



**The Effect of Task- Based Instruction on L2 Grammar Learning and Motivation
of Iranian EFL Learners Junior High School Students**

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**The Effect of Task- Based Instruction on L2 Grammar Learning and Motivation of Iranian
EFL Learners Junior High School Students**

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ABSTRACT: The present study investigated the effect of Task-Based Instruction (TBI) on the development of grammar proficiency of elementary EFL Learners and their motivation after Implementing TBI. To this end, 66 Elementary EFL learners were selected. Their proficiency level was established via administering a Nelson grammar proficiency test. Moreover, their grammar homogeneity was ensured using a grammar-oriented test of Nelson as the screening pre-test. Then, the treatment group enjoyed TBI by implementing different tasks for about 17 sessions in 30 minutes. The control group benefited the same amount of grammar instruction, but not through the TBI. At the end of the study, students of both groups were administered the same Nelson grammar-oriented pre-test to gauge the effect of TBLT on improving the grammar proficiency of the learners. Statistical techniques of independent sample *t*-test were used in order to analyze the data. The results indicated that 1) TBI had a significant effect in promoting the grammar proficiency of Iranian elementary EFL learners; 2) TBI had a significant effect in promoting the motivation of Iranian elementary EFL learners.

Keywords: Task- based Instruction; Grammar teaching; Motivation; EFL learners; Elementary learners



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INTRODUCTION

There are strong obstacles that impede learning of grammar (Rai, 2017). Teaching grammar has even been the most debatable issue in EFL situation. Indeed, how to teach grammar in order to enable the learners to control the real-world communication accurately and properly is a very important issue. Therefore, researchers have struggled hard to make practical methods for teaching language skills method (Alzebaree, & Yavuz, 2017; Salem, & Mohammadzadeh, 2018; Metruk, 2018).

Grammar rules received obsessive attention in grammar translation method. However, there was a departure from grammar after the emergence of audiolingualism and direct. Brown (2014) stated that today only some of language teaching experts support no formed-focused instruction at all, as recommended by Krashan and Terrel (1983) in the discussion of the Natural Approach in language teaching. The results of different studies showed that high exposure to the target language did not guarantee the accuracy of the learners. Celce-Murcia (2014) demonstrates that if students receive no grammar in communicative lessons, their level of accuracy faces with a lot of problems. This finding shows the importance of grammar. In addition, Larsen-Freeman (cited in Brown, 2014) stated that grammar provides the forms or the structures of language. Forms are only meaningful when semantics and pragmatics accompany them. In CLT, learners' main goal is to develop communicative competence/ability. Moreover, the students practise real-life situations that require communication (Brandl, 2008). Tasks are supposed to raise a process of rephrasing, modification, negotiation, experimentation that is at the core of L2 learning (Richard & Reppen, 2016).

Ellis (2005) stated several principles in grammar teaching. He claimed that learners should pay attention to the meaning and form while learners' awareness leads to acquiring of grammatical structures. Therefore, teaching grammar should raise awareness of a grammatical structure.

In Task-Based Instruction (TBI), students discover grammatical rules on their own. Students feel more responsibility and independency when they do problem-solving tasks. Bahrami (2010) asserted that working on a task is intrinsically motivating. In addition, the hard part of grammar is to use the rules appropriately in real world communication. Grammar rules are complex and hard to use. In Iran, teachers usually teach grammar through a traditional method to EFL learners. The teachers say the rules and the learners memorize them and do some exercises and drills. As a result, the learners cannot use the rules and structures in real communication. Although there is less focus



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on grammar and drills in the new edition of English books, students cannot use the grammar in their real situation. There is still a frustration. When teachers teach grammatical points, there are no sufficient exercises for students to practice the grammar communicatively. These problems motivated the researchers to investigate the effects of teaching grammar through TBLT on the grammatical proficiency of Iranian high school third graders. The researchers also aimed to investigate the motivation of students in both control and experimental groups.

This study sought to find answers for the following research questions:

- 1) Does task-based instruction have any significant effect on Iranian third grade junior high school EFL learners' grammatical proficiency?
- 2) Does task-based instruction have any significant effect on Iranian third grade junior high school EFL learners' motivation?

Task -based language teaching

During the recent 20 years, TBLT has attracted the attention of many researchers, curriculum developers, educationalist, teacher trainers, and language teachers in second language acquisition (SLA) worldwide (Branden, 2006). Long (1985) and Prabhu (1987) hold an approach in which learners receive functional tasks. These tasks make the learners concentrate on meaning exchange and language use for real world and non-linguistic purposes (Branden, 2006). In SLA research, tasks are means to elicit language production, interaction, negotiation of meaning, processing of input, and focus on form (Renandya & Richards, 2002). Task-based instruction is dissimilar to other more traditional methods of language teaching. In TBLT, lessons are based on the language needed to do particular tasks rather than the aspects of language such as structures and vocabulary (Ellis, 2003). According to Ramirez (1995), solving these tasks means that learning the target language will be the means to an end rather than the end itself. It means that with solving the task that is given, the students can achieve their purposes to know and understand the grammatical points. Solving the task is not the end of the learning or teaching process. Therefore, the purpose of TBLT is to generate a need to learn and use language. The tasks will create their own language and make a chance for language acquisition. Less focus on form and structures can enhance the students' capability to do things in English (Willis, 2007).

If we consider and apply the following items, we can say that we follow task- based language teaching.



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- a) The activity should encompass learners' interest.
- b) There should be a foremost attention on meaning.
- c) There should be an outcome.
- d) The success should be judged in terms of outcome and completion of a priority.
- e) The activity should link to real world activities (Willis, 2007).

The following activities have the potential to be effective tasks: listing (e.g., memory challenge games), ordering and sorting (sequencing, ranking, classifying), sharing personal experiences, comparing, anecdote-telling, problem solving, creative writing, matching, and predicting. A task sequence can have three or four different sorts of tasks.

The importance of product in TBLT is defensible for two reasons. First, research on L2 acquisition has revealed that, apart from some input, creating some understandable output is essential to make a material. Second, the understanding of the product is part of the motivation (Ellis, 2003). The product is the logic for the task, and the understanding of the product must be linked to the learners' interests and needs (Branden, 2006). Willis and Willis (2007) have produced a task-based framework. In task-based framework, there is a bridge between the concepts of task and didactic unit while the bridge contains three parts and some sub-elements as shown in the following figure.

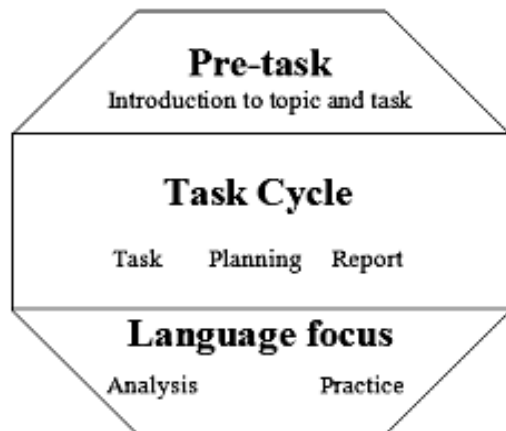


Figure 1. Task-based Framework Willis and Willis (2007)

According to this framework, there is no open method for teacher to create the list of structures openly. In one unit vocabulary would be considered, but tasks would be based on the learners' needs and interests. Alternatively, it is very different from the traditional method of organizing language teaching described by Tomlison (1998) as the 3 Ps including Presentation, Practice, and



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Production (Ellis, 2003). This framework has some benefits. First, it concentrates on meaning while form is important too. Second, it grows not only separate/individual work, but also essentially pair- and group-work. This framework changes beyond the concept of assessment in a traditional view. TBLT within framework can offer teachers and students chances for communication like no other methods and lessons. This approach comes with three subsequent elements, the content-based approach, language awareness, and the intercultural competence.

MATERIALS AND METHOD

This study has an experimental intact design in which there was one experimental group and one group as control but no random sampling of students comparing the effects of TBLT and traditional teaching on the grammatical proficiency of the subjects. The independent variables were traditional and task-based approach and the dependent variables were the grammar proficiency and motivation. The nature of the research questions was quantitative and the nature of research hypotheses was null.

Participants

The study was done in Bahar Junior high school for elementary male students in Firozabad, Iran. There were 2 groups of subjects in this study. The participants were the researchers' students in high school. The number of students was 33 in control group and 33 in the experimental group. They were native speakers of Persian. Best and Kahn (2006) mentioned that a sample consists of 30 or more participants is considered as an acceptable one in experimental researches. The larger the sample is, the smaller the greatness of sampling error and the greater the probability that the sample is the typical of the population. The researchers did not select the participants randomly. They were chosen by taking a Nelson test and two classes were chosen as control and experimental group. The students were all fifteen to sixteen years old.

Instrumentation

The study used two different instruments: instructional and testing materials. In this study, the researchers conducted two pre-tests. Then a questionnaire was administered to learners to examine their motivation.

At first, the Nelson test (100A version) was used to assure the homogeneity of EFL students in terms of overall grammar proficiency. It comprised of fifty multiple choice test questions. All participants took part in a common session and took a Nelson grammar test to assure that they were



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at elementary level of grammar proficiency. They were asked to do the test in 30 minutes. Additionally, the students were assured that their scores on that test would not be part of their term score to decrease any negative affective filter such as anxiety.

Nelson grammar test (50A version) was administered to all the participants proceeding to the treatment as pre-test at the beginning of the study. This test contained 50 items. The content of the test was based on the content of the third grade English book of Junior high school. Nelson grammar test (50A) used for the current study had all the structures of 3rd grade English book. The students had 30 minutes to complete the test. At the start of the test, the instructor provided the necessary instructions in English and Persian on how to complete the test. Besides, the students were ensured that, similar to the earlier Nelson test, their score in this grammar test would not be part of their term score to decrease affective filter.

A motivation questionnaire was also administered to the participants in the beginning as well as the end of the experiment. It was established to elicit related information on the participants' level of educational motivation (Mafi et al. 2012; Brunner. J. J. & Ganga-Contreras. F., 2017). The questionnaire was administered before and after instruction to find the level of their motivation.

Nelson grammar test (50 A) that was administered prior to the treatment was again administered as the post-test at the end of the instruction to find the possible growth in the grammar proficiency of the members.

The researchers assessed reliability and validity of the instruments and found that all the instruments had an acceptable validity and reliability. Nelson grammar tests are among the valid famous tests that are available and well known among university professors. In addition, the researcher received the motivation questionnaire from valid sources with an acceptable validity.

To measure students' motivation, the researchers utilized the Persian version of the Academic Motivation Scale (AMS) from Vallerand et al. (1992), which had 28 items originally. Vallerand et al. (1992) in their scale specified that the alpha quotient of their questionnaire is between 0.71 and 0.83 and the reliability and validity of the questionnaire is at its best level. Bagheri et al. (2009) has translated this questionnaire back to Persian and tested its validity and reliability. They found it valid and reliable. However, the researcher asked 3 TEFL professors to check its validity by evaluating the items in questionnaires. They provided feedback if any addition, deletion or revision was required. To find out the reliability, the researcher administered the test to another parallel



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class which did not participate in main phase of the study. The results showed reliability coefficient of .87 which confirmed the motivation test as a highly reliable one.

The test of the study is valid and authentic. It has the suitable validity. The book is popular enough among researchers. The researcher asked 3 TEFL professors in order to evaluate the items in the test proposing any addition, deletion or revision which may be required. The validity and reliability of the Nelson test have been estimated several times before by other researchers and it is considered as highly valid and reliable test of English proficiency (Shahivand & Pazhakh, 2012; Chavez. A. P. A., 2017).

To test reliability, the test was administered to another class not participating in main phase of the study. The results as reflected in the following table showed high reliability of the test.

Table 1. Reliability Analysis for Nelson grammar test (50 A)

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.839	50

Materials used for instruction

The course book used for instruction in both groups was 3rd grade high school English book written by Alavi Moghadam et al. (2015) comprising 6 lessons. Besides this course book, for the aim of this study the researcher utilized various worksheets, games and, task activities. The source and ideas for the task activities were the new ideas of Richards (2013), Littlejohn and Hicks (1997) and Oxenden and Latham-koeni (2008).

In choosing the material, the researchers undertook great care to select those activities that could be dealt with in grammar teaching. The grammatical points discussed in the 3rd grade Junior high school English book contain simple present tense (do /does), to be verbs, contraction of “to be verb”, present continuous tense, possessive (‘s and of), possessive adjectives, Wh questions, adverb of frequency, past tense (regular), past tense of “to be”, past tense (irregular) and object pronouns.

In this study, to examine the influence of task- based grammar teaching, the researcher provided many tasks for learners. For each structure, the researcher offered some tasks. These tasks had the



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main criteria made by Ellis (2003) and Willis & Willis (1996) in which the features of tasks are as follow. linguistic feature isolation, provision of data showing the targeted feature through underlining, color-coding, boldfacing and italicizing, inspiring learners, using intellectual struggle to realize the targeted feature, clarification in the form of additional data and explanation, and non-obligatory production.

Treatment

The treatment step of the study started with instructing grammar for both the treatment and control groups.

One of the researchers of this study taught each grammatical unit in 1 session. For example, to teach each Wh questions, the researcher gave a paper to each group. The paper included Wh questions with answers. Then the teacher asked students to identify which one of these sentences had the meaning of ‘what time’. The students tried to find the answer through group work. Teacher guided students to answer the questions using mother tongue. For example, teacher said that in Farsi, “when someone asks a question started with “When”, the answer is usually time or days of week” and if they ask a question started with “Where”, the answer should be about the place. This is a sample of decision -making and problem solving task.

The teacher asked the students to consider an imaginary trip that they had in the past. The students were supposed to talk about their past trip. Teacher gave them some papers including *past tense sentences and questions*. Then the students had to guess and draw a conclusion on how to make questions in the past tense while the teacher guided them to talk about the trip in the past tense. This is a sample of problem solving task.

Another example of task –based teaching is as follows. Teacher provided some papers to the groups. The paper included sentences with *objective pronouns*. One group had the sentences with objective pronouns and another group had the same sentences without objective pronouns.

Instead, the teacher drew a picture to objective pronouns. For example, in the sentence “I talk to him” instead of him the teacher drew a picture of a boy. Those pictures were also on the board.

One group helped another group to write and match objective pronouns to the related pictures.

This was a sample of information gap task.

The whole process lasted around 2 months and the students took part the classes twice a week.

Conducting these tasks took 30 minutes per session. At the end, both groups received the post-test



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to assess the effects of task-based grammar instruction in comparison to traditional ways of teaching grammar. Finally, students answered the motivation questionnaire to measure their motivation.

On the other hand, in the control group, as it is usual in most language classes, the instructor directed traditional types of teaching such as offering the rule explicitly initially; and then teaching grammar through a PPP approach (presentation, practice and production). To establish fidelity to the treatment, other conditions for groups were the same. The English classes were held twice a week for the experimental and twice a week for control groups. The classes were held in extra sessions for students. The post-test was administered to both groups at the end of the study. Both sets of experimentation were done during a thirty-four-session period in Firozabad in October 2016. Generally, the participants had approximately 30 minutes to do the exercises.

Procedures

The researchers conducted this study in Bahar Junior high school for elementary male students in Firoozabad, Iran. There were 2 groups of subjects in this study. The participants were the researchers' students in high school. The researcher took a Nelson test (100 A) from 4 classes at school and students were chosen by considering their scores.

The Nelson proficiency grammar test (100 A) was used to determine the homogeneity level of the students. This test was administered to 133 students. Consequently, 66 students whose scores were between-1 SD and +1SD were included in the study. The students randomly divided into experimental and control group .The range of their age was between 15-16. All of the participants were non-native speakers of English and their level of proficiency was elementary.

Before starting this study, the researchers administered a proficiency test to both groups to find the homogeneity of the groups and a pre-test to examine homogeneity of the participants in terms of grammar knowledge. Pretest includes both motivation questionnaire and grammar test. The control group received traditional instruction of grammar by the researcher himself. In traditional instruction, the teacher first stated the rules in the students' mother tongue; then the researcher provided some exercises for the students in order to practice the rules later. In traditional method, teacher stated the rules in mother tongue (Farsi) and wrote the formula of the structures. Then teacher used mechanical drills and students repeated after the teacher. The researcher was the instructor for the treatment and control groups. Instruction in each class took twelve sessions;



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however, the researcher used total 17 sessions to do the study, 5 sessions for the pre and post-tests exams, and 12 sessions for implementing the materials. Each session lasted 30 minutes and the implementation of the task- based grammar teaching materials lasted about 30 minutes for each session of the treatment group. As was said earlier, for the purpose of this study, the researcher utilized grammar task- based instruction.

Data analysis

The Statistical Package Software for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22 was used to analyze the acquired data. Specifying the effect of the independent variable (tasks) on the dependent variable (junior high school learners' grammatical proficiency) was the main focus of this study, so a series of independent sample t-tests were run to measure the effectiveness of independent variable on the dependent variable.

To answer research question one, which is related to the possible effect of task based instruction on the grammar proficiency of the participants, the following null hypothesis was tested:

H01. There is no significant difference between traditional grammar instruction and task-based instruction in improving grammar proficiency of Iranian third graders in junior high school.

In this hypothesis, TBI and grammar proficiency of the applicants were assumed as the independent and dependent variables, respectively. To test this hypothesis, independent samples t-test analyses were run to examine any significant difference between the scores of post-test in the treatment and control groups in terms of the grammar proficiency ability achievements.

In answering research question two that aimed to find out whether grammar task based instruction had any effect in promoting the motivation of the participants in comparison with traditional method, the second null hypothesis was tested.

H02. Task- based instruction has no significant impact on learners' motivation.

To test this hypothesis, independent samples t-test analyses were conducted to examine any significant difference between the scores of post-test in the treatment and control groups in terms of the motivation achievements at the final step.

RESULTS

To identify if the scores were normally distributed, the normality was checked through running two tests: Kolmogorove –smimove and Shapiro-Wilk.



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Table 2. Tests of Normality for all factors

group		Kolmogorov-simironov			Shapiro-wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
extrinsic	control	.099	33	.200	.955	33	.181
	experimental	.094	33	.200	.969	33	.442
intrinsic	control	.097	33	.200	.973	33	.578
	experimental	.134	33	.143	.958	33	.230
motivation	control	.104	33	.200	.977	33	.691
	experimental	.156	33	.039	.948	33	.118
Overall motivation	control	.116	33	.200	.970	33	.494
	experimental	.156	33	.039	.933	33	.041
grammar	control	.113	33	.200	.945	33	.095
	experimental	.099	33	.200	.953	33	.166

As it is stated in the table, the p value of the groups on different items is more than 0.05. It indicates that the groups in all of the above items are similar to each other. Therefore, the scores are normally distributed and we can use parametric tests.

The Nelson proficiency grammar test (100A) was administered to 133 students to determine homogeneity in experimental and control group. Consequently, 66 students whose scores were between -1 & +1 SD were selected. For the goal of this study, 66 elementary EFL learners were selected, 33 as the treatment group and 33 as the control group. After selecting the participants and dividing them into two groups based on 100A version of Nelson grammar test, the researchers administered 50A version to the participants in two groups to ensure the language proficiency is not significantly different between two groups.



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The researchers compared language proficiency of control and treatment group to guarantee their comparability in providing answer for the questions of the study. To do so, all participants in both groups answered the Nelson grammar proficiency test to assure they were all homogenous. As Table 2 shows, the language proficiency mean and the standard deviation for the control group was 18.90 and 4.35 respectively, and the evaluated mean and Standard deviation for the treatment group was 20.72 and 5.18. An independent-samples t-test was run to identify any significant difference between the mean scores. The analysis indicated that there was no significant difference (sig. =0.128) between the control and treatment participants in terms of their language proficiency. It means that the participants in treatment and control group were homogeneous and comparable at the very beginning phase of the study.

Table 3. Results for the Nelson proficiency pre-test (100A)

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
control proficiency	33	18.9091	4.35433
Experimental proficiency	33	20.7273	5.18575
Valid N (listwise)	33		

Table 4. Independent-samples t-test results for the Nelson proficiency pre-test (100A)

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means			
	F	Sig.	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
proficiency test	Equal variances assumed	.626	.432	-1.542	64	.128
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.542	62.140	.128



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Although the test is popular enough among researchers, the researchers asked 3 TEFL professors to evaluate the items in the test proposing any addition, deletion or revision which may be required. This process was conducted to ensure test validity.

To test reliability, the test was administered to another class not participating in main phase of the study. The results as reflected in the following table showed high reliability of the test.

Table 5. Reliability Analysis for Nelson grammar test (50 A)

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.839	50

Due to the fact that language proficiency is made of different abilities, one of which is grammar and may be different even in learners of the same level, a grammar-oriented Nelson pre-test was administered as the main pre-test to both control and treatment groups to compare the results of the pre-test with the results of the post-test in evaluating any possible effect of grammar task- based instruction on the grammar proficiency and ensuring the comparability of the groups as elementary EFL learners. Tables 4.5 and 4.6 display the Nelson pre-test results for the treatment and control groups. The evaluated grammar ability mean and standard deviation for the participants in the treatment group was 20. 24, and 6.17 respectively, and the assessed mean and standard deviation for the participants in the control group were 21.84 and 5.29, respectively (Table 4.5). An independent samples t-test was run to see if this difference is significant. The analysis showed that there was no significant difference between the treatment and control groups in terms of their grammar proficiency (sig. = 0.261). In other words, the treatment and the control groups showed to be homogeneous and comparable at the beginning of the study (Table 6).



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**Table 6. Results for the Nelson pre-test (50 A) of the treatment and control groups
Descriptive Statistics**

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pretestcontrol	33	21.8485	5.29222
Pretestexperime nt	33	20.2424	6.17976
Valid N (listwise)	33		

Table 7 displays the number of participants, mean value and standard deviation of means, in both treatment and control groups.

Table 7. Independent-samples t-test for the Nelson pre-test (50 A) of the treatment and control groups

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances				
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2- tailed)
Pretestco	Equal variances assumed	1.123	.293	1.134	64	.261
	Equal variances not assumed			1.134	62.521	.261

The researchers compared the participants in both groups to ensure their homogeneity in terms of motivation. As Tables 8 shows the motivation mean score for the control group was 2.3 whereas the evaluated mean score for the treatment group was 2.6. Independent-samples t-test showed that there was no significant difference (sig. = 0.156) between mean scores of both groups in terms of their motivation. In other words, the control and treatment groups proved to be homogeneous and comparable at the very beginning of the study in terms of motivation (Table 9).



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Table 8. Results of motivation in both treatment and control group

Groups	Mean	Number	Standard Deviation
treatment	2.6	33	28.33
Control	2.3	33	26.39

Table 9. Independent-samples t-test for motivation in both treatment and control group

Independent Samples Test

	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	.707	.403	1.436	64	.156	.33182	.23108	-.12982	.79345
control Equal variances not assumed			1.436	63.991	.156	.33182	.23108	-.12982	.79345

As Table 10 shows treatment group (m=36.78) outperformed control group (m=24.51) in terms of grammar proficiency. To see if this difference is significant an independent sample t-test was run. As depicted in Table 11, this difference is significant (sig. = 0.000). Thus, it can be concluded that TBI significantly improved the treatment group grammar proficiency in comparison with control group which received traditional instruction.

Table 10. Performance of the Participants on the Nelson Post-test (50A)



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Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Posttestexperimentalgroup	33	36.7879	3.16976
Posttestcontrolgroup	33	24.5152	10.01287

Table 11. Independent Samples t-test for Performance of the Participants on Nelson Post-test (50A)

Independent Samples Test

	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	26.233	.000	6.713	64	.000	12.27273	1.82827	8.62034	15.92512
Posttestexperimentalgroup and controlgroup Equal variances not assumed			6.713	38.350	.000	12.27273	1.82827	8.57270	15.97276

The following tables show the results of posttest for all types of motivation. The results show the significant difference in control and treatment group considering the mean of the groups.



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Table 12. posttest mean differences between control and treatment groups in terms of motivation

group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
extrinsic control	33	2.8485	28.33298	4.93214
extrinsic experimental	33	36.7273	13.94245	2.42707
intrinsic control	33	8.3333	26.39208	4.59427
intrinsic experimental	33	33.8485	16.58712	2.88745
amotivation control	33	8.6667	7.24856	1.26181
amotivation experimental	33	4.5758	8.42255	1.46618
Overall motivation control	33	19.8485	40.58103	7.06425
Overall motivation experimental	33	75.1515	26.20010	4.56085

As depicted in Table 12, treatment group outperformed control group in terms motivation including its subcategories. To see if these differences are statistically significant, independent sample t-test was run as shown in Table 4-12. According to this table, significance level for all variables is lower than 0.05 ($P < 0.05$). Therefore, it is concluded that after treatment motivation of the participants in treatment group improved significantly in comparison with control group. Thus, treatment was significantly effective.



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Table 13. Independent Samples Test in post-test for motivation

		t-test for Equality of Mean			
		Sig.(2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence
					Lower
extrinsic	Equal variances assumed	.000	-33.87879	5.49697	-44.86024
	Equal variances not assumed	.000	-33.87879	5.49697	-44.93952
intrinsic	Equal variances assumed	.000	-25.51515	5.42629	-36.35542
	Equal variances not assumed	.000	-25.51515	5.42629	-36.39483
amotivation	Equal variances assumed	.038	4.09091	1.93439	.22653
	Equal variances not assumed	.038	4.09091	1.93439	.22488
Overall motivation	Equal variances assumed	.000	-55.30303	8.40863	-72.10119
	Equal variances not assumed	.000	-55.30303	8.40863	-72.15618

In the second research question, the motivation level of learners after TBI instruction was investigated. According to Table 14, after treatment, experiment group ($m=4.76$) outperformed the control group ($m=3.37$) in terms of motivation. However, to identify if this difference is significant,



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independent sample t-test was conducted as shown in Table 4.14. The results revealed that there is a significant difference in the mean scores of motivation (sig. =0.000). These results showed that TBI method utilized in this study had a significant effect on Iranian elementary EFL learners' motivation. Therefore, the second null hypothesis is rejected.

Table 14. Mean differences between the control and treatment group in terms of motivation score

	Typesofclass	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
posttestcontrol	CONTROL	33	3.3727	1.09438	.19051
	EXPERIMENT	33	4.7606	.64660	.11256



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Table 15. Independent-samples t-test for the motivation post-test of the treatment and control groups

Independent Samples Test		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
Posttestcontrol treatment	Equal variances assumed	10.509	.002	-6.272	64	.000	1.38788	.221273	-1.82993	-.94583
	Equal variances not assumed			-6.272	51.915	.000	1.38788	.221272	-1.83192	-.94384

DISCUSSION

The present study sought to investigate the usefulness of TBI instruction on learners' grammatical proficiency and the effectiveness of TBI instruction on the motivation of the learners. The results showed that the treatment group ($p < 0.05$) performed significantly better than those in the control group. Therefore, TBI has significantly affected the grammar proficiency of the elementary EFL learners. This result is in line with what is reported by another study done by Amirian & Abbasi (2014). They investigated whether grammar consciousness raising (GCR) tasks could have a more significant effect on the grammatical knowledge of learners than Presentation-Practice-Production (PPP) approach. The results indicated higher improvement of learner's knowledge of grammar in the experimental group. It was suggested that EFL learners benefit more from GCR tasks and teachers should consider including GCR tasks in their syllabus.



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The result of this study is also in congruence with the finding of another study conducted by Ahmadi Safa and Goodarzi (2014). In this study, they worked on a project called the washback effects of task-based assessment on the Iranian EFL learners' grammar development. Seventy-four EFL learners were randomly selected. After the treatment, the two groups took a grammar post-test. The analyses revealed a positive washback effect of the TBLA on the grammar development of EFL learners. The findings imply that TBLA as a pedagogical measurement tool can well replace the classic assessment procedures as all educational efforts including testing and assessment procedures are planned to maximize the educational gains and developments.

In agreement with the results of this study, Tale and Goodarzi (2015) reported that TBI instruction on grammar can be used successfully for Iranian language learners. The present study is also in line with Mohammadi's (2006) findings. In a quasi-experimental research, Mohammadi (2006) investigated the effect of TBI on elementary students in Isfahan. Findings showed that TBI had a significant effect on students whereas the traditional approach did not have a significant effect on students' learning and did not guarantee the success of students. Although the result of this study is at variance with Swan's (2005) criticism regarding the TBI's absence of enough empirical evidence, Ellis (2006) believes that TBI stimulates learners' conscious, unconscious and sub-conscious noticing of forms and therefore can be considered as one of the most effective ways language learners can use to enhance their implicit knowledge required for fluency.

Like Swan (2005), Foster (1999) also claimed that learners who apply TBI can often complete a task without even using an accurate language or sometimes not using any language at all. However, this claim can be rejected based on the findings of Bugler and Hunt's (2002) study. The students who participated in this study were given a task to design a questionnaire to investigate the opinions of a specific target group about the chosen topic. The findings indicated that the experience was rewarding, intrinsically interesting, and educationally beneficial for the students who participated in the task-based project; therefore, the final product was highly qualified. The results of the present study also proved that working collaboratively on tasks provides learners with a chance to perform beyond the capabilities of any individual learner, which resulted in fruitful educational gains besides motivating learners to continue performing the tasks. This result is in line with another study done by Lopez (2004) to implement TBI rather than presentation-practice-production for teaching English. He reported that the participants of his study acquired English more effectively



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since they had a chance to apply the language in order to have access to information, to strengthen their problem solving skills and to have a chance to exchange their personal experiences. In addition, since TBI instruction allow learners to deal with real-life situation, learners, hence, enjoyed authentic materials that involved them at the situations outside the classroom. These kinds of results confirm the sociocultural principles regarding the direct relationship of social interactions and learning.

As for the second research question, the results showed that TBLT had a significant impact on motivation of EFL learners. This result is in line with what many motivation theorists reported regarding the positive relationship between educational motivation and educational performance (see Cokley & Patel, 2007; Gottfried, 1990; Deci & Ryan, 2000, and Marsh & Hau, 2004 and Peng et al., 2017 to name a few). This study also revealed that TBI has a significant effect on the motivation of the elementary EFL learner. Lochana and Deb's (2006) project run by the Basaveshwara Education Society in a school in India also demonstrated evidence in support of TBI. Their findings suggested that TBL is helpful to learners not only in terms of proficiency development but also in terms of motivation. The present study is in line with Lochana and Deb's (2006) findings.

Richards and Rodgers (2001) asserted that success in achieving the goals of task which is undertaken by students (in pairs or groups) increases students' motivation. Skehan (1998) argued "although task accomplishment always leads to a sense of satisfaction, the completed outcome of project-oriented tasks caused much more motivation and satisfaction" (p. 107).

The findings of this study is in line with what Prabhu (1987) stated as one of the rationales for implementing task-based syllabuses in our teaching system. He believed that the tasks make a reasonable challenge and are cognitively motivating and provide learners with a sense of accomplishment. The present study is in line with the findings of Prabhu (1987) regarding the fact that after performing the tasks, learners feel more satisfied and become more motivated to continue and perform several more tasks. This is also reported by Mohammdi (2014) who investigated the pathology of demotivation and amotivation in English language learning context. Mohammdi's (2014) findings indicated that demotivation causes mostly as a result of the misconduct of the teachers in not only their teaching techniques but also their misuse of motivational strategies.



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Another study was done by Hassanzadeh & Mahdinejad in 2014. They aimed to investigate the relationship between motivational orientations (Intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation and Amotivation) and students' academic achievement in English language. The research was done in descriptive (correlation) method. The results of the study revealed a positive significant relationship between intrinsic motivation, its components, and students' academic achievement in the English language whereas a very weak positive relationship was found between extrinsic motivation, its components, and students' academic achievement in English language. Moreover, the study revealed a negative significant relationship between amotivation and students' academic achievement in English language. Intrinsic motivation had the highest share to predict the students' academic achievement in English language. And finally the study showed a significant relationship between motivational orientations and educational grades. Therefore, this study is in line with this research. Moreover, another study done by Kafipour, Noordin & Pezeshkian (2010) showed more frequent and more efficient use of strategies by those internally motivated in comparison with those externally motivated.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study offered a relative degree of empirical support to the theoretical considerations relating to the positive role of tasks and TBLT in the students' grammar proficiency and to the use of TBI in English language classes. Hence, it adds a further piece of evidence on the nature of TBI and its effect on grammar proficiency to the very few studies already conducted in this area. TBI and grammar teaching can be a useful mix for learners. A great deal of information can be found by getting learners to complete tasks. Information from such studies provides valuable illuminating data on the students' learning of grammar and how they improve it. The results may be of relevance to task designers and teachers in better understanding of the TBI. The type and amount of TBI in this study may give teachers a measure to decide how much time to dedicate to structures. Reports of research findings such as these are likely to encourage teachers to feel comfortable applying TBL to their classrooms. Replication of the research to other populations is clearly called for before the conclusions given above could be maintained with confidence.



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