**INFORMATION ON DOCTORAL THESIS**

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**5. Admission decision number:** 1077/QĐ-SĐH issued by the President of VNU University of Languages and International Studies, dated on November 9th, 2009

**6. Changes in academic process**: one-year extension and one-year adjournment.

**7. Official thesis title:** *Secondary School Teacher’s Perception of Task-Based Language Teaching and Their Belief about the Current Series of English Textbooks.*

**8. Major:** English Language Teaching Methodology.

**9. Code:** 62 14 01 11

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**11. Summary of the new findings of the thesis:**

This research studies on the teachers’ perception and teachers’ belief (Teacher cognition) with two broad closely related fields of the current series of English textbooks issued since 2006; those are the investigation of teachers’ existing belief of the textbooks, and the investigation of teachers’ perception of the teaching methods attached to the textbooks (TBLT). The research is supposedly meaningful as its emerged results tie to practical suggestions on improving English teaching quality in NWA. By employing mixed approaches research method, this study combined quantitative and qualitative approaches in two phases; the survey research in phase 1 for the investigation of teachers’ perception of TBLT dealt with 475 subjects, and the survey research in phase 1 for the investigation of teachers’ belief of textbooks dealt with 463 subjects who were asked to express their perception and belief by completing questionnaires; in addition, the case study in phase 2 dealt with 30 cases through interviews and observations for cross-sectional data from cases.

The general result is that two fields are averagely rated and they share common finding in that the result in phase 1 is always higher than in phase 2 but not as specific as in phase 2. In another word, the higher results in survey research through the questionnaire appeared that teachers were more confident of their perception of TBLT and their belief of the textbooks when replying questions with available options; in phase 2, they had to answer interview questions passively and were observed in class. Besides, each field had its own typical findings and outstanding factors affecting teachers’ perception and teachers’ belief.

With regards to teachers’ perception of TBLT, research question 1.1: “How do teachers understand TBLT in term of theory?” can be reported that teachers have fair perception of TBLT; however, it is the unconscious perception. Some of the major findings are presented as follows:

• Neutral perception of TBLT

• Higher score in quantitative phase 1 than in qualitative phase 2

• Mismatch between definition and examples of a task

• No distinction between TBLT and other methods

• Incomplete cycle of a task teaching

• Teaching is in PPP manner

• Get lessons more grammatical than communicative

• Teaching grammar out of context in traditional way

• Misunderstanding of TBLT’s advantages and disadvantages

• Inability to distinguish a task from an activity and an exercise

• Perception of other teachers about TBLT is quite low

The reason is that teachers manipulate three steps teaching daily when they usually refer to teacher’s manuals which help to prepare lessons before classes. As well, this three steps teaching is popular in ELT training workshops that teachers have to participate in every summer. Qualitative data from phase 2 follows that the teachers’ understanding of TBLT inclined to TSI (Ellis, 2000, 2003; Littlewood, 2004; Silva, 2006); for, teachers would mainly have employed unfocused tasks to help students practice linguistic knowledge they had been taught before (Ellis, 2003; ; Skehan, 2003) rather than handled tasks as in TBLT. The reason may be due to threefolds: (1) teachers’ definitions of a task were simple and inclined to the synonym of an activity or an exercise in other teaching methods, not a task in TBLT; (2) Actually, in interview, teachers could hardly distinguish the difference between a task and an activity or an exercise; (3) Practically, in class observations, teachers tent to understand a task as an activity when they could not process it in a cycle of TBLT. Hence, in teachers’ perception, task is just the interchangeable name for exercise or activity, and it is not completely fit to characteristics of a task in TBLT. The study results also indicated that there are a few differences in teachers’ perception of TBLT between the groups in different provinces, with different economic conditions, or in different living areas.

Along with teachers’ perception of TBLT, research question 1.2: “What shapes teachers’ perceptions of task-based language teaching?” can be justified that among the factors affecting the results of teachers' perceptions, the teachers' perception of stages of TBLT accounted for the largest proportion, implying that most teachers certainly understand the three steps teaching but not the real TBLT. Besides, there is a correlation between teachers’ perception of TBLT with teachers’ class room practice; the fact that teacher could not apply TBLT in teaching have a big influence on their perception of this teaching method. Some of factors created this reality are problems of task implementation, problems of teaching context, problem of student’s proficiency, problems of task types in textbooks, and no specific training workshop of TBLT.

In contemplation of teachers’ belief of the current series of English textbooks, research question 2.1: “How do teachers believe in the current series of English textbooks?” can be answered that teachers have fair belief in the textbooks. Some of the major findings are presented as follows:

• Neutral belief in the textbooks

• Higher score in quantitative phase 1 than in qualitative phase 2

• Objectives are higher than student’s level

• Some inappropriate themes and topics

• Some too challenging tasks and activities

• Some overloaded content

• Long content in the limited time.

• Lack of vocabulary, pronunciation, and general knowledge

• Teaching in traditional way

Some of major reasons explaining for those findings is MOET could not anticipate the much different unfavourable condition of students in NWA when having issues the series of textbooks. Some of differences causing the difficulty for teachers to implement the textbooks are: The level of student’s proficiency is relatively low; student’s background is repeatedly unfavorable and disadvantaged, quality of tapes is not very good.

Also concerning teachers’ belief of the current series of English textbooks, research question 2.2: “What shapes teachers’ beliefs in textbooks?” can be understood that among the factors affecting the results of teachers' beliefs, the teachers' beliefs of textbook’s content accounted for the largest proportion, implying that most teachers certainly paid attention to this issue; then some other factors are teachers' beliefs of textbook’s efficiency of tasks and activities, teachers' beliefs of textbook’s teaching method. Besides, a close link between teachers' belief of textbooks with some other factors were identified, including problems of facility and equipment, problems of teaching context, problem of student’s background, problems of tasks and activities, and problems of no separated series of English textbooks for NWA students.

**12. Practical applicability, if any:**

The study contributes a deeper understanding of the secondary school teachers’ perceptions of TBLT and their beliefs of the series of English textbooks when teachers’ voice of these two fields is rarely heard in Vietnam in general and in NWA in particular. This research signals the concern for stakeholders, such as education officials, textbook designers and the NWA teachers with a number of practical issues.

With teachers of English, this research signals the concern for further activities to increase teachers’ perceptions of TBLT and their beliefs of the series of English textbooks, devoting to the increase in English teaching quality in NWA. They need to be provided regular opportunities to develop and update the knowledge of ELT methods so as for them to better design their teaching plans and work well with their class teaching. In particular, MOET should hold intensive workshops on TBLT. Together with that, teachers need to adapt teaching materials to better meet the demand of teaching contexts so as for enhancing the ELT quality.

With education officials, the results can be a reference for education officials for their proper policies on teacher development. All teachers’ voices about the two main research aspects should be seriously considered to be the implications for the ELT teaching here, in the NWA.

With textbook designers, there are cultural steoreotypes of NWA students and their conditions that need being kept pace with when textbook designers develop textbooks and supplementary books for students in this area. Hopefully, this primary research result can be somewhat effective to the forthcoming textbooks of English for NWA students if possible.

**13. Further research directions, if any:** The fulfilment of this research indicates a number of further research possibilities in theoretical, pedagogical and cultural perspectives: designing holistic units for TBLT, the supplementary knowledge and materials for secondary school teachers and for students in NWA, and some most favourable teaching methods and teaching techniques to NWA students.

**14. Thesis-related publications:**

1. Nguyen Viet Hung (2010). Task-Based Language Teaching: Some theoretical issues. *Vietnam National Linguistics 2010*, 15, 212 – 217.
2. Nguyen Viet Hung (2011). Why should we investigate secondary school teacher beliefs and teacher perceptions of English Language Teaching? *VNU Journal of Science: Foreign Languages*, 27 (2), 124 – 131.
3. Nguyen Viet Hung (2012a). A Mixed Approaches Method Used to Investigate Teacher Cognition of English Language Teaching. *English Language Teaching (Canada)*, 5 (11), 161 – 180. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/elt.v5n11p161>.
4. Nguyen Viet Hung (2012b). Mother Tongue Use in Task-Based Language Teaching Model. *English Language Teaching (Canada)*, 5 (8), 23 – 30. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/elt.v5n8p23>
5. Nguyen Viet Hung (2012c). Some theoretical issues in teacher’s cognition. *TNU Journal of Science and Technology*, 94 (6), 97 – 103.
6. Nguyen Viet Hung (2012d). Strategic Interaction: An approach of Application Task-Based Language Teaching Model of Willis. *Journal of Science of HNUE*, 57 (5), 125-136.
7. Nguyen Viet Hung (2014). Review of Notion and Framework of Task-Based Language Teaching. *International Journal of English Language and Linguistics Research*, 2 (1), 39-48. Retrieved on April 6th, 2014 from <http://www.eajournals.org/wp-content/uploads/Review-of-Notion-and-Framework-of-Task-Based-Language-Teaching.pdf>

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***Nguyen Viet Hung***