

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF LANGUAGE STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE

**THE PRACTICABILITY OF TASK-BASED EFL
INSTRUCTION IN HIGHER INSTITUTES**

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**THE PRACTICABILITY OF TASK-BASED EFL
INSTRUCTION IN HIGHER INSTITUTES**

BY TAGESSE DANIEL

**A Thesis Submitted to the Department of Foreign Languages and Literature
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CLT	Communicative Language Teaching
EFL	English as a foreign language
PPP	Presentation-practice-production
SLA	Second language acquisition
TBI	Task-based instruction
TBLT	Task-based Language Teaching
TBLL	Task-based Language Learning
TL	Target language

ABSTRACT

The main objective of this study was to explore the extent to which task-based language teaching is being implemented in Ethiopian higher institutes. To this end, two government colleges, College of Commerce, Addis Ababa University, and Kotebe College of Teacher Education were chosen to be the target of the study. The study was conducted on 10 English language instructors and 150 first year degree students of the two colleges. The sample of the study was taken by using stratified random sampling method.

In order to gather data from the subjects of the study, questionnaires, observation and interview were used. Close-ended questionnaires were prepared for both students and instructors and distributed to the subjects and all of them were returned. The classes were also observed using observation checklist while tasks were being implemented. The interview questions were prepared to get detailed information from the instructors and to cross-check the data gathered by other tools.

The collected data showed that higher institutes are using tasks to teach English language to some extent, but they are not following the basic principles of task-based language teaching and learning. It was also found out that instructors use the pre-task cycle better than other cycles, but they do not give more attention to planning and reporting stages of task cycle. The post-task cycle was almost not implemented in colleges. Factors that negatively affect the implementation of task-based instruction in the Ethiopian context are identified. These include students' poor background, lack of authentic materials, shortage of time to prepare lessons and lack of students' interest to involve in learning process. Finally, some recommendations were forwarded based on the main findings of the study.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

English is being taught as a foreign language in our country starting from elementary school. It is also used as a medium of instruction in secondary and tertiary level of education. Although the students learn English for a long time, they are unable to reach the expected proficiency level when they join tertiary level education. As Hailom (1982) says, the students who join higher institutes lack the language skills that their level demands.

Hailom stated that first year students of Addis Ababa University had serious problems in understanding and in using English language. According to the study carried out by Hailom (1982), out of 2172 regular students, more than half of them failed (31.17% got 'F' and 24.54% got 'D'). The percentage of total fail was 55.71. This datum shows that how severe the problem is. Alamirew (1992:1) also says, "... in spite of the number of years the students are exposed to English, their proficiency in all of four skills of the language (reading, writing, speaking and listening) is low." The report of Freshman programme of the College of Social sciences, Addis Ababa University, reveals the same problem (Gebremedhin 1993). According to the report, the performance of the first year students of the college in English was the lowest and English was the main factor for most dismissal cases. Gebremedhin asserts that the students are "poor in their English and lack confidence in their ability to operate in their own English" (1993:55).

In order to solve this problem, CLT was introduced in our country. However, as Willis (2004: 7) says, weak form of CLT "still did not seem to offer a significant improvement on

the structural approach in terms of the achievement of communicative competence." Most students taught through presentation, practice, production (PPP) lessons which are supplemented with skills lessons were unable to communicate effectively in English (Willis, 2005). Task-based instruction (TBI) is being used recently in many countries as an alternative approach to tackle the problem stated above. It is said to develop learners' accuracy and fluency so as to help them communicate effectively in English. In spite of its uses, TBI has got some challenges of implementation. Some teachers do not implement it as it was intended. They are tempted to insert a grammar presentation stage into the lesson before students do the task. Students also feel that they will not be able to perform the task without being taught a particular grammar item beforehand. They wait for spoon-fed by their teachers with language at all stages (Lopes, 2004).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

A lot of effort has been done for the last decades in our country in order to help learners to use the language effectively and efficiently. But the problem stated above is still persisting. Therefore, it necessitates looking for another approach to language teaching that enables students develop their proficiency in English language. Task-based approach to language teaching can be one of these methods.

The researches conducted by different scholars such as Willis (1996) show that it is an efficient and effective way of language teaching. The study of American Government Language Institutions reported that task-based instruction (TBI) made learners show far more rapid progress and to use their foreign language in real world circumstances with a reasonable level of proficiency often in quite short courses (Lever and Kaplan, 2004). Other researches done in different countries such as in Brazil and Asia reveal TBI helped students to have "extraordinary success" in their foreign language learning (Lopes, 2004; Nunan, 2006; Oxford, 2006).

Task-based language teaching, in fact, is a recent approach world wide. In spite of its newness, it has got great attention of teachers, linguists and researchers. Nowadays, it is being practiced in many countries of the world such as USA, Brazil and various Asian countries (Leaver and Willis, 2004; Nunan, 2006). However, it is still new in our country. Task-based instruction is being introduced to a certain extent in universities and colleges. It seems that there are misconceptions with regard to *task*, *activity* and *exercise* among teachers. The writers of textbooks even seem not to have conceptual clarity among these terms because they are seen using the word *task* for all in different English language textbooks.

Are colleges using TBI as an ELT method? It is difficult to say that they are following the basic principles of task-based instruction even though they are using tasks to teach English language. Hence, this study is intended to explore the extent to which task-based approach is used and the factors that affect the implementation of the approach in higher institutes.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to investigate whether task-based language teaching is being implemented in tertiary level of our country or not. The specific objectives of the research are to find out:

- The extent to which English language instruction materials present or use task-based approach to language teaching.
- How tasks are being implemented in the actual EFL classroom?
- What are the constraints that adversely affect the implementation of task-based instruction in the Ethiopian context?

1.4 Delimitation of the Study

The study mainly focuses on exploration of whether task-based instruction is being practiced in higher institutes of our country or not. It does not treat material, designer and context aspects of tasks and the like. However, this study is delimited to the general guidelines and methodological aspects of task-based language teaching and learning.

The study is conducted on two government colleges which are found in Addis Ababa, namely College of Commerce, Addis Ababa University, and Kotebe College of Teacher Education.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study are hoped to give valuable information for syllabus designers and material developers. It is also envisaged that it would help higher institutes to revisit their syllabuses and English language course materials, and to make modifications where necessary. It can also give insights for language instructors about TBLT. Furthermore, the study will lay a basis for researchers who are interested in the issue.

1.6 Limitation of the Study

The study has some limitations. The study would have been more important if it had investigated the practicability of the approach in the Ethiopian context by designing lessons and by carrying out an experimental study where such kind of study needs longer time and more fund. However, the researcher was not able to do that due to

lack of time and financial constraints. Moreover, all of the subjects of the study are selected from Addis Ababa only. The research would also have benefited if data had been collected from some other higher institutes, in addition to those found in Addis Ababa.

1.7 Definition of Terms

Task - is primarily meaning-focused activity(ies) with an outcome that demand(s) learners to use their own linguistic resources of the target language in the process to arrive at the outcome.

Activity - is a component of task which provides specific procedures of a task about what learners actually do during the task accomplishment.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Task- based Language Teaching

Task-based language teaching is one of the recent approaches to language teaching. According to Edwards and Willis (2005), the word 'task-based' was first used by Prabhu. Prabhu used this approach in his secondary school classes in Bangalore, India, on his Communicational Teaching project, in early 1979. American Government Language Institutions also used the approach to teach adults in the early 1980s. Many scholars in the area agree that TBLT is another version of communicative language teaching (CLT) (Markee, 1997; Oxford, 2006). Others such as Richards and Rodgers (2001) and Leaver and Willis (2004) say that it is an approach which is evolved from CLT. They say so because, like CLT, TBLT stresses the use of target language in learning a foreign language. Richards and Rodgers (2001: 223) explain TBLT as "... an approach based on the use of the tasks as the core unit of language teaching." Markee (1997: 35) also says "... it is an umbrella term that subsumes the process syllabus, the procedural syllabus and pedagogical applications of more recent theoretical and empirical work." Many scholars agree that it is an approach "... based on a theory of language learning rather than a theory of language structure" (Edwards and Willis, 2005: 13).

In the following sections, assumptions behind TBLT, and objectives and goals of language teaching in TBLT will be discussed.

2.1.1 Basic Assumptions of TBLT

As any approach of language teaching, task-based language teaching (TBLT) has its own assumptions on which it is based. Feez (1998), cited in Richards and Rodgers (2001: 224), and in Edwards and Willis (2005: 16), summarized the six basic assumptions of task-based instruction (TBI) as follows.

- The focus of instruction is on process rather than product.
- Basic elements are purposeful activities and tasks that emphasize communication, i.e. meaning.
- Learners learn language by interacting communicatively and purposefully while they are engaged in meaningful activities and tasks.
- Activities and tasks can be either:
 - those that learners might need to achieve in real life or,
 - those that have a pedagogical purpose specific to the classroom.
- Activities and tasks of a task-based syllabus can be sequenced according to difficulty.
- The difficulty of a task depends on a range of factors including the previous experience of the learner, the complexity of the tasks, and the degree of support available.

As we can see from the assumptions, a task-based instruction underscores the importance of tasks. They are tasks that are selected to be the elements of teaching. Tasks are considered as core point of the language syllabus.

2.1.2 Approach of TBLT

TBLT is primarily motivated by the theory of language learning rather than the theory of language itself. However, there are several assumptions about the nature of language that TBLT underlies. The theories of language on which TBLT is based are widely explained in Richards and Rodgers (2001: 226-228) and are put in brief hereunder.

- Language is primarily a means of making meaning, i.e. communication.
- Multiple models of language (structural, functional and interactional) inform TBL. In other words, TBL is not linked to a single model but draws on the three models of language.
- Lexical units are central in language use and language learning. Students need some vocabularies which are relevant to their task at hand and so as to report after the accomplishment of the task.
- Conversation is the central focus of language and the keystone of language acquisition. The use of language begins with simple conversation in real life situation. During this time, the learner's linguistic and communicative resources will be activated and the acquisition of language would be prompted.

It is believed, in TBLT, that tasks play a central role in learning language. Richards and Rodgers (2001: 228-9) put its key theory of learning as follows:

1. Tasks provide both the input and output processing necessary for language

acquisition.

2. Task activity and achievement motivate students to learn and therefore promote learning.
3. Learning difficulty can be negotiated and fine-tuned for particular pedagogical purposes.

Richards and Rodgers (Ibid) further explain that specific tasks can be designed to facilitate using and learning of particular aspects of language. More difficult, cognitively demanding tasks reduce the amount of attention the learner can give to the formal features of message, something that is thought to be necessary for accuracy and grammatical development. In other words, sometimes it is necessary to make tasks difficult deliberately to shift learners' attention from accuracy to fluency so as to develop fluency.

The role of learner, teacher and instructional materials are among the basic components of an approach. In line with this, TBLT identified the main role of the student as central who accomplish the task. In fact, through this process, the learner plays a number of specific roles such as group participant, monitor, risk-taker and innovator, strategy user, goal-setter and self-evaluator (Oxford, 2006; Richards and Rodgers, 2001). The instructor also plays several roles. These include selector and sequencer of tasks, preparer of learners for task, pre-task conscious-raiser, guide, strategy instructor and assistance provider (Scarcella and Oxford, 1992; Richards and Rodgers, 2001).

According to Richards and Rodgers (2001: 236), "Instructional materials play an important role in TBLT because it is dependent on a sufficient supply of appropriate classroom tasks". Since language instruction begins with providing learners with tasks, the instructional material that consists of tasks is very important to give the context of

learning for students. The material can be either pedagogic (meant to classroom use) or authentic (used in real life). However, authentic tasks are more favored as they train the learners with real world activities and skills. Further more, they take the learners to the real world where language is used naturally and, in turn, let them feel that what they are learning in the classroom is useful and applicable outside of the classroom.

2.1.3 Goals of TBI

The general goal of TBI, as Skehan (1996a) says, is to enable learners to be more native-like in their performance of the target language. In order to reach this level, a learner should have a remarkable performance in both accuracy and fluency. Being accurate in using language has a considerable value in the development of fluency. In recent times, according to Leaver and Willis (2004), there are some linguists that conclude that teaching grammar is not essential.

On the other hand, Nunan (1989: 13) says, “. . . there is value in classroom tasks which require learners to focus on form. It is also accepted that grammar is an essential resource in using language communicatively.” This shows that teaching grammar, explicitly or implicitly, accounts for one’s development of native-like language use ability like that of using the target language in meaningful way. Based on these, TBLT has three main goals: accuracy, complexity/restructuring and fluency (Skehan, 1996a, 1996b). Skehan elaborates the three goals of TBLT as follows:

- **Accuracy**- concerns how well language is produced in relation to the rule system of the target language. It is concerned with a learner's capacity to handle whatever level of intra-language complexity he/she has currently attended.

- **Complexity/Restructuring**- complexity refers to the elaboration or ambition of the target language. Restructuring is the process which enables the learner to produce progressively more complex language. This stage is a little bit further than accuracy. Here the learner expands what he/she realized about the rule of language linking with other underlying systems of the language.
- **Fluency**- refers to the learner's capacity to produce language in real time without undue pausing and hesitation. Here the learner uses his/her language (using the above two) in order to communicate meaningfully in real life situation.

TBI emphasizes fluency in communication but the process proceeds from fluency to accuracy. This can be achieved at the expense of accuracy and complexity (Shehadeh, 2005; Oliveira, 2004). This implies that accuracy and complexity are stepping stones to arrive at fluency. Most of the times, as Atkins, Hailom and Nuru (1996) say, foreign language learners are afraid of using the target language (TL) lest they make mistakes and laughed at by their peers. If the students have good knowledge of form as well as use, they can develop their confidence of using TL. Therefore, a task designer should look for the balance between these language aspects when he/she designs language learning tasks. Stressing this idea, Skehan (1996b: 22) says,

It is fundamental for the designer of task-based instruction to engineer situations which maximize the chances that there will be a balance between these different goals when intentional resources are limited.

It is assumed here that these three goals are in some degree of mutual tension. We cannot give our full attention to each of these goals. This means that the pursuit of one of these goals can easily be at the expense of the others. Since the three goals are inseparable, maintaining balance is very essential. Skehan, cited in Birch (2005), gives two suggestions for balancing the three goals: choosing tasks which focus on

particular goals and implementing tasks sequentially so as to establish balanced goals development.

As it has been said so far, language has different aspects which are highly interwoven. Focusing on only one disregarding the other makes the language aspect to be useless by itself. So there should always be balance between accuracy, complexity and fluency. In task-based instruction, tasks should maintain the balance of these three goals so that the learner can have nearly native-like performance in the foreign language he/she learns (Leaver and Willis, 2004).

2.2 Tasks and Language Learning

In TBI tasks are selected or designed as a starting point of language instruction. What do we mean by tasks in TBI and what are their roles in learning language? The following two sections will deal with these two basic questions.

2.2.1 What is a Task?

It is important to know what a task means in TBLT because, as (Richards and Rodgers, 2001: 224) pointed out, "the notion of task is the central unit of planning and teaching". Different scholars gave various definitions of a task.

Prabhu (1987:2) defines task as "An activity which required learners to arrive at an outcome from given information through some processes of thought and which allowed teachers to control and regulate that process."

For Nunan (1989: 10) task is

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.

Breen's definition of task, cited in Bygate, Skehan and Swain (2001: 9) is

Any structured language learning endeavor which has a particular objective, appropriate content, a specified working procedure, and a range of outcomes for those who undertake the task.

According to Willis (1996: 53), a task is

A goal-oriented activity in which learners use language to achieve a real outcome. In other words, learners use what ever target language resources they have in order to solve a problem, do a puzzle, play a game or share and compare experiences.

Ellis (2003: 16) also widely defines a task as follows:

A workplan that requires learners to process language pragmatically in order to achieve an outcome that can be evaluated in terms of whether the correct or appropriate propositional content has been conveyed. To this end, it requires them to give primary attention to meaning and to make use of their own linguistic resources, although the design of the task may predispose them to choose particular forms. A task is intended to result in language use that bears resemblance, direct or indirect, to the way language is used in the real world. Like other language activities, a task can engage productive or receptive, and oral or written skills, and also various cognitive processes.

Skehan (1996b: 20) defines language learning tasks as "activities which have meaning as their primary focus. Success in tasks is evaluated in terms of achievement of an outcome, and tasks generally bear some resemblance to real life language use."

When we examine the above definitions closely, we can realize that all definitions of task are based on the key assumptions of TBLT. In Prabhu's definition, the task is seen as a derived outcome. In order to reach the outcome, there is a process of thought in which learners are required to pass. This definition is similar to that of Willis in that task is seen as a goal-oriented activity. It is also similar to that of Ellis in that the involvement of cognitive processes on the way to end, i.e. an outcome or a goal. In his definition, Nunan treats task as an activity focuses on meaning. His definition is more of pedagogical as he started his definition with 'classroom work'. This reveals that a task is a classroom activity which demands learners to use the target language meaningfully. From Breen's definition, we can understand that a task has specific objective, central idea in which it is built, phases to be undertaken one after another and takes students to a given outcome at the end.

Ellis sees task as work plan with content-oriented outcome. The task requires the learners to achieve an outcome. To reach here, students need to plan their work how to arrive at the end. Through this process, the task demands them to use their own language. Ellis states the use of language skills that other scholars implied. Here the task demands the learner to use some or all of the four language skills where necessary. This is one of the best qualities of TBLT. In TBLT, as Willis, in Willis and Willis (1996: 54), says, "A single task would normally involve both productive skills, e.g. speaking and note taking, and receptive skills, e.g. listening and often reading." Skehan sees task as meaning-focused activity whose outcomes are to be assessed. He included assessment of outcomes in his definition. According to him, the assessment is implemented in terms of task outcome, i.e. to what extent the learner accomplished a given task.

Before moving on to other issues pertaining to tasks, it is useful to know what a task is not. Ellis (2003) makes a distinction between task-supported and task-based teaching. In task-supported teaching, tasks are mainly used as a means for activating prior knowledge of students while in task-based teaching, tasks comprise the foundation of whole curriculum. So far, it has been discussed about what a task is. It is also very important to say some points about what a task is not because some teachers seem to have misconception between language learning tasks and language practice activities. Therefore, it is evident here to note what tasks are not. Concerning this, Skehan, cited in Willis (2004:15), says tasks in TBLT:

- Do not give learners other people's meanings to regurgitate
- Are not concerned with language display (production).
- Are not conformity-oriented.
- Do not embed language into materials so that specific structures can be focused on.

Therefore, activities that are designed to let students to repeat what other people said, to produce the language they learnt previously, to elicit specific language items and the like cannot be considered as tasks.

2.2.2 Roles of Task in Language Learning

These days many scholars agree that active involvement in the process of teaching/ learning fosters learning. Wajnryb (1992: 15), for instance, says,

People learn best when they are actively engaged in the learning process. Active engagement can take many forms: doing, thinking, reacting, absorbing, observing, reflecting, preparing, considering, applying, analyzing, listing, selecting, comparing, rearranging, evaluation-among others.

These different forms of active engagements listed above are some of the activities that tasks demand to do. Wajnryb stresses that language tasks stimulate negotiation of meaning and can provide necessary conditions for the language development to occur. Bygate, Skehan and Swain (2001) also agree that learners' involvement in tasks can affect their language processing and learning capacity.

Concerning learning language through meaningful communication, and concerning the importance of tasks as a way of creating meaningful communication, Williams and Burden (1991: 168) have the following to say.

A learner's language system develops through communicating meaningfully in the target language. In other words, individuals acquire a foreign language through the process of interacting, negotiating and conveying meaning in the language in purposeful situations. Thus a task, in this sense, is seen as a forum within which such meaningful interaction between two or more participants can take place. It is through the ensuing exchange and negotiation of meanings that learner's knowledge of the language system develops.

Task creates an environment in which negotiation of meaning and development of language take place. In this respect, Richards and Rodgers (2001: 223) say, "Engaging learners in task work provides a better context for the activation of learning process ... and hence ultimately provides better opportunities for language learning to take place." They (Ibid) add, "Tasks are believed to foster processes of negotiation,

modification, rephrasing, and experimentation that are at the heart of second language learning" (p.228). Tasks demand learners to follow some processes, and use some strategies and appropriate language on their way to accomplish them. Tasks are very important for the integration of the four language skills. Willis (2004: 14) stresses the use of tasks to do so saying, "...tasks can promote the use of all four skills, receptive and productive." Tasks have potential of inducing learners to process receptively or productively (Loumpourdi, 2005). Learners may need to speak, listen, read and write while their aim is to solve a problem, play a role play, solve a puzzle, etc. Tasks are best instruments to let the learners do so and develop all language skills simultaneously, as it develops in real life.

Tasks can also create motivation among the learners as they themselves actively involve in the process of task accomplishment. Motivation can also result from "having real outcomes to achieve in the target language and the feeling of success in achieving them and sharing the results with others" (Willis, 2004: 16). While doing the task, students help each other, share experiences etc. Even a task may create a kind of fun through its process. As it is reported from John Moser's research, most of the students experienced task-based language learning (TBLL), developed a noticeable confidence to express themselves more fluently in both productive and receptive skills (Edwards and Willis, 2005).

In summary, tasks are considered to be useful in teaching a foreign language. Especially for the learners who have no opportunity to use the target language in real life, tasks give golden opportunity to use it. They are used as a context for language learning. Tasks motivate students to learn creating fun and lessening anxiety among them. They have potential to make learners confident in using the target language. It should, therefore, be remembered that care should be taken while selecting or designing learning tasks to make them interesting to the students.

2.3 Components and Classifications of Tasks

2.3.1 Components of Tasks

Tasks are composed of different elements. According to Wright, cited in Nunan (1989), a task should contain at least two main elements: input data (pieces of information that students are provided like abstract of an article, picture, maps, etc.) and initiating question (activities that initiate students to work with the input). Candlin (1987) extends this number to seven and suggests that a task should consist of *input, roles, settings, actions, monitoring, outcomes and feedback*. The most agreed upon and widely used task components are those which are formulated by David Nunan. As his components are more detailed and useful for the purpose of this study, they are chosen to be seen in some details. Nunan says that tasks consist of five elements, condensing the last three components of Candlin into one, as roles. These are *goals, input, activity (ies), roles* (of teacher and students) and *settings* (Nunan, 1989; Williams and Burden, 1997; Wajnryb, 1992).

A. Goals

Nunan (1989: 48) defines goals as "general intentions behind any given learning tasks." They establish a bridge between the task and curriculum. Sometimes goals can be inferred from an examination of tasks, if they are not explicitly stated. This means that there is a goal in a task. There may be "one-to-one relationship between goals and tasks. In some cases a complex task involving a range of activities might be simultaneously moving learners towards several goals" (Ibid).

B. Input

Input is the material on which the learners work. The input of a task can be gathered from a wide range of sources such as letters, newspaper extracts, stories, family tree, whether forecast, maps, drawings and shopping lists (Williams and Burden, 1997; Nunan, 1989).

The proponents of task-based instruction more favor use of real-world (authentic) materials than non-authentic (pedagogic) materials, though they believe that both are useful. Brosnan and Hood, cited in Nunan (1989), justify why we should use authentic materials. They encourage to use real world materials because they provide natural language, opportunity for the learners to deal with meaningful messages and let them see what they learn in the classroom is relevant to what they need to do outside. Therefore, although they are pedagogical, tasks should be at least parallel to the real-world as much as possible.

C. Activities

As Williams and Burden (1997) say, activities specify what learners actually do during task accomplishment. They are what the learners are asked to do with a given input. An activity should clearly state the procedures for undertaking the task - what the learner has to do from the beginning up to the end, whom to work with (individually, in pair, or in group), what is expected of him/her during and after the task, and when he/she is expected to complete it.

D. Roles

The fourth important component of a task is role. Role, according to Nunan (1989: 79), refers to "the part that learners and teachers are expected to play in carrying out learning tasks as well as the social and interpersonal relationships between the participants." Roles are parts which are played in carrying out the task. It is this component that specifies the roles played by both teacher and students. In other

words, a task should specify the roles of a teacher as well as that of learners. It is here that teacher's and student's roles, which are stated in section 'Approaches of TBI', are revealed.

E. Settings

Setting is the social arrangements in which the task is carried out (Wajnryb, 1992). Nunan (1989: 91) defines settings as "the classroom arrangements specified or implied in the task, and it also requires consideration of whether the task is to be carried out wholly or partly outside the classroom." In simple words, setting is the place where a task is done. This can be either classroom or outside. As we can see in Nunan's definition, a task may or may not be completed in the classroom. There are possibilities in which the task is started in the class and to be completed outside the classroom. Whatever it may be, generally speaking, setting, as a considerable component of task, should be clear.

To sum up, we have seen the five main components of a given task. It is important to give equal attention for all of them because one can affect another directly or indirectly. Williams and Burden (1997: 167) stress this idea saying,

...it is important to stress at the same time that it is impossible to consider these factors without some reference to the others. ... these elements necessarily affect one another in a dynamic and interactive way.

Therefore, the one who designs language learning tasks should look carefully and equally for all components.

2.3.2 Classification of Tasks

Different people classify tasks differently. Nunan (1989) divides them into two broad categories: real-world and pedagogic tasks. Richards and Rodgers (2001: 231) identify them as follows:

1. **Real-world tasks**- are tasks which are designed to practice or rehearse those tasks that are found to be important in a needs analysis and turn out to be important and useful in the real world.
2. **Pedagogic tasks**- are classroom tasks. These are tasks which have a psycholinguistic basis in SLA (second language acquisition) theory and research but do not necessarily reflect real-world tasks.

Willis (2004) classifies tasks into six based on six major cognitive processes (in approximate order of cognitive challenge, from simple to more complex). These are

1. Listing
2. Ordering and sorting
3. Comparing and contrasting
4. Problem solving
5. Sharing personal experiences
6. Creative tasks and projects

Pica, Kanagy and Falodun (1993), cited in Richards and Rodgers (2001: 234), put tasks into five categories according to the type of interaction that occurs in task accomplishment: jigsaw, information-gap, problem-solving, decision-making and opinion exchange.

1. **Jigsaw tasks**-These are tasks which involve learners combining different pieces of information to form a whole (e.g. three individuals or groups may have three different parts of a story and have to put the story together).
2. **Information-gap tasks**-One student or group of students has one set of information and another student or group has a complementary set of

information. They must negotiate and find out what the other party's information is in order to complete an activity.

3. **Problem-solving tasks**- In these tasks, students are given a problem and a set of information. They must arrive at a solution to the problem. There is generally a single resolution of the outcome.
4. **Decision-making tasks**- Here students are given a problem for which there are a number of possible outcomes and they must choose through negotiation and discussion.
5. **Opinion exchange tasks**- These tasks engage learners in discussion and exchange of ideas. They do not need to reach agreement.

2.4 Implementing Task-based Instruction

This is the practical stage of the approach. So far we have seen task components and task types. Whatever care is taken in setting goals and in designing or selecting tasks, it will be fruitless unless it is properly implemented. Every effort done before this stage would be fruitless unless it is put into practice as it is intended. This is why, as Skehan (1996: 24) says, "How a task is implemented can have a strong effect on task value." Therefore, considering issues of methodology is very essential. In this respect, it is evident here to discuss implementation principles and framework.

2.4.1 Principles for Implementation

Willis, cited in Skehan (1998: 126) offers five principles for the implementation of a task-based approach. The principles provide *input*, *use*, and *reflection on input and use*. They are:

- There should be exposure to worthwhile and authentic language.

- There should be use of language.
- Tasks should motivate learners to engage in language use.
- There should be a focus on language at some points in a task cycle.
- The focus on language should be more and less prominent at different times.

Skehan (1998: 132) restated the five general principles as a basis for pedagogic planning and design as follows.

- Choose a range of target structures.
- Choose tasks which meet the utility condition.
- Select and sequence tasks to achieve balanced goal development.
- Maximize the chances of a focus on form through attentional manipulation.
- Use cycles of accountability.

2.4.2 Framework for Implementation

For task-based instructor, selecting good tasks is not enough. He/she needs to know how to implement them. Scholars of TBI such as Willis (1996) and Skehan (1998) identified what is done before attempting the task, during task completion and after the task. In this respect, the three main phases or cycles of task implementation are identified. They are *pre-task*, the *task cycle* and *language focus* (Edwards and Willis, 2005; Richards and Rodgers, 2001; Oxford, 2006). Sometimes authors use the terms *pre-task*, *during task* and *post-task* to refer to the above phases. Since they refer to the same thing, we can use either of them or both of them interchangeably. In the three phases of tasks, the specific roles of teachers and learners are explained. In order for effective implementation of tasks, everyone should play his/her part properly. In the following sections, the three cycles of task will be seen in some details.

2.4.2.1 Pre-task Cycle

This refers to what roles should instructors and students do before they start the accomplishment of the task. Why is it necessary to have this phase? Skehan (1998) gives reasons for this. They are to introduce new language that the learners are to use during task cycle, to mobilize and ease language, and to ease processing load. In pre-task phase, general cognitive demands and linguistic factors are emphasized. Cognitive factors are emphasized to ease subsequent processing load whereas linguistic factors are given emphasis to introduce new forms into attention (Skehan, 1996b). In this stage "teachers set up relevant topic schemata, explain the task and clarify the intended outcome" (Willis, 2004: 37). Specific roles of teachers and students, in this phase, include:

The teacher

- Introduces and defines the topic.
- Helps students to understand the theme and objectives of the task.
- Uses activities to help students recall/learn useful words and phrases, but doesn't pre teach new structures.
- Ensures students understand task instructions.
- May play a recording of others doing the same or a similar task.

The Students

- Do pre-task activity if there is any.
- Read the part of a text if the task is based on it.
- Note down useful words and phrases from the pre-task activities and/or the recording.
- May spend a few minutes preparing for the tasks individually.

(Richards and Rodgers, 2001; Willis, 2004; Shehadeh, 2005; Ellis, 2006).

After completing this phase, we move on to the next phase, task cycle. Proper completion of this phase will be advantageous to properly carry out the task.

2.4.2.2 The Task Cycle

This is the phase in which students do the task in pairs or in groups and work towards the task outcome. Although students can use various skills and strategies, here the focus is principally on meaning (Oliveira, 2004; Willis, 2004). This phase is sub-divided into three stages: task, planning and report. In the task stage, learners do the task. In the planning stage, students plan how to report to the whole class on how they did the task and what solution/decision they reached. In the last, report phase, students present what they did and compare results with other groups (Oliveira, 2004; Ellis, 2006).

What is stated in Willis (2004), Shehadeh (2005) and Richards and Rodgers (2001) for the roles of teacher and students in the three subtypes of task cycle is summarized as follows.

Stages of Task Cycle	Students' Role	Teacher's Role
Task	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do the task in pairs/small groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acts as a monitor and encourages students.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circulates checking task progress and helping learners.
Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare to report to the whole class what they discovered/decided. • Draft and rehearse what they will say (orally or in writing). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures the purpose of report is clear. • Acts as language advisor. • Helps students rehearse oral reports or organize written ones.
Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present their spoken reports to the class or exchange written reports and compare results. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acts as a chairperson, selecting who will speak next, or ensuring all students read written reports. • May give brief comments/feedback on content and form.

In this stage also all students should participate in doing the task, planning and reporting directly. It is through this process that students develop their confidence of language use and proficiency level. The instructor should actively involve playing his/her roles. It is expected from him/her to encourage all learners to participate in all steps.

2.4.2.3 Language Focus Cycle

This is the last phase in implementing tasks. It is the phase "in which students examine and discuss specific features of the material used and the work done in the task cycle and the teacher conducts a practice session on new words, phrases, and patterns

occurring in the data analyzed" (Oliveira, 2004: 256). It is here that proponents of TBI suggest teaching grammar implicitly or explicitly. This is considered to be essential for language development because it helps learner realize the system of a foreign language they are learning.

Language focus phase can be sub-divided into two parts: analysis and practice. Here also several scholars such as Richards and Rodgers (2001) and Willis (2004, 2005) identified the parts that should be played by learners and instructors as follows.

a) Analysis

Here the teacher plays the following roles.

- Reviews each analysis activity with the class.
- Brings other useful words, phrases and patterns to students' attention.
- May pick up on language items from the report stage.

The learners are expected to:

- Do consciousness-raising activities to identify and process specific language features from the task text and/or transcript.
- May ask about other features they have noticed.

b) Practice

Here the teacher is expected to conduct practice activities after analysis activities, where necessary, to build confidence. The students, on their side, are expected to:

- Practise words, phrases and patterns from the analysis activities.
- Practise other features occurring in the task text or report stage.
- Enter useful language items in their language notebooks.

In summary, the three main phases of task, which are explained above, are very important for the development of learners' language. Each phase has its own purpose, for e.g. pre-task phase is aimed to introduce the topic and theme of a given task and lays basis for other phases. Active involvement in each phase helps learners not only to accomplish the task successfully but also to develop different skills and strategies so as to develop their language proficiency of the target foreign language. Hence, it necessitates the instructors to let all learners pass through this process of learning language.

2.5 Factors that Affect Implementation of TBI

According to Leaver and Kaplan (2004: 57), various factors that obstacle task-based implementation are reported by different teachers and administrators. These include significant investment of time, lack of predictability, obstacles related to students' teaching expectations, obstacles related to student testing expectations and lack of authentic materials. The main factor that affected the implementation of TBI in U.S government schools was the amount of time required to prepare lessons. In order to solve this problem some measures were taken like increasing experience in task-based teaching and providing direct assistance from administrators and other scholars. Another problem was the difficulty to predict how much time students would need to complete each task, but it was not always problem of learning. This problem can also be reduced gradually when students have lots of experiences in carrying out tasks. The third factor that affected TBI learners' dissatisfaction because they were never experienced with this approach. The students were expecting their teachers to teach them definitions of vocabulary and list of grammar rules that they were taught for long years. The students preferred tests of knowledge to achievement and proficiency tests as they were familiarized with these types of tests. This needed to work a lot to change

the negative attitudes of students. Through time it was reported that students were able to learn with this approach and benefited a lot. The last factor mentioned above to affect TBI implementation is lack of authentic materials. As Leaver and Kaplan (Ibid) say, "Few textbooks are truly task-based." Therefore, teachers can get input from different sources like articles, magazines and newsletters and design their own tasks or can adapt books that are not truly task-based or else they can use tasks from internet (Ibid).

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

3.1 Sources of Data

The main objective of this study was to find out whether a task-based language teaching is being used in Ethiopian higher institutes as a method of ELT. In order to achieve the objectives of the research, two government colleges which are found in Addis Ababa, College of Commerce, Addis Ababa University, and Kotebe College of Teacher Education, were decided to be target of the study. They were chosen on the basis of their relative proximity to the researcher and on the researcher's belief that adequate information can be obtained as these colleges have long years of experience. The target population of the study was English language instructors and first year degree students who are enrolled in these colleges in 2007/08 academic year. It was decided to gather the required data from 10 instructors and 150 students of the two colleges.

3.2 Sampling Design

In order to select the representative sample of all EFL instructors and students, who are teaching and learning in the two colleges, College of Commerce and Kotebe College of Teacher Education, stratified random sampling method was used. First, the number of teachers who represent the total population of teachers was assigned according to the number of English teachers found in each college. Accordingly, it is decided to take 4 teachers from College of Commerce, Addis Ababa University, and 6 teachers from Kotebe College of Teacher Education. Once the number of sample teachers was known, the list of English language teachers was taken from each college and lottery method (drawing lots) was used to select those who were used as source of data. In line with this, among 7 English teachers of College of Commerce, Addis Ababa University, 4 teachers were drawn. In the same way, among 17 English teachers of Kotebe College of Teacher Education, 6 were drawn to be the sample of the study.

Out of the first year degree students (1700) in both colleges, it was decided to include 150 students in the study. In order to select the sample of students from each college, stratified random sampling method was used. As it was done for teachers, the number of students who participate in the study from each college was assigned based on the size of student population. Accordingly, 70 students from College of Commerce, Addis Ababa University, and 80 students from Kotebe College of Teacher Education were selected. The lottery method was used in section level as it was difficult to write and draw the names of all students. In this way, out of 16 sections of 6 different departments, 3 sections were drawn from College of Commerce, Addis Ababa University. Then the needed number of 70 students was randomly selected from the three sections. The same procedure was used to select 80 students from Kotebe College of Teacher Education. Out of 20 sections of 10 different departments, 4 sections were drawn. Then 80 students were randomly selected from the 4 sections, 20 from each.

3.3 Instruments of Data Collection

In order to collect data from the samples of the target population, questionnaires, observation and interview were employed as instruments of data collection. The questionnaires were used to access the large population of the students and teachers easily. Two questionnaires were used: students' questionnaire and instructors' questionnaire. The questionnaires were designed by the researcher based on theories of task-based EFL instruction. Both questionnaires were similar in contents. They were close-ended. This was made to manage responses when analyzing data. Students' questionnaire consists of four main questions. The questionnaire has three main parts: modes of classroom arrangement, tasks that teachers give to their students and the roles that teachers play when they implement tasks. The instructors' questionnaire comprises six items. It has three main parts: tasks that are used in EFL classes, teachers' roles during task implementation, and factors that affect the implementation of TBLT. Both of the students' and instructors' questionnaires had been piloted and some improvements were made. These include making the instructions more clear, making the language simple and rearranging the order of questions. Then the questionnaires are distributed and all of them are returned.

Classroom observation was also conducted to investigate how tasks were being implemented in the actual EFL classrooms. Observation checklist was used during the classroom observation. The checklist was slightly adapted from Wajnryb's (1992) checklist of classroom observation tasks. It was divided into four sections, namely observing tasks, observing the teacher, observing the learners and comments of the observer. The first three sections consist of ten points of observation. The last section is meant to record the overall comments of the observer. Having this checklist, six classes that were meant to implement tasks by the teachers were observed by the researcher and co-observer. Co-operation is preferred in order to avoid bias that might result from one observer, the researcher. The co-observer, who was expected to have good

knowledge of the theories of TBLT, was trained about how to observe task implementation and how to write the needed information, and co-operated in observing the classes.

The third type of tool employed in this study was interview. The purpose of the interview was to triangulate the data collected by the questionnaires and classroom observation. Three open-ended interview questions were designed to get detailed information from the teachers. The three questions included the issues raised in questionnaires, however, here the questions demand detailed responses. After all data were gathered, three teachers, out of ten teachers, who were randomly selected out of the ten teachers, were interviewed and recorded to be heard repeatedly and analyzed later.

3.4 Methods of Data Analysis

Once the teachers and the students who participate in the study had been identified, the questionnaires were distributed to the teachers and the students. Observation was also conducted by the researcher and co-observer. Finally, interview was conducted between the researcher and the teachers.

The data collected by questionnaires of both students and instructors are presented in tabular form, as they are numerical data, frequency of responses and percentile scale are used to reach conclusions. The results of the data are explained after each table in paragraphs. The data collected by observation and interview are presented and analyzed in paragraphs because such data are difficult to numerate. Finally, the conclusion is arrived at inductively.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Three data gathering tools are used in this study. They are questionnaire, for both students and instructors, interview, for teachers, and observation. The students' and instructors' questionnaires are presented in tabular form and percentile scales. Percentage scales are used to compare the frequency of the responses from students and teachers. The data gathered by interview and observation are explained in paragraphs because it is difficult to put them in tables or other forms like charts, graphs, etc. The data gathered through the above three instruments are presented and analyzed in the following sections.

4.1 Analysis of Students' Questionnaire

The students' questionnaire has three main parts. The first part deals with students' classroom arrangement and the language used during classroom discussions. The second one is about the types of tasks used in English language courses. The last and the third part assesses teachers' role during task implementation by students' eyes. Each table consists of the options, responses (in frequency and percentage) and total number of respondents.

4.1.1 Modes of Classroom Organization

Item 1 How often do you work individually, in pairs and in groups?

Table 1 Modes of Classroom Organization

Modes of Classroom Organization	Response									
	Always		Sometime s		Rarely		Never		Total	
	Fr.	%	Fr.	%	Fr.	%	Fr.	%	Fr.	%
1.1 Individually	52	34.7	62	41.3	29	19.3	7	4.7	150	100
1.2 In pairs	18	12	68	45.3	36	24	28	18.7	150	100
1.3 In groups	66	44	71	47.3	9	6	4	2.7	150	100

Key: Fr. Stands for frequency of responses

Out of 150 respondents, 52 (34.7%) responded that they always work individually in English classes. Others 62 (41.3%) responded that they work individually sometimes. Still others 29 (19.3%) responded that they rarely work individually. This datum shows that 76% of the total students carry out individual works most of the time in the English classes. Regarding working in pairs, 12% of the total students responded "always", 45.3%

'sometimes', 24% 'rarely' and 18.7% 'never'. This datum also shows that most of the times 69.3% Of the total participants work in pairs. Regarding working in groups, 44% of the respondents always work in groups, 47.3% of them work sometimes in and the rest 8.7% work either rarely or never in groups. This reveals that the students work in groups more than other modes of classroom organization, i.e. 91.3% of the total respondents reported as such.

Item 2 Which language do you mostly use when you work in pairs or groups in English Classes?

Table 2 Language Used During Group Discussions

Response	Mother tongue	National language		Total
		(Amharic)	English	
Fr.	3	70	77	150
Percent	2	46.7	51.3	100

Table 2 shows 51.3% of the respondents use English, 46.7% of them use Amharic and the remaining 2% of the respondents use their mother tongues in English classes. About half of the total students mostly use English language to discuss between pairs or among groups. On the other hand, 48.7% of the students speak Amharic and their mother tongues.

This shows that about half of the students do not use the target language, English, during their pair or group discussion. Whatever students work in pairs or groups, they will not benefit a lot unless they use English to communicate between their pairs/among

their groups. According to Nunan (2006), TBLT emphasizes learning to communicate through interaction in the target language because it provides opportunities for learners not only on language but also on the learning process. Therefore, students who do not use the TL lose these opportunities and do not pass through the process of learning and, in turn, might not reach the intended level of proficiency in English.

4.1.2 Task Types Students Carry out in English classes

This part analyses students' responses to different types of tasks, i.e. to what extent such task types are used in EFL classes.

Item 3 How often does your teacher ask you to do the following task types?

Table 3 Task Types Used in EFL Classes

Types of Tasks	Response									
	Always		Some-times		Rarely		Never		Total	
	Fr.	%	Fr.	%	Fr.	%	Fr.	%	Fr.	%
3.1 List information, vehicles, animals, countries, etc.	23	15.3	47	31.3	46	30.7	34	22.7	150	100
3.2 Reorder or sort items, parts of stories, sentences, jobs, etc.	20	13.3	76	50.7	44	29.3	10	6.7	150	100
3.3 Compare and contrast things, means of transportations, cultures, etc.	32	21.3	54	36	36	24	28	18.7	150	100
3.4 solve problems, puzzles, etc.	37	24.7	53	35.3	30	20	30	20	150	100
3.5 Share our personal experience within pairs or groups.	56	37.3	70	46.7	22	14.7	2	1.3	150	100
3.6 Exchange our opinions within pairs or groups.	72	48	57	38	17	11.3	4	2.7	150	100
3.7 Combine different pieces of information to make a whole (e.g.	23	15.3	72	48	37	24.7	16	10.7	150	100

Story)										
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Table 3 shows the frequency of the task types used in the English classes. Among all participants, 15.3% of the respondents said that listing tasks are used always, 31.3% said 'sometimes', 30.7% said 'rarely' and the rest 22.7% said 'never'. 53.4% of the respondents reported that listing tasks are rarely or never used. Regarding reordering and sorting tasks, in spite of their difference in the frequency of the tasks, 93.3% of the respondents agree that their teachers ask them to reorder or sort items, parts of stories, jobs etc. 21.3% of the total respondents reported that their English teachers always give them comparing and contrasting tasks while 36% of the respondents say that their teachers do so sometimes. The remaining 24% and 18.7% responded that their teachers ask them to compare and contrast rarely and never respectively. 81.3% of the participants responded that their English teachers ask them to compare and contrast things, means of transportations, cultures and the like. Concerning the question on how often their teachers ask them to solve problems, puzzles and the like, 24.7%, 35.3%, 20% and 20% of the total students responded 'always', 'sometimes', 'rarely' and 'never' respectively. Here again, 80% of the respondents agree that their English language teachers ask them to carry out problem solving tasks. 37.3% of the students responded that their English teachers always ask them to share personal experiences within pairs or groups whereas 46.7% of them responded that their teachers sometimes ask them to do so. 14.7% of the respondents said that their teachers rarely do this. Only 1.3% of them responded that their teachers never give them such tasks. Almost all of the respondents (98.7%) revealed that their English language teachers give them personal experience sharing tasks. This implies that personal experience sharing tasks are the most popular tasks which are used in English classes in colleges. Concerning opinion exchange tasks, 48% of the respondents said that their teachers always ask them to exchange their opinions, but 38% of them said that their teachers ask them such questions sometimes. 11.3% of them responded that their teachers rarely do so. The rest 2.7% of them responded that their teachers never give them such tasks. According to 97.3% of the students, their teachers ask them to carry out tasks of opinion exchange. From this one can understand that this is also one of the most popular task types in the colleges this

research is conducted. In response to the question how often their teachers ask them to combine different pieces of information to make a whole, 15.3% of the students said that their teachers ask them always; 48% of them said 'sometimes'; 24.7% of the respondents said 'rarely' and the remaining 10.7% said 'never'. This shows that, generally, 88% of the respondents agree that their teachers give them jigsaw tasks, though they differ in terms of frequency.

Item 4 How often does your teacher do the following activities whenever he/she gives you tasks?

This item requires information about the role of the teachers during the three phases of task: pre-task, task and post-task. For ease of analysis, the three phases (cycles) are presented in different tables.

Table 4 Teachers' Roles during Pre-task Cycle

Teacher's Roles	Response									
	Always		Some-times		Rarely		Never		Total	
	Fr.	%	Fr.	%	Fr.	%	Fr.	%	Fr.	%
4.1 Makes us sit in pairs/groups before we start doing the task.	85	56.7	60	40	5	3.3	-	-	150	100

4.2 Introduces & defines the purpose of the task.	92	61.3	53	35.4	5	3.3	-	-	150	100
4.3 Gives us activities to help us recall/learn useful words/phrases for doing the task.	20	13.3	73	48.7	37	24.7	20	13.3	150	100
4.4 Makes sure that all students understand what to do.	51	34	66	44	20	13.3	13	8.7	150	100

Out of 150 respondents, 85(56.7%) of them reported that their teachers always let them sit in pairs/groups before they start carrying out the task while 60(40%) of them said that their teachers do this sometimes. The rest 5(3.3%) said 'rarely'. There was no respondent who said 'never'. More than half of the respondents reported that their teachers always let their students sit in pairs/groups whenever they implement tasks. Concerning introducing and defining the purpose of the task, 61.3% of the students reported that their teachers always do this. Some of them (35.4%), however, said that their teachers introduce and define the purpose of the task only sometimes. The remaining 3.3% reported that their teachers never introduce and define the purpose of the tasks they gave for their students. The third role of teacher in pre-task cycle is giving some activities to help learners recall/learn useful words/phrases that help them while they carry out a given task. Regarding this, the responses of the students is 13% 'always', 48.7% 'sometimes', 24.7% 'rarely' and 13.3% 'never'. This shows that their teachers play the role stated above only sometimes though it is expected of them to do always. The last question of pre-task cycle is about how often their teachers make sure that all students understand what to do before they go to carry out a given task. Concerning this, 48.7% of the total respondents reported that their teachers do this sometimes. 24.7% also said that their teachers do this rarely. Other 13.3% reported that their teachers never make sure that their students understand the task's instruction. The majority of the respondents said that their teachers sometimes ensure that their students

understand the task's instruction. This shows that there are times in which the learners are enforced to precede doing the task without fully understanding what to do. Unless students know what and with whom to do, it could be difficult to process the task and to arrive at an outcome (Skehan, 1998; Willis, 2004). Moreover, students might spend more time than expected to complete the task or even they will be unable to carry out the task if they are not clear with what to do. Therefore, teachers have always to ensure whether the learners understand what to do before students engage in doing the task.

To sum up, in general, one can conclude from the above data that teachers give more emphasis to cognitive factors than linguistic ones. Cognitive factors are more useful for the development of fluency while linguistic factors are important to develop accuracy. Hence, both should be given equal emphasis to make balance between accuracy and fluency (Skehan, 1996b; Shehadeh, 2005; Birch, 2005).

Table 5 Teachers' Roles during Task Cycle

Teacher's Roles	Response				
	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total

	Fr.	%	Fr.	%	Fr.	%	Fr.	%	Fr.	%
4.5 Walks round in the class and provides help when we need.	52	34.7	66	44	19	12.7	13	8.7	150	100
4.6 Makes us report what we did in pairs/groups.	67	44.7	68	45.3	11	7.3	4	2.7	150	100
4.7 Helps us to plan what we are going to report (present).	29	19.3	56	37.3	60	40	5	3.3	150	100
4.8 Selects students who will present (report) next.	36	24	35	23.3	57	38	22	14.7	150	100
4.9 Gives us brief comments/ feedback after students' presentation.	62	41.3	56	37.3	22	14.7	10	6.7	150	100

In table 5, 34.7% students responded that their teachers always walk round in the class to provide help while they are doing their tasks. 44% of them responded that their teachers play this role only sometimes. The rest 21.4% reported that their teachers do this rarely or never. Although the majority of the respondents responded that their teachers sometimes do this, the others (21.4%) reported that their teachers either rarely or never walk around in the class. The main role of the teacher during task cycle is walking round in the class to monitor the task progress and to provide help when students need (Richards and Rodgers, 2001). Therefore, all teachers are always expected to do this.

(language focus) activities after students' presentation (report).	23	15.3	39	26	61	40.7	27	18	150	100
4.11 Provides other useful words, phrases & patterns related to the task after our presentation (report)	49	32.7	93	62	6	4	2	1.3	150	100

Task-based language teaching recommends teaching grammar after students accomplished each task because this helps learners to see what they did wrong during their discussion and/presentation time so that they correct their mistakes and can learn from the mistakes they made and make it part of their knowledge (Willis, 1996). On the contrary, these data show that most English language teachers focus on language rarely. 58.7% of the respondents said that their teachers rarely or never give them language focus activities after report stage. Therefore, using these tasks has a considerable effect in teaching/earning English. After their presentations (reports) students always need to have useful phrases and words related to their task for their future use and confidence. The data collected here shows that most of the teachers provide such words and phrases only sometimes. Post-task activities can “lead learners to switch attention repeatedly between accuracy and restructuring and fluency ... provide another means of inducing effective use of attentional resources during tasks, and balancing the various goals that are desirable” (Skehan, 1996b: 27). As these stages alert students simultaneously to language-as-form and language-as-meaning, teachers have to plan to provide such opportunities for their students (Ibid).

4.2. Analysis of Instructors' Questionnaire

Instructors' questionnaire has three main sections. The first one deals with task types used in English classes. The second and the third sections are about the roles of instructors during different task cycles and factors that influence implementation of tasks respectively.

Item 1 Are there tasks in any of your English language teaching materials?

Table 7 Instructors' Responses to Whether Their English Language Course

Materials Have Tasks

Response	Yes	No	Total
Frequency	10	-	10
Percent	100	-	100

As table 7 shows, all of the respondents reported that the English language course materials they use have tasks.

Item 2 If your answer in question 1 above is 'yes', which of the following task types are included?

Table 8 Tasks Found in English Language Course Materials

Task Types	Response		
	Frequency	Percent	Total
Listing	4	40	10
Ordering & sorting	4	40	10
Comparing & contrasting	8	80	10
Problem solving	7	70	10
Jigsaw	1	10	10
Information gap	5	50	10
Decision making	8	80	10
Opinion exchange	9	90	10

According to the data in table 8, one can understand that almost all English language course materials have opinion exchange, decision making, comparing and contrasting, and problem solving tasks. Some teachers (40% of them) said that their materials have listing, and ordering and sorting tasks. Half of the respondents also said that their materials have information gap tasks. Out of the 10 respondents, only 1 said that there are jigsaw tasks.

In general one can conclude from table 8 that the most common types of tasks found in higher institutes' English course materials are opinion exchange, decision making, comparing and contrasting, and problem solving tasks. Listing, and ordering and sorting tasks are also included to some extent.

Item 3 Do you use tasks of your own/from different sources to teach English language?

Table 9 Instructors' Responses to Task Types They Use out of Their Course Materials

Response	Yes	No	Total
Frequency	10	-	10
Percent	100	-	100

Table 9 shows that all instructors use tasks of either themselves or from different sources.

Item 4 If your answer in question 3 above is 'yes', how often do you use the following task types?

Table 10 Tasks Instructors use out of Their Course Materials

Types of Task	Response									
	Always		Some-times		Rarely		Never		Total	
	Fr.	%	Fr.	%	Fr.	%	Fr.	%	Fr.	%
Listing	2	20	6	60	2	20	-	-	10	100
Reordering & sorting	1	10	8	80	1	10	-	-	10	100
Comparing & contrasting	3	30	5	50	2	20	-	-	10	100
Problem solving	3	30	7	70	-	-	-	-	10	100
Decision making	2	20	3	30	5	50	-	-	10	100
Opinion exchange	8	80	2	20	-	-	-	-	10	100
Jigsaw	2	20	2	20	6	60	-	-	10	100
Information gap	2	20	6	60	1	10	1	10	10	100
Personal experience sharing	8	80	1	10	1	10	-	-	10	100

As table 10 shows, 80% of the instructors always use opinion exchange and personal sharing tasks. They either design or refer to different materials for these tasks. More than

and objectives of the task.	8	80	2	20	-	-	-	-	10	100
5.4 I use activities to help learners recall/learn useful words and phrases for the task accomplishment.	3	30	7	70	-	-	-	-	10	100
5.5 I ensure that students understand task instructions.	8	80	2	20	-	-	-	-	10	100

Concerning teacher's roles during pre-task cycle, more than three-fourth of the instructors said that they always arrange the class into pairs/small groups before students start doing the task, help students understand the theme and objectives of the task, and ensure that students understand task instructions. 70% of the instructors reported that they always introduce and define the topic of the task, and they sometimes use activities to help learners recall/learn useful words and phrases for the task accomplishment. When we compare instructors' responses to that of students' (table 4), we can see some disagreements. Most of the instructors reported that they always play the above roles, except giving activities to help learners recall/learn useful words and phrases. However, students' responses show that most of the instructors do not always ensure that all students understand what to do.

Table 12 Instructors' Roles during Task Cycle

Teacher's Roles	Response									
	Always		Sometime s		Rarely		Never		Total	
	Fr.	%	Fr.	%	Fr.	%	Fr.	%	Fr.	%
5.6 I act as a monitor and encourage students.	2	20	60	60	2	20	-	-	10	100
5.7 I walk round in the class checking task progress and helping learners when they need.	8	80	2	20	-	-	-	-	10	100
5.8 I get learners report their work after they completed the task.	8	80	2	20	-	-	-	-	10	100
5.9 I act as a language advisor when students are planning to report.	3	30	2	20	4	40	1	10	10	100
5.10 I help or encourage students to rehearse oral reports or organize written ones.	4	40	3	30	2	20	1	10	10	100
5.12 I give brief comments/ feedback on content and form of students' report.	7	70	3	30	-	-	-	-	10	100

According to the data in table 12, more than half of the respondents (60%) act sometimes as a monitor and encourage students. Others 20% of them do this rarely. However, students need to be encouraged and teachers' monitoring during each task.

Concerning walking round in the class and helping students when they need, 80% of instructors responded that they do it always. This is also expected from the rest 20% who do so sometimes. Concerning report stage, 80% of the respondents reported that they always let their learners report what they did in their groups. When this is compared to students' responses (table 6), majority of the students reported that their instructors sometimes let them report their work. If students know that they are going to report after doing a given task, they think ahead to the later report stage when they are actually doing the task (Skehan, 1996b). Therefore, it is advisable for teachers to let learners report their work in order to help them pass through this process and learn language through the process. Half of the instructors rarely or never act as a language advisor when students are planning to report. Again half of the respondents (50% of them) rarely and never select students who will speak next, though this is very important for students to reduce tension and be ready how to speak as soon as the reporter completes. As the data show, 70% of the respondents always give brief comments/feedback after students' reports on content and language form. The rest 30% however, do this only sometimes. Since students always need praise or comments/feedback of their instructors so that they may be more confident and more accurate for the next reports (Skehan, 1996b), all instructors have to give comments and feedback as much as possible.

Table 13 Instructors' Roles during Post-task Cycle

Teacher's Roles	Response									
	Always		Some-times		Rarely		Never		Total	
	Fr.	%	Fr.	%	Fr.	%	Fr.	%	Fr.	%
5.13 I give language focus (grammar) activities after students' report.	-	-	4	40	5	50	1	10	10	100

5.14 I provide other useful words, phrases and patterns related to the task to students' attention.	4	40	5	50	1	10	-	-	10	100
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As we can understand from table 13, 40% of the instructors sometimes, 50% of them rarely and the rest 10% of them never give language focus activities for their students after the report stage. Again only 40% of the instructors always provide useful words, phrases and patterns related to what students have done in the tasks. Half of them do the same sometimes. This implies that most of the instructors give language focus activities rarely and provide useful words and phrases sometimes. However, as the interview responses and classroom observation shows that the post-task cycle is almost ignored.

As the information in the above three tables, though some instructors play the roles expected from them during each task phase, there are also many instructors who do not play their roles adequately during the three task phases. Since, in TBI not only the language aspects students learn but also the process of learning is very important (Skehan, 1998), teachers are advised to help their learners pass through different phases and stages of tasks.

Item 6 What are the factors that affect the implementation of task-based language teaching in Ethiopia? The following are some factors that are believed to have negative effects on the implementation of tasks in English classes. To what extent do the following factors affect the implementation of tasks?

Table 14 Factors that Affect Implementation of TBI

Factors Affect TBI Implementation	Response									
	To great extent		To some extent		To little extent		Not at all		Total	
	Fr.	%	Fr.	%	Fr.	%	Fr.	%	Fr.	%
Unfamiliarity of the method	2	20	1	10	6	60	1	10	10	100
Lack of authentic materials	4	40	4	40	2	20	-	-	10	100
Shortage of time to prepare lessons	4	40	3	30	3	30	-	-	10	100
Students' background	8	80	1	10	1	10	-	-	10	100
Difficulty to predict how much time learners would need with each task	2	20	5	50	3	30	-	-	10	100
Difficulty to test students	1	10	6	60	2	20	1	10	10	100

According to the data in table 14, unfamiliarity of the method does not affect task-based language teaching that much. Lack of authentic materials and shortage of time to prepare lessons have great effect for only 40% of the respondents. Others feel that they affect to some extent. The most serious problem, according to 80% of the respondents, is students' poor background. Majority of the respondents reveal that

difficulty to predict how much time learners would need with each task and difficulty to test students can affect task-based EFL instruction to some extent.

4.2 Analysis of Classroom Observation

Six classes of three instructors who believed that they implement tasks are observed by the researcher and co-observer. The observers crosscheck their observation checklists and discuss after every observation. According to their overall agreements, what is observed in the classroom is reported as follows.

When the tasks are evaluated in terms of task definition, among the six tasks taught in the class only four of them satisfy the definition of task to a certain extent. The titles of these are *Curriculum Vitae*, *International Marketing*, *Debate* and *Write a Paragraph*. The rest two, *Identifying Whole Text and Paragraph Structure*, and *Qualities of a Paragraph* are not tasks. In College English volume II, the first one is written as if it were a task. It says *task 6*, and the instruction allows learners to do individually (i.e. filling in the note framework reading the text given) then to compare with a partner's note. *Qualities of a paragraph* has no task at all. The teacher distributed a handout of about six pages that consists of notes about a paragraph and its qualities, one for five or six students. The teacher told learners to read and understand what is given. Then, after some time, the teacher explained what a paragraph means and what qualities it has. There was no task that students carry out. The class ended with teacher's explanation.

This shows that not only the teachers but also the textbook writers have misconception with what a task is when we look at the above 'tasks' (which do not satisfy task definition). Those satisfy the definition of a task can be classified into three categories of tasks: decision making, opinion exchange and information gap. The task on the

Curriculum Vitae is a decision making task. Students sit in small groups and discuss about which points should be included in the curriculum vitae among the given lists and they have also to decide about which other issues should be included. It is a kind of decision making task but the task has no post-task phase. The instructor also did not go beyond what is written in the course book. The two tasks on reading and writing skills, *International Marketing and Writing a Paragraph*, are opinion exchange tasks because those tasks engage learners in discussion and exchange of ideas. Here also there was no post-task phase in reading task. However, in writing task, the teacher informed the students that they would read the next day what they wrote in groups, i.e. report stage of tasks cycle.

During the implementation of the tasks, all teachers introduced the tasks and gave clear instructions. As it was observed in all classes, the students were working in small groups (5-8 members each). They were discussing in their groups although they were heard using Amharic and other native languages (Afan Oromo and Tigrigna) repeatedly. When the phases of tasks are examined, almost all of the tasks have only two phases, pre-task and task. The post-task phase was not implemented. Only one teacher tried to use a report stage of task cycle. In all of the classes, language analysis and practice stages were not practiced. This implies that although there are some tasks in the English course materials of colleges, they usually lack post-task phase and the instructors also do not attempt to implement the whole phases of tasks.

4.3 Analysis of Instructors' Interview

The instructors' responses to the three open-ended interview questions are presented and analyzed as follows.

Item 1 Are there tasks in your English course materials? If 'yes', what types of task are there? Are the tasks divided into phases? If 'yes', how many are the phases? What do students and teacher do during each task phase? How are the tasks treated in your EFL classes? Do you let your students report your work? How often? Do you think the tasks in the materials are enough?

All the three instructors said 'yes' to the question addressed to the presence or absent of tasks in their English language teaching materials. One of them added that in the course, which he teach at present time, i.e. Business English (LBC 101), for example, there are 80 'tasks' in all four units of the course. These include, according to him, activation 'tasks', grammar practice 'tasks', opinion exchange tasks and business writing tasks. The second teacher said that the tasks are related to the four language skills. According to him, these language-skills-related tasks include brainstorming 'tasks', reflections and beliefs tasks, reading tasks, grammar awareness tasks and so on. According to the third teacher, problem-solving tasks, theme identifying tasks, opinion exchanging tasks, and information gap tasks are the tasks which are found in the English courses she gives.

Concerning task phases, one of them reported that the phases are not directly stated, except some reading and listening tasks. The other two said that the tasks are not divided into phases. Some tasks, according to the two instructors, begin with activating students' prior knowledge on the task and then ask them to work the task in groups. Some others, on the other hand, begin with group discussions and end with presentation of group representatives. Others also ask students only to discuss in groups. This idea implies that some tasks have pre-task and task phases. Some others have only task phase. All of the tasks do not include language focus cycle.

Regarding teachers and students roles during each task phase, the interviewees' responses are summarized as follows. All of the three instructors put this idea in general.

One of them said that first the teacher introduces and explains the topic of the task. Then the student thinks about the task or works individually and discusses in groups. Finally, the teacher listens to students' reflections and gives his comments. The second teacher said that during each task students listen what the teacher says, speak, read and write individually, in pairs, in groups and whole class. The teacher listens to students' answers and gives them the correct answers. The third teacher said that the teacher first gives lecture about ways of expressing and organizing ideas, about the language to be used, etc. at first. He does this because he feels that most of the students are from different background and unable to carry out the task unless they are helped in the way expressed above. After short lecture, the learners sit in groups and share ideas. Finally, if there is time, some students may present their groups work.

Concerning report stage, all of the interviewees reported that they do not always let their students to report their work due to some reasons like large class size, shortage of class time and poor background of the learners. This response supports that of students' on the issue. Majority of the students reported that their teachers do not always ask them to report their work though most teachers said that they always do so.

When the responses of the three teachers are compared in terms of teachers' and students' roles in TBLT, there are insights of some roles though much more expected roles are not implemented as needed. The teachers' introduction and explanation of the topic of the task is one of expected roles of teacher during per-task phase. Students' group discussion to carry out the task and reflections (reports) are some of the roles of learners during task cycle (Richards and Rodgers, 2001). The teacher's final comments are some of the roles of task-based instructor during task cycle. This implies that there is an attempt to implement task-based EFL instruction in colleges. On the contrary, the rest two teachers seem to teach in traditional way, teacher's presentation is followed by students' practice and production of some language items. This seems PPP (presentation-practice-production) method. Therefore, this implies that teachers spend much time teaching their students and students speak if their teacher asks them

to do so. There is also pre-teaching of language structures first, which is not advised in TBLT. Besides, the post-task cycle is completely ignored.

The last idea of question 1 is whether the tasks in the language teaching materials are adequate or not. The answer to this question, according to the three interviewees, is not adequate. They said that although there are some tasks that students are not interested in. They forwarded that tasks especially those that arouse students' interest, which are related to their ages, and lives should be included.

Item 2 How do you arrange the class when you implement tasks? Which language(s) do your students use during group discussions?

In reply to this question, one of the teacher said that he uses different arrangements of the class. The students sit individually, in pairs, in groups or the teacher works with the whole class. He uses one of these different ways, according to him, he found appropriate to attain his objectives. Concerning the language of students, he added that most students prefer to speak in Amharic unless he frequently warns or reminds to speak only in English. The other teacher said that he usually arranges the class into groups of three. His justification for this is that some students might be dominated by others and might not talk if a group consists of more than three students. He adds that it is also difficult to control the groups unless the number in groups is limited to three. This teacher also complains that students speak their mother tongues and Amharic languages during the group discussions. He told the interviewer that he uses some techniques like regrouping students who speak their native languages, walking round in the class and listening in which language learners are talking and reminding them to speak only in English again and again. However, he cannot let them avoid doing so. The last teacher, unlike the above teacher, arranges the class in groups of five to ten students. This teacher believes that such a number in a group can easily be managed.

The groups are formed based on students' interest and sitting proximity. This teacher also complains the same as the above teachers concerning learners' language use during group discussions. Two of the three interviewees also reported that there are some students who work individually even though they sit in groups.

From the instructors reply to question two above, one can conclude firstly most of the teachers use group as a classroom mode when they provide tasks to their students. Again one can also understand that there are some teachers, like the one whose replies to this question are presented first, implement tasks while students are working individually or the teacher works with the whole class though it is impossible for the whole class to process the task properly. Such teachers had better divide the class into small groups as it is very difficult to manage to hear each other, to share ideas and so on. Limiting the group members to three is not advisable. Although there is no standard number for group members, many scholars like Byrne (1986) agree that a better interaction and communication can appear if there are four to eight members in a group. Moreover, the teacher can manage the whole class easily as the more the group members, the less the number of groups will be in the class. Finally, what one can conclude based on these teachers responses is that the learners did not developed interest as well as confidence to communicate in English.

Item 3 What are factors that affect the implementation of task-based instruction in Ethiopia?

According to the interviewees' students' background, lack of students' interest, class size and limited class time are identified to be factors that affect the implementation of task-based instruction. Among them students' background, according to all of the interviewees, is the most serious problem. They all reported bitterly that students who come to their colleges from different parts of the country and with diversified background. They said that almost all of their students wait for spoon-feeding. They are

very slow even to understand what their instructors say. They add that the learners generally lack background knowledge that helps them as a bridge for college English courses. When these instructors examine their speech, grammar, writing and the like, the learners' poor background is revealed. The second serious factor next to poor background is lack of learners' interest to actively involve in the learning process. The interviewees explained that students lack interest to refer to books as college students and to participate in learning process like group discussion, answering questions and presentations. According to two of the interviewees, class size is one factor, which affects TBI implementation. One of them said that there are usually more than 45 students in a class; this number becomes an obstacle to give an opportunity for every student or at least for most of the students to present (report) their work and to assess the students problematic area being nearer to them, to provide advice and help, and to follow-up their progress. The other said that due to the large number of students in the sections, he prefers to work with the whole class instead of reporting (presenting) after students have done the tasks. The last factor mentioned by two interviewees is limited class time to implement tasks. One of them said that if he has one class (1hr), the class overs before students complete a given task. The other also said that since the students, most of the times, do not complete a given task in one-hour period, it might take more than three classes to deal with a single task.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

Based on the results found out through the questionnaires, observation and interview, the following conclusions are drawn.

- It is found out that task-based instruction is being practiced to some extent in higher institutes, though the basic principles of the approach are not followed.
- English language course materials of Ethiopian higher institutes included different types of tasks to some extent. The most commonly used ones are opinion exchange, comparing and contrasting, decision making, and problem solving tasks. Instructors also, most of the time, use opinion exchange and personal experience sharing tasks out of their course materials. They sometimes use reordering and sorting, problem solving and comparing and contrasting tasks from different sources. Some tasks have pre-task and task phases; others include only task phase. The post-task phase is not included in the tasks which are found in the materials.
- Although tasks are being used in colleges, it is found out that they are not being implemented according to the main principles of task-based language teaching. Some teachers pre-teach language structures that students are expected to use during they carry out tasks in small groups. The report stage of task cycle is not commonly implemented due to different reasons such as large class size. The tasks also lack language focus cycle of task that comprises language analysis and practice stages, which are implemented after students report what they have decided or solved in their groups and after the teacher has given brief comments/feedback on the content and form of students' report.
- Concerning teachers' roles during task implementation, almost all of English language instructors play their roles well during the pre-task cycle and more or

less during the first stage of task cycle. The post-task cycle, however, is not implemented.

- Group work is preferred by the college English language instructors as the most dominating mode of classroom arrangement. Instructors usually let their students work in groups and reach certain outcome as a group. However, there are students who work individually in spite of their sitting in groups.
- According to TBLT, students have to communicate in the target language they are learning so as to develop their proficiency of the language. On the contrary, about half of the college students mostly use Amharic and other native languages in order to interact with group members. Although students are trained with CLT for many years in secondary schools, it is seen that still they do not develop the interest as well as confidence to communicate in English at least in English classes.
- It is realized, during classroom observation and interview sessions, that instructors as well as materials developers have misconceptions about tasks.
- Lack of authentic materials, shortage of time to prepare lessons, students' background, difficulty to predict how much time learners would need with each time, difficulty to test and lack of students' interest to involve in learning process are identified to be factors that negatively influence the implementation of task-based language teaching in Ethiopian colleges. Among these, students' poor background is the most serious factor which is identified by the instructors.

5.2 Recommendations

On the basis of the above findings of the study, the following recommendations are forwarded.

- The syllabus designers and materials developers of higher institutes need to revise their syllabi and English language course materials so as to add some new tasks and task cycles to the existing ones based on the basic principles of task-based instruction.
- English language instructors have to implement all phases of tasks, including the planning and reporting stages of task cycle and language analysis and

practice stages of post-task cycle for effective implementation of tasks so as to let students pass through different stages in which they can get opportunity to learn language and to develop students' confidence in both accuracy and fluency.

- Instructors of English language have to work hard to help students actively involve in the learning process, like moving around in the class when students are working in groups and encouraging them to communicate in English, making them report and giving constructive feedback, providing them ample opportunities to communicate in English, providing assistance while they are working in small groups and making them feel that they are showing progress in their learning in order to increase students' participation in the process of teaching and learning and to develop their interest and proficiency in using English.
- English language instructors have to circulate always in the class while students are discussing in groups to investigate whether all students are being involved in the group discussion, which language students are using to carry out a given task, how they are processing the task and to provide necessary help because it is not only the product that is important in learning language; the process also is even more advantageous- students learn many language rules and communication skills through the process of group interaction.
- As experts of the area, instructors should do their best in order to overcome the challenges of TBI implementation. For instance, they can adopt or adapt tasks from internet and they can plan in groups to save the time that takes in preparing the lessons (Leaver and Kaplan, 2004).
- Ministry of Education, the college administration and other concerning bodies should arrange refreshment courses, workshops, panel discussions and the like for instructors and material developers in order to let them introduce to current innovations of language teaching.
- Interested researchers can conduct a research to find out why secondary school students have poor background when they come to colleges.
- Other researcher can also conduct an experimental research to investigate students' performance and their level of proficiency that might result from the application of task-based language learning.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A STUDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE

Addis Ababa University

Institute of Language studies
Department of Foreign Languages and Literature
Students' Questionnaire

Dear student,

This questionnaire is designed to gather information for M.A thesis which is aimed to explore the practicability of task-based instruction in higher institutes. The information you give is really very helpful for the success of the thesis. Therefore, I kindly request you to respond frankly and honestly.

Background Information

College _____

Department _____

Year _____

English Course(s) you take at present time _____

Put a tick mark (√) to indicate your answers.

1. How often do you work individually, in pairs and in groups in English classes? Please put a tick mark (√) in the appropriate box.

Classroom Modes	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
1.1 Individually				
1.2 In pairs				
1.3 In groups				

2. Which language you mostly use when you work in pairs or groups in English classes? Put a tick mark (√) in the box of your choice. Please be frank.

Mother tongue National language (Amharic) English

3. How often does your teacher give you the following task types? Put a tick mark (√) in the appropriate box for each of the following.

My teacher asks us to:

Task types	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
3.1 List information, vehicles, animals, countries, etc.				
3.2 Reorder or sort items, jobs, stories, sentences, etc.				
3.3 Compare and contrast things, means of transportations, cultures, etc.				
3.4 Solve problems, puzzles, etc.				
3.5 Share our personal experiences within pairs or groups.				
3.6 Exchange our opinions within pairs or groups.				
3.7 Combine different pieces of information to make a whole (e.g. story).				

4. How often does your teacher do the following activities whenever he/she gives you tasks? Put a tick mark (√) in the appropriate box for each of the following.

My teacher:

Teacher's Roles	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
4.1 Makes us sit in pairs/groups before we start doing the task.				
4.2 Introduces/defines the purpose of the task.				
4.3 Gives us activities to help us recall/				

learn useful words/phrases for doing the task.				
4.4 Makes sure that all students understand what to do.				
4.5 Walks round in the class and provides help when we need.				
4.6 Makes us report what we did in pairs or groups.				
4.7 Helps us to plan what we are going to present (report).				
Teacher's Roles	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
4.8 Selects students who will present (report) next.				
4.9 Gives us brief comment/feedback after students' presentation (report).				
4.10 Gives us grammar (language focus) activities after students' presentation (report).				
4.11 Provides other useful words, phrases & patterns related to the task after our presentation (report).				

THANK YOU.

APPENDIX B INSTRUCTORS' QUESTIONNAIRE

Addis Ababa University

Institute of Language studies

Department of Foreign Languages and Literature

Instructors' Questionnaire

Dear Instructor,

This questionnaire is designed to gather information for M.A thesis which is aimed to explore the practicability of task-based instruction in higher institutes. The information you give is really very helpful for the success of the thesis. Therefore, I kindly request you to respond frankly and honestly.

Background Information

1. Qualification: Ph. D M.A B.A Diploma

2. Teaching experience (in years)

0-3 4-6 7-10 Above 10

3. Department (s) you teach at present time _____

4. Course(s) you give at present time _____

Put a tick mark (✓) in the appropriate box of your choice.

1. Are there *tasks in any of your English language teaching materials?

Yes No

*Dear respondent, for the purpose of this study, tasks are defined as activities that require learners to reach an outcome from given meaning focused information through some processes and learn language through these processes. Tasks are not activities that are meant to let learners practice language items they learned previously. Please attend this definition of tasks through out this questionnaire.

2. If your answer in question 1 above is 'yes', which of the following task types are included?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Listing | <input type="checkbox"/> Information-gap |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ordering and sorting | <input type="checkbox"/> Decision-making |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Comparing and contrasting | <input type="checkbox"/> Opinion-exchange |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Problem-solving | <input type="checkbox"/> Other.If other please specify. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jigsaw (like combine pieces of information to make a whole) | ----- |

3. Do you use tasks of your own/from different sources to teach English language?

Yes No

4. If your answer in question 3 above is 'yes', how often do you use the following task types? Please indicate your response by putting a tick mark (√) in the appropriate box for each task type.

Types of Task	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Listing tasks				
Reordering and sorting tasks				
Comparing and contrasting tasks				
Problem-solving tasks				
Decision-making tasks				
Opinion-exchange tasks				
Jigsaw tasks				
Information gap tasks				
Personal experience sharing tasks				

5. How often do you do the following activities whenever you implement tasks? Please put a tick mark (√) under the column 'Always', 'Sometimes', 'Rarely' or 'Never'.

Teacher's Roles	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
5.1 I arrange the class into pairs/small groups before students start doing the task.				
5.2 I introduce and define the topic of the task.				
5.3 I help students understand the theme and objectives of the task.				
5.4 I use activities to help learners recall/learn useful words and phrases for the task accomplishment.				
5.5 I ensure that students understand task instructions.				
5.6 I act as a monitor and encourage students.				
5.7 I walk round in the class checking task progress and helping learners				

when they need.				
5.8 I get learners report their work after they completed the task.				
5.9 I act as a language advisor when students are planning to report.				
5.10 I help or encourage students to rehearse oral reports or organize written ones.				
5.11 I select students who will speak/report next.				
5.12 I give brief comments/feedback on content and form of students' report.				
5.13 I give language analysis (grammar) activity after students' report.				
5.14 I provide other useful words, phrases and patterns related to the task to students' attention.				

6. What are the factors that affect the implementation of task-based language teaching in Ethiopia? The following are some factors that are believed to have negative effects on the implementation of tasks in English classes. Indicate your answer by putting a tick mark (√) in the appropriate box to show to what extent these factors affect the implementation of tasks.

Factors Affect Implementation of Task-based Instruction	To great extent	To some extent	To less extent	Not at all
Unfamiliarity of the method				
Lack of authentic materials				
Shortage of time to prepare lessons				

Students' background				
Difficulty to predict how much time learners would need with each task				
Difficulty to test students				

THANK YOU.

APPENDIX C OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

Addis Ababa University

Institute of Language studies

Department of Foreign Languages and Literature

Observation Checklist

College _____

Department of Learners _____

Course Being Learnt _____

Number of Students in the Class _____

Observer _____

I. Observing Tasks

Checklist	Observation
What type(s) of task is (are) used?	
How many phases does the task have?	
Does the task have clear instructions?	

II. Observing the Teacher

Checklist	Observation
Does the teacher divide the class into pairs/groups?	

Is the task adequately introduced?	
Are clear instructions given?	
How many phases are involved in the task?	
Is the monitoring involved?	
Is there a report stage?	
Is there a report-back (language focus) stage?	

III. Observing the Learners

Checklist	Observation
Are the instructions adequate for the task(s)?	
Are all the learners engaged in the task with fully understanding of their roles?	

Are learners able to process the task?	
Is collaboration/interaction involved?	
What language(s) do students use to carry out the task in pairs/groups?	

IV. Comments of the Observer

APPENDIX D INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR INSTRUCTORS

Addis Ababa University

Institute of Language studies

Department of Foreign Languages and Literature

Instructors' Interview Questions

College _____

Qualification _____

Teaching experience _____

Department(s) you teach _____

Course(s) you give at present _____

Answer the following questions in detail according to your teaching experience in your college. (The interviewer asks the questions one after another.)

1. Are there tasks in your English course materials? If 'yes', what types of tasks are there? Are the tasks divided into phases? If 'yes', how many are they? What do students and teacher do during each task phase? How are the tasks treated in your EFL classes? Do you think the tasks in the material are enough?
2. How do you arrange the class during task implementation? What language(s) do your students use to communicate within their pairs/ groups?
3. What are factors that affect the implementation of task-based instruction in Ethiopia?

DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university, and that all sources of material used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged.

Name TAGESSE DANIEL

Signature _____

Place AAU, Department of Foreign Languages and Literature

Date of Submission 14 July, 2008