

# Mingle Game Activities in TBLT: An Essential Tool to Improve Speaking Skills of Thai Primary Students

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## A B S T R A C T

Speaking skill is a crucial component of English language learning, especially for EFL students in primary schools, where opportunities to practice real-life communication are limited. This gap between theoretical teaching strategies and classroom practice highlights the need for more interactive and learner-centered approaches. This study explores how Mingle Game Activities within a Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) framework can improve students' speaking skills. A quasi-experimental method was employed, using a pretest-posttest design with control and experimental groups. Speaking tests were used to assess students' performance, and the data were analyzed using paired and independent sample t-tests. The results revealed a significant improvement in the experimental group's speaking skills, particularly in vocabulary usage, fluency, and confidence. These findings suggest that Mingle Game Activities are a promising strategy to foster student engagement and enhance speaking ability in interactive English learning environments within EFL classrooms.

**Keywords:** *Speaking Skills, Mingle Game, TBLT*

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## INTRODUCTION

In today's globalized world, being able to speak fluently in English is essential. Speaking English involves comprehending and using the language, speaking with easily identifiable pronunciation, expressing oneself verbally, and giving speeches. Novitasari & Prawiro (2022) define speaking as one of the crucial abilities that allow students to confidently and clearly communicate their thoughts and arguments to others. Students' ability to communicate allows them to find as much information as possible that will help them. However, some students still have difficulty communicating in English. This happens because the students lack basic English vocabulary, have poor spelling, are afraid of making mistakes, and are reluctant to speak English (Susilawati et al., 2021). Therefore, it is anticipated that the teacher will be able to offer students incentives and opportunities for active speaking. As a result, students can use English to share their experiences as well as to increase their knowledge (Ilinawati, 2020). Shen & Chiu (2019) explain that EFL students have difficulties finding the right words to use when speaking English. They even struggle with creating words or sentences, which pushes them to speak in their mother tongue. In addition, students feel embarrassed about their mistakes, worry about criticism or mockery from others, and are terrified to communicate in English because they have few opportunities to do so. They typically avoid speaking in class as a result, which decreases involvement.

Khamkhien (2010) explains that speaking is a fundamental component of learning a language and education in Thailand. To put it another way, speaking and listening in English is really challenging for students in Thai primary school students. Even the school is an International School, but the students here are not targeted by native speakers, which results in the use of unfamiliar vocabulary and minimizes real engagement in the language classroom.

Thus, there aren't many opportunities for some students to interact with English native speakers. As a result, students' exposure to English is rather limited. Yassin et al., (2021) conclude that like all EFL learners worldwide, Thai students learn and utilize English as a second language and unavoidably run into some difficulties. However, these factors cannot be generalized for all Thai EFL students as there are some demographic differences between the Thai students in the rural and urban areas. In this way, the teacher creates an environment in which students can actively communicate in the classroom. But speaking is typically a challenge for EFL students.

Susilawati et al., (2021) state because they have not learned English before for a large portion of their school activities, students get bored as a result. Lastly, a lack of confidence, a lack of conversational experience, and the usage of one's mother tongue have all been identified as contributing factors to students' difficulty in communicating. For the student to improve their speaking abilities, they require enjoyable and stimulating situations. Normawati et al., (2023) summarize as a result, teachers must establish an atmosphere in the classroom that encourages students to improve their speaking abilities. If the teacher can effectively convey the materials in a way that attracts the students' attention, the teaching-learning process will be successful. When teaching English to the students, the teacher should use creativity (Inayah et al., 2017). In this way, the teacher creates an environment in which students can actively communicate in the classroom. But speaking is typically a challenge for EFL students.

Inayah et al., (2017) explain since they don't live in a nation where English is their first language of communication, EFL students must put in more effort to acquire speaking and listening. EFL students must therefore look for chances for establishing themselves in English in a variety of contexts; speaking in class may be the best method to do this. Being EFL students requires them to be receptive to media that uses English as the primary language, including written and electronic media. Thus, it requires a great deal of efforts and commitment. Because speaking has such a significant impact on our daily lives, it is therefore thought to be an essential component of learning a second language. It is crucial to pay attention to all the significant factors influencing the teaching, particularly the teaching strategy (Syaepul Uyun, 2022).

The mingle game is one of the activities thought to aid students in improving their speaking skills for the reasons explained above. Ilinawati (2020) concludes that by playing the mingle game, students are inspired to participate more actively and become more enthusiastic in class. More chances to practice speaking with a range of people and materials are given to students. Mingle game are activities where students walk around and discuss with one another during the game in order to obtain the information they need (Novitasari & Prawiro, 2022). Implementing a mingle activity involves asking different students the same question and getting different answers. Activities are then carried out by walking and moving, using cards as a media, using peers and small groups of students. Class quizzes, role-plays, group dictations, and matching exercises (finding a partner) are examples of mingle activities. The action does achieve an essential aim. It encourages students to speak and create sentences. It helps students identify patterns and is repeated (Rizki Utami & Sutarsyah, 2017). Through the use of the mingle technique, students are given the opportunity to express their thoughts, feelings, and ideas as well as to discuss a topic in depth (Yahya & Salih, 2021).

These Mingle Game activities are closely related to the principles of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), which promotes learning through meaningful, real-life communication tasks. Hasnine et al. (2024) explain that Task-Based Language Teaching is a teaching paradigm originating from Communicative Language Teaching. Language learners may participate in small groups or individually on assignments. The TBLT teaching technique provides students with many fundamental abilities, such as how to engage with real-world learning environments and adapt different methods to problem-solving. Prasad Bhandari (2020) states that to increase their level of learning independence, TBLT compels even shy students to collaborate and learn from one another in groups and pairs without hesitation. Ganta (2015) defines TBLT as a method that helps students manage their fear and hesitancy by providing them with opportunities to

engage with peers in the target language in a spontaneous way. Since the teacher is not always available, students also learn to take responsibility for their work; however, if they need help, they can seek assistance from the teacher. This encourages students to take chances in order to learn. Lastly, TBLT improves students' collaborative learning by teaching them how to complete projects by supporting one another, fixing each other's mistakes, and developing their communication skills while completing the assignment.

In summary, the ability to speak English is an essential skill for students to succeed in both academic and real-life situations. However, many primary school students, particularly those in EFL environments such as in Thailand, still face significant challenges in speaking due to a lack of exposure, limited vocabulary, and fear of making mistakes. Without sufficient opportunities for active communication, students' progress in mastering English speaking skills remains slow and unbalanced. Teachers must immediately adopt more dynamic, captivating, and participatory teaching strategies that encourage authentic communication practice in the classroom in light of these challenges. In order to foster spontaneous language use and boost confidence, activities that require students to move, interact, and use English authentically are thought to be more successful. A promising method for addressing these speaking difficulties in a fun and student-centered way is the use of Mingle Games, which were created using the principles of Task-Based Language Teaching.

Through the implementation of Mingle Game activities, students are expected not only to improve their fluency and accuracy but also to develop greater self-confidence and motivation in using English for communication. By transforming the classroom into an active learning environment, it is anticipated that students will engage more willingly and demonstrate measurable improvement in their speaking fluency, accuracy, and confidence through Mingle Game Activities. Therefore, this research aims to implement and evaluate Mingle Game Activities as a concrete strategy to improve Thai primary students' speaking skills in a fun, active, and student-centered learning environment.

In this regard, Mingle Games grounded in the principles of TBLT offer a practical and student-centered solution to speaking challenges often faced by EFL learners. They require movement, peer interaction, and purposeful communication, making them ideal for young learners who need authentic and low-pressure speaking opportunities.

#### *Mingle Game as a Language Teaching Tool*

Mingle Games are interactive activities that involve students moving around, engaging in pair or group discussions, and exchanging information. These games align with the principles of TBLT by simulating authentic communication scenarios. Karsudianto (2020) states that mingling games is an activity in which students go around and converse with one another to obtain the information they need. Through the use of the mingle technique, students are given the opportunity to express their thoughts, feelings, and ideas as well as to talk about a topic in depth (Yahya & Salih, 2021). Daeli et al., (2023) explain that the mingling games strategy encourages students to speak more during group activities. The teacher can use this method to encourage students and improve their English communication skills by teaching speaking communicatively. Interactions will develop in individuals, and at least some other students share the main objective of interacting with one another in groups. Because they have partners with whom they can practice speaking and get feedback from their friends, they can work together to get better in speaking. Darmayenti & Nofriadri (2015) conclude there are two main components in mingle: act mingle itself and do presentation. It can be enhanced to create a creative method, strategy, or technique for teaching public speaking.

Previous researchers have looked into the use of mingling games in speaking directions, especially to help students' speaking abilities. Rizki Utami & Sutarsyah (2017) define that teachers often use strategies that ultimately cause their students to feel pressured and afraid of making mistakes. However, in order to help students express themselves and learn how to effectively employ English as a language, teaching English as a foreign language needs the use of effective teaching methods, approaches, games for language learning, or activities that foster speaking abilities. Karsudianto (2020) explains that several problems were discovered during the teaching-learning process, according to the preliminary study. First of all, students are

unmotivated to learn English. The material itself didn't attract their attention. They didn't listen to the teacher and throughout the lesson, they make a noise. Additionally, they made no attempt to identify the challenging vocabulary in the content. Not even a dictionary was with them. Second, the students lacked confidence when speaking in English. The students struggled with pronunciation in addition to lacking a vocabulary. Additionally, when others made mistakes, students laughed. They went down by it. The students lack of confidence when speaking English. Darmayenti & Nofiadri (2015) also explain the application of the Mingle model to students learning of English speaking. He discovered that Mingle model works better at helping students improve their speaking English abilities. The classroom was effectively made enjoyable through the use of mingle games, which motivated students to learn. This game helps students improve their speaking abilities even though they can apply their ideas by explaining a topic or information they have been given (Ady Rezki Harahap et al., 2020). Susilawati et al., (2021) conclude that it was concluded that the mingle game encourages students to be confident in seeking ways to enhance their vocabulary and pronunciation while also helping them practice speaking.

All of these problems claim that in order to increase possibilities for communication practice, the English teaching and learning process need to be enhanced. It is expected that this study will help primary school English teachers by providing them with information on how to enhance the ability of their teaching and learning. Additionally, it is expected that this study would help English teachers better empower their students to use mingling games to increase their enthusiasm and confidence when speaking. Additionally, the study helps the researcher become more mindful of how games might improve students' enthusiasm and self-confidence in their ability to communicate.

#### *Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT)*

Beding & Inthapthim (2019) explain that TBLT is a student-centered method that uses communicative tasks focusing on meaning over form to give learners a natural context in which to utilize the target language. The tasks aim to motivate students, typically collaborating in small groups, to complete real, meaningful activities. By doing this, students can practice speaking the target language in the classroom. Learners are completely free to use whatever materials they have to finish the activity, even though the teacher might introduce language before it begins. Hashemi et al. (2012) conclude that the method known as Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) is an approach that provides students with material they must actively explore in order to meet objectives or complete assignments. TBLT focuses on tasks that require learners to use language for meaningful purposes through learning activities designed to engage students in the natural, practical, and functional use of language for significant communication. Purposes, the task-based approach seeks to provide opportunities for language mastery in both speaking and writing (Hismanoglu, 2011).

Fasih (2022) explains that the key component of any foreign language learner is their vocabulary. Gaining considerable vocabulary is crucial to learning a foreign language. However, because there are so many words that students have to understand, learning new vocabulary is challenging. Newly learned the context are also likely to be forgotten. As a result, task-based learning and seamless learning work well for learning foreign words. Because most students today prefer more communicative approaches, such the task-based approach, and because they want to use English in everyday situations, language teachers' teaching methods and strategies may change. Omer Al-Tamimi et al., (2020) summarize that although fluency is prioritized over accuracy in TBLT, accuracy is not entirely ignored. By participating in the learning process and having conversations with their peers in the target language, students should become able in grammar. Therefore, learners could benefit from an effective learning system for task-based language learning and instruction that uses learning activities and tasks (Hasnine et al., 2024).

Communicative language education is the foundation of the learning and teaching paradigm known as task-based language learning. It is frequently referred to as task-based learning and teaching, or TBLT. Utilizing real language to accomplish purposeful tasks in the language a learner wants to become proficient in is the main goal of TBLT. The tasks in TBLT gives participants the chance of engaging teacher's corrective feedback, whether it be explicit or

implicit (Robinson, 2011). Hasnine et al., (2024) explain that tasks can include things like working together to solve an issue, playing a game, visiting another place to engage in a new learning, and encountering objects that are a source of knowledge. Students can work alone or in small groups to complete tasks. On their finished assignments, the teacher provides them with either individual or group comments. The teacher's focus on reflection and feedback highlights how important it is to improving students' TBLT learning. Giving students constructive feedback gives them the courage to recognize and correct their own mistakes, which enhances their language proficiency and self-confidence (Nurhadi et al., 2024) .

In conclusion, the learner-centered approach, the use of target language, the emphasis on the learning process, and the term "tasks" are all consistently regarded as the fundamental and essential principles of TBLT, regardless of the definitions provided by different experts. However, it should be highlighted that for TBLT to be implemented effectively, teachers and students must agree on the learning objectives, the techniques used, and the assigned level of task completion.

### *Speaking Skills in Language Learning*

For speakers of other languages, learning English as a second language has always been difficult. Abbas (2014) explains that English is a commonly used foreign language that helps connect for a variety of reasons, including studying abroad or finding employment in businesses. Speaking as a communication tool in the present situation. Speaking so becomes a crucial communication skill that needs to be acquired. The English language has become the global language and is spoken all over the world. Scientific research, education, commerce, the internet, travel and tourism, media and newspapers, information and technology, entertainment, banking, and others. Every utilize English extensively (Rao, 2019). Wael et al., (2018) summarize that learning the right grammar and vocabulary to utilize when speaking is an essential component for developing speaking abilities. Speaking can be regarded as an effective ability and involves multiple people. Jo McDonough (2013) explains that speaking is important when learning English since it helps students apply the language. Speaking ability is important, as seen by people's everyday actions. Speaking takes place under real-time time limits and is an interactive activity. In other words, people are able to utilize words and phrases naturally without giving them much thought. Speaking ability allows people to construct sentences for genuine conversation; in other words, they genuinely enjoy using language to accomplish particular goals.

Rao (2019) explains since English is used for international communication, almost all of foreign language learners attempt to acquire it. They must learn the language's four fundamental skills – speaking, listening, reading, and writing during this process. The most crucial ability for learning a foreign or second language is speaking. Speaking is thought to be the most crucial of the four essential language abilities for learning a foreign or second language. The addition of the other language abilities indicates the importance of speaking. Speaking is thought to be the most crucial of the four essential language abilities for learning a foreign or second language. The addition of the other language abilities indicates the importance of speaking. Leong & Ahmadi (2017) state that speaking aids students in improving their grammar and vocabulary, which in turn helps them write better. Students are able to communicate their thoughts and feelings, share stories, make requests, chat, debate, and demonstrate the different ways language can be used. Speaking is crucial outside of the classroom. Manurung (2015) summarizes that the ability to communicate in the language is frequently used to assess a student's proficiency in speaking classes. This achievement is demonstrated when a language learner is able to use the language to communicate his thoughts, feelings, and ideas through dialogue or monologue. It can also be observed when language learners are able to communicate with others or articulate their goals.

## METHOD

This research employed a quantitative method with a quasi-experimental design with a pretest-posttest control group aimed at observing the improvement in students' speaking skills

after the implementation of Mingle Game Activities within the framework of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT). The quasi-experimental design was employed in this study as a type of experimental research in a quantitative method. This design is appropriate for evaluating the improvement of students' speaking skills in existing classroom settings where random assignment is cannot be applied. The fundamental feature of this quasi-experimental study was that the dependent variables were divided into two groups: the experimental group, which received treatment, and the control group, which did not receive any treatment, or technique during this research. A pretest-posttest design was employed in quantitative research. It was used to observe the significant difference between the pre- and post-teaching of the Mingle Game technique. Two classes were chosen as the sample of this research, which were Fifth Grade and Sixth Grade of 2024/2025 academic year.

The primary instrument for data collection was a speaking performance test, conducted in two stages: pre-test and post-test, measuring five aspects of speaking: fluency, vocabulary, pronunciation, accuracy, and comprehension (Marczyk et al., 2005). In this test, students were asked to describe their daily activities using a minimum of 20 English words. This format was chosen to encourage spontaneous speech production and to assess their ability to organize and express thoughts clearly within a limited word range. These tests were designed to track students' progress over the treatment period and assess how their speaking performance improved through task-based interaction.

The students were engaged in learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and were selected to participate in the study based on their need to improve speaking skills. The participants were divided into an experimental group, which engaged in Mingle Game Activities, and a control group, which followed conventional speaking exercises. This approach aimed to measure the impact of Mingle Game Activities on students' speaking proficiency. And this research provided insightful information about how interactive, task-based activities might improve language learning results, especially when it comes to the development of speaking proficiency.

To analyze the data, the mean scores of the pre-test and post-test were calculated for both groups to observe the degree of improvement in speaking performance. The mean scores provided a clear representation of students' overall achievement before and after the intervention. Then, paired sample t-tests were conducted to determine whether there were significant improvements within each group. Meanwhile, independent sample t-tests were used to compare the mean gain scores between the experimental and control groups, aiming to determine whether the difference in speaking improvement was statistically significant. These statistical analyses helped identify whether the improvements observed in the experimental group were indeed statistically significant.

The participants consisted of 26 students in grades 5 and 6 from Darul Maaref Foundation, Thailand. Class 5 was assigned as the experimental group and participated in Mingle Game Activities, while Class 6 served as the control group. This research aimed to provide insight into how interactive, student-centered learning strategies like Mingle Games could significantly contribute to the improvement of speaking proficiency in EFL primary learners.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

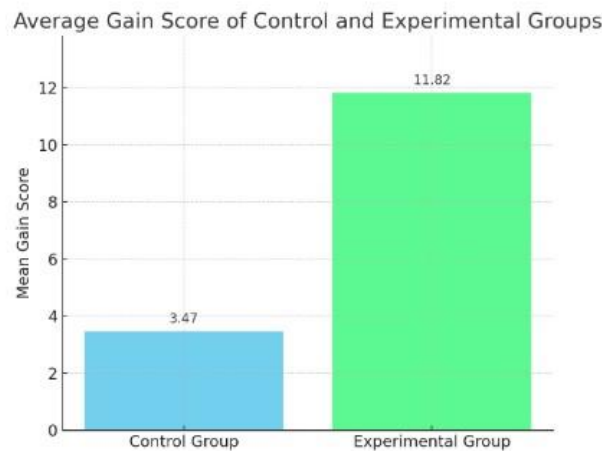
### Findings

#### *Statistical Findings*

This study explored the impact of *Mingle Game Activities* within Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) on improving Thai primary students' speaking skills. Two groups were involved: a control group (n = 15) that received traditional instruction, and an experimental group (n = 11) that participated in Mingle Game-based activities.

The descriptive statistics revealed a noticeable difference in mean gain scores. The control group recorded a mean gain score of 3.27 (SD = 1.163), while the experimental group achieved a substantially higher mean gain score of 12.27 (SD = 4.101)

An Independent Samples T-Test was conducted to evaluate the significance of this difference. Levene's Test for Equality of Variances indicated unequal variances ( $p = 0.000$ ), so the row "Equal variances not assumed" was used. The t-test results confirmed a statistically significant difference between the two groups ( $t(11.186) = -7.078$ ,  $p = 0.000$ , 95% CI = [-11.801, -6.211]), confirming the positive effect of Mingle Game activities on students' speaking development.



The bar chart above illustrates the comparison of mean gain scores between the control group and the experimental group. The control group, which received conventional instruction, achieved a mean gain score of 3.27. In contrast, the experimental group, which was taught using *Mingle Game Activities*, showed a substantially higher mean gain score of 12.27.

This significant difference visually supports the statistical findings from the Independent Sample T-Test, which revealed that the improvement in speaking skills among students in the experimental group was statistically greater than that of the control group. The chart effectively demonstrates the positive impact of task-based language teaching through interactive activities like the Mingle Game.

#### *Interpretation of Results*

The results strongly supported that integrating Mingle Game Activities into English language instruction for young learners led to significant improvement in their speaking skills. The noticeable progress observed in the experimental group demonstrated how interactive, task-based learning strategies provided greater opportunities for students to enhance their fluency, accuracy, and confidence compared to traditional methods. The speaking test required students to describe their daily activities using a minimum of 20 English words, which allowed the researcher to assess their fluency, vocabulary usage, and ability to structure meaningful expressions within a simple, real-life context. A mingle game is one of the engaging activities that can create an enjoyable and fun atmosphere in the classroom for teaching vocabulary. Students get up and move around the class to find friends to talk with, switching between classmates while paying attention and taking notes (Maureen Pricilia et al.,2024).

During the implementation of Mingle Game Activities, observational records indicated increased levels of participation and enthusiasm among students. Learners who were initially hesitant became more willing to interact and express themselves in English. They showed greater effort in constructing complete sentences, applying new vocabulary learned during the sessions, and maintaining conversations with peers. Teacher observations also confirmed this positive shift, noting that many students demonstrated improved confidence, spoke more frequently, and appeared more motivated to participate in class activities. These behavioral indicators support the statistical findings by illustrating the role of Mingle Game Activities in facilitating measurable improvement in students' speaking performance within a supportive and communicative learning environment.

#### *Comparison with Previous Studies*

The findings of this study were in line with recent literature. A study by Maureen Pricilia et al., (2024) found that the mingle game encouraged students to be more engaged in

communication, as it helped enhance their vocabulary. Through conversations with their peers, students were able to acquire and internalize new vocabulary. Similarly, Mohamed Elbaz & Abdul-Samea Qoura (2021) highlighted the role of Mingle Games in promoting learner autonomy and speaking confidence in blended EFL classrooms. Moreover Ramamurthy (2019) emphasized that TBLT-based games helped reduce speaking anxiety and improved learners' willingness to communicate two outcomes that were clearly evident in this study.

#### *Pedagogical Implications*

For teachers in EFL contexts – especially those teaching primary students – Mingle Game Activities offered a practical and engaging strategy that bridged the gap between classroom learning and real-world language use. This approach fostered learner-centered instruction, boosted motivation, and encouraged meaningful use of the target language.

In the Thai primary context, where traditional grammar-based instruction may still be dominant, implementing task-based games could transform the learning environment and lead to better speaking outcomes.

## CUNCLUSIONS

This study concludes that the implementation of Mingle Game activities within the Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) framework significantly improves the speaking skills of Thai primary students. The findings revealed that students who participated in Mingle Game activities showed notable improvements in fluency, vocabulary usage, pronunciation, and confidence compared to those who followed traditional learning methods. The comparison of mean gain scores between the experimental and control groups (12.27 vs. 3.27) and the results of the independent samples t-test ( $p = 0.000$ ) confirm that the observed improvement is both meaningful and statistically significant. These outcomes strongly support the integration of interactive, student-centered techniques – especially those involving movement, peer interaction, and task-based engagement – as effective strategies to foster speaking development in EFL classrooms. For EFL teachers, particularly at the primary level, this study provides practical evidence that Mingle Game activities can serve as an effective pedagogical tool to overcome students' speaking challenges by encouraging meaningful communication, reducing speaking anxiety, and promoting active participation. Teachers are therefore recommended to incorporate Mingle Game activities into their regular speaking lessons to create a more dynamic and communicative classroom environment, supporting not only the development of fluency and vocabulary but also fostering students' confidence and motivation. Moreover, this research contributes to the growing body of evidence promoting the use of game-based learning to address speaking barriers such as lack of confidence, limited vocabulary, and speaking anxiety, with the task of describing daily activities using at least 20 words proving effective in enhancing students' ability to communicate everyday topics with improved fluency and vocabulary. Thus, teachers are encouraged to adopt Mingle Games as an engaging and practical method to improve speaking skills while transforming the classroom into a dynamic, communicative learning environment.

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