



## IMPROVING ENGLISH SPEAKING SKILLS USING THE COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING (CLT) METHOD THROUGH WEBSITE-BASED APPLICATIONS

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### Abstract

This study aims to improve junior high school students' English speaking skills through the application of the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) method integrated with the web-based application Duolingo. The study addresses students' low speaking proficiency caused by limited innovative learning media and insufficient opportunities for communicative practice. A pre-experimental one-group pretest-posttest design was employed involving 10 students of eighth-grade students. Over a three-week period, students participated in speaking activities supported by Duolingo's interactive features aligned with CLT principles. The results indicated significant improvement in students' speaking skills, particularly in pronunciation, fluency, grammar, and vocabulary. Post-test scores showed that most students achieved high results, with several reaching the maximum score. Improvements were most notable in grammar and vocabulary, while pronunciation and fluency developed positively. In addition, students demonstrated increased motivation and confidence in speaking English. Overall, the findings suggest that integrating CLT with Duolingo is an effective and engaging approach to enhance students' speaking skills in the digital learning era.

**Keywords:** *Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Speaking Skill, Web-Based Application*

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## Introduction

English is a crucial skill in today's global development. Among various aspects, speaking skills pose the greatest challenge for students. Speaking is a fundamental language skill that must be taught from the earliest stages of learning (Harianto, 2020). Speaking skill is widely recognized as a central component of communicative competence in English language learning, as it reflects learners' ability to convey meaning effectively in real communicative contexts. Previous studies emphasize that speaking is a complex productive skill involving the integration of linguistic accuracy, fluency, and pragmatic appropriateness (Brown, 2004; Thornbury, 2005). From a communicative perspective, speaking develops most effectively through meaningful social interaction rather than mechanical drills, as learners negotiate meaning and respond to real communicative demands (Bygate et al., 2013; Nunan, 2003). According to Meylani and Suharsono (2017), the level of understanding is the level of a person's ability to understand the meaning or concept, situation, and facts that he or she knows.

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is closely related to the use of technology because digital and web-based platforms can create opportunities for meaningful communication. Many studies have shown that technology-supported CLT helps students interact more actively through activities such as task-based learning and role play. However, there is still limited research that focuses on the use of website-based applications to improve junior high school students' speaking skills, especially when speaking is analyzed through specific components such as pronunciation, fluency, grammar, and vocabulary. Therefore, further research is needed to examine the effectiveness of integrating CLT with website-based applications in developing students' speaking performance. Qasserras (2023) stated Web-based platforms and learning management systems facilitate task-based activities by allowing learners to engage in problem-solving, negotiation of meaning, and authentic Based on these findings, this study aims to examine the effectiveness of integrating CLT with a website-based application in improving students' speaking skills. Specifically, the study seeks to (1) identify the extent to which students' speaking performance improves after the implementation of CLT through a website-based application, and (2) analyze which speaking components—pronunciation, fluency, grammar, or vocabulary—show the most significant improvement.

## Research Methods

### *Design*

This study employed a pre-experimental research design using a pre-test and post-test one-group design. The one-group pre-test and post-test

design allows researchers to measure changes in participants' performance before and after the treatment, thereby identifying the effect of an instructional intervention (Creswell, 2014). In educational research, this design is commonly applied to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching methods in authentic classroom settings, where control groups may be difficult to establish.

### ***Participants***

This study involved 10 eighth-grade students of SMPN 1 Kronjo, Tangerang, and was conducted during the even semester of the 2025/2026 academic year. It was designed as a small-scale, classroom-based study focusing on the implementation of a teaching intervention within a single classroom context.

The test was conducted in two stages: a pretest before the treatment and a posttest after the treatment. During the treatment phase, students engaged in learning activities using the Duolingo app for three weeks, three times a week, with each session lasting approximately 20 minutes. Throughout the sessions, students practiced speaking through various interactive exercises within the app, making the learning process more communicative and contextual. This learning process employed the principles of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), which emphasizes meaningful communication through listening, speaking, and translating. The speaking test assessed four key components of oral proficiency, namely pronunciation, fluency, grammar, and vocabulary, which collectively reflect students' ability to produce comprehensible, accurate, and fluent spoken English in communicative contexts.

### ***Instrument***

Data were collected through speaking tests administered as a pretest and a posttest to measure students' English speaking improvement after the implementation of website-based application learning. The speaking tests assessed four indicators: pronunciation, fluency, grammar, and vocabulary. The pretest was conducted before the treatment to identify students' initial speaking ability, while the posttest was administered after students participated in speaking activities using a website-based application integrated with the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) method. The data were analyzed by comparing the pretest and posttest. Students' speaking skills were assessed using a speaking rubric consisting of four components: pronunciation, fluency, grammar, and vocabulary. Each component was scored on a scale of 1 to 5, with higher scores indicating

better performance. The total speaking score was calculated by combining the scores from all components.

To ensure scoring consistency, the same rubric and scoring criteria were used for both the pre-test and post-test. The researcher applied the rubric consistently across all students and assessments. The pre-test and post-test scores were then compared to measure the extent of improvement in students' speaking performance after using the website-based application.

### ***Data Collection***

The data were evaluated by comparing the pre-test and post-test results to identify improvements in students' speaking performance after using the website-based application. In addition to test scores, observational data were collected during the learning process using an observation checklist and brief field notes. The observations focused on students' participation, motivation, and confidence during speaking activities. These data were analyzed descriptively by identifying general patterns of student behavior to support the quantitative findings.

To reduce researcher bias, the researcher used clear observation criteria and standardized speaking rubrics. The researcher limited direct involvement during classroom activities and acted mainly as an observer and facilitator. This helped ensure more objective and consistent data collection and analysis.

### ***Data analysis***

In this study, data obtained from the pre-test and post-test were analyzed by comparing students' speaking scores before and after the treatment. The analysis focused on four speaking components: pronunciation, fluency, grammar, and vocabulary. Descriptive statistics, including mean scores and gain scores, were used to identify improvements in students' speaking performance and to evaluate the impact of the CLT-based website application on students' speaking skills. The comparison of pre-test and post-test mean scores indicates an overall improvement across all speaking components after the implementation of the treatment.

## **Results and Discussion**

Result of this study will be analyzed in pre test and post test. Pre-test is an essential component in educational and language research as it provides an objective measurement of learners' initial competence prior to instructional intervention. Ary et al. (2014) define pre-test as a diagnostic instrument used to identify participants' baseline abilities, allowing

researchers to evaluate learning progress more accurately. Similarly, According to Chabot et al. (2014), the Pre-Test/Post-Test is one of three assessment tools that is highly recommended for use because it is a concise and effective direct evaluation that can be used to improve student learning outcomes.

## Results

### Pre-Test

The Results The following section presents the pre-test results, as summarized in Table 1, which describe students' initial English speaking performance before the implementation of the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) method through the web-based application Duolingo.

**Table 1. Students' English speaking score before implementation of CLT**

Name of Students	indicators					total	score
	Pronunciation	fluency	grammar	Vocabulary			
Student 1	3	3	3	2	11	68.8	
Student 2	2	3	2	3	10	62.5	
Student 3	3	3	2	2	10	62.5	
Student 4	1	2	1	2	6	37.5	
Student 5	3	3	2	3	11	68.8	
Student 6	1	2	1	2	6	37.5	
Student 7	3	3	3	3	12	75.5	
Student 8	2	3	2	3	10	62.5	
Student 9	3	3	3	4	13	81.3	
Student 10	2	2	2	1	7	43.8	

Based on the results of the student speaking ability assessment, which included four indicators: pronunciation, fluency, grammar, and vocabulary, variations in achievement levels were found among students. Of the ten students assessed, student 10 achieved the highest score, with a total score of 13 and a final score of 81.3, demonstrating excellent speaking ability across all indicators, particularly vocabulary. Most students, there are two students obtained a total score of 11 with a score of 68.8, while there are three students showed relatively balanced results with a total score of 10 and a score of 62.5. These results indicate that their speaking skills are in the fair to good category, with weaknesses still visible in the grammar and vocabulary aspects. Meanwhile, one student obtained a total score of 7 with a score of

43.8, and there are two students recorded the lowest scores with a total score of 6 and a score of 37.5, which indicates limited speaking abilities, especially in the aspects of pronunciation and grammar.

The following results are presented in Figure 1, which illustrates students’ pre-test speaking performance prior to the implementation of the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) method through the web-based application Duolingo.

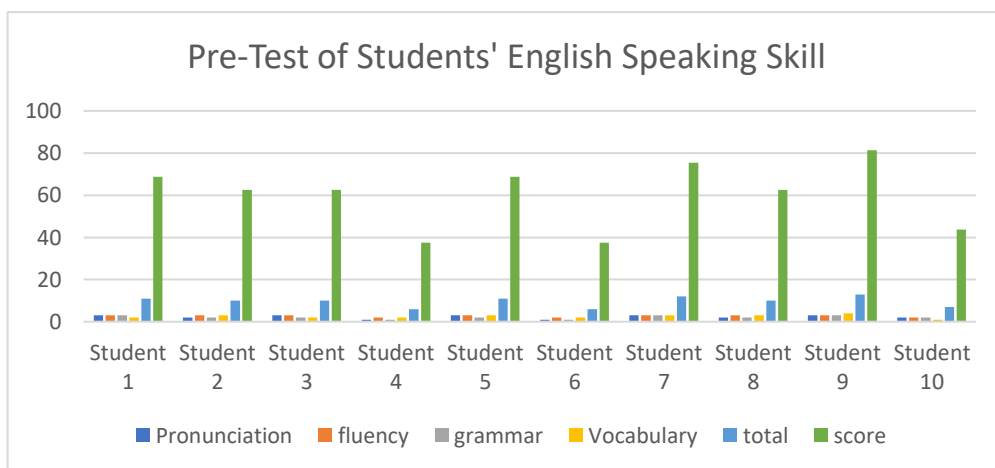


Figure 1. The Result of The Study

Figure 1 illustrates the students’ speaking scores in the pre-test, conducted before the implementation of the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) method through the web-based application Duolingo. The figure shows that students’ initial speaking performance varied significantly, with scores ranging from 37.5 to 81.3. student 10 achieved the highest score (81.3), followed by a student (75.5), indicating relatively strong performance across all speaking components. In contrast, there are two students obtained the lowest scores (37.5), reflecting limited proficiency, particularly in pronunciation and grammar. Overall, the figure highlights the differences in students’ oral English abilities before the intervention and underscores the need for a communicative, technology-supported approach to enhance speaking skills.

*Post Test*

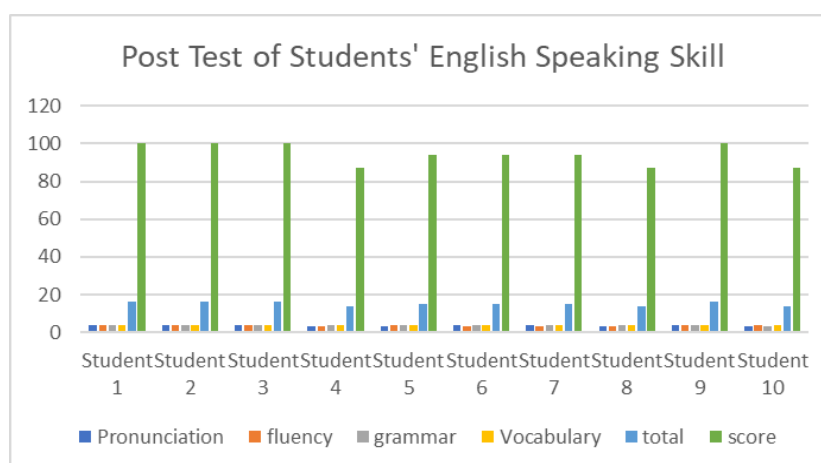
The Results The following section presents the pre-test results, as summarized in Table 1, which describe students’ initial English speaking performance before the implementation of the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) method through the web-based application Duolingo.

**Table 2.**  
**Students' English Speaking Score After Implementation Of CLT**

Name of Students	indicators				total	score
	Pronunciation	fluency	grammar	Vocabulary		
Student 1	4	4	4	4	16	100
Student 2	4	4	4	4	16	100
Student 3	4	4	4	4	16	100
Student 4	3	3	4	4	14	87.5
Student 5	3	4	4	4	15	93.8
Student 6	4	3	4	4	15	93.8
Student 7	4	3	4	4	15	93.8
Student 8	3	3	4	4	14	87.5
Student 9	4	4	4	4	16	100
Student 10	3	4	3	4	14	87.5

Observations showed that the implementation of the CLT method through the Duolingo app had a positive impact on students' English speaking skills, particularly in pronunciation, fluency, grammar, and vocabulary. Of the 10 students observed, four students—showed maximum achievement across all indicators, with a total score of 16 or 100%, indicating excellent English skills after participating in CLT-based learning using Duolingo. Additionally, the remaining students also demonstrated noticeable improvement, although at varying levels, suggesting that the integration of the CLT method with the Duolingo app effectively supported students' active participation and communicative confidence in speaking English.

The following results are presented in Figure 1, which illustrates students' post-test speaking performance prior to the implementation of the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) method through the web-based application Duolingo.



**Figure 2. The Result of The Study**

The figure displays a bar chart depicting the results of the students' speaking ability assessment based on six components: pronunciation, fluency, grammar, vocabulary, total score, and percentage score. Each student is represented individually (two students), making it easier to compare student achievement across indicators. Visually, grammar and vocabulary scores appear relatively consistent and high across almost all students, indicating that their mastery of grammar and vocabulary is at a good to excellent level. Conversely, variation is more visible in pronunciation and fluency, which are the main differentiating factors between students with perfect scores and those with slightly lower scores.

### ***Discussion***

The findings of this study are consistent with previous research on the integration of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and technology in English language learning. Earlier studies have shown that technology-based applications used within a CLT framework can improve students' language accuracy, vocabulary knowledge, and engagement in learning. Similarly, the pre-test and post-test results of this study indicate that students' speaking skills improved after the implementation of CLT through the Duolingo application, particularly in pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary. These results support the view that digital tools can effectively reinforce communicative language instruction.

However, the improvement in grammar and vocabulary was more noticeable than the improvement in speaking fluency. This can be explained by the design of Duolingo, which emphasizes structured practice, repetition, and form-focused exercises. Through these activities, students are frequently exposed to sentence patterns and vocabulary items, which helps them develop grammatical accuracy and lexical knowledge. In contrast, speaking fluency requires spontaneous language production, continuous interaction, and real-time communication, which are more difficult to achieve through an application-based learning environment. Fluency also develops gradually and depends on extended opportunities for meaningful oral interaction, confidence building, and reduced anxiety, which may not be fully supported by Duolingo alone.

In terms of its potential and limitations, Duolingo shows strong capability in supporting speaking development at a basic level. The application helps students improve pronunciation, expand vocabulary, and form grammatically correct sentences, addressing many of the weaknesses observed in the pre-test, such as word-by-word translation and incomplete sentence construction. Nevertheless, Duolingo has limitations in promoting communicative fluency and authentic interaction. The speaking activities

provided are mostly controlled and lack real conversational exchange. Therefore, Duolingo is best used as a complementary tool within the CLT approach rather than as a standalone solution for developing speaking fluency.

## Conclusion

Based on the results of the pre-test and post-test, this study shows that the use of the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) method through the Duolingo website has a positive effect on improving the speaking skills of eighth-grade junior high school students. Students showed improvement in pronunciation, fluency, grammar, and vocabulary, as well as greater confidence in speaking English. They were able to express ideas more clearly using appropriate sentence structures and vocabulary. These findings indicate that combining CLT with digital media such as Duolingo can be an effective alternative for teaching speaking skills, especially in schools with limited facilities because the application is free and easy to use. However, this study was limited to a small group of students, a short research period, and the use of only one digital platform. Therefore, future research is recommended to involve larger samples, longer study durations, and different digital learning applications to further explore the effectiveness of this learning approach.

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