Output Enhancement in Second Language Acquisition:
Some Tasks Facilitating Intake from Input and Output with Special Reference to the Present Perfect
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Some Tasks Facilitating Intake from Input and Output with
Special Reference to the Present Perfect

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Abstract

This study was carried out to examine the connections between grammar pedagogy and task-based language teaching for the purpose of output enhancement, because little such theoretical work has been done in second language acquisition research.

To verify the connections between them, some ideas on grammar teaching were introduced compared with the concepts on communication. Grammar teaching as it has been and is practiced generally means grammar followed by its application to communication. Celce-Murcia (1991), Ellis (1993), and Long and Crookes (1992) all stress the need to reexamine the issue of form-focused instruction in classrooms where the primary focus is on communication. Long and Crookes (1992) suggest that a "focus on form" (in contrast to "focus on forms") is a crucial element in task-based language teaching, but give little guidance on how this is to be accomplished. Grammar teaching (input enhancement) in classrooms has of course been part of the process of input, and should be part of the process of output (output enhancement). Learners need to be pushed in their output by "tasks".

As focus on meaning and form is differentiated as to its relative emphasis in communication and grammar
pedagogy, so "tasks" and "drills and exercises" differ terminologically according to the extent meaning or form is emphasized in a classroom activity. For non-native speakers of English in the EFL (English as a foreign language) context to be able to say what they mean and understand what they wish to know, roles and the construction of tasks in a communicative situation are crucial in promoting the transformation of a learner's declarative or explicit knowledge into procedural or implicit knowledge when the goal of teaching English is communication, not understanding of the language.

Loschky and Bley-Vroman (1990) offer guidelines for developing grammatical tasks that entail the need to use the form in focus and that insure communicative feedback. In this study, we will propose an effective way in which grammar instruction can focus on the present perfect, a particularly difficult communicative grammatical task. We used the present perfect as the target structure because it has been known as one of the notorious problem areas for ESL/EFL learners (Feigenbaum 1981; Larsen-Freeman 1991).

Some tasks and exercises using the present perfect have been devised to help learners acquire English in a more accurate, appropriate and efficient manner based on the theoretical analysis. This study supports the importance of integrating grammar teaching into task-based language
teaching. Thus, it shows one possibility of grammar instruction within task-based language teaching toward communication.
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Introduction

The current movement toward communicative language teaching has been investigated by second language teachers and researchers. Teachers tend to give learners opportunities to use the second language (L2) in the classroom to suit the purpose of communication-oriented language teaching. The teachers usually supply learners with communicative activities soon after the appropriate grammar has been introduced, in almost every classroom, and yet learners often can not use English in real situations.

The point is that grammar is not equivalent to a communicative or proficiency orientation. Grammar is not, in itself, at the service of communication. It is certain that the grammar teaching and communicative activities are important in classroom work. What is questionable is that the grammar teaching and communicative activities are often looked upon as independent, or even in conflict with each other. To put it another way, we will show how position (1), from grammar teaching to communication, presented in Figure 1 below, differs from position (2), from communication to grammar teaching.
It is suggested here that we need to emphasize position (2) in order to promote "task-based language teaching".

In this study, we distinguish grammar in task-based language teaching (process-oriented grammar teaching) from traditional grammar teaching. The aim of traditional grammar teaching has been determined by the nature of the Japanese examination system, while that of process-oriented grammar teaching, or input enhancement (see Chapter 1 in detail), is production of the target language, that is, communication. The point is that the purpose of the language teaching is quite different from that of traditional grammar teaching.

Over the last decades a number of studies have been done on the roles of grammar teaching in the classroom (Ellis 1994; Rutherford 1987; Sharwood-Smith 1993). They have examined the importance of grammar teaching based on psycholinguistic theory. However, they have shown little inclination to introduce their findings into the classroom. Few attempts have so far been made to use "task-based
language teaching" in a concrete manner. Here, we will investigate the significance of task-based language teaching, clarify the nature of "tasks", "exercises" and "drills", and present practical tasks based on the idea of "task-based language teaching" with special reference to the present perfect as one example.
Chapter 1
Grammar Teaching

1.1 Brief Historical Background of Grammar Teaching

The teaching of grammar has a long history. It began with the learning of Latin and Greek. The teaching of grammar in SLA (second language acquisition) pedagogy has a history of at least 2,500 years (Rutherford 1987), and focus on grammatical form is probably a fundamental advantage instructed SL learners enjoy over naturalistic learners (Ellis 1994; Long 1988).

The grammar-translation method was adopted in many Japanese schools. Teaching language was taken to mean explicit explanation of the grammar, and the grammar-translation method was the main one used to teach English in Japan (Tonkyn 1994). However, the goal of learning the second language (English) has recently become communication, so that the approach has also changed to a communicative one. Stern (1992) says that communicative language teaching was discovered and discussed widely in the 1970s. Communication-oriented teaching has been emphasized because we noticed that it is not efficient to give only explicit knowledge of grammar, as this will not enable learners to use the target language. Some researchers even have doubts about or argue against grammar teaching (Krashen 1985;
Prabhu 1987), because (1) learning is distinguished from acquisition, so grammar teaching has a limited role and (2) a set of English morphemes is found to be acquired in a similar order in child L2 and adult L2. The teaching of grammar was thus considered by some as an obstacle to language use, i.e., communication.

However, evidence from communicative language classrooms that do not focus on form at all points to the following problems: (1) an insistence on absolute authenticity, (2) an exclusive focus on communication, (3) a lack of focus on form in input and instruction, and (4) a lack of emphasis on form-based feedback (Williams 1995). Some researchers also noticed that teaching grammar has some advantages in language learning. Ellis (1994) and Pica (1983) suggested that there is no effect on the route of acquisition but that there are influences on rate and accuracy. Celce-Murcia (1992), for instance, highlights her underlying assumption that working towards grammatical accuracy does not mean sacrificing fluency. Gass (1991) emphasizes that focused instruction provides a shortcut because the second language learner already has the grammar of her native language at her disposal. She notes especially that the teaching of grammar is an effective way to support language teaching and that it has merits in terms of accuracy and
rate of acquisition. If the treatment of grammatical errors in tasks (such as the tasks to be defined later) can be shown to improve both fluency and accuracy, even in the EFL (English as a foreign language) context, most teachers will surely agree that such an approach will be advantageous in helping students to learn English more efficiently.

1.2 Input Enhancement

We have looked at the grammar teaching as input in the previous section. Input is crucial for language teaching. The most common meaning for the term "input" in SLA is comprehensive: language data about the target language that the learner is exposed to in all its various manifestations. However, input is useful to the learner only if it is "comprehensible" (Krashen 1985).

Intake, however, is defined in many ways. One definition focuses on that portion of the input that learners notice and therefore take into temporary memory and which is subsequently accommodated in the learner's interlanguage system, i.e., becomes part of long-term memory (Ellis 1994). Corder (1981) refers to the part of input that has actually been processed by the learner and turned into knowledge as some kind as intake. Terrell (1986) refers to
intake from the point of view of cognitive and affective processing, making direct form-meaning connections, not "translation". Ellis (1995) clarifies how the process of acquiring L2 involves three basic procedures: (1) noticing, (2) comparison, and (3) integration. At first, learners notice something new, and then they compare the new target language with the developing system (interlanguage). These stages are called "noticing the gap" (Schmidt 1990; Ellis 1991) and are important for learners developing systems in "processing instruction" (Lee and VanPatten 1995). Finally, in the stage of integration, they involve the target item in the interlanguage as intake. Grammar teaching is an effective way to change a learner's input into intake. Sharwood-Smith (1981) insists on attention-drawing activities as "consciousness-raising" in the classroom, arguing that this does not have to involve teaching rules and grammatical paradigms. However, he refers to this by the term "input enhancement" rather than "consciousness-raising" (Sharwood-Smith 1993). The difference between the two terms is based on the viewpoint of learning. "Consciousness-raising implies that the learner's mental state is altered by the input", though "input enhancement implies only that we can manipulate aspects of the input but make no further assumptions about
the consequences of that input on the learner" (176). Lee and VanPatten (1995) label explicit instruction as "structured-input", meaning that "the grammatical form carries meaning and learners must attend to the form in order to complete the task" (101). That is, the structured-input activity has characteristics in which the learners are required to attend to the grammatical item in the input sentence, focusing on meaning, and must process the grammatical item in the input rather than produce it. What this means is that successful language acquisition cannot happen without comprehensible input. In other words, input enhancement is the way particular features of language input to learners become "salient" (Sharwood-Smith 1993: 176).

1.3 Output Enhancement

As we have seen in the previous section, input enhancement must be salient. However, Sharwood-Smith does not have any practical ideas on how to achieve this. The aim in our language teaching is communication, not only understanding of the language in itself. In order to communicate, we need a chance to practice and use the language, which is often missing in the classroom. We have tended to believe that exercises and drills were
What is lacking in current communication-oriented language teaching with its many drills and exercises? We have to give learners grammar through input enhancement and communicative activities. One of the most popular communicative activities involves information gaps, in which a learner has one piece of information and must interact with a partner so as to complete it. In other words, learners have to negotiate meaning to accomplish the given activity successfully. Long (1983) suggests that interaction among learners is more effective than giving morphologically simplified input in order to make input comprehensible. This "interaction hypothesis" claims that the process of negotiation of meaning increases comprehension. However, the gathering of information in this kind of information-gap activity is only one part of the output process. In view of the theoretical claim that comprehensible input is not sufficient for successful second language acquisition, opportunities for learners to hear nonnative speakers produce "comprehensible output" are also necessary (Swain 1985). The construction of comprehensible output has become increasingly important to current second language theory.

Clearly language teaching in the classroom has some
merits. For example, it is easy to give formal instruction directly. However, the management of a learner's production should be considered by the teacher, since one learner's input might affect another learner negatively in the case of incorrect input through interaction. We know that a failure of accuracy in the production of language among one learner negatively affects the partner learner through studies of immersion programs in Canada. According to Harley and Swain (1984), a study of some students' persistent errors, particularly in certain verb forms, at various grade levels has led to the conclusion:

The simple provision of meaningful input which is comprehensible to the learner ... while clearly necessary, is not in itself sufficient to promote productive use of a marked formal aspect of the L2 in a classroom setting. (309)

Also, "comprehensible output" (Swain 1985) is associated with both the production and the reception of language. In order to make output comprehensible, grammar teaching is significant. One of the advantages in classroom language teaching is the chance for the teacher to provide feedback. Takashima (1995c) suggested the term "output enhancement" for this, which is an adaptation of "input enhancement", as coined by Sharwood-Smith (1993), and of "output hypothesis", as coined by Swain (1985). Output enhancement
focuses on accuracy through grammar teaching and/or corrective focused feedback, that is, the management of production. At first, learners are given tasks involving "pushed output", production through communicative activities. Then, the teacher makes learners aware of a particular item, and asks them to correct their production, making requests for clarification or focused feedback. Explicit teacher correction (e.g., 'No, that's wrong.') should generally be unnecessary. It is important to create chances for learners to make errors and to receive feedback on them. However, efficient use of feedback depends on having sufficient means to locate the source of one's error. "Unfocused" feedback should thus be distinguished from traditional feedback of the error correction kind, which can be termed "Focused" feedback (① in Figure 2). The following figure presents the typical classification of feedback:

Figure 2 Comparison of feedback

```
Meaning-focused

Feedback  ------------  Focused  ①
           ------------  (= Focus on Forms)

Form-focused

           ------------  Unfocused  ②

(Adapted from Takashima 1995c: 23)
```
An important and similar distinction has been made between "focus on form" and "focus on forms" (Williams 1995). Output enhancement is included into the former. Thus, output enhancement is grammar teaching and/or "Unfocused" feedback (in contrast to "Focused" feedback) through pushed-output (② in Figure 2). Learners should have the opportunity to be pushed into output in the classroom by "tasks".

In the next chapter, let us look at drills, exercises, and tasks in theoretical detail.
Chapter 2

Differences Between "Drills and Exercises" and "Tasks"

2.1 Background of Task-based Language Teaching

Language teachers have typically provided learners with a lot of linguistic knowledge (i.e., declarative knowledge) in the classroom. This is necessary within an EFL context such as Japan, but not sufficient to enable learners to use the language. The classroom may sometimes not be an ideal place for the development of listening and speaking skills, but it may be an ideal one for grammar instruction. We might not really be able to "teach" language; we may only be able to "create conditions" in which language can be acquired by the learner (Corder 1981). Sharwood-Smith (1993) indicates there is a need for an effective way to turn learned knowledge into procedural knowledge. In order to turn declarative knowledge, what the learners know about language, into procedural knowledge, the learner's ability to actually use language in real operating conditions, learners need to be given an environment where they can use language of their own will, that is to say, "tasks", meaning focused activities (see the definition in the next section). Tasks can be a trigger for the conversion of declarative knowledge into procedural knowledge.

There has been some discussion about types of tasks among
second language researchers. White (1989) puts task types into two categories, Type A and Type B. The former is a teacher-centered and product approach, focusing on what is to be learned. The latter is a learner-centered and process approach, focusing on how the language is to be learned. Long and Crookes (1992) divide Type B syllabuses into three types, which appeared in the 1980s: (1) the procedural syllabus, (2) the process syllabus, and (3) the task syllabus. Tasks in a procedural syllabus should be intellectually challenging enough to maintain students' interest, for that is what will sustain learners' efforts at task completion, focus them on meaning and, as part of that process, engage them in confronting the task's linguistic demands (Prabhu 1987). The process syllabus is a plan for incorporating the negotiation process and, thereby, learning processes into syllabus design (Long and Crookes 1992). A third approach to course design, which takes the task as the unit of analysis, is task-based language teaching (Long 1985). Task-based language teaching bases arguments for analytic, chiefly Type B syllabuses on what is known about the processes involved in SLA. Such syllabuses require a need identification to be conducted in terms of real-world target tasks such as buying a ticket. "Pedagogic tasks" (planned and unplanned,
open and closed) are derived from the task types and sequenced to form the task-based syllabus. Consequently, these syllabuses share the same problem, sequencing and grading.

To overcome the problem, we need to identify those activities in the classroom which can be powerful and distinct to second language teaching in their own right. Yet, these should not be thought of as separate entities. Rather, we should aim to integrate them with one another as much as possible.

2.2 "Drills and Exercises" and "Tasks"

Recently, in most classrooms, drills and/or exercises, such as pattern practice, are done after the grammar has been taught and explanations of particular items have been given (explicit knowledge). It is necessary to make learners do exercises as communicative activities after giving explicit knowledge, but it is not sufficient. It is natural that students focus on a target item soon after the grammar teaching. One of the reasons they cannot use L2 in real situations is a shortage of "classroom tasks" from which they choose the form according to their own will. Thus we need to identify some practical drills, exercises, and tasks.
2.2.1 Drills and Exercises

Drills and exercises have traditionally been used in classrooms after grammar teaching, for instance, the substitution of nonsense words for any content word in a pattern. Some researchers have customarily distinguished between drills and exercises (Stern 1992), the one having only a single answer and the other being more open-ended. A drill which practices some aspect of grammar or sentence formation is often known as pattern practice in order to facilitate "automatization" (Loschky and Bley-Vroman 1990). The teacher provides some cues and learners are required to respond based on repetition, substitution, and transformation (Richards, et al. 1985). Paulston (1972) classifies drills into three types: mechanical drills, which are those during which the learner need not attend to meaning and for which there is only one correct response; meaningful drills, in which the learner must attend to the meaning of both the stimulus and the answer to complete the drill successfully, but there is only one correct response and it is known to all participants; and communicative drills, which require attention to meaning and the exchange of new information among the learners. Usually, both drills and exercises are focused on form; therefore, they are included into the same category.
2.2.2 Tasks

In contrast to drills/exercises, tasks are interpreted as having various meanings. Some scholars use "tasks" to include exercises in which grammatical accuracy is an explicit part of the job at hand. Hence, we do not apply the term "task" to such tests or exercises in grammar. The term "task" is, as Nunan (1989) puts it, "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 the meaning rather than form" (10). According to Loschky and Bley-Vroman (1990), the idea that tasks are distinguishable from exercises has been prevalent recently. "Tasks" are separate from "exercises and drills" by being more focused on meaning than form (Long 1985; Richards, et al. 1985; Nunan 1989). To be counted as a "task", the immediate criterion of success must be outside of grammar.

Different tasks can put different requirements on particular grammatical knowledge. Some researchers argue that grammatical elements should be contained in the task. For example, Skehan (1996) insists that the goal of tasks include accuracy, fluency, and complexity.² It is possible to construct tasks which involve grammatical knowledge in various ways, and to varying degrees. Loschky and Bley-
Vroman (1990) argue that tasks involve grammatical structures to three different degrees, in terms of naturalness, utility, and essentialness. They have four sets of interrelated distinctions for these relationships, diagrammed as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essential</th>
<th>Useful</th>
<th>Natural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis formation</td>
<td>Automatization</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More control</td>
<td>Less control</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension</td>
<td>Production</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Loschky and Bley-Vroman 1990: 185)

Task-essentialness causes attention to be paid to the relevant structure, and this attention facilitates initial hypothesis formation or restructuring. Hence, comprehension tasks are particularly well-suited to hypothesis formation.
and to restructuring because production tasks are comparatively less valuable as chances for learners to notice gaps in their interlanguage hypotheses about a specified structure. In other words, the goal in production tasks is likely to be limited to task-utility or task-naturalness, while in comprehension tasks, task-essentialness can be more easily achieved.

Tasks are indispensable to language learning if the goal is communication. However, according to Loschky and Bley-Vroman (1990), there is no guarantee that a task in which a structure naturally occurs will, by itself, trigger the initial acquisition of that structure, even if the structure is modelled, primed, or otherwise taught in the task. If the task which is carried out in the classroom is not interesting for learners, they may be unwilling to do it. Spontaneity is sometimes more important than accuracy. Therefore, successful tasks must have four elements: naturalness, essentialness, utility, and interest.

Types of tasks have been clarified by various researchers. Pica, et al. (1993), for example, showed five task types and their effects on learners' interactions (see Table 1 on the next page).
Table 1  Communication task types for L2 research and pedagogy analysis based on: Interactant (X/Y) relationships and requirements in communicating information (INF) to achieve task goals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task Type</th>
<th>INF holder</th>
<th>INF requester</th>
<th>INF supplier</th>
<th>INF requester-supplier relationship</th>
<th>Interaction requirement</th>
<th>Goal orientation</th>
<th>Outcome options</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jigsaw X&amp;Y</td>
<td>X&amp;Y</td>
<td>X&amp;Y</td>
<td>X&amp;Y</td>
<td>2way (XtoY &amp; YtoX)</td>
<td>+required</td>
<td>+convergent</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information gap XorY</td>
<td>YorX</td>
<td>XorY</td>
<td>XorY</td>
<td>1way&gt;2way (XtoY / YtoX)</td>
<td>+required</td>
<td>+convergent</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem-solving X=Y</td>
<td>X=Y</td>
<td>X=Y</td>
<td>X=Y</td>
<td>2way&gt;1way (XtoY &amp; YtoX)</td>
<td>-required</td>
<td>+convergent</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision-making X=Y</td>
<td>X=Y</td>
<td>X=Y</td>
<td>X=Y</td>
<td>2way&gt;1way (XtoY &amp; YtoX)</td>
<td>-required</td>
<td>+convergent</td>
<td>1+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opinion Exchange X=Y</td>
<td>X=Y</td>
<td>X=Y</td>
<td>X=Y</td>
<td>2way&gt;1way (XtoY &amp; YtoX)</td>
<td>-required</td>
<td>-convergent</td>
<td>1+/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each activity is explained as follows: in "Jigsaw", each member of a group has a piece of information needed to complete a group task; in "Information gap", (communication between two or more people) one learner has all the information needed to complete a goal, and the other is required to ask for the missing information; in "Problem-solving" members select the best choice from several alternatives in order to reach a desired goal; in "Decision-making", each member of a group exchanges and negotiates information and ideas in order to arrive at a conclusion; in "Opinion exchange", each member of a group has some limited information and must discuss a topic through negotiation. Pica, et al. (1993) insisted that closed tasks (jigsaw and information gap) tend to have more interaction than open ones (problem solving, decision making, and opinion exchange), a finding similar to that of Loschky and Bley-Vroman (1990). With regard to the issue of how to provide feedback, they argue that negotiated interaction in a closed task should generally be sufficient.

The distinctions we have drawn between drills or exercises and tasks are highlighted in the following figure:
Just as focus on meaning and form are distinguished by their relative emphasis in communication and grammar teaching, so "drills and exercises" and "tasks" differ terminologically by the degree to which meaning and form are emphasized in the classroom activities.

We do not mean to say here that drills/exercises should be ignored. Rather, we suggest that we have lacked tasks which are meaning-focused in communicative language teaching. Drills/Exercises will be "most valuable to develop automatization" of a specified structure (Loschky and Bley-Vroman 1990: 166). If we remove these form-focused activities (drills and exercises), learners will not able to understand either form or meaning, nor will they be able to progress toward communication. Thus, in this study, we would like to argue for the integration of grammar teaching into task-based language teaching.

We will next explain in detail how we used task-based
language teaching and grammar teaching for instruction on the present perfect tense.
3.1 What is the Present Perfect?

The present perfect indicates "the continuing present relevance of a past situation" (Comrie 1976). It is obvious that the present perfect is explained as a relationship between a past event and the present time of speaking (Close 1962; Leech and Svartvik 1975). When we decide whether to use the past or the present perfect, the choice depends on the speaker's point of view (Yasui 1982; Ando 1983).

Unfortunately, few texts deal this problem of the speaker's point of view. Explanations usually focus on the "have + past participle" structure and give three classifications of the present perfect, Experience (Keiken in Japanese), Continuation (Keizoku in Japanese), and Completion (Kanryo and/or Kekka in Japanese). Some linguists have classified the foci of the present perfect as follows: (1) State up to the present, (2) Indefinite past, (3) Habit in a period leading to the present, (4) Past results (Leech and Svartvik 1975; Zandvoort 1975). Some consider completion and result as the same category (Quirk, et al. 1985). Richards (1979) referred to the resultative present perfect as the simple past. Furthermore, Moy (1977) suggested the importance of judging
the present perfect not only from the adverbs employed but also the contextual factors in use.

Naturally, we found difficulty in the use of the present perfect in the ESL context. In this study, in fact, we have selected the present perfect as a target grammar item precisely because it is said to be notoriously problematic for ESL/EFL students (Feigenbaum 1981; Larsen-Freeman 1991). Oda (1990) and Takashima (1995b) also admit the difficulty of the present perfect. Because Japanese is an aspectual language by nature, learners of English are often confused by differences between tense and aspect. Oda asserts that there is a problem in the instruction of the present perfect itself in Japan. Kiba (1996) underscores this, saying that while teachers have little difficulty in teaching the present perfect, students have much difficulty in learning it. Williams (1995) argues that four elements can lead to explicit focus on form: (1) differences from L1, (2) lack of saliency or infrequency, (3) unimportance for successful communication, and (4) possibility to be misinterpreted by learners. Japanese has no present perfect. In addition, the form is not as theoretically salient as it is phonological: 'I've'. Also, the sound of 'have' has low "communicative value" (VanPatten 1985). For these reasons, we have chosen the present perfect as a test
case for effective methods of instruction leading toward communication in this study.

Takemoto (1995) found that instruction with pragmatics as input enhancement was effective in making learners understand and retain a declarative knowledge of the present perfect. She asserts that the problem is deeply related to the speaker's point of view and the lack of instruction in the pragmatic dimension. However, even if we provide learners with a declarative knowledge of pragmatics, we do not do enough. We need to see to it that learners can actually use the present perfect within a communicative context. Even if we give sufficient declarative knowledge, there is no guarantee that learners have sufficient opportunities to use the L2.

3.2 Treatment of the Present Perfect

We examine and classify the frequency of communicative activities for the present perfect according to the criteria of Paulston (1972). Surprisingly, we see no tasks among the textbooks in Japanese junior high schools. Also, except for Experience there are very few communicative drills among them (see Appendix 1). Analyzing the results according to the three classifications of the present perfect, we find that Completion (Kanryo in Japanese) in
particular rarely has drills (exercises). Takemoto (1995) noted that scores on Completion were low in the experiment test. As we see in Appendix 1, it is natural that learners were not able to get high scores on the test, because they did not have enough drills (exercises). Teachers at least have to give drills (exercises) focused on form after the grammar teaching in order to make learners use the L2 form, as long as this can be done in a real communicative context. To make sure that learners can use the target form in a real situation, we have to construct tasks for the L2 form focused on meaning.

In the next chapter, we will see how effectively such tasks and exercises can be used to lead to communication.
Chapter 4
Tasks and Exercises Facilitating/Confirming Intake from Input Toward Output

The following activities in English are recommended for implementation in junior high school. To repeat, tasks are more meaning-focused and drills/exercises more form-focused. (For an outline of the teaching plan, see Appendix 2.)

4.1 Task in order to Facilitate Learners' Intake

Activity 1

Procedure:

Stage 1: The teacher prepares two cards, Card A and Card B (see Appendix 3). The learners are divided into groups, then they are paired off with one card each. They discuss the information that their teacher has given them and whether or not it is true. Note that each learner must not look at the other’s card. First, the learner with Card A starts by repeating a complete sentence about their teacher, initiating a model dialog. For example, if their teacher's name is Miss Iyoda, then the learner with Card A says Miss Iyoda lives in Kobe now. Then the learner with Card B says She has lived in Kobe for four years, filling in the blank with Kobe, and the learner with Card A repeats
the sentence as before. Both learners repeat the sentence using the present perfect. After that, they discuss whether it is true or not of their teacher. If their guess is the same, they check the box indicating "same". If it is not the same, they check the box indicating "different". Next, the learner with Card B begins the conversation.

Stage 2: The learners confirm whether their guess is true or not by interviewing their teacher.

**Aim and interpretation:**

This task is done before formal instruction about the present perfect in order to focus the learners' consciousness on the gap between previously learned forms and a new one. This allows the learners to consciously notice the gap, which we hope will facilitate their intake processing.

From this activity, some may be reminded of the oral introduction and/or the oral interaction being carried out in the classroom. This, however, is not a "task requirement" but a "teacher requirement" (Loschky and Bley-Vroman 1990: 180). Thus, there may be insecurity if learners consciously tend to focus on the form rather than the meaning. Also, all the students may not join the activity, in the case of oral introduction/interaction.
Some students may join the interaction through exchanges of questions and answers with the teacher, though all students in the classroom may not join the activity. Through the task, on the other hand, all the learners can join the activity through learner-learner interaction. As this task is carried out before formal instruction, the learners may not understand the new form (the present perfect). They may just notice "something new" that they have never seen because they have not learned the present perfect yet. They can perform the activity without exactly knowing what the form means. They go on processing and performing the task depending on the minimum information, e.g., live, Kobe, and four years. In other words, this is a meaning-focused activity, i.e., a task. Also, according to the criteria of Loschky and Bley-Vroman (1990), this is a comprehension task, which can be more easily achieved in task-essentialness.
4.2 Exercises to Facilitate Intake Comparing the Present Perfect and the Past Tense

Activity 2

Procedure:

The teacher hands each learner a sheet with written dialogues (see Appendix 4). The learners read it, choose an answer from the alternatives consisting of the present perfect or the past tense according to the context, and think of the reason the choice is appropriate.

Aim and interpretation:

This activity is more form-focused. The exercise aims to reconfirm knowledge of the present perfect and the past tense after formal instruction, comparing the difference. For instance, learners have to choose \( a: I \) dropped (the past) in number 1, because Kenji has the wallet when talking with Miss Iyoda. In other words, Kenji's point of view lies in the past. Learners can tightly connect the form to the meaning as they have to recognize this speaker's consciousness in the dialogue. They have to think about why it is the best expression. The grammar teaching in the classroom must stress the difference between the present perfect and the past tense from the speaker's point of view.
before this exercise.

4.2.2 Activity 3

Procedure:

Stage 1: The teacher prepares two cards, Card A and Card B (see Appendices 5-1 and 5-2). The learners are divided into groups, and then into pairs. Each member of a pair has a different card which has an information gap. The experiences of their teachers are printed on the card. The learners choose the present perfect, the past tense, or the future tense according to the given adverbs.

For example, the learner with Card A asks the learner with Card B, Has Miss Iyoda (their teacher's name) written a fan letter? Then, the learner with Card B says, Yes, she has because s/he finds the adverb "two years ago", which indicates a point in the past. The learner with Card A confirms this utterance by saying something such as Oh, has she? The learner with Card B is required to answer She wrote one to Hikaru-Genji two years ago, because the adverb ago is not used with the present perfect. Next, they take turns and the learner with Card B begins the conversation.

Stage 2: The learners proceed to write down full sentences, by which they can confirm the dialogues which they have carried out (see Appendix 5-3).
Aim and interpretation:

The aim of these activities is to enhance learners' intake of the use of the present perfect after formal instruction. They re-construct their knowledge and distinguish the new item, the present perfect, from the previously learned past tense and the future tense. The newly-learned form is involved in a developing system, which is called "restructuring" (Loschky and Bley-Vroman 1990). Through these activities, both the teacher and the learners themselves confirm the learners' intake. This differs from traditional grammar practice by mixing already learned items with new ones. Traditional practice focuses on the new item in communicative activities soon after formal instruction. The learners look at the adverbs of time and choose the right form of the verb, though they have to think of the meaning. Thus, these activities are focused more on form than meaning. They are exercises, not tasks.

4.3 Additional Exercise in order to Further Facilitate Intake

Activity 4

Procedure:

The teacher hands out a sheet printed with dialogues (see Appendix 6). The learners fill in the blanks.
According to learners' level, we can give single words or alternatives. (The sentence under each underlined part is the sample answer.)

**Answer and Interpretation:**

Number 1, *I've come here (to help you)* is preferred to *I came here (to help you)*. It emphasizes that the speaker's intention is to help him from now on. That is, it means *I'm here to help you*. Number 2, *I've been ill for three days* is the best expression because Superman is still sick now. Number 3, either *I was sleeping for 10 hours yesterday or I slept for 10 hours yesterday* is the right expression. Superman separates the event that occurred yesterday from the present, and in the case of the continuous present he remembers a past state. If he chooses the past tense, he merely indicates the fact. This exercise makes learners compare the present perfect to the past tense, the present perfect to the present continuous tense, and the present perfect and the other items. In this way, the learners will be able to grasp the connection between these forms and the speaker's point of view.
4.4 Task in Order to Confirm Learners' Intake

Activity 5

Procedure:

This activity requires learners to choose new occupations for familiar teachers. The learners form groups and are handed sheets which contain the information about Mr. Kiba, Mr. Takashima, Ms. Terakawa, Ms. Taniguchi, and Mr. Maeda in the present perfect (see Appendix 7). Learners are requested to choose who they think is the right person for the new jobs listed at the bottom, here a movie star, a soccer player, a zoo keeper, a newscaster, or a nurse. The information about the five teachers includes a distractor so that the learners must puzzle out their choices and discuss them with the others. For instance, to select the teacher to become a zoo keeper, they must read and understand the text. Then, they may get confused in choosing Mr. Kiba, who has kept dogs and cats, because they will find that Ms. Taniguchi has lived with insects.

Interpretation:

On the printed sheet, the text is in the present perfect. However, the learners are forced to direct their consciousness to the meaning rather than the form so as to achieve the goal, assigning the teachers' jobs. That is,
this activity is comparatively meaning-focused, a task. In using tasks, learners have to focus more on meaning than on form, and choose the appropriate form judging from the context. In practice, the learners do not have to use the present perfect, but they will tend to select the form through the appropriate context by themselves. What should be noted here is not that tasks make learners use the target item soon after implementation, but that tasks help learners absorb it efficiently.

Also, if learners make some mistakes during the task, the teacher can focus on the form and (indirectly) correct it as focused feedback (output enhancement), because this task is a closed production task. Tasks become exercises in this case. According to the criteria of Loschky and Bley-Vroman (1990), this task is limited to essentialness because learners can perform the target item.

4.5 Summary

Our tasks (Activity 1 and Activity 5) are both closed ones because the provision for feedback is easy and likely to be successful. The former is designed as a comprehension task and the latter as a production task.

Activity 1 is an essentially meaning-focused task to facilitate intake. Activity 2 and Activity 3 are more
form-focused tasks to facilitate intake. Activity 4 is a more form-focused task to confirm intake, and Activity 5 is a more meaning-focused task to confirm it. Figure 5 outlines our conceptualization of exercises and tasks.

**Figure 5**  
**Exercises and Tasks in Processing-Oriented Grammar**

input $\rightarrow$ intake $\rightarrow$ developing system $\rightarrow$ output  
($=$interlanguage$)$

↑

Activity 1 (task)  Activities 2 & 3 & 4 (exercises)  
Activity 5 (task)

In sum, we need to recognize that each activity has a part to play. Both exercises and tasks are needed in the classroom, because exercises facilitate automatization and tasks contribute to restructuring.

These activities are effective not only in helping learners to use the language but also to understand the people around them. Traditional discussion questions can be supplemented by a task-based activity in which each step identifies the layer involved in discussing a topic. That is, the final goal in these activities is to help learners know how to use the present perfect communicatively, among other things, and to help them know the people around them.
as well.

Task-based language teaching can be a vehicle for instruction in other types of content or knowledge at the same time as it addresses language acquisition. Learners come to know their teachers and other learners by means of carrying out these activities. Foster and Skehan (1996) propose that "familiarity" should be one cognitive factor concerned with limiting "task difficulty". In designing tasks, we should unite them organically, and then select the appropriate one for our purpose. Furthermore, successful task-based language teaching requires giving clear directions before task implementation. To reduce task pressure, using visual devices (e.g., video) is helpful for learners.
Chapter 5
Conclusions

5.1 Conclusions

In this study, we have outlined an approach to the teaching of grammar from a communicative perspective using tasks. We have tied together grammar teaching and task-based language teaching as pedagogical tools. Also, we have noted the need to recognize the differences between drills/exercises and tasks and to utilize them according to the learners' proficiency level. Our approach to task design allows structures to be learned implicitly, rather than requiring explicit instruction (e.g., explanation of grammatical rules). Especially in situations such as the Japanese EFL context, drills/exercises and tasks which facilitate natural processing should be recognized as having distinct important roles in the classroom, used in an appropriate way. Similar to input enhancement, output enhancement ("Unfocused" feedback) should be carried out in tasks.

We focused on the present perfect here because it is a difficult concept for Japanese students to understand and to use. In order to overcome this problem, we have suggested paying attention to aspectual differences between Japanese and English as well as the speaker's point of
view.

We have stressed the need to focus on form in task-based language teaching and have outlined procedures for accomplishing this. The essential building-blocks for communicative language teaching occur from the earliest stages of classroom language learning. We hope that the proposals and suggestions made here may be helpful for instruction of the present perfect.

5.2 Implications for Teachers

Now, let us summarize some important points gained from our study and their implications for the classroom.

1. We should recognize the differences between tasks and drills/exercises and use them so as to meet different purposes, because tasks can contribute to restructuring and drills/exercises to automatization.

2. We should utilize the comparison of previously known structures to the new form in providing procedural knowledge as input enhancement.

3. We should identify the goal as communication, whether we use task-based language teaching or form-centered language teaching. We need to integrate task-based and grammar teaching (both focus on form and focus on forms).
4. We should try to reexamine the role of feedback, especially unfocused feedback, output enhancement (in contrast to focused feedback) in task implementation.

5.3 Further Study

In this study, we have tried to examine and present a way of changing declarative knowledge into implicit knowledge through tasks. We do not, however, propose that all SL/FL instruction be either task-based, or form-centered. Rather, this study shows the significance of grammar teaching in a task-based approach.

Naturally, it has some limitations. First, this study is only a proposal. Though our proposal is based on theoretical analysis, it is not ideal. In order to investigate the effect of task-based language teaching, we should actually carry out this study in the classroom (in preparation). Second, we have suggested that task-based language teaching be focused on the present perfect, because this form presents a processing problem for the Japanese from the aspectual viewpoint (Oda 1990; Takashima 1995b). We also need to develop more tasks and drills/exercises in other structures, and conduct research on their actual influence and effectiveness (Ellis 1993; Larsen-Freeman 1991). Third, evaluation should be considered task-based
language teaching. The effect of testing on teaching and learning is known as backwash, which can be either harmful or beneficial (Hughes 1989). Lastly, we did not touch on feedback in detail, though we stressed its significance in tasks as output enhancement. We have to analyze when, how, and what type of feedback is effective in tasks.

If such research can overcome the limitations of the present study, we will have determined a better way to enhance appropriate output. We hope that these findings and the suggestions that we have made here may be helpful for instruction of the present perfect and task-based language teaching in Japan.
Notes

1 Focus on form and focus on forms (Williams 1995): "Focus on form" involves alternating in some principled way between focus on meaning and focus on form. It occurs when instruction follows a task-based syllabus, but focuses a learner's attention on specific linguistic properties in the course of carrying out communicative activities. In contrast, "focus on forms" means instruction that seeks to isolate linguistic forms in order to teach and test them. This occurs when language teaching is based on a structural syllabus.

2 Accuracy, fluency, and complexity: Foster and Skehan (1996) clarify the effects of three different conditions and three different implementation conditions for each task. According to their investigation, if learners have planning time, whether it be detailed or not, they can get high scores in terms of fluency, complexity, and accuracy. This article suggests that fluency and complexity should grow together, while accuracy develops alone. In other words, to give learners accuracy, we need to give formal instruction.

3 A report on language difficulty in the learning and the teaching of grammar: Kiba (1996) elicited responses on the
difficulties in learning grammar among university and high school students and in teaching grammar among high school teachers using a questionnaire. It required the students and teachers to choose five easy items and five difficult ones from 17 items (e.g., A: Five Sentence Patterns, B: Articles, C: Nouns and Pronouns). For students, the perfect tense was difficult to understand, while it was rather easy for teachers to teach. This kind of mismatch is reflected in language learning, according to Nunan (1995).
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### [Appendix 1]

#### Types of Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Textbook</th>
<th>Continuation</th>
<th>Experience</th>
<th>Completion</th>
<th>Sum</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Drill</td>
<td>Task</td>
<td>Drill</td>
<td>Task</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mec</td>
<td>Mea</td>
<td>Com</td>
<td>Mec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columbus</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crown</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everyday</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horizon</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One World</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunshine</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sum</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:**
- Mec = mechanical drill
- Mea = meaningful drill
- Com = communicative drill
- Tsk = task
## Teaching Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Aim</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Activity 1 (Task)</td>
<td>10 min.</td>
<td>Information-Gap</td>
<td>To notice the Gap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal Instruction</td>
<td>20 min.</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>To Facilitate Intake for Restructuring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 2 (Exercise)</td>
<td>5 min.</td>
<td>Choosing the Alternatives</td>
<td>To Confirm Intake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 3 (Exercises)</td>
<td>10 min.</td>
<td>Information-Gap Writing-Out</td>
<td>To Confirm Intake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 4 (Exercise)</td>
<td>10 min.</td>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>To Confirm Intake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 5 (Task)</td>
<td>5 min.</td>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>To Confirm Intake</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
[Appendix 3]

<TASK>

[ CARD A ]
< Stage 1 >

Check off the statements you think are true based on what you know about your teacher.

- same
- different

☐ (Teacher's name) lives in Kobe now.
☐ He/She has often visited ______.
☐ He/She caught a cold yesterday.
☐ He/She has bought ______.
☐ He/She read "Botchan" three years ago.
☐ He/She has studied ______.

[ CARD B ]
< Stage 1 >

Check off the statements you think are true based on what you know about your teacher.

- same
- different

☐ He/She has lived in ______ for four years.
☐ He/She visited Sydney two months ago.
☐ He/She has caught ______.
☐ He/She bought a new car last week.
☐ He/She has read _______ three times.
☐ He/She studies Chinese a long time ago.

<Model dialog>
A: Miss Iyoda (teacher's name) lives in Kobe now.
B: She has lived in Kobe for four years.
A: She has lived in Kobe for four years.
I think it's {false / true}.
B: {I think so, too. / I don't think so. / I agree. / I don't agree.}
(Check the box.)
Directions: Read the dialogues, choose the alternatives that best express your thinking, and then explain in detail what you were thinking.

1. Miss Iyoda’s boyfriend is Kenji. They are eating lunch at McDonald’s as usual. After checking ....

Miss Iyoda: What’s the matter with your wallet?
Kenji: Why?
Miss Iyoda: Isn’t it the wallet I gave you last Christmas? It looks different.
Kenji: Well, ... in fact, three days ago I dropped it.
Miss Iyoda: Really? Where?
Kenji: I’m very sorry ..., [a: I dropped, b: I’ve dropped] it. I dropped it in the toilet.

2. Miss Iyoda and Andy, the ALT, are good friends. They meet at the shoe cupboard.

Miss Iyoda: You look unhappy. What’s the matter?
Andy: I need a watch because I have a date today, but [a: I lost b: I’ve lost] mine. If I’m late, Seiko will be angry with me.
Miss Iyoda: That’s too bad! Why don’t you borrow mine?
Andy: Oh, thanks. Can I?
Miss Iyoda: Oh, wait a minute! Did you say ”a date with Seiko”? On second thoughts I guess you’d better not take it.
### [Appendix 5-1]  
**<EXERCISE>**

**Stage 1: Information-gap Activity**

**[CARD A]**

You are an FBI agent. Your mission is to collect the following eight pieces of information regarding our dear Miss Jyoda. Fill in the blanks and make dialogues like the model dialog at the bottom.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Things that have been or will be done</th>
<th>Time, Place, etc.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>written a fan letter?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>be an English teacher?</td>
<td>never</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>sent a love letter?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Mr. Children yesterday</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>three times</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>seen a ghost in school?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Mt. Rokko with her boyfriend next</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Model dialog**

A: Has Miss Jyoda written a fan letter?  
B: Yes, she has.  
A: Oh, has she?  
B: She wrote one to Hikaru-Genji two years ago.
[Appendix 5-2]
<EXERCISE>

Stage 1: Information-gap Activity

[ CARD B ]
You are an FBI agent. Your mission is to collect the following eight pieces of information regarding our dear Miss lyoda. Fill in the blanks and make dialogues like the model dialog at the bottom.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Things that have been or will be done</th>
<th>Time, place, etc.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>to Hikaru-Genji</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>two years ago</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>eaten frog legs in France?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>1994~</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>been to a rock concert?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>tomorrow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>been broken-hearted?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td>often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>climbed a mountain?</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Model dialog
A: Has Miss lyoda written a fan letter?
B: Yes, she has.
A: Oh, has she?
B: She wrote one to Hikaru-Genji two years ago.
[Appendix 5-3]

<Exercise>

Stage 2: Writing-Out Activity

Next write down your information exactly as you have jointly collected it.

1 Miss Iyoda ________________________________.
2 She ________________________________.
3 She ________________________________.
4 She ________________________________.
5 She ________________________________.
6 She ________________________________.
7 She ________________________________.
8 She ________________________________.

<Sample Answer Keys>

1: Miss Iyoda wrote a fan letter to Hikaru-Genji two years ago.

2: She never ate frog legs in France./ She has never eaten frog legs in France.

3: She has been an English teacher since 1994.
[Appendix 6]
<Exercise>

Directions: You are Superman (Supergirl). Translate Superman (Supergirl)'s words into English.


あなた：「助けにきたよ。もうだいじょうぶだ。」
(You: I'm all right now.
[I've come here to help you.]

男の子：「ありがとう、スーパーマン（スーパーガール）！」
(Boy: Thank you, Superman (Supergirl).)

2. Even Superman (Supergirl) catches a cold. You say to yourself.

あなた：「この3日間調子が悪いなあ。だから、飛べないのかな。」
(You: I can't fly.
[I've been ill for three days.]

友達：「今日は歩いて帰ったら！」
(Friend: You had better walk home today!)

3. On your way to the newspaper office, you meet your friend.

友達：「どう、元気になった？」
(Friend: How are you today?)

あなた：「昨日は10時間も寝ていたよ。とても元気だ、ありがとう。」
(You: I was sleeping for 10 hours yesterday./ I slept for 10 hours yesterday.}
[Appendix 7]
<TASK>

The Right Experience for the Job

Go through the secret texts of five familiar teachers in our school. Discuss which teachers you would transfer to the new jobs listed at the bottom on the basis of their past experience. If necessary, ask your teacher or another student in a low voice to explain any difficult vocabulary.

Mr. Kiba, aged 45
- Has been married twice, and has two children.
- Has kept five dogs and four cats.
- Has joined baseball games in his town.

Mr. Takashima, aged 40
- Has been married, but has no children.
- Has lived in Holland, the U.S.A. and Germany.
- Has acted in some plays in his youth.

Ms. Terakawa, aged ??
- Has been married for twenty-five years, and has no children.
- Has visited Canada, France and Italy.
- Has worked as a part-time reporter at NHK.

Ms. Taniguchi, aged 29
- Has been married, and has three children.
- Has done voluntary work a few times.
- Has lived with many kinds of insects such as beetles, moths, and ants.

Mr. Maeda, aged 25
- Has never married, and has no children.
- Has won the first prize in the triathlon race three times.
- Has played football in England for five years.

<Possible Jobs>
Movie star
Soccer player
Zoo keeper
Newscaster
Nurse