# Perceptions of Task-based Language Teaching: A Study of Iranian EFL Learners

Atefeh Hadi<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>English Department, Najafabad Branch, Islamic Azad University, Najafabad, Iran

Correspondence: Atefeh Hadi, English Department, Najafabad Branch, Islamic Azad University, Najafabad, Iran. E-mail: atefeh.haadi@gmail.com

Received: November 7, 2012 Accepted: November 20, 2012 Online Published: December 12, 2012 doi:10.5539/elt.v6n1p103 URL: http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/elt.v6n1p103

# Abstract

This paper explored perceptions of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) among a group of Iranian female learners. A sample of 88 English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners participated in the study. A task-based questionnaire was developed to examine the perceptions of the participants. The results suggested a high level of understanding of TBLT concepts among the majority of respondents. They also revealed a few negative views on TBLT implementation. This implies that EFL teachers can be positive in successfully applying TBLT in their classes because the learners are willing to adapt themselves to this new approach of language teaching.

Keywords: Task-based Language Teaching (TBLT), learner' perceptions, EFL contexts

# 1. Background

With the introduction of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in the field of second or foreign language acquisition in the early 1980s and strong emphasis having been placed on learners' communicative abilities, TBLT has drawn the attention of many researchers towards itself due to its focus on process-based syllabi designed to increase learners' actual language use for communicative purposes. Although there is no single definition of TBLT, most scholars agree on three common characteristics: TBLT is a student-centered approach (Ellis, 2003; Nunan, 2004; Richards & Rodgers, 2001); it includes certain constituents such as goal, procedure, and specific oresult (Murphy, 2003; Nunan, 2004; Skehan, 2003); it supports content-based and meaning- based tasks instead of linguistic forms (Carless, 2002; Littlewood, 2007).

Jeon (2005) argues that language acquisition is an extremely complex process which involves the interaction of many different variables such as materials, feedback, and activities and TBLT influences these variables positively. In other words, TBLT provides learners with authentic and meaning-based materials, real life communicative activities and motivating feedback. It also promotes actual language use. Particularly in an Asian country like Iran where learners rarely have the possibility of using English outside the classroom, being provided with abundant opportunities for target language use in the classroom is extremely necessary.

# 2.1 Research on TBLT in EFL Contexts

The majority of research undertaken on TBLT has been in an ESL context, but in recent years it has received increasing interest from EFL countries, particularly after attempts to implement CLT have been met with resistance and varying degrees of success (Li, 1998; Bax, 2003; Ellis, 1996; Littlewood, 2007). Nevertheless, the implementation of TBLT in EFL contexts has not been without its difficulties.

In countries where teacher-fronted classes are the norm, students may need some time to adjust to TBLT's interactive approach, as found in McDonough and Chaikitmongkol's (2007) study of a task-based EFL course in Thailand. The students reported more grammar instruction and target language forms were needed in their task-based course. They also wanted more teacher support and guidance.

Perceptions of the purpose of task-based learning may also differ. In a study of three EFL primary classes in Turkey, İlïn, İnözü, and Yumru (2007) point out that the tasks used in the classes they observed were predominately language practice activities focusing on form rather than meaning. The teachers in their study were aware of the purposes of task-based learning, but used tasks at the end of lessons to present language items because this was expected.

Ho and Wong (as cited in Littlewood, 2007, p. 246) also report that approaches such as TBLT, which originate from the West, can be incompatible with public assessment demands and conflict with educational values and traditions in non-Western contexts.

Despite some problems in implementing TBLT in EFL contexts, these studies also recognize the benefits of the approach and report that students have generally responded positively. They acknowledge the importance of TBLT in developing learner autonomy and transferable skills (McDonough & Chaikitmongkol, 2007) and providing opportunities for students to practice using English (Ho & Wong, as cited in Littlewood, 2007, p. 246). The use of tasks can also be adapted to review taught linguistic items (İlïn, İnözü, & Yumru, 2007). The positive results from these studies look promising, but further research of TBLT in the EFL context is needed for more conclusive results.

## 2.2 Learners' Perceptions of the Teaching-learning Process

During the past two decades, second language acquisition researchers have devoted attention to the cognitive aspects of language learning. Research indicates that individual students differ considerably in their use of learning strategies and the end products of language learning (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Vann & Abraham, 1990). An important question is what causes students to approach a specific language learning task differently. What accounts for the individual differences observed even among learners with similar language proficiency? A reasonable answer may be found in learner perception.

In learner-centered approaches, learners have greater roles in teaching/learning processes. This can result in the promotion of their interests toward language learning (Makarova, 1997). Moreover, Rifkin (2000) asserts that learners' perceptions about the learning process are "of critical importance to the success or failure of any student's efforts to master a foreign language". According to Nunan (1988), "no curriculum can claim to be truly learner-centered unless the learner's subjective needs and perceptions relating to the processes of learning are taken into account." Unfortunately, as Allwright (1984) says, "very many teachers seem to find it difficult to accept their learners as people with a positive contribution to make to the instructional process". Based on Bada & Okan (2000), many teachers acknowledge the need to understand learners' perceptions, but they may not actually consult learners in conducting language activities. Teachers may believe that learners are not capable of expressing what they want or need to learn and how they want to learn. However researchers like Block (1994, 1996) claim that learners do have an awareness of what goes on in classes and that teachers should therefore make an attempt to align their task orientation to that of learners. Breen (cited in Block, 1996) showed that students were able to identify specific techniques adopted by the teacher that they believed helped them to understand the new language.

As Cray and Currie (1996) suggest, the important point is that teachers do not have to act on behalf of their learners but with their learners. Attention needs to be given to students' ways of learning and their perceptions and unless teachers are aware of those perceptions they cannot consider them in their teaching activities and classroom practices.

Foreign language learners often hold different beliefs or notions about language learning (Horwits 1987). Existing research suggest that these believes and notions have the potential to influence both their experiences and actions as language learners. According to Puchta (1999), "beliefs are guiding principles for our students' behavior and strong perceptual filters". Stevick (1980) asserts that" success depends less on materials and techniques and more on what goes on inside the learner." Current definitions of beliefs found in the foreign language education literature focus primarily on how teachers think about the nature of foreign languages, teaching and learning. Recent researchers have also examined learners' perceptions about language learning for different purposes. But, language learning research lacks empirical evidence for the way language learners perceive TBI.

## 3. Statement of the Problem

Over the last few decades, CLT and task-based approaches have been used in most countries in order to teach second and foreign languages to learners. In foreign language learning contexts where students have little exposure to the target language outside the classroom, TBLT can be specifically helpful (Jeon, 2005). However, task-based instruction is not widely followed as an educational approach to English language teaching in Iran. Given this, the educational culture of task-based learning/teaching is something completely new to Iranian students (Zare, 2007). Moreover, much of the work done in the area of TBLT, has focused on the definitions of task, the role of tasks in second language acquisition (e.g. Ellis 2000; Skehan 1996), different task types (e.g. Skehan & Foster, 1997), task repetition, and task difficulty. However, there is little practical discussion of how language learners perceive task based instruction.

On the other hand, over the years a great deal of research has been carried out into learner variables which might affect language learning process, such as nationality, age, gender, and motivation among many others. But, issues related to learners' perceptions of language learning have not attracted the same degree of attention; whereas, language learners' beliefs surrounding the language learning process has an undeniable impact on their learning. Regarding all the above-mentioned issues, the present study seeks to investigate EFL learners' perceptions of task- based language pedagogy.

# 3. Research Questions

The present study is an attempt to investigate Iranian EFL learners' perceptions of TBLT. For this purpose the following questions were formulated to be pursued:

- 1) How well do English learners in Iran understand TBLT principles?
- 2) What are the Iranian EFL learners' views on the implementation of TBLT?
- 3) Why do English learners in Iran choose, or avoid the implementation of TBLT?

## 4. Method

## 4.1 Participants

A total of 88 female English language learners studying at the Kish Language Institute (Isfahan, Iran) participated in the survey. These learners were chosen randomly from a pool of volunteers with different proficiency levels including pre-intermediate, intermediate, upper-intermediate, and advanced learners. They were female with the age range of 16-40.

## 4.2 Survey Instrument

A perception questionnaire was used to measure Iranian EFL learners' perceptions of TBLT in. This questionnaire was adapted from Jeon's (2005) study. According to Jeon: "the questionnaire items were partly adapted and modified from Nunan's (2004) checklist for evaluating communicative tasks". To ensure that learners understood the items in the questionnaire, it was translated from English into Farsi. The questionnaire included some Likert-type items and two open-ended ones. It was composed of four parts: first part included questions to collect information about their age, and language learning level. The second section asked questions to gain insights into how familiar they were with task based instruction and its principles. The third section, sought to find the L2 learners' views on classroom TBLT practice. In the second and third sections, learners were asked to answer each question using a 5-point scale ranging from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree'. Correspondingly, in the fourth part, learners chose their reasons for their willingness or reluctance towards TBLT application.

## 4.3 Data Collection Procedure

The researcher visited language learners of the Kish Language Institute and the questionnaires were distributed among the participants of the study from 11 different classes at the last 30 minutes of their class time. The researcher gave the learners a short explanation about her work as well as the way they were supposed to fill out the questionnaire and assured that the information provided by them would be kept confidential. While the learners were filling out the questionnaires, the researcher stayed with them in case there were any ambiguities. As such, it took the researcher about 4 months to collect data from the learners' questionnaires. The collected data was subsequently tabulated to be analysed. Learners' perceptions of TBLT were assessed using the answers which they provided for different parts of the questionnaires.

## 4.4 Data Analysis

The data analysis process consisted of two phases:

1) The Likert-type items of the questionnaires, which were constructed to check learners' awareness of TBLT principles and their views on TBLT implementation, were given a numerical score (e.g., *strongly disagree =1, disagree =2, neutral=3, agree=4, and strongly agree=5*).

2) In the open-ended items, the participants were asked to choose their own reasons for being in favour of or against implementing TBLT. For this reason, the selected items were given the numerical score of "1" and the unselected ones were given "0".

Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 11.0 for Windows was used to analyse the data. Measures of frequency (descriptive statistics) were used. In other words, a percentage analysis of respondents' answers to each of the questionnaire items was performed in order to indicate how well they understood each of the concepts of TBLT, what kind of views they held when it comes to the TBLT implementation in foreign language

classrooms, and for what main reasons learners chose or avoided TBLT implementation.

## 5. Results

5.1 Addressing the First Research Question

This part is related to the first research question that states:

How well do learners understand TBLT concepts?

Part two of the questionnaire contained seven items dealing with this question.

Table 1 shows the result of the learners' reactions to this section.

Table 1. The Results of the Students' Responses to Section Two (total 88)

Question	SA	А	U	D	SD
1	30	53	5	0	0
2	25	51	7	5	0
3	19	34	30	5	0
4	23	37	28	0	0
5	23	55	10	0	0
6	29	36	18	5	0
7	27	47	9	5	0

SA= strongly agree; A= agree; U=neutral;

D= disagree; SD= strongly disagree

By investigating Table 1, it can be found that the majority of the students generally agreed with the items, and there was no strong disagreement. For item one "a task is communicative goal directed" 34.1% strongly agreed and 60.2% just agreed, but 5.7% were neutral, and there was no disagreement. Item two "a task involves a primary focus on meaning" had 28.4% strong agreement, 58% agreement, 7.9% neutral responses, and 5.7% disagreement. Regarding item three "a task has a clearly defined outcome", 21.6% strongly agreed, 38.6% agreed, 34.1% were neutral, and 5.7% disagreed. For item four "a task is any activity in which the target language is used by the learner", 26.1% showed strong agreement, 42.1% showed agreement, and 21.8% were neutral. As with item five "TBLT is consistent with the principles of communicative language teaching", 26.1% strongly agreed, 62.5% agreed, and 11.4% were neutral. Item six "TBLT is based on the student-centered instructional approach" collected 33% strong agreement, 40.9% agreement, 20.4% neutral responses, and 5.7% disagreement. Considering the last item, that is, item seven "TBLT includes three stages: pre-task, task implementation, and post-task", 30.7% strongly agreed, 53.4% agreed, 10.2% were neutral, and only 5.7% disagreed.

#### 5.2 Addressing the Second Research Question

This part relates to the second research question that states:

What are the aspects of learners' views on TBLT implementation?

Section three of the questionnaire consisted of eight items which corresponded to this question.

Table 2 depicts the results of the students' responses to the items of section three of the questionnaire.

Table 2. The Results of the Students' Responses to Section Three (total 88)

	-			· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	
Question	SA	А	U	D	SD
1	45	38	5	0	0
2	36	43	9	0	0
3	30	46	12	0	0
4	30	41	12	5	0
5	34	44	10	0	0
6	19	35	28	6	0
7	15	48	20	5	0
8	26	38	19	5	0

SA= strongly agree; A= agree; U=neutral;

D= disagree; SD= strongly disagree

Once again, studying Table 5.2 shows that there was no strong disagreement with any items in this section. Other results which were drawn are as follows. Regarding strong agreement, item one "I am interested in implementing TBLT in the classroom" captured 51.1% of the responses, item two "TBLT provides a relaxed atmosphere to promote the target language use" 40.9%, item three "TBLT activates learners' needs and interests" 34.1%, item four "TBLT pursues the development of integrated skills in the classroom" 34.1%, item five "TBLT gives much psychological burden to teacher as a facilitator" 38.6%, item six "TBLT requires much preparation time compared to other approaches" 21.6%, item seven "TBLT is proper for controlling classroom arrangements" 17.1%, and item eight "TBLT materials should be meaningful and purposeful based on the real-world context" 29.5%. Considering agreement, 43.2% of the respondents chose this option for item one, 48.9% for item two, 52.3% for item three, 46.6% for item four, 50% for item five, 39.8% for item six, 54.5% for item seven, and 43.2% for item eight. For the neutral option, item one attracted 5.7%, item two 9%, item three 13.6%, item four 5.7%, item five 11.4%, item six 6.8%, item seven 5.7%, and item eight 5.7%. Finally for the disagree option, there was no disagreement for items one, two, three, and five, but for item four there was 5.7% disagreement, for item six 6.8%, for item seven 5.7% and for item eight 5.7%.

## 5.3 Addressing the Third Research Question

This part is related to the third research question that states:

#### For what practical reasons do learners choose, or avoid, implementing TBLT?

Section four of the questionnaire contained one yes/no question which was related to this research question. If the respondents answered 'Yes', they had to tick any or all of the five reasons that followed, but if they answered 'No', they had six reasons to choose from. Table 5.3 shows the number of reasons the students presented for using TBLT.

Table 3. The Number of Reasons Presented by the Students for Implementing TBLT

Reason No.	Students
1	32
2	71
3	50
4	66
5	63

According to Table 3, reason one "TBLT promotes learners' academic progress" attracted 36.4% of the students' vote, reason two "TBLT improves learners' interaction skills" 80.7%, reason three "TBLT encourages learners' intrinsic motivation" 56.8%, reason four "TBLT creates a collaborative learning environment" 75%, and finally, reason five "TBLT is appropriate for small group work" attracted 71.6% of the learners. The number of reasons for those who chose 'No' option is presented in Table 4.

Table 4. The Number of Reasons Presented by the Students for not Implementing TBLT

Reason No.	Students
1	28
2	23
3	7
4	21
5	32
6	28

It can be seen in Table 5.4 that 31.8% of the students chose the first reason " not being used to task-based instruction", 26.1% chose reason two "materials in the textbooks are not proper for using TBLT", 8% chose reason three "large class size is an obstacle to use task-based methods", 23.9% chose reason four which deals with "difficulty in assessing their own performance", 36.4% chose reason five that is "teachers' limited target language proficiency", and 31.8% selected reason six which refers to "teachers' little knowledge of task-based instruction".

#### 6. Discussion

According to the first research question, the analysis of items 1 to 7 manifested the fact that learners had a firm grasp of the linguistic characteristics of tasks which approves the teaching advantages of tasks in learning a second language. According to Jeon (2005), this could be the consequence of the shift that the Asian EFL context has made toward the use of a task-based and activity-oriented type of learning a language to improve the

learners' communicative skills. This finding also supports the findings of the study conducted by Zare (2007), who examined the attitudes of Iranian EFL learners and teachers towards TBLT after they were exposed to and applied TBLT, respectively. The results showed that the Iranian EFL learners had a positive attitude towards TBLT.

Concerning the second research question, which investigated learners' views on TBLT implementation, the analysis of items 8 to 15 showed that the Iranian EFL learners actually held positive views on implementing TBLT in English language classrooms. They seemed to be willing to adapt themselves to the new language learning approach. These findings are consistent with the findings of Zare's (2007) study, in which it is argued that Iranian EFL learners who participated in the study welcomed the new experience. Zare asserts that the educational environment to which the people are accustomed can have some effects on their attitudes towards methods of language teaching and these attitudes can sometimes prevent or delay the acceptance of new methods of language teaching. On the other hand, he argues that these attitudes are not innate and can be changed through exposure to a new method of teaching.

In response to the third research question in which the practical reasons why learners chose or avoided implementing TBLT, the answers to the two open-ended items were analysed. The findings revealed that learners' reasons for willingness or reluctance toward TBLT application vary.

The majority of learners were in favour of task-based methods firstly because of its collaborative and interactional nature and then its motivational potential. While a large number of learners favored TBLT due to its appropriateness for small group-work, and for them this reason came before motivation.

For the learners who have not had much exposure to task-based learning, the most important reason why they avoided participating in task-based activities was that they did not find their teachers proficient enough in the target language. They believed their teachers did not have the necessary experience and mastery to implement TBLT. Moreover, most of the learners were not used to TBLT. They were accustomed to the traditional lecture-oriented methods and teacher-centered classrooms. It is not surprising, because communicative language learning and especially task-based language learning are not practiced in the Iranian educational system. When it comes to task performance, Learners do not have the required confidence. Therefore, it is teachers' responsibility to encourage learners, inspire their confidence and help them learn collaborative skills necessary for successful completion of task-based activities; because learners' active participation in task-based activities are simply one of the many ways of language learning, they will effectively manage to deal with the tasks. Thus, confidence-building exercises may result in improving learners' active participation and a shift toward more learner-centered classrooms (Burdett, 2003).

The other obstacles mentioned by L2 learners were inappropriateness of the text book materials and not having a clear understanding of their progress while being taught in TBLT.

These findings are in line with those of Zare (2007) who proposed that teachers can be hopeful to successfully apply TBLT in their classes while the learners adapt themselves to this new approach of language teaching. This can be seen to be true not only at the level of private institutes, but also at the level of public schools. In other words, one can hope to institutionalise the culture of TBLT in public schools as well, though in this process the learners may initially face some cultural problems. Moreover, it is clear that such a change can only take place gradually.

## 7. Conclusion

In Iranian EFL situation, because learners do not have direct contact with English native speakers, the teachers have emphasized more active group learning classroom contrary to the traditional passive lecture for the learners to become more acquainted with the target language in actual use. As a result, learners are keener on using TBLT, primarily because they believe task-based learning benefits learners' communication abilities.

Language tasks can be used in communicative approach to arouse learners' motivation for learning a foreign language. These tasks don't just give variety to the language teaching methodology but also make the classroom much more fun and interesting; besides, they can produce a lively atmosphere in the classroom which gives language instruction more creativity.

Concerning the findings of this study, using flexible and interactive teaching tasks in English classes have many positive results, such as:

TBLT encourages learners' academic progress.

- TBLT improves learners' interaction skills.
- TBLT encourages learners' inherent motivation.
- TBLT creates a collaborative learning experience.
- TBLT is suitable for small group work.

As mentioned before, language tasks are components of communicative approach in language teaching which can maximise students' use of target language by providing collaborative as well as competitive problem solving tasks. This is what learners who took part in this study mentioned.

The overall findings of this study manifested the fact that the majority of Iranian EFL learners highly understand TBLT concepts and have positive attitudes toward using them in the classroom. Only a small number of learners were reluctant toward TBLT because of former problems they had in classroom practice but at the end it seemed learners had their own reasons to approve or disapprove of the use of TBLT.

#### 7. Implications

Concerning the results of this study, some notifying suggestions are given to teachers. First, since learners' views have a dramatic influence on their learning process, it is necessary for the learners to have a positive attitude toward TBLT in order to gain the desired outcome. Second, because learners believed some teachers know little about applying task-based methods or techniques, teachers should be given the chance to be educated in fields relating to the task-based planning, implementation, and evaluation. For this purpose, language teaching programs should familiarize teachers with the strengths and weaknesses of TBLT as well as its basic principles and techniques. Third, because lack of confidence is one of the reasons why learners avoid TBLT, it should be given consideration to overcome these impediments in the classroom.

This study has some implications not only for EFL teachers and learners in private institutes but also for students and teachers at public schools. Although EFL learners in Iran's schools are not accustomed to TBLT, this does not mean that instructors should put TBLT aside and follow traditional methods of language teaching. As the attitudes of Iranian EFL learners to TBLT were rather positive in this study, EFL teachers are encouraged to adopt this approach in their classrooms. In this regard, those decision makers in charge of the educational system should also change their attitudes and do their best to promote TBLT.

#### References

- Allwright, R. L. (1984). The importance of interaction in classroom language learning. *Applied Linguistics*, 5, 156-171. http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/applin/5.2.156
- Bada, E., & Okan, Z. (2000). Students' language learning preferences. *TESL-EJ*, 4(3), 1-15. Retrieved December 30, 2010 from http://tesl-ej.org/ej15/a1.html
- Bax, S. (2003). The end of CLT: a context approach to language teaching. *ELT Journal*, 57(3), 278-287. http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/elt/57.3.278
- Block, D. (1994). A day in the life of a class: Teacher/learner perceptions of task purpose in conflict. *System, 22*, 473-486.
- Block, D. (1996). A window on the classroom: Classroom events viewed from different angles. In K. M. Bailey,
  & D. Nunan (Eds.), Voices from the Language Classroom: Qualitative Research in Second Language Education (pp. 168-194). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Breen, M. P. (1991). Understanding the language teacher. In R. Phillips on, E. S, Kellerman, Selinker, M. S. Sharwood, & M. Swain (eds.), *Foreign/Second Language Pedagogy Research* (pp. 213-233). Clevedon UK: Multilingual Matters.
- Burdett, J. (2003). Making groups work: university students' perceptions. *International Education Journal*, 4(3), 177-191.
- Cray, E., & Currie, P. (1996). Linking adult learners with the education of L2 teachers. *TESOL Quarterly*, 30(1), 113-130. http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/3587609
- Ellis, G. (1996). How culturally appropriate is the communicative approach? *ELT Journal*, 50(3), 213-218.
- Ellis, R. (2000). Task-based research and language pedagogy. Language Teaching Research, 4(3), 193-200.
- Ellis, R. (2003). Task-based language learning and teaching. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Halliday, M. (1985). An Introduction to Functional Grammar. London: Arnold.

- Horwitz, E. K. (1987). Surveying student beliefs about language learning. In A. L.Wenden, & Rubin, J. (Eds.), *Learner Strategies in Language Learning* (pp. 119-129). Englewood Cliffs. NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- İlïn, G., İnözü, J., &Yumru, H. (2007). Teachers' and learners' perceptions of tasks: Objectives and outcomes. *Journal of Theory and Practice in Education*, *3*(1), 60-68.
- Jeon, In-Jae. (2005). An analysis of task-based materials and performance: Focused on Korean high school English textbooks. *English Teaching*, 60(2), 87-109.
- Li, D. (1998). "It's always more difficult than you plan and image": Teachers' perceived difficulties in introducing the communicative approach in South Korea. *TESOL Quarterly*, 32(4), 677-703.
- Littlewood, W. (2007). Communicative and task-based language teaching in East Asian classrooms. *Language Teaching*, 40(3), 243-249.
- Makarova, V. (1997). Discovering phonetics. *The Language Teacher Online, 21*(3). Japan: TLT Online Editor. Retrieved October 1, 2010 from http://Langue.hyper.chubu.ac.jp/jalt/pub/tlt/97/mar/phonetic.html
- McDonough, K., & Chaikitmongkol, W. (2007). Teachers' and Learners' Reactions to a Task-Based EFL Course in Thailand. *TESOL Quarterly*, 41(1), 107-132.
- Nunan, D. (1988). The learner-centered curriculum. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Nunan, D. (2004). Task-Based Language Teaching. Cambridge: Cambridge University press.
- O'Malley, J. M., & Chamot, A. U. (1990). *Learning strategies in second language acquisition*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Puchta, H. (1999). Beyond materials, techniques and linguistic analysis: the role of motivation, belief and identity. *Plenary Session at the 33rd International IATEFL Annual conference*. Edinburgh.
- Rifkin, B. (2000). Revisiting beliefs about foreign language learning. Foreign Language Annals, 33(4), 394-409.
- Richards, J., & Rodgers, T. (2001). *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching: A Description and Analysis.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Skehan, P. (1996). A framework for implementation of task-based instruction. Applied Linguistics, 17(1), 38-62.
- Skehan, P. (2003). Task-based instruction. Language Teaching, 36, 1-14. http://dx.doi.org/1017/S026144480200188X
- Skehan, P., & Foster. (1997). Task type and task processing conditions as influences on foreign language performance. *Language Teaching Research*, 1(3), 185-211.
- Stevick, E. W. (1980). Teaching languages: A way and ways. Newbury House. Rowley. MA.
- Vann, R. J., & Abraham, R. G. (1990). Strategies of unsuccessful language learners. TESOL Quarterly, 24, 177-198. http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/3586898
- Zare, G. (2007). The Attitudes of the Iranian EFL Learners and Teachers towards Task-based Language Teaching. Unpublished MA thesis, Shiraz University, Shiraz.

#### Appendix

#### Learner Questionnaire

This questionnaire is designed to examine Iranian EFL learners' perceptions of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) with reference to classroom practice. I would be really grateful if you read each item carefully and provide an answer. Your answers will be kept confidential. Thank you for your cooperation.

#### Section I. General and Demographic Information

Gender	□male	□female		
Age	□15-19	□20-24	□25-29	□30 +

# Section II. Learners' Understandings of Task and TBLT

For each of the following statements, please answer by putting a  $\sqrt{}$  in a box, according to the following scale:

SA (strongly agree), A (agree), U (undecided), D (disagree), SD (strongly disagree).

Questionnaire Items	SA	А	U	D	SD
1. A task is communicative goal directed.					
2. A task involves a primary focus on meaning.					
3. A task has a clearly defined outcome.					
4. A task is any activity in which the target language is used by the learner.					
5. TBLT is consistent with the principles of communicative language					
teaching.					
6. TBLT is based on the student-centered instructional approach.					
7. TBLT includes three stages: pre-task, task implementation, and post-task.					

# Section III. Learners' Views on Implementing TBLT

The following statements address Learners' views on implementing TBLT in the classroom. Please answer by putting a  $\sqrt{}$  in a box that matches your position most, according to the following scale:

SA (strongly agree), A (agree), U (Undecided), D (disagree), SD (strongly disagree).

Questionnaire Items	SA	А	U	D	SD
8. I am interested in implementing TBLT in the classroom.					
9. TBLT provides a relaxed atmosphere to promote the target language use.					
10. TBLT activates learners' needs and interests.					
11. TBLT pursues the development of integrated skills in the classroom.					
12. TBLT gives much psychological burden to teacher as a facilitator.					
13. TBLT requires much preparation time compared to other approaches.					
14. TBLT is proper for controlling classroom arrangements.					
15. TBLT materials should be meaningful and purposeful based on the					
real-world context.					

# Section IV. Reasons Learners Choose or Avoid Implementing TBLT

Are you interested in the implementation of TBLT in your classroom? DYES DNO

If yes, please put a  $\sqrt{}$  for any reasons that make you interested in TBLT.

TBLT promotes learners' academic progress.	
□ TBLT improves learners' interaction skills.	
□ TBLT encourages learners' intrinsic motivation.	
□ TBLT creates a collaborative learning environment.	
□ TBLT is appropriate for small group work.	
If you have other reasons, please write them down.	
(	)

If no, please put a  $\sqrt{}$  for any reasons that make you uninterested in TBLT.

□Students are not used to task-based learning.

□Materials in textbooks are not proper for using TBLT.

□Large class size is an obstacle to use task-based methods.

□I have difficulty in assessing my own performance.

□Teachers limited target language proficiency.

□Teachers have very little knowledge of task-based instruction.

If you have other reasons, please write them down.

(

)