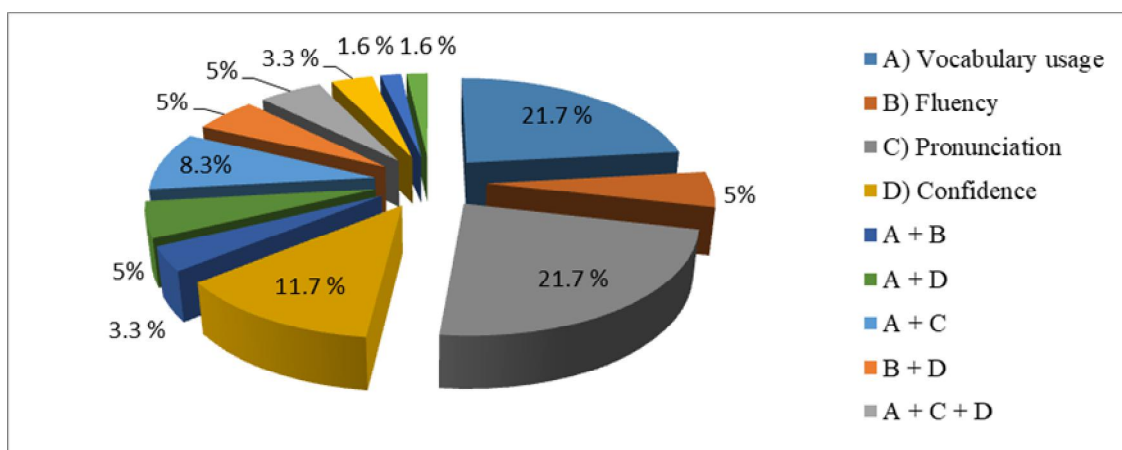


Figure 16: Learners' Views on the Most Improved Speaking Aspects through CLT-based Activities

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The data highlights that vocabulary usage and pronunciation were equally noted as the most improved aspects (21.7% each), while confidence and fluency followed at lower rates. Additionally, a significant number of students selected combined improvements across multiple areas, indicating that CLT-based activities tend to foster overall speaking development rather than isolated skills. This suggests that the communicative approach not only enhances specific language features but also promotes a more holistic improvement in students' speaking proficiency, contributing to greater fluency and confidence in their oral expression.

Question 18: How confident do you feel when participating in speaking tasks in class?

Options	Subjects	Percentage
A) Very confident	14	23.3%
B) Somewhat confident	39	65%
C) Not confident	7	11.7%
Total	60	100%

Table 17: Students' Confidence Levels During Speaking Tasks in Class

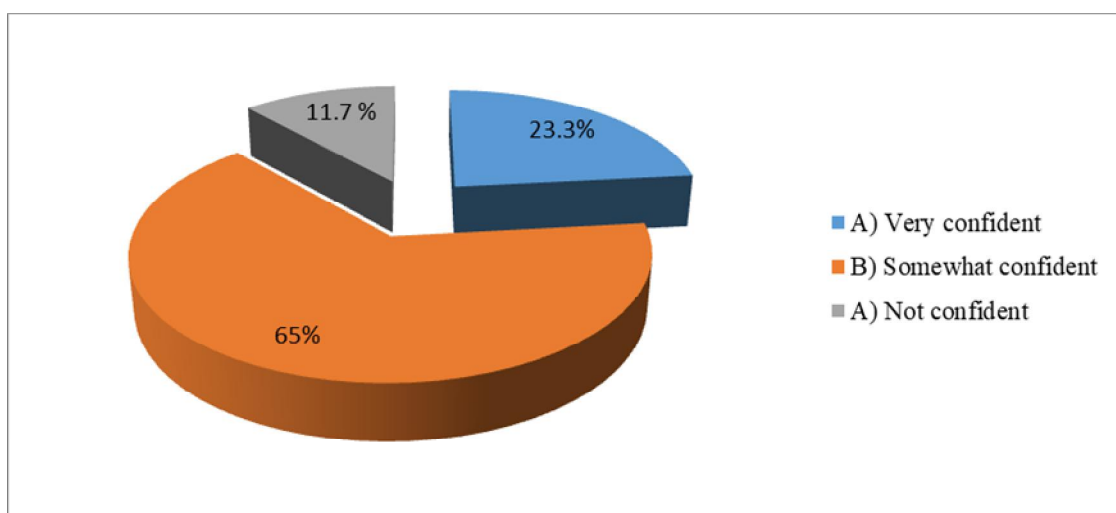


Figure 17 : Students' Confidence Levels During Speaking Tasks in Class

The majority of students (65%) reported feeling somewhat confident when participating in speaking tasks, while 23.3% felt very confident. Only a small portion (11.7%) admitted to not feeling confident at all. This suggests that most learners have a moderate to high level of comfort with speaking in class, though there is still room to support those with lower confidence. It highlights the

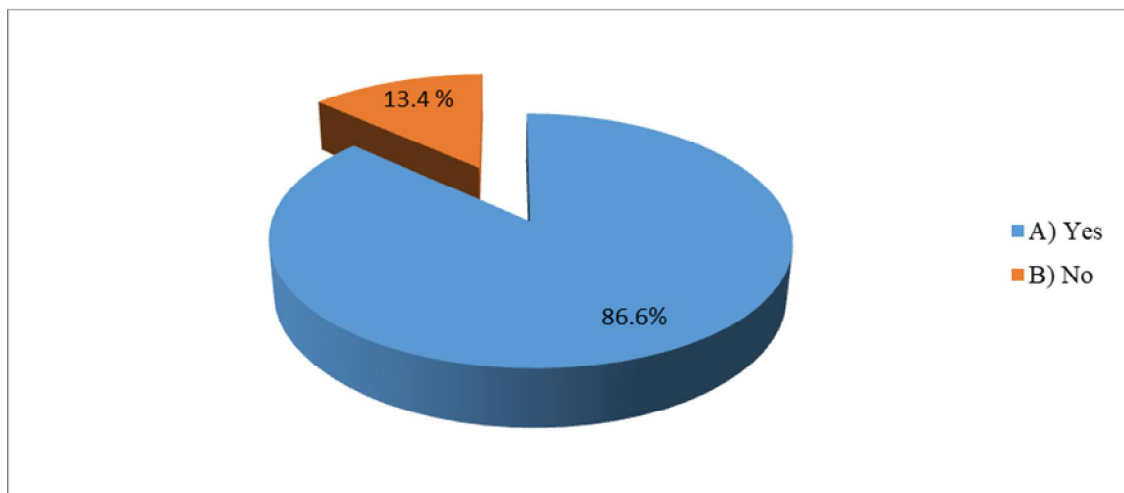
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importance of fostering a supportive and encouraging classroom environment to boost students' self-assurance and further promote their active participation in speaking activities.

Question 19: Do you think CLT addresses the specific challenges you face in speaking English?

Options	Subjects	Percentage
A) Yes	52	86.6%
B) No	8	13.4%
Total	60	100%

Table 18: Students' Opinions on CLT's Effectiveness in Addressing Speaking Challenges



Graph 18: Students' Opinions on CLT's Effectiveness in Addressing Speaking Challenges

An overwhelming majority of students (86.6%) believe that CLT effectively addresses the specific challenges they face when speaking English. Only a small group (13.4%) disagreed, which highlights that CLT is generally perceived as a supportive and beneficial approach in overcoming learners' speaking difficulties. This suggests that the communicative methods employed in the classroom are well-received and perceived as instrumental in helping students overcome the barriers to speaking proficiency.

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4.1.1.5. Section Five: Suggestions and Feedback

Question 20: What changes would you suggest to improve speaking lessons in your classroom?

Among the 60 respondents, many students shared insightful suggestions for making speaking lessons more effective and enjoyable. Their responses emphasized the importance of incorporating interactive and entertaining activities—such as speaking games, debates, role plays, and class discussions—to create a more engaging and supportive learning atmosphere. These activities were perceived as helpful in breaking the routine, reducing anxiety, and boosting students' self-confidence. Moreover, students highlighted the need for increased exposure to listening tasks and interactive speaking exercises, which would allow them to engage with authentic language use and improve their pronunciation and fluency. Several participants also expressed dissatisfaction with traditional teaching methods and recommended a shift towards more communicative, learner-centered approaches. Additionally, they stressed the importance of teachers being supportive and encouraging, especially when learners make mistakes, as this fosters a more comfortable environment and promotes active participation. Overall, students believed that implementing these suggestions would make speaking lessons more dynamic, motivating, and effective in enhancing their oral communication skills.

Question 21: In your opinion, how does the teacher contribute to improving students' speaking proficiency?

The students provided insightful responses regarding the teacher's role in enhancing their speaking proficiency. Most agreed that the teacher plays a central role in fostering a positive and supportive environment where learners feel encouraged to speak without fear. They emphasized that teachers should continuously motivate students, boost their confidence, and demonstrate patience when mistakes occur. According to the participants, effective teachers use varied and interactive methods—such as discussions, role plays, and games—to engage learners in meaningful communication. Additionally, many students highlighted the importance of constructive and gentle feedback, noting that correcting errors without causing embarrassment contributes to a more comfortable learning atmosphere. Some students also appreciated when teachers used simplified language, offered consistent encouragement, and actively involved all students in speaking tasks. Moreover, teachers who are friendly, approachable, and humble were especially valued, as these

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qualities made learners feel more at ease and more willing to participate. In short, students view the teacher's methods, attitudes, and interpersonal approach as essential to the development of their oral proficiency.

Question 22: Do you think CLT is the most effective method for improving speaking skills? Why or Why not?

When asked whether they consider the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach the most effective method for enhancing speaking skills, a significant number of students responded positively. While some simply answered "yes" without elaboration, others provided detailed explanations for their views. Several students highlighted that CLT focuses on key elements of speaking proficiency, such as pronunciation, fluency, and overall oral performance. They also emphasized that the method promotes active participation, which helps learners build self-confidence and overcome their fear of speaking. The interactive nature of CLT was especially appreciated, as students noted that it fosters real-life communication and allows them to engage in meaningful conversations. According to these students, the emphasis on interaction in CLT enhances their ability to use English effectively in everyday situations, making the approach both practical and beneficial. Overall, those in favor of CLT agreed that its communicative and learner-centered principles play a vital role in developing speaking proficiency.

Question 23: Any further suggestions or point of view are most welcome

For this question, many students chose not to provide additional suggestions. However, among those who did respond, several key ideas emerged. Some students emphasized the importance of fostering a classroom environment where learners feel encouraged and comfortable speaking. They proposed that teachers should create opportunities for students to express themselves freely without fear of making mistakes, as this would help reduce anxiety and enhance participation. Additionally, a few students suggested incorporating regular speaking assessments to monitor progress and motivate consistent practice. These responses reflect learners' desire for a supportive, low-pressure environment that nurtures confidence and facilitates the development of speaking skills.

The analysis of the students' questionnaire reveals valuable insights into learners' attitudes, challenges, and preferences regarding speaking instruction and the use of the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach. Overall, students expressed a strong appreciation for

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communicative activities and recognized their effectiveness in enhancing oral proficiency, particularly in terms of fluency, vocabulary, and confidence. While many students reported feeling comfortable in oral expression classes, the findings also highlighted the need for more varied and interactive teaching strategies, consistent feedback, and a supportive classroom environment. These results underscore the importance of adapting speaking lessons to be more student-centered, engaging, and reflective of real-life communication, in line with the core principles of CLT.

Therefore, in order to provide more qualitative data and to secure further support to the findings of the present investigation, a semi-structured interview with Four (04) teachers was designed and is analyzed in the following section.

4.1.2. Analysis of Teachers' Interview

Question One: How long have you been teaching EFL learners?

Teachers' responses to this question revealed a wide range of teaching experience, from as little as two years to over two decades. This diversity offers a balanced and comprehensive perspective, enriching the study with insights from both novice and seasoned educators. For example, a teacher with only two years of experience described teaching speaking as a new and evolving challenge, while a more experienced teacher reflected on long-term pedagogical shifts and recurring obstacles. This variation in professional background enhances the credibility and depth of the data collected.

Question Two: Can you describe your experience teaching speaking skills to first-year EFL students?

Most teachers characterized teaching speaking to first-year EFL students as both demanding and rewarding. Commonly cited challenges included learners' shyness, anxiety, low confidence levels, and limited opportunities to use English in authentic contexts. One participant, in their first year of teaching oral expression, noted frequent student absences and a general lack of language practice outside the classroom. Another teacher remarked, "Most of my students were afraid to speak or take part in discussions," reflecting a concern echoed across responses. Despite these difficulties, many teachers observed that when students were given structured support and encouragement, they gradually became more engaged and motivated. These observations suggest that while the initial stages of teaching speaking can be difficult, a well-designed and supportive course can play a crucial role in helping students overcome their hesitation and develop greater confidence.

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Question Three: “What are the most common difficulties first-year students face when developing their speaking skills, and how do you address them?”

All participating teachers identified a similar range of difficulties commonly faced by first-year EFL students. These included anxiety, lack of confidence, limited vocabulary, poor pronunciation, and a pervasive fear of making mistakes. One teacher emphasized that “the overwhelming problem is concerned with shyness and anxiety,” while another pointed out that “students struggled with correct pronunciation of sounds.” To address these challenges, teachers reported using scaffolded instructional strategies that gradually increased students’ participation. These included beginning with individual tasks, followed by pair work, and eventually group discussions. Several teachers also noted the importance of interactive, engaging activities to maintain motivation, while others highlighted the value of positive reinforcement and creating a supportive classroom environment to reduce anxiety and build learners’ confidence.

Question Four: How familiar are you with communicative language teaching (CLT), and how would you define it?

All respondents demonstrated a clear and accurate understanding of the principles of Communicative Language Teaching. Their definitions commonly highlighted the importance of interaction, student-centered learning, and the use of real-life communicative contexts. One teacher described CLT as “an umbrella approach” aimed at fostering communication through authentic tasks, while another succinctly stated, “CLT is about making the student interact with the teacher and their classmates.”

These responses reflect a shared and coherent conceptualization of CLT, indicating that the participants are not only familiar with the approach but also possess a sound theoretical understanding of its core principles.

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Question Five: To what extent do you integrate CLT principles into your spaking lessons? Can you give specific examples?

All teachers reported frequent integration of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) principles into their speaking lessons. One participant remarked, “Almost in most of my sessions,” highlighting the regular use of communicative techniques. Specific classroom activities mentioned included role-playing, task-based learning, group discussions, storytelling, and problem-solving tasks. Some teachers incorporated real-life scenarios, such as “making a phone call” or “visiting a doctor,” which are strongly aligned with CLT’s emphasis on authentic communication. Additionally, contemporary topics like artificial intelligence and technology addiction were used to stimulate meaningful dialogue among students. These examples demonstrate a deliberate shift toward communicative, learner-centered practices and reflect a move away from traditional, form-focused instruction.

Question Six: How do you think CLT differs from traditional teaching methods when it comes to improving students’ speaking proficiency?

All participants acknowledged that CLT differs significantly from traditional methods in its approach to developing speaking skills. Teachers emphasized that CLT provides students with more opportunities for active participation, greater engagement, and exposure to real-world contexts. One teacher expressed this shift by stating, “It is like I am saying to them, ‘This is your time, feel free to practice your English.’” Such responses illustrate a clear move from teacher-centered instruction to a learner-centered model that prioritizes fluency, interaction, and confidence-building. Overall, the teachers viewed CLT as more effective than traditional methods in fostering communicative competence and encouraging student autonomy in the speaking classroom.

Question Seven: “What are the biggest obstacles you face when applying CLT in your classroom?”

Teachers identified several recurring challenges that hinder the effective implementation of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). These included large class sizes, insufficient resources and equipment, limited time for lesson planning and delivery, and inadequate teacher training. One respondent remarked, “Large class sizes make it difficult to give individual attention to each

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student,” while another highlighted that the lack of professional development and technological resources impedes the integration of digital tools often recommended in CLT-based instruction. These constraints reveal a significant gap between teachers’ theoretical understanding of CLT and their ability to apply it consistently in practice, largely due to systemic and logistical limitations.

Question Eight: How do your students typically respond to CLT- based speaking activities?

According to the teachers, students generally reacted positively to CLT-based speaking activities, though initial responses were marked by shyness and anxiety. Over time, most learners grew more confident and engaged, particularly as they became familiar with the format and expectations of communicative tasks. One teacher observed that after a few sessions, “they became familiar with the activities and enjoyed the discussions.” Activities such as debates, role-plays, and group work were frequently cited as effective in encouraging participation. Nevertheless, teachers acknowledged that not all students adapt at the same pace; some continued to experience difficulty with self-confidence and oral expression despite repeated exposure to communicative methods.

Question Nine: In your experience, what type of CLT activities have been most effective in engaging students and improving their speaking skills?

Teachers identified a variety of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) activities that they found particularly effective in engaging learners and enhancing their speaking abilities. These included role-playing, debates, information gap tasks, storytelling, songs and dialogues, and project-based learning. Such activities were praised for their ability to simulate real-life communication scenarios, thereby promoting fluency, increasing student motivation, and boosting overall confidence. The emphasis on meaningful interaction and contextually rich language use was seen as central to their success.

Question Ten: In your opinion, how effective is CLT in enhancing students’ speaking proficiency? Please explain.

All respondents expressed strong confidence in the effectiveness of CLT for improving students’ speaking proficiency. Teachers highlighted the approach’s focus on fluency, authentic communication, and student interaction as key factors contributing to its success. One teacher noted that CLT “fosters autonomy, self-esteem, and self-confidence,” emphasizing the broader personal

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benefits beyond linguistic gains. However, it was also acknowledged that the effectiveness of CLT is contingent upon consistent implementation and the availability of adequate resources and institutional support.

Question Eleven: Do you think CLT helps students feel more confident when speaking English? Why? or why not?

There was unanimous agreement among teachers that CLT plays a significant role in enhancing students' confidence in speaking English. The approach's prioritization of fluency over accuracy, as well as its emphasis on creating a low-pressure, supportive environment, were cited as crucial factors. One teacher remarked, "CLT allows students to speak without pressure, making them more comfortable in using the language." This shared perspective underscores CLT's capacity to lower learners' affective filters, thereby facilitating more effective language acquisition and increased willingness to communicate.

Question Twelve: What improvements or resources do you think are needed to apply CLT more effectively in speaking classes?

Teachers proposed a range of improvements to enhance the effective implementation of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in speaking classes. Key suggestions included reducing class sizes to allow for more individualized attention, increasing the availability of audio-visual materials such as videos, podcasts, and real-life media, and providing ongoing teacher training focused on communicative strategies. Additionally, respondents highlighted the need for conducting needs analyses to better tailor activities to students' proficiency levels, as well as improving classroom equipment and access to technology. Some teachers also stressed the value of fostering a supportive and inclusive classroom atmosphere, alongside regular professional development workshops, to empower educators with practical tools and updated methodologies. These recommendations reflect both pedagogical and logistical considerations that are essential for maximizing the effectiveness of CLT.

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4.2. Discussion of the Findings

The findings from both the students' questionnaires and the teachers' interviews suggest that Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is generally regarded as an effective approach for enhancing English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students' speaking proficiency. Teachers highlighted that CLT encourages real-life communication and moves students beyond rote memorization and mechanical language use by engaging them in interactive and meaningful tasks. In line with this, students reported that activities such as discussions, role-plays, and group work were particularly beneficial in improving their speaking skills, making the learning process more enjoyable and engaging. Despite the positive perceptions of CLT, both teachers and students identified several challenges that hinder its full implementation and effectiveness. Teachers pointed to large class sizes, a lack of appropriate materials, and insufficient training as significant barriers to applying CLT effectively. These factors, they noted, limited their ability to provide individualized attention and fully integrate the communicative activities that CLT promotes. On the students' side, feelings of anxiety, shyness, and a fear of making mistakes were commonly mentioned, particularly in the early stages of language learning, which often prevented active participation in speaking activities. These emotional and psychological barriers reflect the challenges students face in developing the confidence necessary for effective communication.

Nonetheless, both groups agreed that CLT-based activities played a critical role in gradually increasing students' confidence and willingness to speak. Over time, learners became more comfortable with using the language in interactive contexts, despite their initial hesitancy. Additionally, the findings underscore the need for greater institutional support to facilitate the successful application of CLT in speaking classes. This includes providing more professional development opportunities for teachers, ensuring access to adequate resources and materials, and addressing classroom size and technological limitations. Such support is essential to bridge the gap between theoretical understanding and practical implementation, allowing CLT to be more effectively integrated into the teaching and learning process.

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4.3. Recommendation for Future Research

Future research could investigate the long-term impact of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) on students' speaking proficiency across different academic levels and learning contexts. While this study focused on first-year EFL students at the university level, further studies could explore how CLT influences the development of speaking skills over time, particularly in secondary education settings. Additionally, conducting experimental studies that compare CLT with other teaching approaches would provide valuable empirical evidence regarding its relative effectiveness.

Further exploration of both students' and teachers' attitudes toward CLT, using a mixed-methods approach, could offer a more nuanced understanding of how perceptions of the method influence its success in the classroom. Another promising area for future research is the role of technology and digital tools in supporting the implementation of CLT. Investigating how technological innovations can enhance communicative activities and improve student engagement would provide important insights into the integration of modern resources in CLT-based instruction.

4.4. Conclusion

This study aimed to explore the effectiveness of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in developing the speaking proficiency of first-year EFL students at Bouira University. The data collected through student questionnaires and teacher interviews revealed a shared recognition of the benefits of CLT-based instruction. Both students and teachers noted that CLT fosters greater student engagement, encourages authentic communication, and gradually builds learners' confidence in speaking English.

Despite these positive outcomes, several challenges emerged, including large class sizes, limited teaching materials, insufficient teacher training, and student-related issues such as anxiety and low self-confidence. However, the findings indicate that when CLT is applied consistently and with appropriate support, it can significantly improve students' oral performance. These results underscore the need for institutional efforts to provide teachers with the necessary training and resources, as well as to create a supportive classroom environment that fosters communicative learning.

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Overall, this study affirms the potential of CLT as a learner-centered approach that can address common difficulties in EFL speaking classrooms and contribute to more effective language teaching practices.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

This dissertation set out to investigate the effectiveness of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in enhancing the speaking proficiency of first-year EFL students at Bouira University. Through a mixed-methods approach combining student questionnaires and teacher interviews, the study aimed to explore how CLT practices contribute to the development of oral communication skills, and to identify both the benefits and challenges of implementing this approach in the Algerian university context. The results revealed that CLT has a generally positive impact on students' speaking performance. Students who were exposed to communicative tasks and interactive classroom activities reported increased motivation, greater participation, improved fluency, and a stronger sense of confidence when speaking English. Teachers also highlighted the value of CLT in creating a more engaging and student-centered learning environment, where learners are encouraged to express themselves and use the language meaningfully. However, despite its potential, the research uncovered several challenges that hinder the effective application of CLT. These include large class sizes, limited instructional time, lack of authentic teaching materials, insufficient training in communicative methodologies, and a general resistance to moving away from traditional, grammar-focused instruction. Many teachers expressed a willingness to adopt more communicative techniques but felt constrained by institutional policies, rigid curricula, and logistical barriers. These limitations point to a broader need for systemic reform, including more comprehensive teacher training programs, increased availability of communicative resources, and greater flexibility in curriculum design. In conclusion, while CLT offers a promising approach to improving speaking proficiency among EFL learners, its success depends largely on the conditions in which it is implemented. For CLT to be fully effective, educational institutions must provide adequate support, continuous professional development, and an environment that encourages interactive learning. This study recommends that future efforts focus on addressing these challenges by prioritizing teacher preparation, reducing class sizes where possible, and integrating communicative principles into both curriculum planning and classroom practice. Additionally, further research is needed to examine CLT's effectiveness in different educational contexts and among diverse learner populations to develop a more comprehensive understanding of its impact. Ultimately, adopting a communicative approach to language teaching can significantly contribute to the development of students' speaking abilities and better prepare them to use English confidently and effectively in real-life situations.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Students' Questionnaire

Dear students,

This questionnaire designed for a dissertation of a master degree, aims at Exploring the Effectiveness of Communication Language Teaching (CLT) in Enhancing EFL Students' Speaking Proficiency. Your valuable participation in this research is greatly appreciated and will be highly beneficial. You are expected to read carefully the questions and to give an honest and straightforward answer. Thank you very much in advance Please mark by a tick (✓) your best answer or give a full answer if necessary

Section One: Background Information

1. Gender

a) Male

☐

b) Female

☐

2. How long have you been studying English?

a) Less than 5 years

☐

b) 5-8 years

☐

c) More than 8 years

☐

Section 2: Students' Perceptions of Speaking Skills

3. How is speaking skills important to you?

a) Very important

☐

b) Rather important

☐

c) Little important

☐

d) Not important at all

☐

4. How do you rate your current speaking proficiency in English?

a) Poor

☐

b) Average

☐

c) Good

☐

d) Excellent ☐

5. Do you find speaking in English:

a) Very easy ☐

b) easy ☐

c) difficult ☐

d) very difficult ☐

6. Do you speak English outside the classroom?

a) Yes ☐

b) No

7. What do you find most challenging about speaking English? (You can select more than one)

a) Vocabulary.

b) Pronunciation.

c) Fluency.

d) Confidence

8. How often do you participate in the Oral Expression module?

a) Often

b) Sometimes

c) rarely

d) never

9. Do you feel comfortable in the Oral Expression class?

a) Yes

b) No

10. whatever your answer say why?

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.....

10. To what extent did the oral expression module help you to enhance your oral proficiency?

- a) Very much
- b) Somehow
- c) Not very much
- d) Not at all.

Section Three: Classroom Practices and CLT

11. How often do your speaking lessons involve communicative activities (e.g., role-plays, group discussions, debates)?

- a) Always
- b) Often
- c) Rarely
- d) Never

12. What type of activities do you find most effective in improving your speaking skills?

- a) Grammar-based exercises
- b) Communicative activities (e.g., conversations, group tasks)
- c) Listening exercises
- d) Other (please specify):

.....

.....

.....

13. Do your teachers encourage you to express your ideas freely during speaking activities?

- a) Always
- b) Sometime
- c) Rarely
- d) No

14. How often do you receive feedback from your teacher about your speaking performance?

- a) After every activity
- b) Occasionally
- c) Rarely
- d) Never

Section Four: Impact of CLT on Speaking Proficiency

15. Do you feel that communicative activities improve your speaking skills?

- a) Significantly
- b) To some extent
- c) Not much
- d) Not at all

16. Which aspect of your speaking has improved the most through CLT-based activities?

- a) Vocabulary usage
- b) Fluency
- c) Pronunciation
- d) Confidence

17. How confident do you feel when participating in speaking tasks in class?

- a) Very confident
- b) Somewhat confident
- c) Not confident

18. Do you think CLT addresses the specific challenges you face in speaking English?

a) Yes

b) No

c) In both cases please explain:

.....

.....

Section Five: Suggestions and Feedback

19. What changes would you suggest to improve speaking lessons in your classroom?

.....

.....

.....

20. In your opinion, how does the teacher contribute to improving students' speaking proficiency?

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.....

.....

21. Do you think CLT is the most effective method for improving speaking skills? Why or why not?

.....

.....

.....

22. Any further suggestions or point of view are most welcome

.....

.....

Thank you

Appendix 2

Teachers' Interview

Dear teachers,

This research is a part of my research work. Your completions of this interview will be a great help to bring fruition to the present work. The main purpose of this interview is to identify the Effectiveness of CLT in Enhancing EFL Students' Speaking Proficiency. I would be grateful if you could answer these questions to help me in my research for a Master degree.

1. How long have you been teaching EFL learners?
2. Can you describe your experience teaching speaking skills to first-year EFL students?
3. What are the most common difficulties first-year students face when developing their speaking skills, and how do you address them?
4. How familiar are you with Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), and how would you define it?
5. To what extent do you integrate CLT principles into your speaking lessons? Can you give specific examples?
6. How do you think CLT differs from traditional teaching methods when it comes to improving students' speaking proficiency?
7. What are the biggest obstacles you face when applying CLT in your classroom?
8. How do your students typically respond to CLT-based speaking activities?
9. In your experience, what types of CLT activities have been most effective in engaging students and improving their speaking skills?
10. In your opinion, how effective is CLT in enhancing students' speaking proficiency? Please explain.
11. Do you think CLT helps students feel more confident when speaking English? Why or why not?
12. What improvements or resources do you think are needed to apply CLT more effectively in speaking classes?

Thanks for your collaboration