



Research Article

The Effect of Different Educational Contexts on Iranian Teachers' Perception and Implementation of Task-based Language Teaching (TBLT)

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Introduction

As a reaction against the behavioristic audio-lingual method, communicative language teaching emerged in the 1980s because the audio-lingual method did not have the desired effect to communicate. This method was based on the premise that if language patterns are presented, imitated, and practiced intensively in the classroom, learners can assimilate and use them in similar contexts outside the classroom (Leaver & Willis, 2004).

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) claims that the goal of language teaching is to develop "Communicative Competence" in learners and pay attention to all four skills (Brown, 2007; Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Content-Based Language Teaching (CBLT), Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), and Competency-Based Language Teaching are three of the most important methodologies that have been derived from CLT. One approach that has attracted a lot of attention over the past twenty-five years is a task-based approach to language learning and teaching.

"The idea of task-based learning (TBL) was greatly popularized by Prabhu" (As cited in Harmar, (2002, p. 89) who, working at a school in Bangalore-southern India, speculated that students could likely learn a language if they were thinking about a non-linguistic problem instead of focusing on particular language forms or a language structure. In other words, students are given a task to do or an issue to resolve.

TBLT has been supported by leading linguists since the 1980s, who emphasize the importance of using language in authentic ways through tasks. The Ministry of Education has also recommended adopting TBLT in English teaching. In TBLT lessons, the teacher serves as a facilitator and course guide. However, challenges may arise in implementing TBLT due to institutional, teacher, and student factors. (Adam & Newton, 2009)

Institutional factors, Teacher factors, and Student factors

Shehadeh (2010) demonstrated some institutional factors that hinder the adoption of TBLT in many EFL settings like focused exams and assessments, large class sizes, and mixed-proficiency classes. Shehadeh (2010) stated three

main teacher factors that challenge the adoption of TBLT in several EFL contexts. First uncertainty and doubts about the nature of tasks and the effectiveness of TBLT itself because they simply do not know how to implement TBLT in their teaching practices. Second, many teachers feel more secure and in control in traditional, teacher-fronted, teacher-centered instruction. Third, teachers in many EFL settings consider TBLT an alien concept not applicable to their specific teaching context or educational setting because it is incompatible with their own experiences of language learning and teaching. Shehadeh (2010) found that many students express doubts about the effectiveness of TBLT, and their teachers' views, and echo their conservative parental beliefs about education.

The Task-based approach is a recommended way of teaching English as it prepares learners for self-directed, long-life learning. However, little attention has been given to implementing TBLT in junior and senior high schools. Textbooks have been criticized for not promoting communication in classes, leading to the development of CLT-based textbooks. Despite this, many Iranian teachers still use teacher-centered methods, neglecting the importance of learners' communicative competence.

Applying TBLT needs experienced teachers to help students to achieve their goals. Hence, it is important to see how task-based is welcomed by the teacher in different contexts, especially in an environment providing opportunities for the students outside the class (i.e., where providing tasks is easy). In light of this, this research aimed to explore the effect of different educational contexts (Institutes and High schools) on Iranian teachers' perception and implementation of TBLT. Furthermore, an attempt was made to find out the main reasons to apply or avoid task-based language teaching in different room settings.

The results of the study have valuable implications for teachers, curriculum designers, institutes, and policymakers. They can aid institutes in improving educational facilities and supplying materials based on teachers' needs. EFL teachers can enhance English learning classes using task-based language teaching. The findings contribute to improving English teaching and learning quality for

greater student success. Policymakers can design pedagogical materials and training courses based on the results. Additionally, the research provides valuable insights for teachers to plan motivating learning activities.

Literature Review

Although TBLT has achieved popularity in recent years, it is not a new concept. Prabhu was the first important scholar in the development of TBLT. Prabhu (1987) defined a task as “an activity which required learners to arrive at an outcome from given information through some process of thought, and which allowed teachers to control and regulate that process” (p.432). Prabhu (1987) used a task-based approach with secondary classes in Bangalore, India. The task-based instruction (TBI) for foreign language for adults was used by American Government Language institutions in the early 1980s. TBLT began to be recognized and widely discussed in language teaching and research in second language acquisition (SLA). The popularity of task-based language learning and instruction has greatly increased during the past few decades.

Theoretical Studies on TBLT

To have a better understanding of task-based language teaching instruction, defining tasks from the related literature is a crucial part. Many definitions of “task” have been provided by different scholars, and each definition has its focus. Various definitions of tasks are widely promoted in literature as follows:

A task, according to Willis (1996), is an action in which the learner uses the target language to attain a communicative purpose. Here, the word “outcome” includes the idea of meaning. Similarly, for Nunan (2006) tasks have a non-linguistic outcome. He defines a task as “a piece of classroom work which involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language while their attention is principally focused on meaning rather than form.” (p.10).

Long (1985) has defined task as:

A task is a piece of work undertaken for oneself or others, freely or for some reward. Thus, examples of tasks include painting a

fence, dressing a child, filling out a form, buying a pair of shoes, making an airline reservation, borrowing a library book, etc. In other words, “task” means the hundred and one things people do in everyday life, at work, at play, and in between. (p.89)

The task is also discussed from a psycholinguistic point of view. From this perspective, “...a task is a device that guides learners to engage in certain types of information-processing that are believed to be important for effective language use and/or for language acquisition from some theoretical standpoint” (Ellis, 2000, p.197). It assumes that while performing the tasks, learners engage in certain types of language use and mental processing that are useful for acquisition. Ellis (2006) states that “tasks reduce the cognitive or linguistic demands placed on the learner” (p.23).

Richards and Rodgers (2001) suggested that “tasks are believed to foster processes of negotiation, modification, rephrasing, and experimentation that are at the heart of second language learning”. (p. 228)

TBLT Methodology

Ellis (2003) asserted that the design of a task-based lesson involves consideration of the stages or components of a lesson that has a task as its principal component. Various designs have been proposed. However, they all have in common three principal phases reflecting the chronology of a task-based lesson. As a result, the first stage is called “pre-task” and it deals with the different activities that teachers and students might do before beginning the work, such as whether or not pupils are given enough time to plan out how to do it. The second phase, known as the “in-task” phase, focuses on the task itself and offers different instructional alternatives, including whether or not students must work under time constraints. The last “post-task” phase consists of steps for monitoring task performance.

Teacher role and learner role

‘Role’ refers to the part that learners and teachers are expected to play in carrying out learning tasks as well as the social and interpersonal

relationship between the participants” (Nunan, 2004, p. 64). Learner and teacher roles receive a lot of attention in Richards and Rodgers (1986). They draw attention to the fact that a methodology will reveal presumptions regarding the contribution that students can make to the learning process.

Empirical Studies on TBLT

Prabhu's Communicational Teaching Project in Bangalore was a significant milestone in the transition towards task-based language teaching (TBLT), as it demonstrated the potential of TBLT as an alternative to existing language teaching methods of the 1980s. The project showed that a syllabus centered on problem-solving tasks and feedback could effectively achieve what a traditional linguistic syllabus provided and even improve on it. Since the Bangalore project, subsequent research has provided a solid foundation for adopting TBLT in L2 classrooms.

Fotos and Ellis (1991) showed that the adoption of "task-based language teaching" to communicate about grammar is conducive to both learning and communication. They also found that communicative grammar-based tasks helped Japanese college-level EFL learners increase their knowledge of difficult grammatical rules and facilitated the acquisition of implicit knowledge.

Foster and Skehan (1996) studied the effects of three types of strategic planning on EFL learners' speech in three tasks. They found that meaning/form-focused strategic planning produced more complex and fluent speech and more accuracy than minimal strategic planning. Meaning/form-focused strategic planning also resulted in significantly higher speech complexity and fluency than undetailed strategic planning.

Muller (2005) used task-based learning to help weak English language students in Japan improve their speaking skills. He adopted a vocabulary-focused lesson from a PPP-based textbook and incorporated Willis's (1996) task structure. Although his approach did not meet all the criteria for task-based learning, it provided a starting point for low-level learners, who could gradually progress to more demanding tasks while working within a familiar framework and the undetailed strategic planning condition.

Murad (2009) investigated the effect of a task-based language teaching program on developing the speaking skills of Palestinian secondary students and their attitudes toward English. The students were in the eleventh grade for a period of three months. The findings of the study showed that firstly, the TBLT program enhanced significantly the speaking skills of the students of the experimental group and positively affected their attitudes toward English. Secondly, the TBLT program improved the girls' speaking skills more than the boys in the experimental group.

Birjandi and Ahangari (2008) examined the effects of task repetition and task type on fluency, accuracy, and complexity. The researchers assigned 120 students to six groups. The results and the analysis of variance indicated that task repetition and task type, as well as the interaction between these variables, resulted in significant differences in subjects' oral discourse in terms of fluency, accuracy, and complexity.

Tabatabaei and Hadi (2011) found that most EFL teachers in Iran have a good understanding of task-based language pedagogy and perceive it positively. The study suggests that TBLT can be successfully applied in EFL classrooms in Iran. The sample consisted of 51 EFL teachers who completed a questionnaire.

Elmahdi (2016) investigated the impact of task-based instruction on EFL learners' performance. The study highlighted the relevance of task-based language teaching (TBLT) and its influence on EFL learners. Specifically, the article emphasized the significance of speaking skills and sub-skills for developing speaking activities. It also discussed the implementation of task-based instruction, including principles and factors affecting its effectiveness. The findings suggest the need to prioritize task-based approaches in EFL instruction while acknowledging the necessity for further research on their efficacy and impact on learner performance (Elmahdi, 2016).

Dr. Fatima Hafeez Unnisa (2017) conducted a study on "An Innovative Method of Teaching English for Engineering Students: Task-Based Language Learning and Teaching." The study concludes that task-based teaching provides language educators with the freedom to be creative

and offers natural contexts for speaking opportunities. Tasks focus on meaning-driven language use, while activities target form-focused language use. Task difficulty is a crucial consideration in task design and selection.

Adiantika and Purnomo (2018) examined the implementation of task-based instruction in EFL teaching of speaking skills. The study revealed both advantages and shortcomings of this approach. Task-based instruction fostered active student participation and improved speaking skills. However, challenges were identified, including teacher ability, time constraints, and diverse student proficiency levels. To address these issues, the study recommended a long-term, tailored implementation of task-based instruction considering individual student abilities (Adiantika and Purnomo 2018).

Jeon and Hahn (2006) emphasize that successful implementation of TBLT in language learning contexts requires more than just giving tasks to learners and evaluating their performance. The instructors must have sufficient knowledge of the instructional framework in relation to its plan, process, and evaluation since they play a crucial role as a facilitator and controller of task performance.

Teachers' perceptions towards TBLT have been researched, but the current study differs from the studies cited herein in other aspects. Few studies have been conducted on the perception and implementation of TBLT in the Iranian context in general. Therefore, the current research is unique since it examines the effect of different educational contexts (institutes and high schools) on Iranian teachers' perception and implementation of Task-based language teaching (TBLT). Its results and implications will be beneficial to policy-makers, school principals and foreign language institutes, and EFL teachers.

Research Questions

This study tried to answer three research questions. The following sections present the results.

- 1-What is the difference between institutes' and high school teachers' perceptions of TBLT?
- 2-What is the Iranian teachers' attitude to implementing TBLT in different contexts?

- 3-What are the main reasons to apply or avoid implementing TBLT in different contexts?

Methodology

Research Design

The design of the present study adopted a descriptive study in which the researcher used research methods such as questionnaires, interviews, and observational methods. It is also a mixed-methods research that involves different combinations of qualitative and quantitative research during the data collection and analysis.

Participants

The participants of the study were 60 Iranian teachers (16 males and 44 females) working at English language institutes and high schools. The participants were divided into two groups; one group consisted of 30 Iranian English teachers who worked at high schools and the other group those who worked at English language institutes. The teachers ranged in age from 28 to 53 (Mean =38.75) and their English teaching experience ranged from 2 to 34 years with a mean of 10.82. Both high school teachers and Institute teachers were chosen from graduate students and undergraduate students. The teachers were deliberately selected from Shiraz, Ahvaz, and Gachsaran high schools and Institutes. The researcher had easy access to these institutions.

Instruments

The researcher used the following instruments to achieve the purpose of the study:

Likert Scale Questionnaire

The first instrument was a two-page questionnaire which was originally conducted by Joen and Hahn (2005) to obtain the data. The questionnaire was composed of 27 Likert-type items. The five-point Likert scale ranged from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Apart from the demographic information such as age, gender, and years of teaching English, the prepared questionnaire consisted of four sections. The first section measured teachers' understanding of tasks and TBLT with 7 questions. The second part (items 8-15) dealt with teachers' views on

implementing TBLT. Section three consisted of 5 questions (items 16-20) regarding why teachers apply TBLT and finally section four (items 21-27) aimed at finding out why teachers avoid applying TBLT. Checking the reliability of the questionnaire, Table 1 indicates the internal consistency reliability coefficient of the questionnaire. The reliability of the test as measured by Cronbach alpha for the entire questionnaire was 0.90.

Table 1
Internal Consistency Reliability of Questionnaire

Scale	Alpha
Reliability	.903

Observation

The second one was a two-week observation associated with job performance evaluations for a full class period. The observed lessons were part of their required classroom instruction and representative of their TBLT implementation quality. The institute class sizes ranged from 10 to 15 students, and the high school class sizes ranged from 15 to 25 students. To gain a better understanding of how participants responded to TBLT, data from classroom observations were used. Classroom observation was conducted based on the three principal phases of task-based instruction. The first phase is 'pre-task' and concerns the various activities that teachers and students can undertake before they start the task; such as whether students are given time to plan the performance of the task. The second phase, the 'in task' phase, centers on the task itself and affords various instructional options, including whether students are required to operate under time pressure. The final 'post-task' phase involves procedures for following up on the task performance.

Interview

Finally, a teacher-made interview was applied to find out the teachers' personal opinions about their main reasons for avoiding or applying TBLT in different contexts. The interview was comprised of three questions. Two PhD experts in language testing and design reviewed the interview questions'

content validity. Interviews as Dornyei (2003) implies are designed to acquaint the participants with the nature of the study, to establish rapport, and to attain the depth and details of their personal experience. Besides taking notes the interviews were recorded as well. The interview also provided an opportunity for teachers to address any issues or questions that had been brought up during observation by the researcher. Participants preferred to interview in English.

Data collection procedures

First of all, permission to conduct the study was obtained from the school principals, then the researcher visited most language teachers of institutes and high schools, explained the pedagogical goals of the survey, and asked them to fill out the questionnaires. The questionnaires were distributed among teachers. A few of them answered the questionnaire after or between their class times, but most teachers assigned a time for returning the questionnaire, between 3 to 4 weeks. So the questionnaires were collected one by one during 3 months. Then the collected data was tabulated to be analyzed. Teachers' perceptions and implementation of TBLT were assessed using the answers that they provided for different parts of the questionnaires.

Secondly, a total of 10 classes were observed and voice-recorded. As much as possible, the language and the teaching process of the teacher were recorded verbatim and the researcher used concrete, objective language to describe what she observed.

Finally, ten teachers were chosen randomly based on the accessibility rules. This procedure was conducted after the questionnaire to explore the reasons teachers choose, or avoid, implementing TBLT in their classrooms and to gain an understanding of the teachers' practices and beliefs. The interview was prepared by the researcher which is inspired by the questionnaire. The researcher held individual sessions with the teachers and met each teacher for ten minutes, during which they answered questions from the researcher-made interview. Each session was tape-recorded. After each session, the researcher

evaluated the teachers' responses according to the evaluation scheme.

Results and Discussion

As mentioned in the previous chapters, this study sought to explore the institute and high school English teachers' perceptions about and attitudes toward TBLT and the reasons for using or avoiding this method. To reach these aims, three research questions concerning implementing TBLT in the EFL context were examined in this study. The following sections try to present the obtained results and the research questions are going to be answered.

Quantitative Results

Teachers' perceptions of TBLT

One of the purposes of this study was to scrutinize whether there were any differences between institutes and high school English teachers' perceptions of TBLT. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the first section of the questionnaire asked questions about teachers' perceptions of the TBLT method. To examine differences between teachers of the institute and school in this regard, an independent samples t-test was run; the related descriptive statistics are reported in Table 2 and the related inferential statistics findings are reported in Table 3.

Table 2.

Descriptive statistics of teachers' perceptions

Teachers' groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Institute	30	4.1714	.36451	.06655
school	30	4.4952	.50852	.09284

Table 3

Independent Samples Test of teachers' perceptions

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	5.322	.025	-2.835	58	.006	-.32381	.11423	-.55247	-.09515
Equal variances not assumed			-2.835	52.57	.006	-.32381	.11423	-.55297	-.09465

According to Table 2, the institute teachers' mean scores in perceptions about the TBLT method was 4.17 and that of school teachers was 4.49. Therefore, the school teachers' perception was higher.

Table 3 demonstrates if this difference is statistically significant or not. An independent samples t-test was conducted to compare the teachers' TBLT method perception scores for institute and school teachers. According to Table 3, there was a significant difference in the scores of these two groups ($t=-2.83$, $p=.006$, two-tailed).

Teachers' attitude towards implementing TBLT

The second section of the questionnaire asked respondents to give their attitudes toward implementing TBLT in their classes. A Likert scale ranging from 1 (never use the learning activity) to 5 (always use the learning activity) was used for these items. Table 4 demonstrates the overall mean scores for all respondents' attitudes toward the questioned issue.

Table 4.
Descriptive statistics of teachers' attitudes

Teachers' groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Institute	30	4.0958	.31942	.05832
school	30	4.1958	.47421	.08658

As Table 4 signifies, the institute teachers' mean score in their attitudes toward implementing the TBLT method was 4.09 and that of school teachers was 4.19. Therefore, the school teachers'

mean was higher than that of their counterparts. Table 4 depicts the inferential statistics comparing these two groups in this regard.

Table 5.
Independent Samples Test of teachers' attitudes

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	3.589	.063	-.958	58	.342	-.10000	.10439	-.30895	.10895
Equal variances not assumed			-.958	50.82	.343	-.10000	.10439	-.30958	.10958

According to Table 5, the t-test found no significant difference between institute and school teachers on this measure ($t=-0.958$, $p=.342$, two-tailed). The differences in the means were very small.

Teachers' applying or avoiding TBLT

The third research question tried to find the main reasons for applying or avoiding

implementing TBLT in different contexts. To gain the results, first the descriptive statistics were reported to summarize the teachers of institutes and schools scores in the third and fourth sections of the questionnaire which were asking questions about the reasons for applying and avoiding TBLT in English language classes.

Table 6.
Descriptive statistics of teachers' reasons for applying or avoiding TBLT

	Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
apply	Institute	30	4.2867	.51376	.09380
	School	30	4.3333	.34971	.06385
avoid	Institute	30	3.2056	.53010	.09678
	School	30	3.4944	.40703	.07431

According to the reported results in Table 6, the institute teachers' mean scores for applying and avoiding sections were 4.2867 and 3.2056, respectively; on the other hand, the teachers' mean scores for applying section was 4.33 and for the avoiding section was 3.49. A comparison of the

mean scores of these groups indicated that the teachers of schools had more tendency to utilize TBLT. To shed more light on this difference, independent samples t-tests were run; the related results are reported in Table 7.

Table 7.
Independent Samples Test of teachers' reasons for applying or avoiding TBLT

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper	
apply	Equal variances assumed	6.859	.011	-.411	58	.682	-.04667	.11347	-.2738	.18047
	Equal variances not assumed			-.411	51.124	.683	-.04667	.11347	-.2744	.18112
avoid	Equal variances assumed	2.344	.131	-2.36	58	.021	-.28889	.12202	-.5331	-.0446
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.36	54.375	.021	-.28889	.12202	-.5334	-.0442

According to Table 7, the t-test on mean scores of applying TBLT revealed no significant difference between institute and school teachers ($t=-0.411$, $p=.682$, two-tailed). The results of the t-test of avoiding TBLT indicated that there was a significant difference between institute and school teachers on this measure ($t=-2.36$, $p=.021$, two-tailed).

Discussion

Certain prevalent patterns in second language education influence both language instruction and language learning at any given period. One of the latest trends in language learning and teaching is TBLT, which focuses on the use of authentic language through meaningful tasks. The current study aimed to scrutinize some dimensions of this approach in different contexts of Iran. It is worth mentioning that the researcher utilized triangulation methodology to increase an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under investigation by combining multiple data collection methods including questionnaire, interview, and observation.

In the observation data collection phase, the researcher conducted classroom observation based on the three principal phases of task-based instruction. The first stage, known as "pre-task," is concerned with the several activities that teachers and students might carry out before to they start the task, such as whether or not students are given enough time to plan out how to do it. The second phase, known as the "in task" phase, focuses on the task itself and provides a variety of instructional alternatives, including whether or not students must work under time constraints. The last "post-task"

phase consists of steps for monitoring task performance.

Quantitative Result

As mentioned previously, the present study was guided by three research questions. The first research question was "Do institute and high school teachers' have different perceptions of TBLT?" According to the reported results in Tables 2 and 3, teachers from institutes and schools had different perceptions of the TBLT method. Most school teachers affirmed that TBLT is based on CLT which can make learning interesting, meaningful, and purposeful and students can learn practical language to use in real and daily life. They confirmed that this method requires time, energy, and proper material based on CLT which is absent in their textbooks. On the other hand, the institute teachers regarded TBLT as an interesting, meaningful, and practical method in which their textbook designs required its implementation.

The obtained results are supported by other research findings (Chang, 2011; Jeon and Hahn, 2006; Li, 1998). Despite the educational benefits of TBLT in language learning contexts, Jeon and Hahn (2006) noted that a task by itself does not ensure its successful implementation unless the teacher, the facilitator, and the controller of the task performance are aware of how tasks function in the classroom. Additionally, it implies that TBLT is a more complex instructional strategy than simply assigning tasks and grading student performance. More importantly, the teacher must possess the necessary understanding of the instructional framework related to its plan, procedure, and

assessment if they hope to implement TBLT successfully. In a similar vein, Chang (2011), and Li (1998), have found that teacher training plays a crucial role in practicing communicative-oriented language approaches.

The second research question sought to find answers to the question “Is there any difference between the Iranian teachers’ attitude to implementing TBLT in different contexts?” An independent samples t-test was utilized to answer this research question; According to the reported results of Tables 4 and 5, there was no significant difference between institute and school teachers’ attitudes toward implementing this language teaching method.

The interview results support this finding; a majority of both institute and school teachers held positive attitudes toward TBLT. The findings are supported by Carless (2007; 2004), Ellis (2004), Widdowson (2003), and Willis and Willis (2011) who explicitly or implicitly favor a change in methodology. They claimed that implementation of TBLT is not just adopting the abstract specification of materials at the syllabus level which only demands a top-down process of curriculum development. According to these researchers, methodological innovation plays a crucial role. Besides the less threatening implementation procedure for TBLT, supportive and convincing statements and arguments were made by Widdowson (2003) and Willis and Willis (2011) for the suitability and potentiality of capitalizing on linguistically-oriented materials for TBLT. Najjari (2014) concluded that TBLT is applicable in Iran if teachers and practitioners recognize and value the legitimacy of linguistically organized materials i.e., textbooks for communicative-oriented activities.

The last research question was “What are the main reasons to apply or avoid implementing TBLT in different contexts?” to answer this question, first, two independent samples t-tests were run on mean scores of applying and avoiding implementation of TBLT method in the English language classes in different contexts. Based on the obtained results of Tables 6 and 7, however, there was no significant difference between institute and school teachers in applying this method. The results

claimed that these two groups are significantly different in avoiding TBLT in their classes.

Qualitative Results

The observation results indicated that the majority of institute teachers implemented all phases of TBLT based on their classroom instruction and their textbook materials, which may be due to the noticeable attention to implementing TBLT in institutes. Furthermore, among different task types in TBLT, instructional tasks involving pair work or group work were more evident in their teaching.

On the other hand, the school observations showed that although the textbooks recently developed for junior and senior high schools are based on communicative language teaching, the instructors mostly avoided implementing TBLT in their junior and senior high school classes. Also, the instructional tasks involving pair work or group work were not parts of their teaching.

In interview sessions, the high school teachers mostly claimed that they denied the implementation of TBLT in their classrooms and stuck firmly to a traditional teacher-centered method, and they were mostly attendant to the achievement of examinations and scores. But the institute teachers conveyed that although they did not have complete and precise knowledge and information about this method, they have implemented TBLT in their classrooms since they were asked to do so based on their textbooks and institute management policy.

Furthermore, through the interview sessions, the teachers were asked to name some obstacles to implementing TBLT in their language teaching process. The school teachers counted a large number of students, lack of time, improper textbook materials, and students’ lack of prior knowledge as hindrances to TBLT implementation. They also added that TBLT requires materials based on CLT, while their textbooks are just semi-CLT.

The institute teachers designated that teachers should be trained before using TBLT. Also, teachers’ limited knowledge of task-based instruction (TBI) could lead to unsuccessful outcomes. However they were aware that their

textbooks were designed to promote the use of the TBLT method; their students also had positive attitudes toward this method.

The present research findings lend support to Najjari's (2014) study. He accounted for two factors to be necessary to adopt and integrate a new paradigm like TBLT in language pedagogy in Iran. The first one concerns the desirable innovation which should enjoy a high applicability scale and provide a win-win situation for the stakeholders of language pedagogy. The second one deals with coping with and adapting (not adopting) the current materials so that textbooks' shortcomings can be fixed.

Conclusion

This study set out to investigate the effect of different educational contexts (institutes and high schools) on Iranian teachers' perceptions and implementation of task-based language teaching (TBLT). The main qualitative and quantitative results were: first, the school teachers' perception of TBLT was higher; however, most school teachers denied implementing TBLT as an instructional method because of the problems they had in classroom practice. Second, the majority of both institute and school teachers held positive attitudes toward TBLT. Finally, although there was no significant difference between institute and school teachers in applying this method, the results claimed that these two groups are significantly different in avoiding TBLT in their classes based on their educational contexts. Taking quantitative and qualitative findings together, the following conclusion can be made. According to Adams and Newton (2009), institutional factors are one of the factors that challenge adopting TBLT in many EFL settings. These institutional factors are different in institution and high school contexts in Iran and based on the interview results, teachers stated that these institutional factors hinder the adoption of TBLT. Therefore, the results of the study revealed the role of different educational contexts in teachers' perception and implementation of task-based language teaching (TBLT).

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