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Promoting a student-centered environment in an EFL classroom in Azogues through CLT principles

Trabajo de Integración Curricular previo a la obtención del título de Licenciado/a en Pedagogía del Idioma Inglés

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Resumen:

La necesidad de un ambiente centrado en el estudiante en la enseñanza del inglés se aborda en este estudio basado en observaciones realizadas durante nuestra práctica. Para investigar esto, se pusieron en práctica actividades de enseñanza de lenguas comunicativas (CLT, por sus siglas en inglés) fundadas en sus principios con el fin de determinar su papel en la creación de dicho ambiente. El propósito del estudio fue determinar en qué medida las actividades de CLT contribuyen a un ambiente centrado en el estudiante en las clases de inglés como lengua extranjera (EFL). El estudio utilizó el método cualitativo en la investigación-acción, recolectando datos a través de listas de verificación de observación, cuestionarios y notas reflexivas. Los participantes fueron estudiantes de octavo grado, de entre 12 y 13 años, de una escuela rural en Azogues, Ecuador. Los resultados mostraron que los estudiantes se sentían cómodos e involucrados durante las actividades de CLT, respondiendo positivamente a ellas. Se descubrió que las actividades de Running Dictation y Mingle fueron extremadamente exitosas en fomentar un ambiente centrado en el estudiante. Los hallazgos sugieren que las actividades de CLT promueven un ambiente dinámico y centrado en el estudiante que apoya el aprendizaje significativo.

Palabras clave: Entorno centrado en el estudiante, enseñanza del inglés, actividades CLT, principios del CLT, escuela rural.

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Abstract:

The need for a student-centered atmosphere in English teaching is addressed in this study based on observations made during our practicum. In order to investigate this, activities for communicative language teaching (CLT) that were founded on their principles were put into practice in order to ascertain their role in fostering such an atmosphere. The purpose of the study was to determine how much CLT activities contribute to a student-centered environment in EFL classes. The study utilized the qualitative method in action research, collecting data through observation checklists, a questionnaire, and reflective notes. Students in the eighth grade, ages 12 to 13, from a rural school in Azogues, Ecuador, were among the participants. The results showed that students felt at ease and involved during CLT activities, responding well to them. It was discovered that the Running Dictation and Mingle activities were wildly successful in fostering a student-centered environment. The findings imply that CLT activities promote a dynamic, student-centered environment that supports meaningful learning.

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Introduction

Context

The lack of students' active role in English classrooms is an issue that needs to be addressed since this may affect their learning processes. In EFL teaching, learners should be the main actors, experimenting by themselves and thus acquiring knowledge meaningfully. By doing so, English learning suits their interests to perform better and actively. Otherwise, the lack of student participation in English classrooms is one of the biggest challenges that affects students' language acquisition and learning.

During Practicum hours, we observed this lack of involvement firsthand. Sadly, it is one of the main issues in the Ecuadorian educational setting that undermines the quality of Education. Active participation is crucial for meaningful learning since students will be engaged in class, which makes them more likely to retain information. Hence, addressing this issue could improve Ecuadorian Education by making it more effective and student-centered.

Traditional teaching methods often rely on a teacher-centered approach where teachers are the main actors and students play a passive role. In the classrooms observed, there was a noticeable deficiency in student participation and engagement. Even more when they rely on a single teacher for English instruction. With a focus on teachers serving as the only sources of knowledge, this conventional pedagogy encourages memorization and passive learning with little student involvement. According to Ocaña (2013), this idea, which depends on maintaining social order, opposes modern education's necessities, which emphasize active, experiencing learning.

Another setback is that teachers often worry about group work leading to distractions, as students may engage in off-task behavior such as chatting, which complicates classroom management. Consequently, there is a tendency to favor activities that prioritize individual

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work, that is, to maintain classroom management and maximize learning outcomes. Nevertheless, students' learning can be affected if teachers have excessive control since their engagement and participation can be reduced. Hence, this situation suggests that many classes are not student-centered but teacher-centered.

In this regard, the expectation of this study is to contribute by transitioning from a teacher-centered class to a student-centered one with the help of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) activities. The CLT approach aims to boost communication and interaction inside the class enabling students to be the protagonists, playing an active role in achieving the desired language knowledge. By incorporating CLT principles, this research seeks to enhance student engagement, foster a more interactive learning environment, and improve overall educational outcomes.

Problem identification

In discussing English as a Foreign Language (EFL), a prevalent issue nationwide is that EFL learners tend to perceive this subject (English) as irrelevant—explicitly expressed by students from our Practicum (H. G. Argudo, personal communication, October 20, 2023)—and this is because of the mentioned setback. Some of the educators we have observed, based on our practicum experience, rely on textbooks and lecture methods, which restricts the potential for student participation and interaction. According to Emaliana (2017), this dependence implies a commitment to Traditional Method standards, such as teacher control and minimizing disruptions in the classroom. Nevertheless, this method may result in repetitive and tiresome courses, which can lower student's enthusiasm to study.

In the rural school (Azogues, Ecuador), which acts as setting for this study, it was acknowledged that students lack the desire to learn a new language since it is not relatable for them. The majority of students come from low-income backgrounds. Moreover, the current

curriculum (Ministerio de Educación del Ecuador, 2019) has insufficient time (3 hours) allotted for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and a shortage of English teachers. In Figure 1, there is a clear description of the current English hours public schools have based on the current curriculum.

Figure 1

Hours placed for English teaching based on the curriculum

Subnivel de EGB		Superior
Áreas	**Asignaturas**	**Periodos pedagógicos mínimos sugeridos a la semana**
Lengua y Literatura	Lengua y Literatura	6
Matemática	Matemática	6
Ciencias Sociales	Estudios Sociales	4
Ciencias Naturales	Ciencias Naturales	4
Educación Cultural y Artística	Educación Cultural y Artística	2
Educación Física	Educación Física	2
Lengua Extranjera	Inglés	3
Orientación vocacional y profesional		1
Acompañamiento integral en el aula		1
Animación a la Lectura		1

Note. Extracted from *ACUERDO Nro. MINEDUC-MINEDUC-2023-00008-A* (Pérez, 2023, p.9).

The school administration where this study took place has only one English teacher for ten classes, with 14 to 20 students in each class. Henceforth, based on our observations, students exhibited boredom and disinterest in the methods and approaches employed. Therefore, this study focuses on nurturing upper basic level students' learning from this rural school by boosting their involvement during lessons and identifying the current inattention to students' needs regarding their meaningful understanding. It can be achievable by leveraging the CLT approach as our way forward.

Therefore, the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach, encompassed in the English national curriculum, served as our guide path when addressing this problem since

it is student-focused and is the supportive approach in this study. That is why the activities present in this study (Mingle, Role-Play, Running Dictation, Interview, and Debate) are based on its principles by considering real context, communicative competence, context, communicative purposes, and actual communication settings (See Figure 3). In addition, these activities foster a communicative and interactive environment, along with cooperative work grounded in the social constructivist theory, which draws attention to interaction and cooperation in the learning context, thereby enriching students' language skills through practical usage. Implementing these activities offers students lots of opportunities to use English meaningfully and in authentic contexts. Moreover, the focus shifts from a teacher to a student-centered classroom, so students have an active role in their learning process as it is expected.

Importance of the study

Addressing this problem is significant for improving the quality of educational practices since, based on our lived experience, it is noticeable that learners require an upgraded way of acquiring knowledge. It entails creating an atmosphere that provides a social environment where students can actively share and connect among themselves through their own experiences. As Kalina and Powell (2009) mentioned, students should not only interact with teachers but also have spaces and chances to work with peers. This not only promotes awareness among peers to cooperate among themselves but also facilitates their internalization of understanding.

The adopted approach, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), emphasizes a learner-centered environment and primarily focuses on student interaction, promoting their communicative skills. Aligned with the curriculum, the goal of EFL is not merely to master linguistic content but for learners to manage competence skills effectively in both oral and

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written communication (Ministerio de Educación del Ecuador, 2019). The Intervention aimed to optimize the issues noticed and make students actively participate in the teaching process. Hence, this study aims to fill this paramount gap in learners' necessities within a modern learning context by targeting 8th-graders in a rural school in Azogues.

By adopting this approach, the spotlight shifted from teachers to learners, enhancing their English learning through communicative activities and fostering a sense of community in the classroom. For the Intervention, it was essential to have permission from the authorities and parents of the selected population, which took eight weeks. The substantial preparation and approval procedure ensured the study complied with ethical guidelines and had the support of any pertinent stakeholders, which is one of the reasons why this study remained feasible.

Accordingly, the practicality of this research is supported by several conditions. First, the remote school where it was held showed that it was willing to try a more active and engaging approach. Collaboration between pre-service teachers (researchers) and school administration demonstrated this preparedness. The school's physical setting made it easy to carry out Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) activities. Besides, parents and municipal authorities supported the project and provided the required permissions, which further underscores the viability of implementing this educational program. Together, these elements highlight how highly feasible it is to carry out this investigation successfully.

To address the presented concern, researchers developed the following questions and objectives, which aim to be accomplished by applying CLT activities to promote a student-centered environment.

Main Research Question

- To what extent do CLT principles promote a student-centered environment in the EFL

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classroom?

Sub-questions

- Which CLT activity applied during the Intervention most contributes to a student-centered EFL classroom?

- What are students' attitudes towards the CLT activities applied during the Intervention?

Objectives

General

- To examine the extent to which CLT activities based on its principles contribute to a student-centered environment in the EFL classroom.

Specific

- To identify the CLT-applied activities that contribute the most to a student-centered classroom.

- To report the students' attitudes when applying CLT activities inside the EFL classroom.

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Literature Review

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The researchers' claim —that CLT activities can transition from teacher-centered classes to student-centered classes— is backed by both international and national previous studies outlined in this chapter. These studies guided the current research by emphasizing successful implementations, addressing obstacles, and providing key findings. This academic basis provided a vigorous framework for investigating the effectiveness of CLT activities in fostering student engagement and language acquisition, highlighting their applicability and significance in educational contexts.

Previous Studies

The following previous studies have guided this research since they support

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empowering a more student-centered teaching style. Moreover, CLT and student-centered are the main concepts contributing to the feasibility and reliability of this research, as explained below. The studies provide a clear description of the significant features of the vital concept and how it has influenced the education field in recent years.

In this first study, Komol and Suwanphathama (2020) explored the perceptions and attitudes of Thai University students when using communicative language instruction to improve their English speaking and listening skills. The population was 82 fourth-year students. Activities such as Role-Play, group discussions, and video production helped boost students' self-esteem and language abilities. Additionally, the students overwhelmingly concurred that those activities helped them with pronunciation, creativity, and confidence by giving them much exposure to the language.

It is indisputable that activities like the previously mentioned support the development of speaking as an imperative productive skill through peer interaction during class time. This study highlights the significance of adopting them to establish a student-centered atmosphere since students are performing these activities and also gave favorable feedback. Consequently, it reinforces and supports the principal purpose of this study of implementing CLT activities to support the development of a student-led classroom.

Rezalou and Yagiz (2021) carried out another study, which was a quantitative one, to investigate the effects of implementing CLT to enhance students' speaking abilities and lessen their speaking challenges. Forty (40) EFL students enrolled in an ELT Teacher Education program in Turkey formed the participants. Classroom action research (CAR) was used as the method, and lesson plans, observation checklists, and a Questionnaire were part of the data collection instruments. Results showed a beneficial impact on the speech performance development of the participants and that their attitudes towards the activities

used were favorable. Therefore, this study supports this research by offering guidance for the design of the observation instruments (checklists) and the written interview tool (Questionnaire).

The following study, directed by Bagheri and Hashemi (2021), was conducted at the Language Institute in Kerman (Iran). Their objective was to investigate the impact of the CLT method on EFL students' exam performance. They used communicative material and activities such as Role-Play, games, discussions, and visually stimulating pictures to engage students in the classroom. Additionally, it sought to investigate how EFL students felt about the CLT method. They administered a pre-and post-test and used a quasi-experimental design. The teacher here is referred to as a facilitator, as highlighted in the analysis and discussion of the data obtained. The results showed that CLT positively influenced students' exam performance, and their attitudes were favorable regarding this method.

This study informs us about how vital a facilitator is in improving language learning outcomes and the student's acceptance of this method, as evidenced by foreign studies. Therefore, to provide a comprehensive view, the following studies will present and analyze research conducted in Ecuador, focusing on the national context.

In Ecuador, several national studies have followed the path of CLT. Chasi and Ichina (2023) conducted research in Latacunga aimed at identifying the effectiveness of CLT in improving students' oral skills, which shares similarities with our study. Their quantitative study used a bibliographic review, a survey, and an Interview. The population consisted of fifteen (15) 8th-grade students and the only English teacher. The study revealed challenges in learning oral expression and hours of EFL teaching, mainly in rural areas lacking English teachers. Nevertheless, CLT is helpful when addressing those challenges, making a student-centered environment conceivably.

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Aguilar and Armijos (2023) were in charge of another study to develop English vocabulary through four CLT activities among eighth-grade students at an Ecuadorian public school. The study had 21 students by convenience sampling as participants, and it used a mixed method approach with qualitative and quantitative instruments such as Pre and Post-test, a Questionnaire, and field notes. The results indicated that CLT activities led to improvements in scores and vocabulary. Something to highlight from the results is the students' perceptions regarding the communicative activities in EFL throughout a Questionnaire. It aids us in gathering students' insights through written interviews.

In a study conducted by García (2019), the effectiveness of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in improving the speaking skills of third-level English students at the Language Center of the Technical University of Babahoyo was examined. There were 60 participants in the study, split into two groups, and both quantitative and qualitative methods were used. The research included pre-tests, post-tests, and a survey as data collection tools. The findings indicated that CLT not only enhanced oral skills but also significantly motivated the learners. This study, while similar to international research, was unique in that it was carried out in an Ecuadorian context. The results demonstrated that CLT enables students to engage in oral language production actively, aligning with the student-centered approach to learning.

All the studies mentioned yielded vital findings. Firstly, observation emerged as a tool for identifying the presence or absence of CLT, supporting the planned use of observation checklists in each lesson of this research. Secondly, the fact that the Communicative approach emerges from communicative skills makes it helpful for this paper, aligning with the focus on student-centered classes in this study. Another aspect of the study was the students' perceptions towards communicative activities, claiming that they have favorable

insights and popularity. Upon reviewing action research studies, they supported the role of researchers/teachers in the classroom setting as facilitators rather than remaining the focal point. Finally, these studies provided insights into CLT activities that are pivotal in creating a classroom environment centered on students.

Having analyzed the previous studies and their findings, we now turn to the theoretical framework that internships this research. The following chapter will outline the paramount theories and concepts of this study. Furthermore, it will provide a foundation for the analysis, thus guiding our understanding and approach to the investigation.

Theoretical Framework

The Social Constructivism theory that underpins the study is thoroughly explained in this section. It looks at how student-centered and teacher-centered learning settings differ, emphasizing what makes student-centered classrooms unique. Additionally, the study examines how English functions within Ecuador's educational system, with a particular emphasis on integrating Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) into the curriculum. The chapter emphasizes activities that foster communicative competence while providing clarification on CLT concepts and their use in the classroom. Finally, it examines the motivations behind the attitudes that students have towards CLT activities.

Social Constructivism Theory

When proposing the implementation of CLT activities to promote a student-centered environment, researchers had to ground the teaching process in a learning theory in order to ensure proper application. Hence, Lev Vygotsky's theory of Social Constructivism is relevant. This theory emphasizes interaction and collaborative work in the learning context. It introduces the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) as a critical concept, defined as the learning zone reached when a learner is helped by someone who has more knowledge in that

area, meaning by social interaction (Amineh & Asl, 2015). In this regard, classes should facilitate enough activities with social and sharing opportunities, thus enriching students' learning experience.

According to Muhayimana (2017), who draws on Vygostky's ideas, language is not present if there is no interrelation inside the class. Therefore, not only teachers and students must use language in the classroom, but also students have to show engagement with ample practice. One of the best ways to encourage language use is by cooperation, such as making groups, pair work, and interactive activities. As demonstrated in Taqi and Al-Nouh's study (2014), students felt improvement in their communicative abilities and acknowledged a comfortable and enjoyable environment. This means that teamwork not only boosts communication skills but also contributes to a better atmosphere for the students in the class.

In regard to English learning, this theory boosts students' performance since it increases social interaction between teachers and students as well as among students, thus improving language learning (Umar et al., 2023). Furthermore, learners build their knowledge by engaging with others through collaboration rather than just from the teacher. By doing so, they develop communicative competence and critical thinking that are vital for communication in the language being learned. Consequently, having social constructivism in English teaching will emphasize an interactive environment, collaboration, and development of linguistic proficiency that drives us to meaningful language learning.

This theory highlights the importance of communication and collaboration among peers, which is in line with the focus of this research. Consequently, the CLT activities used in this study were aforethought to enhance interaction and scaffolding among students. Scaffolding involves support provided by a more experienced individual to a novice, enabling them to complete a task step by step (Muhayimana, 2017). Therefore, this theory forms the

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foundation of our study, leading us towards creating a student-centered environment.

Student-centered and teacher-centered environment

Student and teacher-centered classrooms differ significantly in their focus and approach to learning. A teacher-centered class is associated with the traditional method where the teacher has an active role, and students remain passive. As Emaliana (2017) mentioned, educators manage learning experiences, plan and administer every step of the lesson, and student involvement is present once the teacher entitles it. Therefore, teacher innovation is optional, and the book as the only resource does not allow interactive tasks. Consequently, students in such classrooms need more collaborative skills due to the limited opportunities for sharing or interacting with others. Figure 2 illustrates the roles that students and teachers have in a student-centered and teacher-centered class.

Figure 2

Teacher-centered and students-centered roles

	Student- Centered	Teacher-centered
Teacher	Facilitator	Authority
Student	Active Role	Passive Role
Planning	Teacher´s innovation	No teacher´s innovation

Note. This figure demonstrates the roles that students and teachers play in a student-centered and teacher-centered environment.

On the other hand, student-centered classrooms, as Markina and Garcia (2022) observed, provide opportunities for students to talk, thus increasing learners' participation. Students are empowered to develop ideas and meanings to achieve their assigned tasks (Al-Zu'be, 2013), fostering an environment where learners take the forefront, with teachers acting as facilitators. In other words, teachers guide and support students in experimenting and constructing their learning processes. Moreover, cooperative work supports interaction since

students can share and acquire further knowledge from peers with the same characteristics.

In the present study, interchanging the teacher-centered class with a learner-centered approach is essential. Therefore, focusing on the features of a class with students as a focus is imperative for guiding our research.

Student-centered class features

Jones (2007) emphasized the significance of striking a balance between teacher-led and student-centered activities, a principle this study seeks. Focusing on group collaboration rather than solitary work promotes active student involvement, particularly in enhancing speaking abilities. To do so, minimizing Teacher Talking Time (TTT) is crucial, granting students as the main participants inside the classroom (Kostadinovska-Stojchevska & Popovikj, 2019). Unlike TTT, Student Talking Time (STT) permits students' autonomy to experiment and explore the content by themselves, fostering a student-focused learning environment.

Jones (2007) proposes that smaller group projects that increase engagement can help achieve student-centered learning in big classes. Teachers must set clear expectations and goals, allowing flexibility to suit different levels of engagement and time restrictions for the implementation to be successful. Therefore, encouraging peer engagement and support creates a collaborative atmosphere that helps less independent students by drawing assistance from their more independent peers.

English Language in the Ecuadorian Education

It makes sense, given our practicum experience, that there is a common perception that Ecuador's English competence level could be better. According to the EF EPI (EF English Proficiency Index, 2023) World Ranking, Ecuador is ranked 80th out of 113 nations. However, De Angelis (2022) believes that in comparison with EF EPI, the Test of English as

a Foreign Language (TOEFL) is a more explicit process. She nevertheless recognizes Ecuador's low level of English proficiency since a number of factors, such as educational practices and policies, socio-economic problems, teacher preparation, and student motivation, among others, may contribute to the rankings. Ecuador's low levels of English competence are a result of these causes, showing a deeper understanding of our national outcomes.

Contextual challenges within the country further compound these issues. In Ecuador, for years, we have acknowledged that learning a foreign language has yet to be prioritized. Sevy-Biloon, Recino, and Munoz (2020) found that as we are in a Spanish-speaking country, students need help with the language, including challenges understanding teachers and needing more motivation to learn. Mainly because there are unequal chances and uncertain benefits; nonetheless, there were different realities, including urban and rural schools. Despite these challenges, the importance of English must be addressed.

Indeed, the significance of English has been growing. Proficiency in English offers career advancement opportunities, both in local and multinational corporations. Similarly, it enables global connections, exploration of uncharted territories, and appreciation of new customs and cultures (Molina et al., 2019). That is because English as a Foreign Language (EFL) has become quite demanding in educational and labor fields, and its presence in the national curriculum is worth mentioning. This rising relevance highlights the necessity for efficient approaches, such as CLT, present in the Ecuadorian schools' curriculum.

Communicative Language Teaching Approach in the Ecuadorian English Curriculum

In the Ecuadorian curriculum, students' interaction is prioritized, and learning is considered an active and dynamic process (Ministerio de Educación del Ecuador, 2019). CLT is more than just grammar; it goes for communicative competence development through meaningful activities, strategies, and general teaching, which makes it relevant so learners

acquire the target language quickly (Thamarana, 2015). This approach aims to boost linguistic linkages, interactive opportunities, and an intrinsic desire to learn English. Consequently, to achieve this process, Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) are integrated into the national curriculum as approaches.

Nevertheless, the CLT approach is rare in Ecuadorian classrooms. In some cases, teachers need to gain familiarity with modern teaching methods in their teaching practice. Calle et al. (2015) developed a study where teachers followed training to use communicative activities. The results claimed that after having intervened with the Enhancing Communicative Teaching Strategies (ECTS) program, teachers seemed to agree with using communicative strategies; however, it decreased over time. After two years, teachers showed little agreement with them. Having concluded that not having ongoing and permanent training diminishes its impact.

Henceforth, this study embraces the CLT approach as a basis for promoting a student-centered environment. Therefore, these CLT concepts are relevant to our Intervention since they allow us to grasp its essence and practical use. This sets a significant precedent for the importance of continuing to apply this approach in the classroom.

Communicative Language Teaching in the Classroom

CLT differs from conventional teaching methods because it prioritizes communication over form. As Zúñiga, and Barrantes (2021) stated in the study, the CLT approach allows students to express opinions and thoughts collaboratively so they use the language meaningfully and naturally. In this way, the student's learning and understanding become profound and more useful for real-life situations. Hence, teachers are crucial in setting practical classroom activities to improve the learning environment. The amount and

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variety of class activities facilitated by teachers can be imperative for supplementing learners' class contents and for learners' self-study (Komol & Suwanphathama, 2020). However, despite this importance, this dynamic should be more prevalent in Ecuadorian classes.

Rezalou and Yağiz (2021) found that students perceive CLT activities positively. They found the activities enjoyable, enhanced their speaking abilities, built confidence, and made classes more participatory. Their use impacted both students' insights and performance, and they strongly support in-class aims. Even so, in the opinion of Komol and Suwanphathama (2020), there is considerable skepticism regarding the viability of replacing the traditional classroom with communicative language instruction. However, the main objective of implementing communicative activities is to enhance the development and comprehension of students' language.

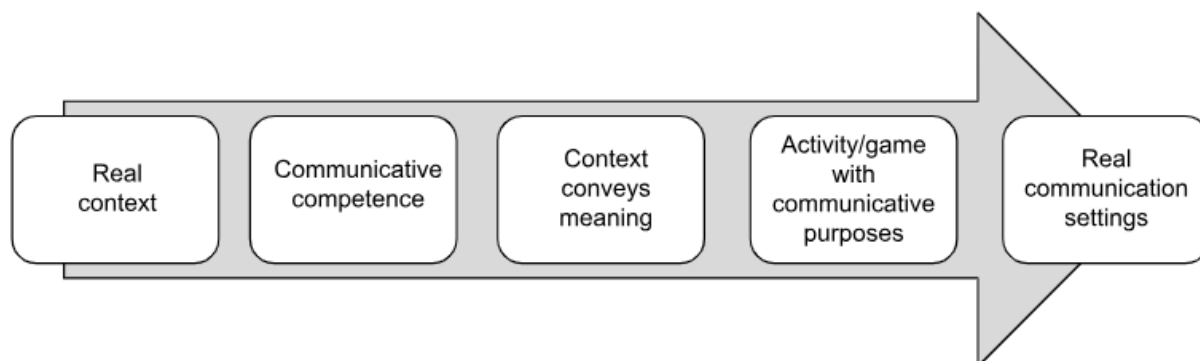**Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) principles**

The CLT approach encompasses various components, versions, techniques, and principles. Rezaee and Farahian (2015) detail these components in their study. Firstly, they mention that the other versions of CLT include "Content-based teaching," "Language for Specific Purposes," "Task-based language teaching," and "Notional Functional syllabus." All of these share similar features that emphasize communication as their core aspect.

Relevant CLT techniques include using authentic materials (movies, songs, or news), games (Role-Play, real-life discussions), collaborative work, teacher as a facilitator, correct language use, and the Presentation Practice and Production (PPP) model. These techniques are paramount to carrying out CLT-focused classes. Furthermore, it is feasible for teachers to put these concepts into practice since they do not require much effort to create materials. Figure 3 below shows the main CLT principles, highlighting communication and the practical use of language in real-life contexts.

Figure 3

CLT principles

Note. Adapted from Larsen-Freeman (2000, as cited in Rezaee & Farahian, 2015).

The principles of the CLT approach involve the use of actual context language, imparting communicative competence by understanding the speaker's intention, recognizing that context provides meaning, having activities or games with communicative purposes, and finally, the creation of genuine communication settings by teachers (Larsen-Freeman, 2000, as cited in Rezaee & Farahian, 2015). These principles pave the way for lots of activities to be designed and applied with the ultimate goal of focusing on the learner.

Activities based on the CLT principles

As previously mentioned, the CLT activities are the source of creating a student-centered environment. That is why, in Figure 4, the chosen activities are shown, followed by their explanation.

Figure 4

Activities based on the CLT principles

Note. This figure shows the activities based on CLT principles that the researchers in this study will use to promote a student-centered environment.

Chetouane, Chibout, and Kherbouche (2023) describe three chosen CLT activities used in this research: a Mingle activity, Role-Play, and Running Dictation. Following, each one is outlined.

Mingle activity (*Find someone who*) consists of filling out a template, finding someone who does any activity, and writing down the name. It can be adaptable to any topic and level. Also, the procedure to conduct this activity will entirely rely on the teacher. This activity took part here because it fosters a communicative environment with real-life contexts, which is paramount for this research.

The **Role-Play's** purpose is to act out an imaginary situation by involving guidelines to follow and freedom to perform linguistically, giving students the chance to get ready beforehand. Similar to the previous one, this activity not only enhances communication but also considers students' preferences since students need to do and perform the activity according to their preferences.

Running Dictation is an activity that practices the four skills (reading, writing,

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listening, and speaking). Pairs decide who runs to read/see the material provided by the teacher and come back with their peers and say what (s)he remembers. The one who listens has to write down everything to have the same information as the teacher. This activity contributes to an interactional environment by its kinesthetic dynamic. As knowledge is created via active engagement and firsthand experience, Piaget's theory of cognitive constructivism holds that interactive activities can improve learning by letting students create their own understanding (Wadsworth, 2004, as cited in Kalina & Powell, 2009).

Regarding **Debates** (*Pyramid discussion*), Akkasorn and Chaiyasuk (2021) mentioned that this activity reflects competition and teamwork at the same time because here, you need two group sides or go from individual to pairs, to groups of four, and so on as a Pyramid discussion. Also, the freedom students have to defend their position entails many speaking skills. It is crucial to emphasize that this activity involves every student's opinion since it goes from individual to group discussion, ensuring everyone's participation and fostering communication and interaction.

Finally, Haliwanda (2021) says an **Interview** involves having one student acting as the Interviewer and another as the Interviewee. The Interviewer has to come up with a list of questions to answer. In this way, students give and exchange information while testing their speaking abilities when delivering information. Similar to Role-Play, this activity involves students' creativity since they need to share their personal information in their own manner.

As stated above, all the activities in this study use CLT principles as a foundation. Each one of the activities has cooperative work as its core and entails interaction among students, which agrees with the philosophy of Social Constructivism. They comply with the established principles while being reliable and valid. In addition, the activities were designed to fit both the subject matter and teaching style, intended to make students feel fruitfully

immersed. It is paramount not only for teachers but also for students as they are the ones who receive the knowledge and who need to be comfortable and engaged in these activities, which drives us to the next topic.

Students' Attitudes towards CLT activities

The term "attitudes" encompasses various definitions, but generally, it is the "evaluations people have regarding people, objects, places, and issues" (Briñol et al., 2019, p.2). As Gaiseanu (2020) mentioned, attitudes reflect personal mental and emotional perspectives. In the present study, attitudes were considered based on students' perspectives and feelings on CLT strategies since understanding them helps teachers create a student-centered class.

Bagheri and Hashemi (2021) found that after introducing the CLT approach, the classroom atmosphere changed dramatically, vastly surpassing previous methods. It encouraged active student participation in teaching-learning activities with a renewed sense of ease and enthusiasm. It made students feel more comfortable expressing themselves and improving their language skills, resulting in a more vivid and satisfying educational experience (Bagheri & Hashemi, 2021). It underscores the importance of students' perspectives regarding applying CLT activities in the present study, as their insights help us understand the intrinsic impact from students' points of view.

Methodology

This study aims to implement activities that promote a student-centered environment in the EFL classroom. Therefore, the following chapter outlines the research paradigm, the type of research, and the research method used in this study. Afterward, it describes the techniques and instruments used to gather and analyze data. After that, the participants' description and subsequent steps of defining the methodology employed to address the

research questions.

Research paradigm

This study was conducted within the constructivist paradigm, which emphasizes understanding and engaging with the research population to guarantee that outcomes accurately represent the participants' viewpoints. Pilarska (2021) asserts that interaction is essential for the study's feasibility and accuracy. Furthermore, the Constructivist approach supports the use of CLT activities by valuing participation in the activities during implementation, which is in line with the paradigm's tenets.

Type of Research

This study utilizes qualitative research, employing natural and interpretive methods to address practical problems (Taherdoost, 2022). This approach enables a more thorough investigation of issues, focusing on interpretations of emotions, feelings, and perspectives. Additionally, the study utilizes an Action Research methodology to tackle real teaching practice problems through direct Intervention (Efron & Ravid, 2013). In educational settings, practitioners act as researchers addressing essential problems or professional interests, emphasizing improvement over theory development (Efron & Ravid, 2013). Because of that, the study's questions were made using a qualitative approach, focusing on the Intervention process rather than the results. According to Taba and Bagra (2024), qualitative research is used to report and understand experiences from the ones who have lived them. Hence, we chose this approach also, considering the importance of students' perspectives.

Research method

The research aims to increase the student-centered environment in EFL lessons by focusing more on students and their time for language use. Recognizing this challenge, Action Research paved the way for this research. Herr and Anderson (2014) have defined it

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as "a reflective process" where we reflect on observation and actual action to identify areas for improvement. Following this methodology, researchers aimed to gain a deeper understanding deeper into the problem identified during the exploratory phase, moving towards a potential solution in the actual action research phase, where CLT activities appear. Further on, techniques and instruments are shown in detail.

Techniques and instruments for data collection

As mentioned, this study uses an action research method with a qualitative approach, concentrating mostly on qualitative data collection methods, while quantitative data complemented and supported the study. Thereby, the instruments were created and validated by two experts (See Appendix 1). Figure 5 illustrates the techniques and instruments designed by the researchers that took place as ways of collecting data.

Figure 5

Techniques and instruments for data collection
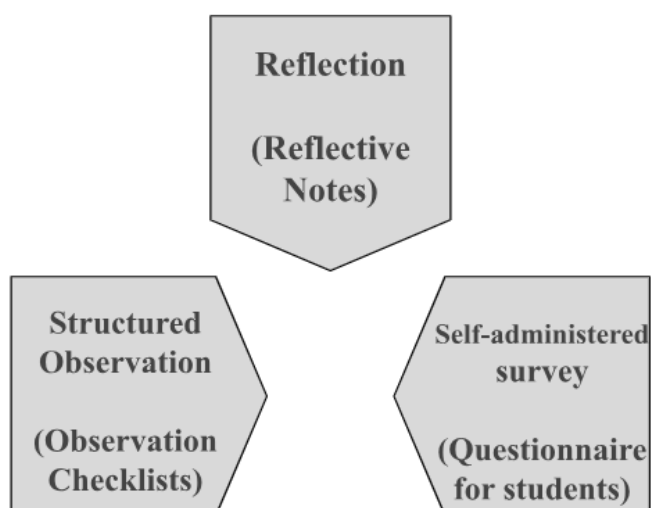
Note. This figure presents the techniques and instruments used by the researchers to gather data.

Observation checklists

Structured observations helped to lead to the creation of the instrument Observation Checklist. According to Engler and Stausberg (2011), this technique follows a protocol in which the essential elements are in a list, requiring structure and systematization of the detailed things observed to minimize distractions for the observer. Therefore, we created one observation checklist for the initial and final observations to know if the student-centered features were present or absent in classes, verify the problem, and see if the problem continued after our Intervention. Besides, two supplementary checklists were used during the Intervention; one monitored student-centered features in class flow, and another ensured that CLT activities adhered to communicative principles. They enabled us to track students' activities through the One-Zero measurement, noticing whether the listed actions happened (McCall, 1984, as cited in Engler & Stausberg, 2011). Structured observation provided valuable insights into students' tangible actions, complementing verbal reports with direct observations (See Appendixes 2, 3, and 4).

Reflective notes

Having the checklists filled, we intended to use the reflective notes. As the technique, Reflection is a forward-looking process that allows researchers to go beyond experiences and acknowledge areas for improvement (Naseer, Muhammad, & Masood, 2020). Accordingly, reflective notes were designed per lesson to provide a broad understanding of class dynamics. According to Williams (2018), reflective field notes aid researchers and readers in understanding descriptions and conclusions of observations by capturing researchers' feelings, perceptions, and connections. These notes documented changes toward student-centered focus and informed adjustments to subsequent lesson plans according to self-reflection and recommendations (See Appendix 5).

Questionnaire for students

By the end of our Intervention, we implemented the quantitative self-administered survey technique with participants using an anonymous Questionnaire as the instrument. It included close-ended questions that gave us measurable insights into their experiences and open-ended questions that allowed participants to express their feelings behind each answer. Consequently, it is a practical procedure to gather people's facts about their attitudes, views, and convictions (Artino et al., 2014), as it can be filled with little effort. Moreover, Questionnaires can be effectively and immediately analyzed, providing a wide range of responses efficiently (Efron & Ravid, 2013). It is paramount to state that it was provided in Spanish to ensure feasibility and reliability (See Appendix 6).

Collectively, these tools provided valuable information on planning and applying the activities, including students' final insights after the Intervention. Having all the data collected supports accurate discussions and conclusions. That being so, the description of the population will come next.

Data Analysis Methods

In order to facilitate analysis, all the filled documents were scanned and then transcribed and analyzed using MAXQDA software (See Appendix 7). Four primary categories were identified based on our research goals: CLT activities contribution, Students' attitudes, Student-centered environment, and Before and after the Intervention. These categories were utilized in MAXQDA to classify the excerpts. Subsequently, to provide a systematic approach, this categorization was further organized into a table that details Categories, Themes, Codes, and Excerpts (See Appendix 8) (Bengtsson, 2016). In addition to that, quantitative data was analyzed using tables and graphics to support the qualitative data (See Appendix 9). Triangulation was used eventually to make the data visual and

understandable (See Figures 8, 9, and 10). The analysis concludes with a comparison of the before and after Intervention. All the methods used will be explained deeply in the analysis chapter.

Participants

The research was carried out at a rural school in Azogues, attended by middle and low-class students, both female and male, around 12 and 13 years old. The population consisted of fourteen (14) 8th-grade students (Upper Basic level), who, based on the curriculum, must be at the A1.1 level of English proficiency (Ministerio de Educación del Ecuador, 2019). The permission to conduct the investigation was accepted by the school principal and students' parents (See Appendix 10). The school has only one English teacher for all grades from 1st to 10th, with one parallel per grade. Among all these classrooms, 8th-grade students were deemed neither too old nor too young to engage in and reflect upon our activities. In this regard, purposive sampling was considered in choosing the participants based on our judgment to have a proper population (Mweshi & Sakyi, 2020).

Henceforth, Initial Observations revealed a need for more interaction, collaborative work, student participation, engagement, assistance among students, and student talking time (STT), all indispensable for a student-centered class (Jones, 2007). Thereafter, the Intervention plan will be explored with the goal of contributing to this problem.

Research procedures

Having completed the preliminary steps, we now detail our Intervention, which follows a structured seven-step process separated into two phases: the exploratory and the Actual Action Research phases. In the later phase, the instruments are explained in greater detail to clarify how data was collected and utilized. Also, the following figure illustrates the cycle through which this research progressed to obtain data and answer the main research

questions and objectives.

Figure 6

Steps of Exploratory Action Research
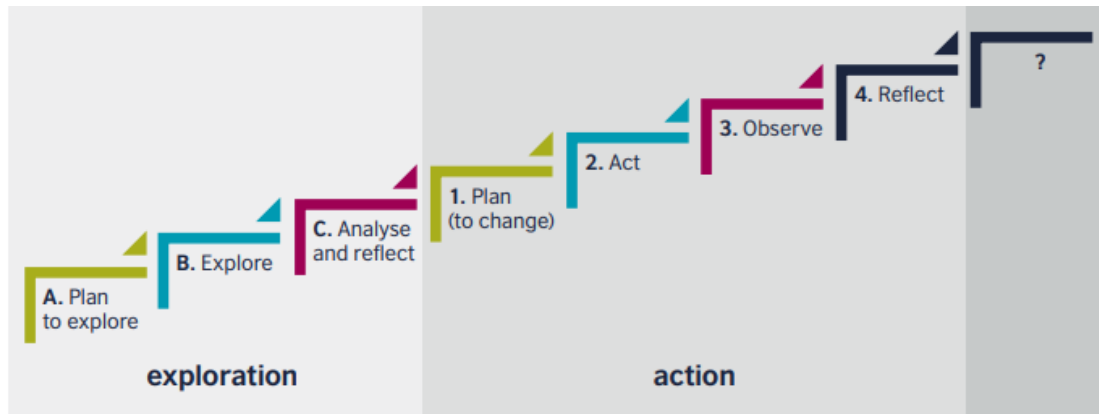
Note. Taken from Smith and Rebolledo (2018, p. 25)

Exploratory phase

Plan to explore

Intending to facilitate our investigation and corroborate the identified issue, we have

devised the following exploratory questions:

- To what extent do the students interact inside the classroom?

- How often do the students produce the language?

In order to answer these questions, we conducted the observation in the English

classroom during class hours. Eventually, researchers designed the Checklist Template for

the **Initial Observation** to assess the lesson conducted by the professional tutor. With that

filled, noticing all-important features of the class and identifying common patterns was

possible. The observation took place over two weeks. Those filled checklists were then

compared and contrasted with the Final Observation using the same Checklist Template after

the CLT activities application.

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Explore

After developing the instruments, we requested permission from our professional tutor to observe during the first two weeks. Subsequently, the observation was conducted inside the classroom, focusing on teacher and students' performance. Moreover, the **Initial Observation Checklist,** previously created, was filled out to include specific student-centered features such as balancing Teacher-led and Student-centered activities, promoting group work and peer support, minimizing TTT, emphasis on STT, providing precise directions, and flexible activity pacing. These features were recorded to compare and notice any changes after the application of CLT activities.

Analyze and Reflect

Once we had completed the first two steps in this Exploratory phase, we analyzed the observations by examining the checklists and looking for relevant patterns. We extracted the observed features and kept them for future comparison with the final observation. Through this process, we acknowledged the student's passive role in class, particularly regarding interaction and production of the language. All the data gathered from this was genuine for preparing our plan to change in the next phase.

Action Phase

Plan to change

After reflecting on the gathered data in the exploratory stage, planning was vital for the Action phase. Literature indicates that the following five activities, built from CLT principles, are particularly effective at encouraging student contact and a communicative atmosphere: Mingle (*Find Someone Who*), Role-Play, Running Dictation, Debates (*Pyramid discussion*), and Interview (Chetouane et al., 2023; Akkasorn & Chaiyasuk, 2021; Haliwanda, 2021). These exercises, within lesson plans, improve cooperative learning and real-world

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communication while adhering to CLT principles. **During the Intervention**, observation checklists recorded the absence or presence of the student-centered features and the CLT principles in the activities. Furthermore, we completed the **Final Observation Checklist** after the Intervention. Then, we extracted the main points and reflected on them using the reflective notes taken during the Intervention. Finally, we conducted a **Questionnaire** where students showed their attitudes toward the CLT activities we had applied.

Act

Regarding this stage, researchers designed and implemented seven English lessons structured around CLT activities. Drawing from CLT principles outlined by Larsen-Freeman (2000, as cited in Rezaee & Farahian, 2015), the emphasis was on real-world language, communicative competence, contextual meaning, and activities related to communicative purposes in authentic communication settings. The selected activities included a Mingle activity, Role-Play, Running Dictation, Interview, and Debates, as they all facilitated social interaction and the use of the target language in real-life contexts, aligning with the CLT approach. Also, we decided to conduct two lessons with Running Dictation but with upgraded difficulty to do something different and avoid students' boredom as it appeared to be the most appealing to them and where they served as the primary actors. Additionally, lesson plans were meticulously designed for each activity, offering guidance and ensuring alignment with the topics offered by the professional tutor's quarterly micro curricular planning (See Appendix 11).

During our five-week Intervention, we used the **During Intervention Observation Checklists** (student-centered features–CLT principles). Additionally, one **reflective note** per lesson took place along with the Intervention checklists, having seven (7) reflective notes. After that, we just observed during the last week and fulfilled the **Final-Observation**

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Checklist, which followed the same format as the Initial Observation to compare the students' features before and after the Intervention. In addition, we conducted a Questionnaire with the students to determine their attitudes regarding the CLT activities applied at the end of our Intervention.

Observe

While we were applying the activities based on CLT principles in each lesson, we were observing the whole process as there were two of us; we decided that while one of us was giving the class, the other one was observing. In doing so, the observer used the **During Intervention-Observation Checklists (2)** to identify the student-centered characteristics and the CLT principles in the activities. The **reflective notes** were also tools used to record any changes in student dynamics, and they helped in noticing aspects that may be new regarding students' engagement and performance. Having done so, during the last week of observation, we used the **Final Observation Checklist** to compare and contrast with the data gathered from the Initial Observation.

Reflect

Having applied activities based on CLT principles that were for leading into a student-centered class, we reflected using the data collected through the (2) initial, (7) during-Intervention -features/principles-, and (1) final-observation checklists, (7) reflective notes, as well as the data obtained from (14) students' questionnaires. All data was analyzed and interpreted to have accurate analysis. Furthermore, we compared the initial and final checklists to assess any changes that occurred after our Intervention.

Implementation Plan "Cultivating Minds"

Objective: To promote a student-centered environment through the application of CLT activities.

This implementation uses the social constructivism theory as a guide, which underscores the importance of cooperative work to facilitate interaction inside the classroom. Furthermore, in this theory, we have the ZPD, which involves cooperative work by grouping more knowledgeable students with average ones to support each other.

Therefore, we need to choose activities that involve collaboration and interaction so that they can be valuable in creating a student-centered environment. The CLT activities chosen were a *Mingle activity (Find someone who), Role-Play, Running Dictation, Interview, and a Debate (Pyramid discussion)*. In summary, we selected these activities for their ability to facilitate interaction, collaboration, and cooperative work among students, thereby enhancing their language learning experience.

To begin our implementation, we designed the lesson plans for each class, taking into consideration the school book they were using in order to avoid interference in their process of learning. Additionally, we considered their level and adapted all the activities. We opted to utilize the PPP model and added a warm-up at the beginning of each lesson (See Appendix 11). However, as the classes continued, we noticed that the allocated time needed to be modified to cover all the planning. Thus, for the following lessons, CLT activities took precedence over others and were primordial in the classes. Figure 7 details the features of the Intervention, along with each lesson plan, which is explained in detail.

Figure 7

Observation and implementation phases timetable

Week	Instrument	Technique	CLT activity
Week 1	Initial- Observation Checklist	Systematic Observation	None
Week 2	Initial- Observation Checklist	Systematic Observation	None
Week 3	During-Intervention observation checklists (2) Reflective notes	Systematic Observation Reflection	Mingle activity (Find someone who)
Week 4	During- intervention observation checklists (2) Reflective notes	Systematic Observation Reflection	Role-play
Week 5	During- intervention observation checklists (2) Reflective notes	Systematic Observation Reflection	Running dictation and Interview
Week 6	During- intervention observation checklists (2) Reflective notes	Systematic Observation Reflection	Debate (Pyramid discussion) and Running dictation 2.0
Week 7	During- intervention observation checklists (2) Reflective notes	Systematic Observation Reflection	Running Answer (variation of Running Dictation)
Week 8	Questionnaire Final- Observation Checklist	Written interview Systematic Observation	None

Note. This figure specifies the instruments, techniques, and activities that were applied per week.

Observation and Implementation Timeline:

· Two weeks for Initial Observation.

· Five weeks for implementation with CLT activities.

· One final week of observation.

Data Collection Method:

· Division of workload: One person teaches, and the other observes and fills out instruments.

· The researcher is in charge of teaching and also completing instruments after each class.

· Collaborative discussion and comparison of perspectives to enhance instrument information.

Weekly CLT Activities:

· Week 1: "Mingle (Find Someone Who)" for individual student interaction.

· Week 2: "Role-Play" in small groups for mutual support.

· Week 3: Two classes with "Running Dictation" in pairs and "Interview" to enhance social skills.

· Week 4: Two classes with "Debates (Pyramid Discussion)" starting individually and then in groups and "Running Dictation 2.0" for cooperative skills, repeating and upgrading the activity.

· Week 5 (Final one): "Running Answer (variation of Running Dictation)" with group competition through asking and answering questions.

As was seen, some weeks were devoted to applying CLT activities twice during the week. This strategic approach aims to give students more chances to practice and apply their language abilities by increasing exposure to communicative behaviors. Subsequently, each lesson plan's description will be shown (See Appendix 11), providing a thorough grasp of the techniques and results by highlighting the particular activities, goals, and student responses.

Lesson Plans Descriptions

Implementation goal: To promote a student-centered environment through the application of CLT activities.		
N° of sessions: 7 sessions	**Estimated duration time:** 5 weeks	
Session N°1 (Week 1): Vocabulary - Mingle activity		
Objectives	**Structure**	**Duration of session**
- To practice asking and answering questions about related vocabulary.	Start the class with a warmer "Memory game." Students have to find the pair of cards they choose in big groups.	1h 45min
	The teacher presents the "Home Activities" vocabulary and makes students practice pronunciation.	
	Present the "Pictionary" activity, where students have to draw and guess the word in small groups.	
	Students are involved in a Mingling activity	

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	in which they have to find one classmate (who does a specific Home Activity).	
Session N°2 (Week 2): Grammatical competence and vocabulary - Role-Play		
- To use the Present Simple Tense and frequency adverbs to write about their activities and those of another person in the context of a hypothetical play.	Introduce the class with a warmer "Chinese Whisper." Students have to whisper the sentences they listen to and pass them.	1h 45min
	The teacher presents the "Present simple" and "Frequency adverbs" by eliciting them and using a dice for the adverbs.	
	The teacher introduces the "Role-Play" activity. Students have to perform a hypothetical situation using simple sentences, including adverbs of frequency.	
Session N°3 (Week 3): Vocabulary - Running Dictation		
- To recognize the process of writing a letter using the vocabulary learned.	Start the class by conducting a warmer "Hangman." Students have to guess the word by saying letters out loud.	1h 45min
	The teacher presents vocabulary to "Give instructions" and helps students practice pronunciation.	
	The teacher uses the Tingo-Tingo-Tango game to choose a student to come and play Charades.	
	Students are involved in the Running Dictation activity, where they dictate to their partners what they see in a chosen photo.	
Session N°4 (Week 3): Vocabulary - Interview		
- To describe the process for making their favorite dishes.	Start the class with a warmer "Paper plane." Students write their doubts on a piece of paper, fold it into a plane shape, and throw it to the front.	1h 45min
	The teacher presents the vocabulary of "Giving instruction (recipes)" with flashcards and makes students match the words with the flashcards.	
	Present the "Interview" activity. Students have to ask and answer questions about their favorite dishes.	
	Presentation of the Interview. Students have to present their Interviews in	

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	front of the class.	
Session N°5 (Week 4): Vocabulary - Pyramid discussion (Debate)		
- To recognize the use of should and should not when talking about Health Problems in real-life scenarios.	Present a warmer "Target shooting." Students have to throw wet toilet paper on the whiteboard to the circle drawn on the board.	1h 45min
	Introduce "Health problems" vocabulary with flashcards and explain what should and should not.	
	Present the "Pyramid discussion" activity. Students have to think individually first, then in pairs, and so on, once they all discuss together to reach an agreement.	
Session N°6 (Week 4): Grammatical competence and vocabulary - Running Dictation 2.0		
- To recognize the structure and the third person when using present simple.	Starts with the "A to Z" warmer. Students have to go through the alphabet with their fingers, and once they stop, they have to say something that starts with the letter they are pointing out.	1h 45min
	Review the previous vocabulary by playing "Pictionary" with the whole class. Students have to draw, and the rest guess the word. Present the "Present simple" by eliciting.	
	Present the "Running Dictation 2.0" activity, in which students dictate to their partners what they see in a chosen template. The template also has some incomplete sentences that students need to complete afterward.	
Session N°7 (Week 5): Vocabulary - Running Answer (variation of Running Dictation)		
- To discuss and reinforce understanding of the vocabulary covered.	Introduce "My ship is full of…" warmer where students have to say objects depending on the category chosen.	1h 45min
	Review the vocabulary, and students will have to create questions regarding all the topics covered.	
	Start with the "Running answer (variation of Running Dictation)" activity, in which students listen to the questions made by the other groups, discuss them in their groups, and then go to the board to write their answers.	

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Analysis of the results

In this chapter, the process of analyzing the data from the observation checklists, reflective notes, and the questionnaire will be described. Moreover, the method of integrating all data from the instruments to analyze it correctly will be detailed. In addition, the interpretation and discussion of each category's results will be stated.

After the data had been collected, the qualitative data procedures involved coding and theme identification for accurate analysis, as stated by Taherdoost (2022). A deductive research approach was used to analyze to what extent CLT activities promote a student-centered environment using action research as the method guiding the study. Researchers then created a list of codes before starting the analysis (Bengtsson, 2016). During this whole process, the anonymity and confidentiality of the school and the students were maintained.

In the first two observation weeks, the **Initial Observation Checklists** confirmed the presence of the concern by focusing entirely on how the class environment was managed (See Appendix 2). Both quantitative (presence or absence) and qualitative (comments) data were analyzed (Dehalwar & Sharma, 2024), with qualitative data being the primary focus following a qualitative approach. Quantitative data was analyzed with tables (See Appendix 9), and qualitative data was categorized (See Appendix 8) into main categories based on our objectives. Then, coding was done with the support of the MAXQDA software to identify relevant details for each category (See Appendix 7).

Afterward, the **During Observation Checklists** (See Appendix 3 and 4) were completed during our Intervention along with the reflective notes focusing on students' performance and how the CLT activities were applied. Similar to the initial observation checklist, these were analyzed in the quantitative tables (See Appendix 9) and qualitative categorization (See Appendix 8), considering the four categories and using MAXQDA

software (See Appendix 7). Reflective notes were combined with these checklists to find patterns and analyze them properly (See Appendix 5 and 7).

After that, the **Final Observation Checklist** (See Appendix 2) was also completed to compare with the initial observation checklists, identifying continuity and/or improvement. As the other instruments, it followed the same path regarding its analysis, from the quantitative analysis (See Appendix 9), which was also used as a support for the analysis, to the qualitative one (See Appendix 8) with the help of the MAXQDA software (See Appendix 7).

Finally, the **Questionnaire** (See Appendix 6) was administered during the last week of Intervention to examine the students' attitudes. Similar to the other instruments, it was analyzed and categorized (See Appendix 8) using the MAXQDA software (See Appendix 7), with quantitative data represented in tables and graphics (See Appendix 9). It is important to highlight that all the data from all instruments was integrated into a single categorization chart (See Appendix 8).

Triangulation

As a means to enhance analysis, data triangulation was done, helping researchers avoid general information and go deeper into the data analysis. Moreover, through the confirmation of recurring themes from various data production techniques, this process greatly aided in the development of categories (Santos et al., 2020). This strategy was used to identify and order the data, which derived the three main categories (*1. CLT activities contribution, 2. Students' attitudes, 3. Student-centered environment*). Furthermore, it helped as a visual representation of each of the categories to have a structured and proper analysis (See Figures 8, 9, and 10).

The following sections will contain the results and comments of each finding. The

complete analysis is intended to explain how CLT activities support a student-centered

environment while simultaneously addressing real-world teaching issues. Figure 8 will detail

the triangulation of the first category to make the analysis more understandable.

Results

Figure 8

CLT activities contribution category
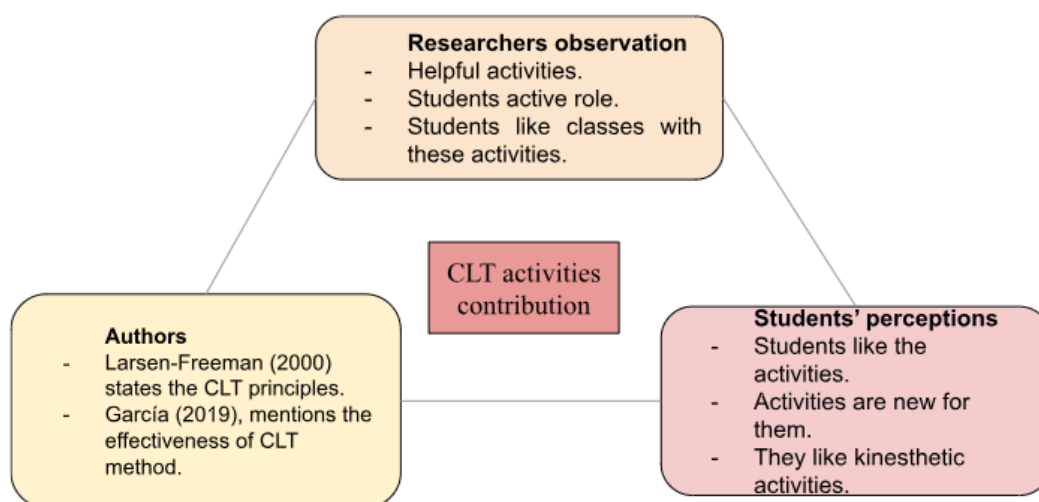
Note. The figure states the CLT activities contribution category based on what the authors say

about it, what we have observed, and what the study participants think about it.

In Figure 8, the first category, "CLT activities contribution," is presented. Based on

the observations made, the activities were helpful since students were part of the class,

participating, cooperating, and learning. It was noticeable that they enjoyed the classes with

these kinds of activities. Regarding students' perceptions, they mentioned that they liked the

Mingle and Running Dictation activities because they were new and enjoyable.

It demonstrates that the CLT activities helped a lot to a student-centered class since,

in the observations and reflective notes held, interaction, collaboration, and real-life contexts

were evident in the activities. These activities were Mingle, Running Dictation, Interview,

Role-Play, and Debates. Thus, this supports the first specific objective regarding the contribution of CLT activities to a student-centered class. As it was stated in the checklist and the reflective notes by the researchers, *"Interaction was key*," *"The connection among themselves is pretty evident," "real-life situation,"* and *"Content linked to activity*." This aligns with the principles mentioned by Larsen-Freeman (2000, as cited in Rezaee & Farahian, 2015), which emphasize the importance of using actual context language, having communicative competence, and the creation of genuine communication settings.

Regarding the preferred activities in the reflective notes, the researchers stated that *"(Running Dictation) really worked during class time. The activity awakened a sense of competition but, at the same time, a sense of cooperation."* Besides, in the Questionnaire, students supported this by mentioning, *"a la hora de moverme mi cuerpo se estira y me siento más cómodo"* (when it comes to moving my body stretches and I feel more comfortable - Student 7) and *"Me gustó más la competencia de dictado porque era como una competencia y teníamos que ser muy rápidos"* (I liked the Running Dictation more because it was like a competition and we had to be very fast - Student 14).

It was noticeable that students preferred activities where they had to move and compete. Also, the fact that they interacted and cooperated when carrying out these activities was enriching for building a student-centered class. Mingle and Running Dictation activities contributed the most to a student-centered class since students were moving around and actively participating, which was new for them. Additionally, they were asking for activities like that all the time.

The information gathered about the value of CLT activities in a student-centered classroom is in direct line with García (2019) findings, which discuss improving students' motivation and speaking abilities. The present study shows that the CLT activities (Mingle

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and Running Dictation) engaged our students and that enthusiasm and active participation embrace García's findings regarding motivation with applying the CLT method. Both studies underscore how vital the creation of real-world language use is and how CLT boosts a student-centered class by having them as active participants when learning. Figure 9 will display the triangulation of the second category to be analyzed.

Figure 9

Students' attitudes towards CLT activities
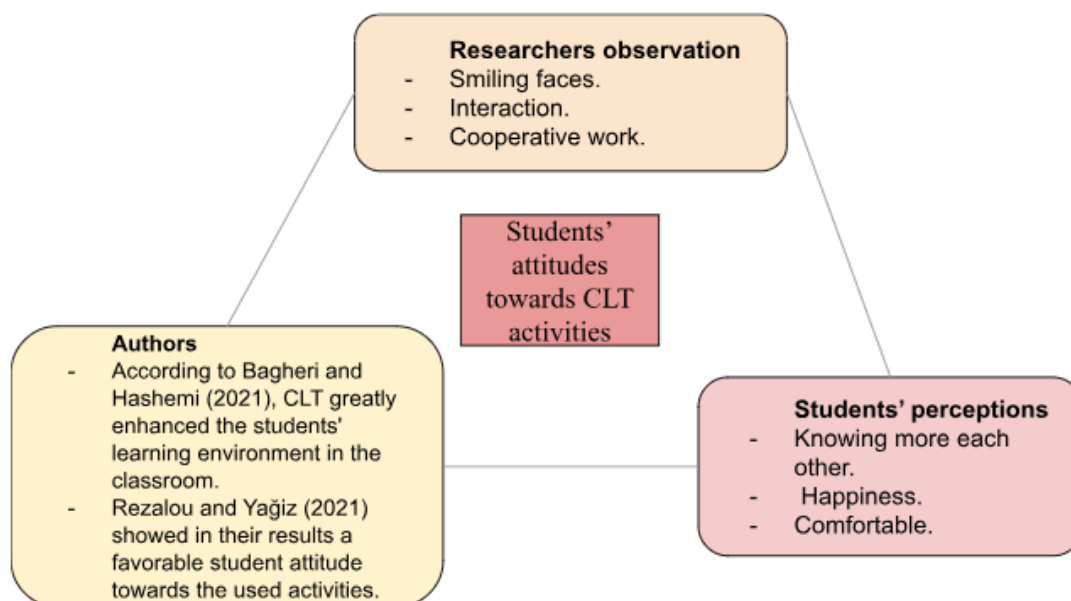
Note. It displays the students' attitudes towards the CLT activities category, comparing what the authors say regarding it, what we have observed, and what the students of this study perceive.

The "Students' attitudes towards CLT activities" category data was collected through the During Observation Checklists, and the applied Questionnaire to the students. Based on these instruments, it was noticeable that during the application of these activities, students had smiling faces and seemed to be enjoying the activity. Furthermore, they showed engagement by asking each other, helping others, and being attentive. Also, they interacted

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and worked collaboratively to complete the activities. Supporting this fact, most students stated that these activities helped them learn more about their classmates and that they were always part of the team. Also, they felt excited and comfortable during the activities.

In regard to the second specific objective focused on attitudes, results show that the students' attitudes toward CLT activities favor this research since they like to know more about others and feel comfortable in class. Moreover, it was observable that they were engaged, as stated in various comments from the researchers. For instance, students were sometimes seen *"smiling," "dancing and laughing,"* and *"enjoying running activities."* Additionally, they were *"curious about more vocabulary."* One student even remarked, "*Nos divertíamos mucho*" (We had a lot of fun - Student N° 13), highlighting their enjoyment for these activities.

Furthermore, interaction was pretty present in the class since it was a must for all the activities, and as researchers commented, *"Interaction was useful."* Students were also aware of their interaction and mentioned, *"Nos ayudó a saber más cosas de nuestros compañeros"* (It helped us learn more about our classmates - Student 1). This is similar to the other one that said, *"Nunca me dejaban fuera del grupo"* (They never left me out of the group - Student 4). Additionally, learners expressed their feelings through the Questionnaire. It showed that most students appeal to have CLT activities, as they stated in the following excerpts: *"Me sentí cómodo porque las actividades eran divertidas"* (I felt comfortable because the activities were fun - Student 5), *"Me sentí cómoda"* (I felt comfortable - Student 8), *"Me sentí emocionado y feliz"* (I felt excited and happy - Student 14). Consequently, it is evident from our findings that students liked the activities because they not only made them feel good but also helped strengthen their relationships. This aligns with the findings of Bagheri and Hashemi (2021), who state that CLT created an environment where students reported being

cozy when expressing their ideas and learning. Based on our results, not only did CLT activities help to create a student-centered environment, but they were also positively embraced by students, making them feel comfortable and actively involved throughout our Intervention.

This category of the students' attitudes is linked with a previous study conducted by Rezalou and Yağiz (2021) since both highlight students' positive impact and perceptions in the light of CLT activities. As in this research, students shared that they were like an integral part of the class, and with their smiling faces, it was perceived that they had a favorable predisposition. Hence, both researches underscore the CLT's effectiveness in creating a supportive learning environment and fostering good students' attitudes towards language learning activities. Aguilar and Armijos (2023) also received positive student responses regarding CLT activities. Following, Figure 10 contains the third category regarding the student-centered environment to be analyzed.

Figure 10

Student-centered environment category
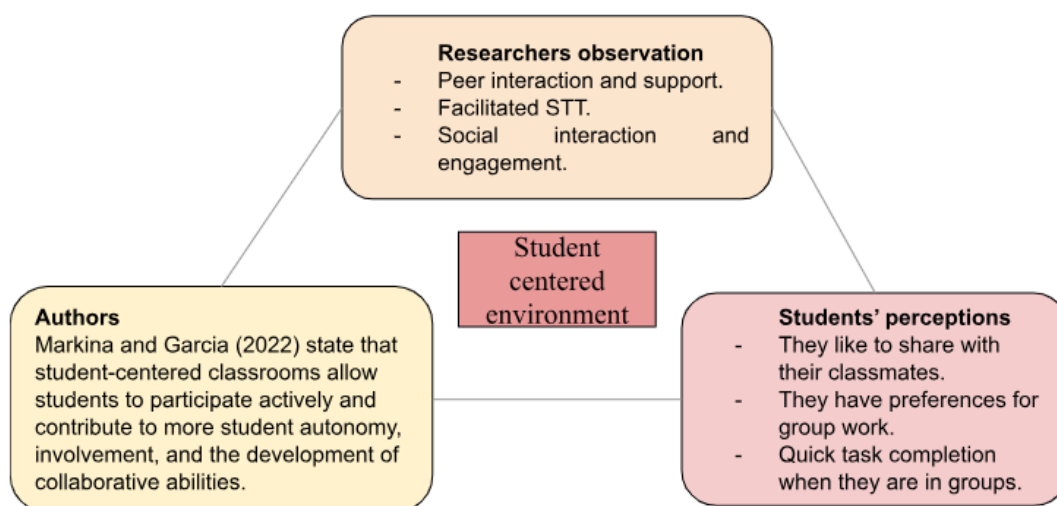
Note. It shows the student-centered environment category along with the authors' findings,

researchers' observations, and what the participants reckon about it.

Figure 10 represents the third category, "Student-centered environment," along with the gathered data from all Checklists, Reflective notes, and the Questionnaire. With that basis, it was acknowledged that all the activities held and taught were primarily intended to achieve a student-centered environment since peer interaction and STT were significantly addressed. Also noticeable is the students' preference for group interaction activities that would help them complete tasks more quickly and cooperatively, which aligns with the notion of social constructivism.

When students expressed their perceptions, they defined positive insights connected with a student-centered environment. For instance, one student stated, *"podemos interactuar entre nosotros, así ayudándonos mutuamente"* (We can interact with each other thus helping each other - Student 5). Another noted, *"convivo con mis compañeros y nos ayudamos en cualquier cosa"* (I spend time with my classmates and we help each other with anything - Student 9). Additionally, a student mentioned, *"nos podemos ayudar uno a otro y acabamos más pronto las tareas."* (We can help each other and finish the tasks sooner - Student 12). Lastly, a student shared, *"converso con mis amigos y nos ayudamos"* (I talk with my friends, and we help each other - Student 14).

These excerpts go together with what Markina and Garcia (2022) expressed, that student-centered classrooms provide kids more chances to speak up, boosting engagement. Al-Zu'be (2013) also stated that peer interaction and information exchange are cooperative work. Moreover, reducing Teacher Talking Time (TTT) and increasing Student Talking Time (STT) improves speaking skills and fosters students' accountability (Kostadinovska-Stojchevska & Popovikj, 2019). Jones (2007) also highlights the significance of striking a balance between both.
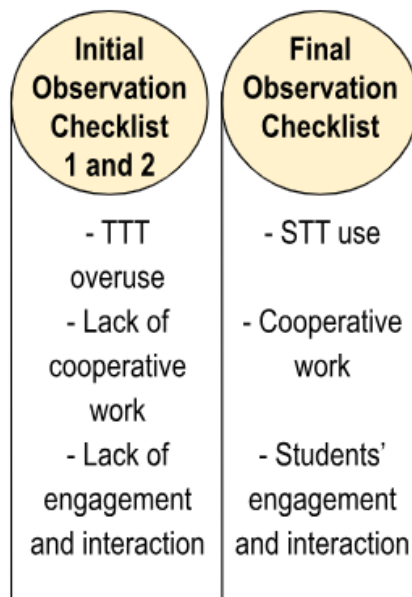
Therefore, students cherish a setting where they can communicate and help one another. This enhanced their educational experience and promoted a sense of community and cooperation. Our analysis underscores that students felt more involved and accountable for their education in this collaborative environment, eventually resulting in better comprehension and recall of the subject matter. With this, the general objective was achieved since it reflects a student-centered environment with the help of CLT activities. A more dynamic and productive learning environment that meets the interests and preferences of the students can be created by educators by encouraging peer interaction and lessening the predominance of teacher talk.

This study, like Komol and Suwanphathama (2020), discovered that Role-Play and group discussions greatly improved students' confidence and speaking abilities. According to Rezalou and Yağiz (2021), applying CLT activities improved students' speaking skills and attitudes. Examples of these activities include group work and conversations, built on a constructivist basis, facilitating the active construction of knowledge through social reflection and interaction. Furthermore, as noted by Bagheri and Hashemi (2021), this research emphasizes the value of a student-centered approach in enhancing language learning results, supporting the facilitator function of the instructor. Lastly, the results of this study confirm the observations made by Aguilar and Armijos (2023) and García (2019), showing that CLT activities promote both a collaborative and stimulating learning environment in the classroom and language ability improvement.

To finish this analysis, Figure 11 compares the observations done before and after the Intervention related to student-centered features. The most noticeable features were the time both actors took to speak in class, the cooperative presence, and the interaction among students.

Figure 11

Before and after the Intervention category

Initial Observation Checklist 1 and 2	Final Observation Checklist
- TTT overuse	- STT use
- Lack of cooperative work	- Cooperative work
- Lack of engagement and interaction	- Students' engagement and interaction

Note. This figure presents the results and comparison between the Initial and Final Observation Checklists regarding student-centered features.

Here, the initial and final observation checklists are compared to notice if there was continuity or if something had changed in the flow of the classroom environment. As is evident in the figure, in the first two lessons observed, the class appeared to use classic teaching methods, having the teacher as the main protagonist since there was an overuse of Teacher Talking Time (TTT), individual work, and no engaging activities. On the contrary, cooperation was present in the final lesson, with dynamic and engaging activities. Students' interaction and prioritizing Student Talking Time (STT) was also notable.

It is evident that there was a change and improvement in a student-centered environment since TTT was lowered significantly, and the use of STT was present. As Kostadinovska-Stojchevska and Popovikj (2019) indicated, minimizing TTT is key for having students as the prominent participants in the class, which is clearly stated in the

following researchers' comment, *"Teacher encourages STT."* Afterward, Jones (2007) claims that student-centered learning can be attained even in big classes through smaller groups, and in the end, it was observable that collaborative work usage was increased. As the following extract shows too, *"Activities are designed for being worked in pairs."* Finally, the activities that at the beginning were not engaging enough were later replaced by interactive and dynamic ones since students needed new stuff in their learning to be productive and meaningful; as mentioned by Komol and Suwanphathama (2020), the amount and variety of class activities facilitated by teachers could be imperative for supplementing learners' class contents. As the excerpts mentioned, *"They support each other," "Students ask and answer each other,"* and *"... are asking each other to be more clear."* Evidently, a student-centered environment was present at the end of the implementation since the characteristics mentioned above are part of a student-centered class.

Indeed, the results obtained in these observations allow us to see the class environment before and after. As supported by the recommendation of Chasi and Ichina (2023), CLT could be helpful when addressing learning challenges, making a student-centered environment conceivably. Consequently, CLT is a powerful approach to transforming traditional teaching into more current and student-led teaching.

Overall, the analysis underscores that the CLT approach is essential for encouraging students to take an active role in the classroom, creating an atmosphere where learners take ownership of their education. All the data obtained from the observation, reflective notes, and the questionnaire revealed that Mingle and Running Dictation activities foster a cooperative and enjoyable learning atmosphere. Students were fascinated with kinesthetic, competitive, and interactive activities since they made them enthusiastic and participative. The transition from traditional teaching to a student-centered approach was evident by reducing TTT and

increasing STT, reflected in social constructivism and cooperative work. Finally, these findings align with existing research, which contributes to the validity of claiming that CLT fosters a student-centered class.

Conclusions

Having analyzed all the results and data gathered, we concluded the research with the following statements. Based on the first specific objective about which CLT activity contributes the most to a student-centered class, we have Running Dictation and Mingle activities as the most mentioned by the students and by us in the data gathered. This is because students like to share with their classmates and know more about them. It is essential to highlight that they also stated that they felt good when doing the activities because they were new. As in the student-centered features, it is mentioned that for this environment, interaction, cooperative work, and student talking time, among others, are paramount, and if we noticed in the results, the presence of these features is notable. Thereby, we can claim that Running Dictation and Mingle activities contributed the most to a student-centered environment in our study.

Concerning the second specific objective, which is to know the students' attitudes towards these CLT activities, we have students responding positively to the data obtained. They declared they felt great since these activities allowed them to learn more about their classmates and move actively. It was something different and dynamic for them since they had a variety of activities that involved movement and participation. This drives us to the conclusion of applying the CLT approach and making activities based on it to make our students feel part of the class and increase involvement and cooperation. Consequently, in our setting, using CLT activities benefited our participants when learning English as a foreign language.

Furthermore, the last observation of the class unveiled a significant finding: the English teacher's proactive use of several implementation strategies, including realia, pair work, real-life tasks, and instruction-checking questions (ICQs). This observation was pivotal in evaluating the sustained supportive learning environment Post-Intervention. It was truly inspiring to witness the consistent use of these strategies, highlighting the viability and potential for ongoing success in implementing Communicative Language Teaching activities in this environment. It is crucial to note that this approach is already embedded in the current curriculum (Ministerio de Educación del Ecuador, 2019), and its feasibility, as demonstrated in this study, suggests its applicability extends not only to public schools but to all schools.

Finally, our general objective was to examine the extent to which CLT activities contribute to a student-centered environment. With all the information gained, it is accurate to declare that the CLT activities did promote a student-centered environment in this specific class and context. As evidenced by both students' declarations and our observations, students not only demonstrated increased engagement and collaboration but also a more profound sense of accountability and satisfaction with their learning process. This prioritization of peer interaction and Student Talking Time is a testament to the success of our research. Thus, this research supports the notion of integrating Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) activities not only to enrich classroom dynamics but also to empower students' active participation, help them thrive in their educational journey, and be consistent with the national curriculum.

Limitations

Although the results are worthwhile, the most remarkable limitation we faced was the participants' English level. It was also noticed that English is not a primordial subject; however, as researchers, we found it to be a manageable impediment when applying the

strategies. Most of the time, classes had to be conducted using L1 (Spanish) for explanations and instructions; nevertheless, English was always the main target of all the applied activities. Students were more encouraged to use and practice throughout the Intervention to succeed when completing the tasks.

Recommendations

- To create a compelling and enriching EFL classroom, the teacher should ensure that students have the comprehensive and necessary knowledge for any activity (Grammar structures/vocabulary).

- The teacher should include various activities to maintain the dynamism and cater to students' interests (learning preferences and multiple intelligences).

- The teacher can introduce breathing exercises, positive reinforcement, or hands-on activities to ensure an EFL classroom is free of stress or anxiety.

- The teacher must build a positive environment by establishing rapport with students to ensure they are comfortable and eager to learn.

- Teachers can make an important boost to the education of our nation by meticulously reviewing the English National curriculum, which outlines and explains useful approaches like the CLT.

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Appendixes

Appendix 1

Validation of Instruments

COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS SECTION

- Do you consider that the proposed items correspond to categories, unit of analysis or variables of the study?

  YES ____x___   NO_____

- What items would you add or erase?

- **What other suggestions would you make to improve this instrument?**

- Evaluator's Names: _UVALDO RECINO PINEDA

- ID: 1756655393

- Academic Degree: M.A. in Studies of the English Language and PhD in Pedagogical Science

- Signature:

COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS SECTION

- Do you consider that the proposed items correspond to categories, unit of analysis or variables of the study?

  Yes X   No _____

- What items would you add or erase?

  _____
  _____
  _____
  _____

- **What other suggestions would you make to improve this instrument?**
  Check the phrasing of question 1: Puedes describir o dar un ejemplo de estas ocasiones

  Evaluator's Names: Mahly J. Martinez

  ID: 1759432733

  Academic Degree: Phd. In Education

  Signature: _____

_____

Trabajo de Integración Curricular   Andrea Estefanía Calderón Procel
                                                     Viviana Estefania Munzón Luna

Appendix 2

Instrument: Observation Checklist (Initial - Final)

Initial - Final - Observation Checklist

Escuela de Educación Básica "Daniel Córdova Toral"

Class topic: _____

Class objective: _____

Date: _____

Starts at: _____ Finishes at: _____

Observer name: _____

This Initial Observation Checklist has the purpose of:
Providing information about the presence or absence of student-centered features in classes of 8th-grade students from Escuela de Educación Básica "Daniel Córdova Toral" in Azogues during the first 2 weeks. It will be fulfilled while doing Observation (by one of the researchers).

This Final Observation Checklist has the purpose of:
Providing information about the presence or absence of student-centered features in classes of 8th-grade students from Escuela de Educación Básica "Daniel Córdova Toral" in Azogues during the last week. It will be fulfilled while doing Observation (by one of the researchers).

N°	*Criteria*	Observed		Remarks/Comments
		Present	Absent	
1.	The teacher does activities for students to interact (group /pair work) during class at least once.	""		
2.	The teacher gives opportunities to students to use the taught language			

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Trabajo de Integración Curricular

Andrea Estefanía Calderón Procel
Viviana Estefania Munzón Luna

	feature/topic in class at least once in class.			
3.	The teacher applies activities during the class that engage students for experience sharing.			
4.	The teacher provides spaces for learners to support each other in the activities being carried out.			
5.	The teacher allows learners to assist one another when they have questions about the class.			
6.	The teacher uses grammar and vocabulary strategies to help students to communicate what they need/want to.			
7.	The teacher makes use of the Student Talking Time thus it is leading the class.			
8.	The teacher gives students the time to think and prepare before talking.			
9.	The teacher acts as facilitator and gives clear instructions for activities and makes use of ICQs (Instruction Checking Questions).			
10.	The teacher makes students use a variety of resources or materials (book, songs, games, flashcards)			

Adapted by Andrea Calderón and Estefania Munzón from Jones, L. (2007). *The student-centered classroom* (Vol. 32). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

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Instrument: Observation Checklist (During the Intervention)

During Intervention - Observation Checklist

Escuela de Educación Básica "Daniel Córdova Toral"

> This During-Intervention Observation Checklist has the purpose of:
> Provide information about the **student-centered features** present in classes of 8th-grade Parallel "A" students from Escuela de Educación Básica "Daniel Córdova Toral" in Azogues with the help of the application of activities used based on the principles of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) during 5 weeks.

Class topic: _____

Class objective: _____

Date: _____

Starts at: _____ Finishes at: _____

Observer name: _____

N°	*Criteria*	Observed		Remarks/Comments
		Present	Absent	
1.	Students are involved in collaborative work.			
2.	Student Talking Time predominates the class.			
3.	Students' interaction is present most of the time.			
4.	Students seem to be engaged in the activities.			
5.	Students receive clear			

_____

	instructions from the teacher and/or answer Instruction Checking Questions (ICQs).			
6.	Students have enough time to think and prepare before an activity.			

Adapted by Andrea Calderón and Estefania Munzón from Jones, L. (2007). *The student-centered classroom* (Vol. 32). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Instrument: Observation Checklist for CLT activities (During the Intervention)

During Intervention - Observation Checklist

Escuela de Educación Básica "Daniel Córdova Toral"

This During-Intervention Observation Checklist has the purpose of:
Providing information about the **activities** based on the CLT principles present in classes of 8th-grade students from Escuela de Educación Básica "Daniel Córdova Toral" in Azogues during 5 weeks.

Class topic: _____

CLT activity: _____

Date: _____

Starts at: _____ Finishes at: _____

Observer name: _____

N°	*Criteria*	Observed		Remarks/Comments
		Present	Absent	
1.	Students are using the target language or at least trying to, in the class activity.			
2.	The content taught is useful for the activity students do in class.			
3.	Students' interaction is present most of the time.			
4.	Teacher activities lead to the students' use of real context language in class.			

_____

Trabajo de Integración Curricular

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5.	Teacher makes use of authentic material for the activities in class.			

Adapted by Andrea Calderón and Estefania Munzón from Jones, L. (2007). *The student-centered classroom* (Vol. 32). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

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Appendix 5

Instrument: Reflective Notes

> These Reflective Notes have the purpose of:
> Providing space for making reflections regarding the class when applying the CLT activities with 8th-grade students from Escuela de Educación Básica "Daniel Córdova Toral" in Azogues during 5 weeks.

Date: _____

CLT activity: _____

N. of lesson: _____

Reflective notes:

*Did the activity foster **real communication and active participation** among students?*

*Were there enough opportunities for students to **share and socialize** their work?*

*Was the **interaction among students** successful or useful?*

*What would we focus on more closely or do better when we **return** to this setting?*

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
Self-Reflection / Future Adjustments/Improvements

Adapted by Andrea Calderón and Estefania Munzón from Efron, S., & Ravid, R. (2013). *Action research in education,* p. 91

Appendix 6

Instrument: Questionnaire

Cuestionario dirigido a estudiantes de la Escuela de Educación General Básica "Daniel Córdova Toral"

Estimado/a estudiante:

Este cuestionario tiene el propósito de:
Proveer información sobre las actitudes presentes en los estudiantes de 8vo grado Paralelo "A" de la Escuela de Educación General Básica "Daniel Córdova Toral" en Azogues referente a el uso de actividades empleadas en base a los principios del Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) durante 5 semanas en el periodo académico 2023-2024.

De modo que, es necesario que sus respuestas sean **apegadas a la verdad** para el óptimo uso de las mismas. Las respuestas serán de **estricto uso reservado para la investigación.** Este cuestionario es anónimo por lo que **su identidad no será requerida** y los participantes **son libres de decidir si completarla o no.**

Fecha: _____

1. Me sentí involucrado en las clases:

a. Siempre
b. A veces
c. Nunca

¿En qué ocasiones?

_____
_____

2. Prefiero trabajar de manera:

a. Individual
b. En pareja
c. Grupal

¿Por qué?

_____

_____
_____
_____
_____

3. ¿Cómo me sentí durante las actividades aplicadas por las profesoras?

    a. Cómodo
    b. Neutral
    c. Incómodo

    ¿Por qué?

    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____

4. ¿Hice uso del idioma inglés dentro del aula de clase?

    a. Si
    b. No
    c. Algunas veces

    Explica tu elección.

    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____

5. Entre todas las actividades aplicadas ¿Cuál fue la actividad que más disfrutaste? ¿Por qué? ¿Cómo te sentiste?

(Debates, Actividades de movimiento, Juego de roles, Entrevistas, Competencia de dictado)

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

<div align="center">Gracias</div>

Adapted by Andrea Calderón and Estefania Munzón from Cazco Carrazco, Z., & Chunata Vallejo, D. (2016).

Appendix 7

MAXQDA analysis Link:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1rl2H779fQcnokYGJnnvfSXmRFNmmdtSp/view?usp=sharin

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Appendix 8

Categorization table

Categories	Themes	Codes	Excerpts
CLT activities contribution (Blue color)	CLT activities based on its principles.	Sharing and Collaboration	-*"In the warmer and Mingle activities they had to share."* -*"...in the main activity they were in groups."* -*"Interaction was key when doing the rest of the activities"* -*"The connection among themselves is pretty evident"*
		Variety of activities	-*"...matching and Interview activities"* -*"Music and flash cards hand-made dice"*
		Real context practice	-*"The rest of the time they (students) had to speak."* -*"...enough time to practice"* -*"personalization"* -*"real-life situation"* -*"Content linked to activity."*
	Preferred CLT activities.	Preferred activity observed (teachers).	-*"(**Running Dictation**) really worked during class time."* -*"The activity awakened a sense of competition but, at the same time, a sense of cooperation"* -*"The English level of the activity was not challenging for students. So, this activity really worked during class time."* -*"they really like running activities so this activity was based on it."*

_____

		Preferred activity expressed (students).	**-S1:***"Juego de roles fue divertido"* **-S2:***"actividades de movimiento (Mingle) ... juegos de roles estaba bien porque me desestresa."* **-S3:***"la competencia del dictado ya que nos debíamos esforzar"* **-S5:***"actividades de movimiento, de juego de roles"* **-S6:***"disfrute es en la competencia de dictado porque aprendí a pronunciar y me sentí muy feliz."* **-S7:***"Actividades de movimiento (Mingle) ya que a la hora de moverme mi cuerpo se estira y me siento más cómodo."* **-S14:** *"me gusto más la competencia de dictado porque era como una competencia y teníamos que ser muy rápidos"*
Students' attitudes towards CLT activities (Green color)	Student Engagement	Engagement and Enjoyment	-*"Smiling"* - *"Dancing, laughing"* - *"Really engaged"* - *"Enjoy running activities"* - *"Curious about more vocabulary"* - *"Activity went better than we thought"* - *"Everyone enjoyed"*
		Interaction and Socialization	- *"Involvement and socialization were cheerful"* -*"Asking each other/the teacher for pronunciation"* - *"Interaction was useful"* - *"More engaged when they compete"* - **S1:***"Juego de roles fue divertido"* - **S1:***"Nos ayudó a saber más cosas de nuestros compañeros"* - **S4:***"Nunca me dejaban fuera del grupo"*
		Feelings	- **S13:***"Me sentí cómoda"* - **S13:***"Nos divertíamos mucho"* - **S14:***"Me sentí emocionado y feliz"* - *"Me sentí verdaderamente cómodo porque, las actividades... eran*

			divertidas"
Student-centered environment (Pink color)	Collaboration and Interaction	Designed for Pair Work	-"Activities are designed for being worked in pairs." - "They support each other." - "Teacher encourages STT" - "Students ask and answer each other." - "asking each other to be more clear." - "Students were socializing most of the class, sometimes in the presentation phase they were asking each other about the topic and in the Mingle they did it in the whole activity." - "students rely on each other when doubting, so interaction is pretty present. It allowed students to share and socialize." - "Their interaction was certainly useful because they were helping each other with the vocabulary they didn't know and also the pronunciation of some words."
		Mutual Support	-"They managed to complete the tasks by supporting each other and asking their teachers." - "those dynamics they really encourage each other and support them" - "they certainly active participated" - "create questions and they are not so familiar with it. That is why, teacher was helping" - "and interacted to provide answers to win." - **S1:** "puedo contarle algo a mi amiga un secreto o algo más de las tareas." - **S2:** "hacer más rápido y compartir en grupo entre todos." - **S2:** "de buena manera y con juegos que nos hacían divertir." - **S4:** "al momento de participar siempre estuve involucrada de tal manera que nunca me dejaban fuera del grupo." "en pareja porque hay más

			coordinación"
		Preference for Group Work	- **S5:***"Prefiero trabajar en grupo… podemos interactuar entre nosotros ayudándonos mutuamente."* - **S6:***"explicaban, hacían dinámicas"* - **S7:***"la otra persona me ayuda."* - **S9:***"convivo con mis compañeros y nos ayudamos en cualquier cosa"* - **S10:***"En juegos, trabajo en equipos… nos ayudamos entre todos y damos nuestras opiniones acerca del tema sugerido… jugamos en grupo"* - **S11:***"hicieron unos juegos muy lindos."* - **S12:***"nos podemos ayudar uno a otro y acabamos más pronto las tareas"* - **S3:***"nos podemos ayudar en grupo, y si tenemos dudas"* - **S14:***"converso con mis amigos y nos ayudamos"*
Before and after the Intervention (Brown and Yellow colors)	Absence of student-centered features.	Lack of Collaboration and Engagement	*"None of the activities required students to work together."* - *"None of the activities required them to talk."* - *"Do not seem to be engaged and activities are not personalized"* - *"Just one student was actively participating"* - *"Students only wrote sentences in their notebooks."*
		Teacher-Centered and Materials Use	*"Teacher Talking Time took over the class."* - *"Whiteboard and notebook were the main materials."* - *"They only used the whiteboard and notebooks."* - *"Pay attention but lose it easily"* - *"Students were confused"*
	Presence of student-centered	Collaborative Learning and STT	*"Activities are designed for being worked in pairs."* - *"Teacher encourages STT."*

		features.	
		Student Interaction and Support	*"They support each other." - "Students ask and answer each other."* *- "... asking each other to be more clear."*

Appendix 9

Link to Quantitative Data Analysis: https://docs.google.com/document/d/14oHBObI08R-vqle8Ccjb8Nxur7apj7WtG-c4ZaTaeqw/edit?usp=sharing

Appendix 10

Link to the School and parents' consent:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1qOu9fGAkqketU85ZSNVgUKRLsAvrx5nu?usp=sharing

Appendix 11

Link to the Implementation Plan (Lesson plans):

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1rDVo7IZaizKeIDQjZXysm7vFrQYcQXe0HcRDqXBgkUY/edit?usp=sharing

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Appendix 12

Photos during the implementation

**DECLARATORIA DE PROPIEDAD INTELECTUAL Y CESIÓN DE DERECHOS DE PUBLICACIÓN
PARA EL TRABAJO DE INTEGRACIÓN CURRICULAR
DIRECCIONES DE CARRERAS DE GRADO PRESENCIALES - DIRECCIÓN DE BIBLIOTECA**

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Azogues, 19 de agosto de 2024

Andrea Calderón
_____
Andrea Estefanía Calderón Procel
C.I.: *0150609493*

Trabajo de Integración Curricular

Andrea Estefanía Calderón Procel
Viviana Estefania Munzón Luna

DECLARATORIA DE PROPIEDAD INTELECTUAL Y CESIÓN DE DERECHOS DE PUBLICACIÓN PARA EL TRABAJO DE INTEGRACIÓN CURRICULAR
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Azogues, 19 de agosto de 2024

Viviana Estefania Munzón Luna
C.I.: *0350150397*

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Viviana Estefania Munzón Luna

**CERTIFICACIÓN DEL TUTOR PARA
TRABAJO DE INTEGRACIÓN CURRICULAR
DIRECCIONES DE CARRERAS DE GRADO PRESENCIALES**

Carrera de: Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros

Yo, Fernanda Elizabeth Sarango Solano, tutor del Trabajo de Integración Curricular de Carreras de Grado de Modalidad Presencial denominado "Promoting a student-centered environment in an EFL classroom in Azogues through CLT principles" perteneciente a los estudiantes: Andrea Estefanía Calderón Procel con C.I. 0150609493, Viviana Estefania Munzón Luna con C.I. 0350150397. Doy fe de haber guiado y aprobado el Trabajo de Integración Curricular. También informo que el trabajo fue revisado con la herramienta de prevención de plagio donde reportó el 5 % de coincidencia en fuentes de internet, apegándose a la normativa académica vigente de la Universidad.

Azogues, 19 de agosto 2024

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