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## **The Use of The Celta Frameworks to foster speaking skills in the English language classroom**

### **Uso de los marcos CELTA para fomentar las habilidades del habla en el aula de inglés**

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## ABSTRACT

This study aimed to analyze the effect of CELTA frameworks on the speaking skill development and motivation of students in a 4-month English as a foreign language (EFL) course in their senior year, while preparing for an international English language exam. The study collected data on students' speaking proficiency at pre-test and post-test. The results showed a significant increase in students' pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary, and grammatical accuracy, as well as high motivation to speak, confidence in using the language, and a recognition of the importance of teamwork through interaction with peers. It was concluded that the use of CELTA frameworks is an effective means of fostering language production in the English classroom. Recommendations for future research are included.

**Descriptors:** Language of instruction; bilingual education; academic achievement. (UNESCO Thesaurus).

## RESUMEN

Este estudio tuvo como objetivo analizar el efecto de los marcos CELTA en el desarrollo de habilidades orales y motivación de estudiantes en un curso de inglés como lengua extranjera (EFL) de 4 meses en su último año, mientras se preparaban para un examen internacional de inglés. El estudio recopiló datos sobre el dominio del habla de los estudiantes en pre y postest. Los resultados mostraron un aumento significativo en la pronunciación, la fluidez, el vocabulario y la precisión gramatical de los estudiantes, así como también una motivación alta para hablar, confianza al usar el idioma y, un reconocimiento sobre la importancia del trabajo en equipo a través de la interacción con sus compañeros. Se concluyó que el uso de los marcos CELTA es un medio eficaz para fomentar la producción del lenguaje en el aula de inglés. Se incluyen recomendaciones para investigaciones futuras.

**Descriptores:** Idioma de enseñanza; educación bilingüe; rendimiento escolar. (Tesoro UNESCO).

## **INTRODUCTION**

Educational institutions and teachers have been constantly searching to improve methodologies and techniques to teach English, especially in subjects such as science, projects, and literature. In particular, the search includes looking for a model that allows going beyond non-communicative practices based on grammar, memorization and repetitive lecturing, where the teacher covers all teaching, and implement more student-centered approach where learning is developed in an active and collaborative form.

An eclectic approach that prioritizes the student in the learning process is the CELTA approach. Previous studies on CELTA around the world indicate “the CELTA course addresses Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in such a way that it motivates students to actively learn compared to traditional language teaching and learning” (Mohammed, 2021, p. 26). However, there is little information about implementing CELTA Frameworks to address speaking skills in EFL classrooms in Ecuador.

The CELTA is a short course of five weeks that allows teachers to train in English teaching techniques using frameworks such as the Speaking Framework and Task-Based Framework. Lessons are focused on the needs and motivations of the student, allowing them to develop their ability to communicate while working collectively in a task based using the target language in the solution of problems. Task-Based Learning is “a variant of CLT [communicative language teaching] ... which bases work cycles around the preparation for, doing of, and reflection and analysis of tasks that reflect real-life needs and skills” (Scrivener, (2011, p.32).

The CELTA experience allows the teacher to reflect on their teaching practices carried out in the institution before and after the course. In addition, in using CELTA frameworks such as Speaking and Task-Based frameworks, the teacher adopts an independent actor role in the teaching-learning process being able to reduce the teacher talking time (TTT) and increase the student talking time (STT), give appropriate feedback by identifying errors and make an appropriate correction in students' oral and written production. This

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includes the use of material for communication purposes among others. Moreover, “The essential engine of a richer, more productive learning environment is communication, two-way feedback from learners to teacher and vice versa” (Scrivener, 2005, p. 74)

The use of Task based learning is very significant and positive since to create the interest of the students it is necessary to carry out tasks where an effective input is tested, where the feeling of affective can be noticed and tasks that allow putting into practice outside the classroom. in real situations. For instance, by applying CLT approaches in EFL classroom the activities must be meaningful and interesting to students so they can participate actively in class having the teacher as a guide in their learning process (Dörnyei, 2001; Ellis, 2002). Therefore, the purpose of this study is to analyze the level of student’s confidence, development of the speaking skill as well as their motivation in EFL class by implementing the CELTA Frameworks that promotes problem solving based on a given context and use the target language for real-life purposes.

## **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

1. What is the effect of the implementation of CELTA Framework approach in a preparation course to enhance students’ speaking skills?
2. What is the perception of students on the CELTA frameworks used in the English language class related to their speaking skills, confidence and motivation to learn?

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **Teaching Communicative Language CLT**

Language teaching over the years has gone through several stages. Initially there was talk of a cognitive process where memorization and repetition were predominant in methods such as grammar-translation, and the direct method. Later it was considered that social interaction played an important role through a socio-cognitive process. Vygotsky (1934) stated that adults promote social interaction since they transmit their culture’s

knowledge as a tool; this contrasts with Piaget's since he states the importance to peers interaction as social cognitive development (Balyasnikova & Vasileva, 2019).

Within the communicative approaches, the term Linguistic Competence was introduced by Noam Chomsky, who made two distinctions: competence, which refers to the knowledge of language and its grammatical rules, and Performance, which refers to the use of language (Chomsky, 1965). Chomsky added that psychological factors are immerse in the production of the language; these viewpoints were later supported by (Canale & Swain, 1980).

In the book *Language and Education*, (Halliday, 2007) agrees with Chomsky and adds the functions of language, presenting the communicative competence as the result of active interaction through a meaningful communicative task. Furthermore, (Hymes, 1971) gives importance to the social and psychological environment. This assertions have been supported by other authors including Dornyei (2009), a key researcher on motivation.

CLT was born as an alternative to traditional practices such as memorization, repetition, and direct translation in favor of student- centered learning methods applying the target language in real context or "activities where the practice in the use of language within a real communicative context is the focus, where real information is exchanged and where the language used is not totally predictable" (Richards, 2006, p. 16). In CLT, the production of the target language in an efficient and fluent manner is dependent on the quality and quantity of incomprehensible input to which the student was exposed, as reflected in the Input Hypothesis (Krashen, 1985).

## **CELTA**

The CELTA is a world renowned teacher training course, launched by John and Brita Hycraft in London in 1962. International House (IH) extends the CELTA (Certificate of English language teaching to Adults) certificate to beginners as well as experienced teachers, who wish to be trained in adult teaching techniques. After a relatively short

course of approximately 120 theoretical hours including 6 practical hours, the CELTA certified teacher is able to acquire essential aspects of the subject and become familiar with principles of effective teaching; manage English teaching techniques; demonstrate efficient classroom management among others (Borg, 2008).

### **Task-Based Learning**

One of the most important proponents of TBL was Michael Long (1989), who pointed out that TBL must involve a focus on form, which must arise from students' attempts to perform a task. The main way this is done it is through corrective feedback using reformulations. Long (1991) proposed the “interaction hypothesis” that focuses on the form of language and this is produced through negotiation between the members of a group, (Ellis, 2003) presents two types of tasks, one that supports language teaching and another based on language teaching. In his view, a task must meet four important criteria 1) be focused on meaning and message meaning; 2) feature a gap (information or opinion), 3) allow the student to choose the linguistic and non-linguistic resources to communicate; and 4) have a communicative outcome. TBL activates the student's intrinsic motivation in learning through learning the linguistic forms of language as well as the interaction competence.

The task-based CELTA framework presents a structure that begins with a Lead-in, which is the stage where the teacher can create a comfortable and friendly environment for learning, engaging the student in the class by creating interest in the subject. This is done through an effective rapport where “teachers and trainers often comment on the importance of ‘rapport’ between teachers and students” (Scrivener, 2005, p.22).

The second stage is Introducing language for the task, providing comprehensive input in order to complete the task, and focusing in speaking for accuracy through a listening text, the third stage is Preparing to Speak, where teachers by using prompts help students build up ideas in order to promote speaking production. The fourth stage is Speaking,

which focuses on fluency and where classroom tasks allow the student to solve real-world situations (Nunan, 1989). The fifth stage, Content Feedback, highlights students' achievements and show the end of the task. The sixth stage is Emerging Language Feedback, whose purpose is to enhance students' language accuracy and grant language relevant to the students' needs by letting students compare notes in pairs about possible errors before eliciting correction.

## **STATE OF THE ART**

Many researchers have done studies on the development of the ability to speak using CLT activities, (Al-Garni & Almuhammadi, 2019) conducted a quasi-experimental study with the aim of examining the effect of using CLT activities on the speaking skills of female students enrolled in an EFL course at a local University. Three communicative activities were tested with an experimental group, with results showing positive implications for the implementation of CLT teaching practices and recommendations that teachers should be observed teaching CLT activities. Another study on student and teacher perceptions on implementing CLT in the Standards-Based English Language Curriculum (SBELC) in secondary schools in Malaysian (SBELC) was conducted by (Mangaleswaran & Aziz, 2019), who concluded it was an effective approach to improve speaking skills. Among the challenges encountered by teachers when using CLT classwork is the perceived lack of need to learn the language, particularly among parents, as well as the lack of facilities and the focus on exams as impediments to its implementation. On the other hand, during the production of the language, a lack of vocabulary and grammatical structures was evidenced.

The authors recommended that teachers assume the role of facilitator and guide to counteract this situation and reducing the focus on exams to increase the level of speech. Another study in Luanda (Albino, 2017) evaluated how students' English level increased using Task-based instruction. This study was conducted with ninth grade students at a

local high school using picture-description tasks and recordings of students' speeches as instruments before and after the class and were used as feedback tools for eight weeks. The results showed an increase in speaking fluency as well as in the grammatical accuracy. Considering the opinions of the students about working with the TBLT method, and the results of the study, the authors concluded there was a motivation on the part of the students to use the target language orally inside and outside the classroom, as well as an increase in vocabulary.

In this sense (Mohammed, 2020) conducted two studies on the use of the CELTA model. The first investigated challenges of applying the teaching methodology of (CELTA) productive skills in learning environment with poor and fragile infrastructure region of Darfur, Sudan. The study also investigated the role of the private sector and voluntary organizations that promote education. Interviews were conducted among CELTA certified teachers to examine their experiences on how the methodology of this course was applicable to different contexts. The results showed a difficulty in the teaching-learning process of speaking ability due to the fragile structure of the environment, as well as the use of traditional methods dominant in EFL classes in the region.

The author concluded that the CELTA certification meant a change and improvement in the teaching of EFL class, because teachers could reflect on their teaching techniques. A second study in 2021 aimed at implementing the guided discovery CELTA framework as an approach to address meaning, pronunciation and form (MFP) of the target language, this study was carried out as "Effective Academic Writing" which shown that the use of this CELTA framework approach was useful to learn new vocabulary in an interesting way, so the use of Guided Discovery framework was recommended in all academic writing classes and in general the study states as positive, effective and motivating for the teaching and learning process the use of CELTA approach as a Communicative Approach. (Mohammed, 2021).

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## **METHODS**

### **Study Design**

The present study applied a mixed methods approach to assess the impact of the CELTA frameworks in an exam preparation course to prepare students to take an international English qualification exam. In the quantitative phase, a pre-test was applied before the intervention and, a post-test was taken to measure progress after the intervention. The qualitative data was collected through interviews with the teacher and a group of students after the tests were applied to determine their perceptions, confidence and motivation while using the frameworks.

### **Participants**

The participants were comprised of 30 students of the third year of high school from the 2019 – 2020 academic year at UEBI High School, a private institution located in Cuenca, Ecuador. The students considered had an advanced level of English and needed the B2 certification as part of the institution's objectives. Their ages were between 17 and 18, 62% of which were female (see Table 1). One student was excluded from the study on account of being an English native speaker. To participate in the interviews regarding their perception of the preparation course for the FCE exam, students with the highest, middle and lowest scores were chosen.

**Table 1.**  
Study participants.

<b>Participants</b>	<b>Number</b>
Female	18
Male	11
Teacher	1

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The teacher of the course at the time had a Bachelor's degree in Teaching English, CELTA pass A, FCE, CPE and a Master's degree in Teaching English. With a six years of teaching experience, he was chosen to teach the FCE exam preparation course due to his experience in preparing for international exams.

### **Instruments**

In the quantitative phase, an FCE mock test (official First Certificate in English by Cambridge, later changed to B2 first as of this writing) was used to evaluate the students' language proficiency at the start of the intervention. This test had the same structure, duration and assessed the same abilities as the official FCE exam, and thus was used as pre-test. The mock test, which has a difficulty level B2 or upper intermediate level, is the most important of the Cambridge exams, and has four sections: 1) Reading & Use of English ; 2)Writing ; 3) Listening ,and 4) Speaking. Table 2 shows the criteria according to the (CEFR) Common European Framework of Reference for languages, which establishes the requirements to achieve a B2 FCE certification.

**Table 2.**  
 Equivalencies for FCE test.

<b>Practice</b>	<b>Cambridge English</b>	<b>CEFR level</b>
<b>Test score</b>	<b>Scale score</b>	
54	180	Level C1
36	160	Level B2
24	140	Level B1
14	122*	Level A2

\* minimum score reported for B2 First

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In the qualitative phase, the data was collected through two questionnaires with 16 and 11 semi-structured questions, respectively. They were designed to cover the perceptions of students on the CELTA frameworks used in the English language class.

### **Procedure**

Prior to data collection, permission to collect student data was requested from the director of the English department of the high school. Students were guaranteed absolute confidentiality. The quantitative data, that is, the results of the pre- and post-test exams, were requested from the teacher in charge of the preparation course at that time. On the other hand, the qualitative data was collected by the researcher through a survey.

The CELTA frameworks gave the teacher the opportunity to structure their lessons based on learners' needs and find the most appropriate way to teach language skills. With the purpose of increasing the speaking ability in this course, the Speaking framework PPP (presentation practice production) was used so learners could have the opportunity to put into practice what they learned; through TBL (Task-Based Learning), learners were guided to learn by themselves through tasks based on daily life context. Finally, TTT (Test teach Test) was used to diagnose students' knowledge. Afterward, the teacher was able to focus on specific needs, present a challenging follow up activity to put into practice what was learned and then perform another assessment activity on the learned content.

The first objective was to identify the effectiveness of the implementation of CELTA Framework approach in the high school on students' speaking skills in a preparation course for the FCE exam. To this purpose, skills were measured through a the pre and post test administered by two evaluators, an interlocutor and a qualifier, following standard FCE procedures. The interlocutor assigned a general qualification (Global Achievement) and the qualifier considers four criteria: grammar and vocabulary, discourse management, interactive communication and pronunciation. This evaluation primarily considered the correct use of language in a real context, presented clearly and supported with examples,

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as well as the description of situations following a linear sequence in a clear and detailed manner on various common topics. Another consideration was the clarity, fluency and naturalness of test takers when interacting with another participant.

The speaking test consisted of four parts. In the first part, an interview of approximately two minutes was carried out in which the participant discussed aspects related to their daily life, studies, work, etc. Part two consisted of a monologue of approximately one minute where the participant described, shared and contrasted information about two photographs. Part three was conducted in pairs for approximately two minutes, where a conversation was established based on images and instructions from the interlocutor. Part four featured a discussion of approximately four minutes in which participants, working in pairs, freely expressed their opinions on the topic addressed in part three.

The pre-test results were provided by the teacher who gave the preparation course for the B2 FCE certification. These scores were then analyzed and compared to the results of the post-test provided by the head of the English department of the institution.

The second objective of the study was to identify students' perceptions of the implementation of CELTA Frameworks as an approach to enhance speaking skills. To this purpose, two questionnaires with semi-structured questions were prepared. The first was used with the teacher and contained questions about the methodology used in the course, advantages and disadvantages of using the CELTA approach, and memorable characteristics of the students. The second questionnaire was used among the students with questions on their motivation regarding class activities, interaction with their peers and the teacher's methodology.

## **RESULTS**

### **Quantitative Findings**

The Mock and FCE exams were taken approximately four months apart to determine the speaking proficiency levels of the participants at the onset and at the end of the

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intervention. Table 3 shows the number of students' scores and their equivalencies according to the CEFR levels in the Mock (pre) and FCE (post) test. Upon observation, a numerical increase can be seen in the number of students whose test scores moved them from a B1 level to a B2 level. Based on proficiency levels alone (which included speaking, reading, listening and writing), it can be observed that more than half of the students (55.172%) moved upwards into a new language level, 10.34% decreased, and 34.48% remained at the same level they started with.

**Table 3.**  
CEFR Equivalencies for students' Mock and FCE test

<b>LEVEL</b>	<b>MOCK (pre)*</b>	<b>FCE (post)*</b>
C1	5	3
B2	3	20
B1	20	4
A2	1	2

\*Number of students

Mean scores were calculated from the Mock and FCE tests using the SPSS software package. Table 5 shows the first output of descriptive statistics, which shows a numerical difference of 9.11 in the mean test scores before and after the intervention, thus reflecting a numerical increase.

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**Table 5.**  
 Descriptive statistics for Mock and FCE scores.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Min.	Max.	Percentiles		
						25th	50th (Median)	75th
MOCK	29	159.03	16.517	137	190	149.00	151.00	170.00
FCE	29	168.14	12.212	137	190	161.50	172.00	176.50

To determine whether this difference was statistically significant, the Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test was applied, using a 2-tailed test for two related data samples of non-normally distributed data such as test scores. The null hypothesis established was that there would be no difference between the scores. The level of significance, also referred to as a critical value, was set at 0.05, for a 95% confidence rate. In addition, a p value approach was also applied to measure the probability that the apparent difference between two sets of scores could have been due to chance. When testing hypotheses, a small p value (close to zero) will likely require the rejection of a null hypothesis in favor of the alternative (Doane, 2016). The second output in Table 6 shows the results of the signed ranks test, which shows 72.41% of the numerical test scores increased after the intervention.

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**Table 6.**  
Ranks output from Wilcoxon Signed Ranks test.

<b>Ranks</b>				
		<b>N</b>	<b>Mean Rank</b>	<b>Sum of Ranks</b>
FCE – MOCK	Negative Ranks	5 <sup>a</sup>	14.20	71.00
	Positive Ranks	21 <sup>b</sup>	13.33	280.00
	Ties	3 <sup>c</sup>		
	Total	29		

a. FCE < MOCK  
 b. FCE > MOCK  
 c. FCE = MOCK

According to the third output from the signed ranks test (Table 7), the asymptotic significance or p value was less than 0.05, which means the null hypothesis was rejected in favor of the alternative hypothesis. This indicates there are statistically significant increases in the study participants 'average exam scores after the intervention ( $Z = -2.655^b$ ,  $p = .008$ ).

**Table 7.**  
Wilcoxon Signed Ranks test for Mock and FCE mean scores.

<b>Test Statistics<sup>a</sup></b>	
FCE - MOCK	
Z	-2.655 <sup>b</sup>
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.008

a. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test  
 b. Based on negative ranks.

## **Qualitative Findings**

Through the survey of the learners it was possible to measure their perceptions on the CELTA approach. Nine students chosen based on their different test scores (high, intermediate and low) participated in the survey, which contained 11 questions, divided into three major themes: importance of English in their lives, perception of CELTA as an approach in teaching, and activities practiced in the course.

### **Students' Perceptions**

#### **Importance Of English In Students' Lives**

All students surveyed consider English a useful language that brings opportunities to get a job, travel, meet and interact with people of different cultures and study abroad. Approximately 66,22% indicated they felt confident speaking in English,, and 11.11% felt nervous they felt nervous using the language, due to lack of vocabulary and fear of making mistakes and feeling judged.

#### **Perception Of CELTA As An Approach**

When asked about their perceptions of CELTA as an approach to teaching English, students rated it as a dynamic, interactive course, where they felt motivated by a teacher who demonstrated great charisma and knowledge of teaching techniques. They noted activities were carried out with clear instructions and timing, particularly for individual and collective work and when comparing and contrasting opinions among peers.. The teacher integrated games into practice so that the students felt hooked and highly motivated to work. However, three indicated they did not like improvisation in some of the classes and they felt that the course went "global" which meant they felt the teacher did not address some knowledge gaps some students had.

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All students stated that the course helped them increase their level of speaking ability, since during the exam they recalled being able to use greater vocabulary, which increased their confidence when speaking about different topics.

### **Perception Of Activities**

On the topic of classroom activities, the most well received activities were those related to speaking, which included discussions about daily life themes and describing and comparing photos. All students considered them very useful since they were related to the official exam, and boosted their confidence to take the exam. Since the activities were adapted to a real context, with vocabulary of daily life, the students did not realize the activities were aimed to prepare them for the exam.

Moreover, 44.44% of the students indicated that the speaking activities promoted communication and teamwork, since they were developed in pairs or in small groups. They noted it gave them the opportunity to interact in dialogues and discussions, where each participant could present their opinions, listen to those of their peers, agree or disagree with them. On the other hand, 11.11% indicated that the speaking practices helped individual rather than collective development, since the student with the most vocabulary was the one who succeeded the most. And 44.44% considered that both individual and collective work were promoted.

### **Perception of Teacher**

Through the survey conducted with the teacher of the course, it was possible to measure his perceptions in relation to the approaches adopted in class. The survey contained 16 questions, divided in three major themes: students characteristics, and classroom methodology.

## **Perception Of Students**

When asked about his perceptions of the course and the exam, the teacher noted the course was very dynamic and emphasized the commitment of both students and teacher as key to the development of every class. He perceived some shyness among the students at the beginning, as they didn't elaborate a lot when asked to speak; some were accustomed to giving very short answers at first, but upon receiving questions later on, they became more interactive, involved, willing to learn, and talk openly and actively. Another aspect mentioned is that the course was taught during the Covid-19 pandemic, which affected students' active participation in class. He mentioned, "it was easy to pinpoint which students were thinking." The teacher considered that the students' attitude towards the course was an important factor in increasing the level of speaking ability. The fact that students could have a good grasp of vocabulary at an advanced level and also the fact that they got used to working with a specific teaching style made it easier for them to follow each class.

## **METHODOLOGY**

According to the teacher, the methodology used in the course was guided discovery, communicative approach, CELTA teaching frameworks, scaffolding, among others. He indicated that the CELTA frameworks are easy to follow and give prompts as to how to address and approach specific language skills. He also noted that the most applied frameworks in the course were Test-teach-test, speaking and writing framework reading, listening, task-based learning; it is worth highlighting that every class had always a subsidiary aim of speaking.

In his view, the most effective aspect of using the CELTA frameworks is the fact that procedures were standardized and it was not up to him to waste time trying to find a way to best approach language skills since that the frameworks had already been previously researched and backed up by experts in ELT field.

## **DISCUSSION**

Based on the results, the first research question can be answered in that the CELTA frameworks approach had a positive effect in enhancing students' speaking skills. This finding can be attributed to several reasons, particularly in the core foundations of CELTA, which incorporate approaches associated with communicative language teaching (CLT) and task-based language teaching (TBLT). Both CLT and TBLT involve creating organic environments where learning where "more progress in promoting language acquisition can be observed when learners are exposed to meaningful activities by means of authentic materials" (Yildiz, 2020, p.75). Thus, improvement in-class communication and interaction among learners.

Secondly, the communicative activities were well received by students. Whether they worked in pairs or in small groups, they received the opportunity to develop their ideas individually and then contrast them with their peers and also interact with the teacher. A key component to making the communicative activities work is interaction, through activities that promote practice outside of the classroom in a real context (Panhwar et al., 2017, p. 228).

Based on the students' comments, it can be seen that activities such as dialogues, games, discussions, contrasting information about pictures, and information-gap activities, among others, allowed students to discuss topics that made them feel engaged in the course and to develop in a positive way since it was necessary to present their point of view, make decisions and express their own opinions about familiar topics (Panhwar et al., 2017). As a result, the students in this study became more confident and fluent. Other researchers agree that interactive activities that are inherent in CLT are what creates an appropriate atmosphere for learners to express and share their views confidently without being shy or embarrassed (Mahmadun-Nuby et al. 2019).

Among the most effective frameworks used in the class was TTT (Test-Teach-Test), which begins with an evaluation, after which the teacher presents content, assigns learning

activity to students and finally, tests the students on what has been learnt. This framework provides the opportunity to direct a class to the specific needs of students. That said, a small number of students mentioned they would have liked to receive more individual attention.

The course promoted the independent work of the student, using the guided discovery framework, where the teacher guides the student to discover the rules and structures by himself, through Instruction Checking Questions ICQs and Concept Checking Questions CCQs, focusing on Meaning, Form and Pronunciation MFP. This framework allows collaborative work and ends with a productive task such as speaking and writing (Mohammed, 2021).

According to (Kasap, 2005), task- based activities can promote active participation in oral practice, thus improving speaking skills. In the same way, this study showed that the teacher prepared students to work individually and collectively on text-based tasks, since the structure of CELTA frameworks, which include Speaking and Task-Based frameworks, encourages students to work independently and prepare for a final stage where there will always be a productive activity and opportunity to use the target language. It is evident that the CELTA approach is student-centered, where pressure on the teacher is reduced and the student takes a more active part in their learning. This framework allows the teacher to work directly with specific groups. While the majority of students felt comfortable working in this type of activity, there was a small number of students who felt that their specific needs were not addressed. This may be attributed the size of the class and a lower proficiency level.

To answer the second research question, the study presented positive results in terms of motivation and engagement. It is important to point out that motivation and engaging learners are an essential part of teaching and learning; thus, they are mainly the responsibility of teachers, as they must look for the appropriate activities. “Teachers should know how to and are responsible for the design of such academic activities that

will authentically and productively engage students in their learning” (Saeed & Zyngier, 2012, p. 261). In this sense, to engage students in meaningful learning, it is essential that the teacher is able to reach them both emotionally and psychologically (Digamon & Cinches, 2017).

Regarding the construct of motivation, it has been argued that it has strong links to energy, inspiration, and recognition of the value of an activity. “A person who feels no impetus or inspiration to act is thus characterized as unmotivated, whereas someone who is energized or activated toward an end is considered motivated” (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 54), (Ryan & Deci, 2020), in an updated contemporary review of motivation within the framework of self-determination theory (SDT), argue that “the most autonomous form of extrinsic motivation is integrated regulation in which the person not only recognizes and identifies with the value of the activity, but also finds it to be congruent with other core interests and values” (p. 1). Thus, in having the common goal of achieving international certification, it can be inferred that this group of learners felt highly motivated to participate and develop positively in class.

This group indicated having a close relationship with their peers and a very good relationship with their teacher. They enjoyed working in a group with their peers and were not afraid of making mistakes. In addition, with activities that were mostly communicative and based on a real context, the class turned into a friendly and entertaining environment where they could share their interests and experiences with classmates, and where learners showed authentic motivation through debates, and role-plays, this finding aligned with a study by Saeed and Zyngier (2012), who have stated that students authentically engaged enjoy more team work since they feel it is positive for their learning.

Finally, the fact that the activities followed a similar structure to the exam gave them a purpose to engage in class with an active and spontaneous participation; this contrasted with situations such as the teacher's lack of attention to the individual deficiencies of the students causing students felt demotivated. because of the skill, students did feel that the

attention obtained was not enough to get the desired results. Individual feedback is always necessary in every single level, due to the psychological barriers the students face when they are learning the target language.

### **LIMITATIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

Among the limitations of the study is the time that elapsed between the date the course and exams were taken and the date of data collection and analysis. A gap of four months allowed the possibility for omission of additional information that might otherwise have been relevant.

The implementation of a highly communicative approach requires working in pairs or in small groups. This study analyzed a relatively small number of students (29); applying the CELTA approach in institutions with larger class sizes (e.g. 40 students or more) could prove to be problematic and yield different results, especially when it comes to meeting students' individual needs. It is also worth noting that a critical success factor in the CELTA approach is teacher training, which requires institutions to invest in training and certification of their teachers to promote student-centered teaching where independent and collective learning is allowed, thus changing the role of the teacher to a guide rather than a lecturer. Future research on CELTA as a classroom approach could also focus on analyzing the effect of interaction on writing skills development.

### **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The present study measured the effect of the use of the CELTA approach on the speaking ability in the preparation course for the B2 certification exam. As mentioned, there were different factors that influenced the success of the students, including greater exposure to communicative methods and the adoption of a student-centered approach, which as proven to have a positive effect on learning to speak and understand the target language effectively.

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The CELTA approach is based not only on well-structured models, but also on well-trained teachers, on the knowledge of the language, the correct use of the material, key teaching strategies, classroom management, and knowledgeable assessing process. As of this writing, the CELTA approach is not applied as part of the UEBI school curriculum; however, depending on the teacher, CELTA will be followed according to the syllabus. Nevertheless, the staff should follow the principles of this institutions regarding religious and cultural aspects.

Given the difficulties of mastering the speaking skill in the English language classroom and based on the results of the study, it is recommended the high school continue with the implementation of the CELTA approach. For a more effective result, the approach should be applied by teachers certified by the program or with training in the use of the frameworks.

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