

The Effectiveness and Feasibility of Instructing with Dictogloss-J in an EFL Context

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Abstract

This study¹ focuses on the effectiveness of dictogloss-J, a revised version of dictogloss (Wajnryb, 1990) for Japanese students, which requires the reconstruction of a listening text, focusing on certain grammatical structures in a shorter and simpler way. A particular structure, the present perfect tense, was used as the main focus. Students learned either by individually or cooperatively reconstructing a text after listening to it.

Based on pilot research (Imai, Sugiura, & Takashima, 2018) conducted in 2017, three groups were compared from the perspectives of (1) individual versus cooperative work (Group A versus Groups B and C) and (2) the timing of grammar instruction, either before or after reconstruction of the text given aurally. Learning was measured by (a) multiple-choice grammar tests, (2) questionnaires, and (3) reflection sheets. The participants were 179 ninth grade junior high school students.

The results have important pedagogical implications for the timing of explicit grammar instruction, the role of collaborative work in pairs, and the efficacy of focused tasks.

Key words: dictogloss-J, collaborative work, languaging, Japanese EFL context

1. Introduction

There are various collaborative activities for L2 classrooms that elicit output and also promote discussion about language forms (cf., Nassaji & Fotos, 2011). One such activity is dictogloss (Wajnryb, 1990). Wajnryb states that this is “a task-based procedure designed to help language-learning students towards a better understanding of how grammar works on a text basis” (p. 6). Through dictogloss, learners are encouraged to reconstruct their own text cooperatively after listening to a passage, and this is designed to promote their metalinguistic awareness through collaborative dialogue. After receiving a teacher’s explicit feedback, they are able to deepen their understanding of a target structure. That is, dictogloss enables students to pay attention to a grammatical form as well as to a message.

Based on our research conducted in 2017 (Imai, Sugiura, & Tadashima, 2018), we propose a modified dictogloss, dictogloss-J, as an effective method of cultivating students’ communicative abilities.

2. Rationale and Theoretical Background

2.1 Introducing Dictogloss

Dictogloss was first introduced by Wajnryb (1990). As the name suggests, it is an amalgam of a dictation and a gloss, or an explanation, consisting of four stages. It focuses on receptive as well as productive activities. Some particular target structures are contrived in a text, and after students have listened to it, they are asked to re-make the text, not verbatim but in ways that lead them to use the target structures.

In Stage 1, the preparation stage, which takes 20 minutes, learners are given a topic and some new vocabulary from the text, including words that are possibly difficult for them to infer. The total number of words in the text varies according to the level. In Stage 2, which takes 5 minutes, a short and dense text is read to the learners twice at normal speed. As it is being read, the learners jot down key words and phrases. At this stage, the primary focus of attention is on meaning. In Stage 3, which takes 30 minutes, learners work in small groups and strive to reconstruct their own version of the text from their shared resources. Dictogloss does not simply rely on the learners' memories, as they are not asked to reconstruct the text word for word; rather, they are required to retell the story from their own resources in English. In Stage 4, which takes 30 to 45 minutes, learners analyze, compare and improve on their texts based on shared discussions regarding grammatical accuracy as well as the meaning of the text. Thus, the total time needed to complete a dictogloss is from 85 to 100 minutes.

2.2 Effectiveness of the Dictogloss

The effectiveness of teaching with dictogloss has been pointed out, for instance, by Nassaji and Fotos (2011), who summarized a number of advantages:

To complete the dictogloss, learners need to communicate and help each other to reconstruct the passage. Participants should reconstruct the text as accurately as possible. This requires them to engage in extensive discussion about the appropriate lexical and grammatical forms. Thus, the task pushes learners to reflect on their own language output and get engaged in meta-talk, or talk about language. (p. 109)

Wajnryb (1990) claims that the key to the approach through dictogloss to grammar is interaction:

Through active learner involvement, students come to confront their own strengths and weaknesses in English language use. In so doing, they find out what they do not know, then they find out what they need to know. It is through this process that they improve their language skills. (p. 10)

Doughty and Williams (1998) also mention that collaborative metatalking during dictogloss engages learners in syntactic rather than semantic processing, which may be necessary for interlanguage restructuring to occur. Swain (1998) argues that dictogloss creates opportunities for learners to demonstrate metatalk,

which succeeds in holding their attention and focusing it on their own language use.

In sum, dictogloss is designed to focus learners' attention on language forms in relation to meaning, along with the contexts in which the forms are used. As learners work through dictogloss, they are asked to discuss grammatical features as well as rules for accuracy during reconstruction of the text. That is, in order to complete a semantically meaningful text, the act of discussing uses of grammatically appropriate forms is carried out simultaneously. Loewen (2011) notes that learners will encounter difficulties in accurately producing the forms needed to convey their intended meanings as they work through the reconstruction. At the same time, they will notice gaps between their own interlanguage resources and the language necessary to reconstruct the text. This process is necessary for their interlanguage to develop.

2.3 Introducing Dictogloss-J as an Alternative

Considering the time restrictions and the number of English lessons available per week (50 minutes per lesson, four times a week) in schools in Japan, it is not feasible to implement dictogloss as it was originally conceived. It is, therefore, necessary to modify it to suit these Japanese constraints (see 2.1).

In the modified dictogloss, dubbed "dictogloss-J," in Stage 1, in order to reduce students' cognitive load and in light of their small vocabulary, new words are basically not introduced, which is contrary to the original plan developed by Wajnryb. Another modification is that unfamiliar topics are avoided. In yet another procedural modification, the topic of the text is presented orally by the teacher within 2 minutes. In Stage 2, the text is read out loud three times, which usually takes 5 minutes. The first time, students are simply asked to listen to the text to grasp the content, without taking notes. The second and third times, they are required to jot down some key words and phrases, or whatever they think important for reconstruction of the text. In Stage 3, the reconstruction stage, which takes about 12 minutes, students are encouraged to develop their text in pairs. Especially during this stage, they are expected to cooperatively reconstruct the text semantically as well as grammatically; this process has been called "languaging" (Swain, 1985).² Stage 4, the final stage, involves analysis and correction with or without feedback, which takes 20 minutes.

The total amount of time needed for dictogloss-J is thus about 40 minutes, one half the time required in the original format. It is therefore feasible in the Japanese EFL context, taking up about one lesson period.

This study focuses on this revised dictogloss-J and its efficacy.

3. Experiment

3.1 Target Structure and Subjects

The target structure in this study was the present perfect tense,³ which is considered difficult for most

2 A term coined by Swain (1985) relating to the cognitive process of negotiating and producing meaningful, comprehensible output as part of language learning. Swain and Lapkin (2011) explains that "the term languaging characterizes language as a process (verb) rather than a product (noun)" (p. 2).

3 It is impossible to examine the correct use of one particular structure. This study naturally aims at appropriate uses of the present perfect tense in comparison with other such tense-related structures as the past, present and progressive.

second and foreign language learners (Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman, 1999). Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman suggest that this form is often best sorted out at the level of discourse, not through sentence-level contrasts.

The subjects in this study were ninth grade public junior high school students, fourteen or fifteen years old. The target structure was taught at the beginning of their school year, in May, and the study was carried out from October to December. The total number of students involved was 179.

3.2 Research Assumptions

Our research assumptions were as follows:

1. Collaborative work will lead to discussion about meaning, form and use. In order to examine this assumption, collaborative work in pairs was compared with individual work only.
2. Collaborative work in pairs should be assigned after explicit grammar explanations. Beginning-level students do not have enough metalinguistic knowledge to discuss grammar and to correct themselves.

Assumptions 1 and 2 were examined by comparing scores on multiple-choice grammar tests (pre-, post-, and delayed post-tests). In addition, students' motivation regarding English lessons and attitudes toward communication were examined through pre- and post-questionnaires and reflection sheets.

3.3 Procedures

Data collection took place over a nine-week period from the beginning of October to the middle of December in 2018. Data collection procedures are depicted in Figure 1 below.

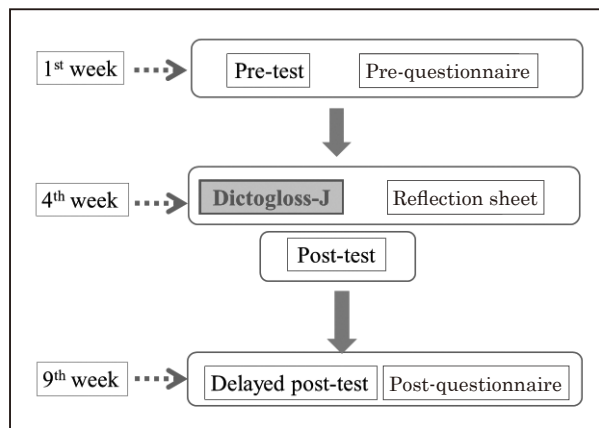


Figure 1. Procedures for data collection in the experiment.

In the first week, a pre-test and a questionnaire were administered to see how well the students grasped the present perfect tense, and to gauge the extent to which they were motivated to study English and to use it for communication.

In the fourth week, a post-test was administered in order to determine immediate effects, followed by a reflection sheet which was distributed to evaluate the degree of students' participation in the lesson. In the ninth week, a delayed post-test was administered to find residual effects. These three kinds of tests were considered to be important in order to assess differences in the students' degree of comprehension of the appropriate use of the target structure, the present perfect tense.

Each item on these multiple-choice grammar tests was in a dialogue format between A and B. Students were required to choose the most appropriate answer from among four alternatives to complete the dialogue. In question 2, for instance, A is asking B, in Japanese, if B has been doing different part-time jobs, and B is to answer in English by choosing the most appropriate form according to the context. The test items are constructed so that A can make up a context in Japanese that will not interfere with B choosing the most appropriate form among the four options. A translation of A's question is given in parentheses for convenience.

Q2	<p>A: 色々なアルバイトをしているんだってね。 (You have had different part-time jobs, haven't you?)</p> <p>B: Well, I () five different jobs since last year. ① do ② did ③ was doing ④ have done</p>
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Each item, in other words, is a problem involving a choice among the present, past, present perfect, and past progressive tenses. The total number of questions was 28, and all students finished the test within 15 minutes.

In the fourth week, dictogloss-J was implemented in Groups A, B, and C. The results were compared and examined. The differences in teaching methods among the three groups are shown in Figure 2 below.

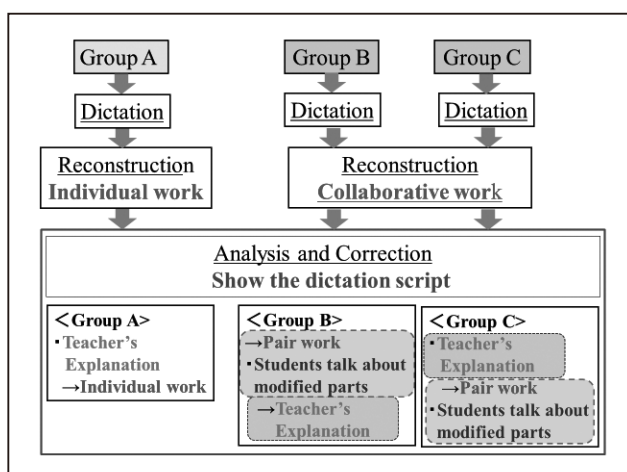


Figure 2. Different teaching methods among the three groups.

After the dictation stage, which was the same for all the groups, the main difference was that the students in Group A did reconstructions alone, while the students in Groups B and C did them in pairs. More concretely, those in Group A reconstructed their version of the text individually, while those in Groups B and C were requested to interact with each other in pairs to reconstruct their version of the text collaboratively.

In the analysis and correction stage, while the students in Group A received the teacher's explanation, the two collaborative groups, B and C, followed two different procedures. In Group B, the pair work preceded the teacher's explanation, and in Group C, the pair work followed the teacher's explanation.

In the teacher's explanation section, Groups A and C received the dictation script followed by the teacher's explanation of specific grammar structures. However, those in Group A analyzed and corrected their reconstruction individually, in accordance with the teacher's instructions, and those in Group C were asked to discuss their versions collaboratively after the grammar explanation by the teacher. Those in Group B were asked to interact and discuss collaboratively before the grammar explanation by the teacher. The 179 participating students were broken down into 36 in Group A, 72 in Group B and 71 in Group C.

3.4 Focused Dictation Script

Quality and quantity, especially through frequent input, are crucial in language learning (Larsen-Freeman, 1975; Kartal & Sarigul, 2017). In dictation, the reading speed also determines the degree of comprehension. Naturally, the average speaking rate varies according to the purpose of a person's speech. In everyday conversation, 100–150 wpm (words per minute) is common. Yamane and Yamane (2017), cited by Yasunishi (2017), notes that an ABC newscaster on TV typically speaks at a rate of around 163 to 198 wpm, while the speakers in the listening section of the Common Entrance Examination for Universities in Japan use a rate of 155 to 160 wpm. Tauroza and Allison (1990) says that 140 wpm is appropriate for lectures to non-native speakers.

In this study, we set 110 wpm as an appropriate speed, based on various textbook readings at school. A text of 172 words was prepared and was recorded at an average rate of 108 wpm. To create a text, an 'input flood' technique was utilized, providing multiple exposures to the target structure. It was therefore a focused text, drawing the learners' attention to the targeted linguistic form. The text presented the structure in three different ways: (1) a situation that began at a prior point in time and continues into the present, (2) an action occurring (or not occurring) at an unspecified prior time that has current relevance, and (3) an action that occurred over a prior period of time and that is completed at the moment of speaking. These three different structures were underlined and correspondingly numbered (1) to (3).

Script:

Hi, everyone. I'm Hide. I'm a teacher in Yokohama. I have taught English for 20 years.₍₁₎ I have lived in Yokohama for 25 years.₍₁₎ I have a friend in New York. Have you been to New York?₍₂₎ I have.₍₂₎ I have been there three times to meet my brother.₍₂₎ Hideo. Hideo lives in Yokohama now. He has just come back from New York.₍₃₎ and Hideo and I live together in Yokohama. He is a computer programmer, and he has worked for a computer company for 10 years.₍₁₎ He worked in New York for two years. One day, he took me to a Japanese restaurant in New York. I ate sushi with corn flakes, and udon with broccoli. Have you ever eaten sushi with corn flakes,₍₂₎ or udon with broccoli? They were interesting *washoku*. There are many books in English about *washoku* in bookstores. I have already read 3 books about *washoku*,₍₃₎ and I have started to read a fourth book.₍₃₎ I think *washoku* has become very popular all over the world.₍₃₎

4. Results and Analyses

4.1 Grammar Tests

By implementing dictogloss-J, in combination with the grammar explanation before or after the English dictation script was given, the students' understanding of the target structure, the present perfect tense, was measured. At the same time, the efficacy of individual and cooperative work through languaging to reconstruct the text was compared.

The results were examined by statistically analyzing the data from the 28-item multiple-choice grammar tests. An ANOVA was calculated to find significant differences among the tests (= the pre-test and the post-test, the post-test and the delayed post-test, the pre-test and the delayed post-test) and between the groups (on the pre-, the post- and the delayed post-tests).

There were no overall differences among the groups ($p = .947$), which indicates that all the average test scores in groups can be interpreted as the same at any point. Therefore, at the outset, all the groups were considered to be equivalent in understanding the present perfect tense in contrast with the present and the past tenses. There was no interaction effect between the test and the group. However, significant differences were found between the pre-test and the delayed post-test in all the groups, Group A ($p = .007$), Group B ($p = .007$), and Group C ($p = .013$). This indicates that significant improvements were found five weeks after the instruction of dictogloss-J (= residual effect). The results on the grammar tests for 28 items are shown in Table 1.

Table 1
Means and Standard Deviations on the Multiple-choice Grammar Tests

Group	Pre-test		Post-test		Delayed		<i>p</i> Pre – Delayed
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
A	15.78	5.91	16.86	6.37	17.64	5.74	※
B	15.97	5.19	16.53	5.46	16.99	5.67	※
C	16.03	4.95	17.01	5.82	17.24	5.62	※

(Note) Maximum score: 28

※ ⇒ statistically significant ($p < .05$)

Among the 28 items, 13 dealt solely with the present perfect, with three different meanings, as described in 3.4. First, a one-way ANOVA indicated no significant differences in the pre-test among the three groups ($p = .592$). Another repeated measures ANOVA was run, and there were no overall significant differences among the groups, but significant differences were found among the three tests. Further analyses showed that though no significant differences were found between the three tests, in Groups B ($p = .046$) and C ($p = .033$), significant differences (= improvements) were found between the pre-test and the delayed post-test, as shown in Table 2. This indicates that the effect lasted at least five weeks after the instruction.

Table 2
Means and Standard Deviations on the Multiple-choice Grammar Tests for the Present Perfect

Group	Pre-test		Post-test		Delayed		<i>p</i> Pre – Delayed
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
A	7.03	2.81	7.58	2.82	7.69	2.89	ns
B	6.58	2.62	6.94	2.89	7.19	2.94	※
C	6.63	2.49	7.21	2.96	7.28	2.83	※

(Note) Maximum Score: 13

※ ⇒ statistically significant ($p < .05$) ns ⇒ no significance

4.2 Analyses Based on the Grammar Items

Table 3 shows the percentage of the 13 questions answered correctly in terms of the present perfect tense on the pre-, the post- and the delayed post-test. The shaded parts show higher percentages (more than 70%), and the parts with banding patterns lower percentages (less than 30%). Except for the use of different nouns and proper nouns, the 13 questions were basically the same in all three tests. The ordering of the test questions, however, was changed in all the tests, which is why the same item was numbered differently, e.g., the item numbered 2 on the pre-test was numbered 7 on the post-test and 20 on the delayed post-test. As was mentioned in 3.3, each question was presented in a dialogue between A and B. The utterances of A were written in Japanese in the original test, though they are here translated into English in parentheses for convenience. Students were required to choose the most appropriate answer from four options to complete the dialogue.

Table 3
The Percentage of Questions Answered Correctly in Terms of the Present Perfect (%)

Pre-test			Post-test			Delayed		
No.	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	No.	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	No.	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
2	73	0.44	7	73	0.44	20	77	0.42
10	21	0.41	1	23	0.42	4	21	0.41
12	76	0.43	4	83	0.38	8	80	0.40
14	65	0.48	6	74	0.44	7	78	0.42
17	54	0.50	10	61	0.49	13	66	0.47
18	5	0.22	11	4	0.21	14	6	0.23
19	48	0.50	13	55	0.50	16	55	0.50
20	27	0.45	14	28	0.45	18	34	0.47
21	63	0.49	15	61	0.49	19	62	0.49
23	34	0.47	18	40	0.49	22	41	0.49
25	68	0.47	23	69	0.47	24	72	0.45
26	60	0.49	24	65	0.48	25	66	0.47
27	76	0.43	26	80	0.40	27	76	0.43

Three questions which had consistently higher or lower percentages of correct answers on the three tests are given below.

(1) Three questions with a consistently high percentage of correct answers (extracted from the pre-test; answers underlined)

Q2	A: 色々なアルバイトをしているんだってね。 (You have had different part-time jobs, haven't you?) B: Well, I () five different jobs since last year. ① do ② did ③ was doing ④ <u>have done</u>
Q12	A: あなたの iPhone がかっこいいわね！買ったばかりなの？ (Your iPhone is so cool! Have you just bought it?) B: No. I () it for two years. I like it very much. ① use ② used ③ was using ④ <u>have used</u>
Q27	A: 田中さんと知り合いなの？有名な人ですよ。 (Are you acquainted with Mr. Tanaka? He is famous, isn't he?) B: Yes, I () him for 10 years. He is one of my good friends. ① know ② knew ③ was knowing ④ <u>have known</u>

(2) Two questions with a consistently low percentage of correct answers (extracted from the pre-test; answers underlined)

Q10	A: ケイコよね？5年前に会ったきりなのでちょっと分らなかった。変わったね！ (Are you Keiko? I didn't recognize you at first, because I haven't seen you for five years. You have changed.) B: Oh, really? You (), too. ① change ② changed ③ were changing ④ <u>have changed</u>
Q18	A: ここにあったクッキー、どこに行ったのかわからない？ (There were cookies here. Do you know where they are?) B: I () them. They are in my stomach. ① eat ② ate ③ was eating ④ <u>have eaten</u> ※ stomach おなか

In questions 2, 12, and 27 with higher percentages of correct answers, the prepositions 'for' and 'since', apparent indicators of the present perfect tense, are used, while in questions 10 and 18 with lower percentages of correct answers, such indicators are not used. Clearly, the existence of prepositions helped to trigger the choice of present perfect forms.

Among the other 15 items (apart from the 13 questions for the present perfect tense), Q16 (extracted from the pre-test) had the lowest percentage of correct answers on all three tests, 19% on the pre-test, 21% on the post-test, and 22% on the delayed post-test. The question required the past tense (② lived). Apparently, the students were looking for the form rather than thinking of the meaning, which made them wrongly choose the present perfect (④ has lived).

Q16	A: 亡くなったおばあさんは、京都出身だったよね。 (Your late grandmother was from Kyoto, wasn't she?) B: Yes, but she () in Kagoshima for 50 years. ① lives ② <u>lived</u> ③ was living ④ has lived
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4.3 Questionnaires

A questionnaire was conducted to probe students' overall attitudes regarding English classes and English learning (four 50-minute lessons per week). It was carried out twice, one week before the lesson in this study, and 5 weeks after. It was given in Japanese but is translated into English in Table 4. For scoring, the four replies were assigned from 1 to 4, "strongly agree" being 4, and "strongly disagree" being 1, resulting in an average score of 2.5.

Table 4
Questionnaire

Items	Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	I like the English class.	4	3	2	1
2	What I learn in the English class is useful.	4	3	2	1
3	I actively participate in the English class.	4	3	2	1
4	I like to listen to English in the class.	4	3	2	1
5	I am confident in listening to English and understanding it in the class.	4	3	2	1
6	I like to write English in the class.	4	3	2	1
7	I am confident in writing English in the class.	4	3	2	1
8	I want to use what I learn in the class outside of the class.	4	3	2	1
9	I want to improve my English.	4	3	2	1

Table 5 shows the results for each group. Scores were analyzed by using a two-way repeated-measures ANOVA, with alpha being set at the .05 level. There were no significant differences among the three groups. However, within Group A, there were significant differences on items 2 ($p = .023$), 4 ($p = .016$) and 5 ($p = .047$), and in Group C on item 4 ($p = .013$), which are colored in grey in the table.

Table 5
Mean and Standard Deviations on the Questionnaire

Group→ Items↓	A				B				C			
	Pre		Post		Pre		Post		Pre		Post	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
1	2.86	0.99	2.94	0.86	2.85	0.80	2.92	0.78	2.70	0.83	2.81	0.91
2	3.36	0.68	3.64	0.59	3.39	0.63	3.37	0.65	3.40	0.68	3.45	0.75
3	2.81	0.95	3.00	0.79	2.87	0.70	2.92	0.78	2.70	0.68	2.79	0.78
4	2.86	0.96	3.14	0.80	2.93	0.83	2.83	0.84	2.69	0.82	2.92	0.85
5	2.42	0.84	2.72	0.91	2.45	0.81	2.45	0.91	2.25	0.88	2.39	0.83
6	2.56	1.00	2.72	0.97	2.75	0.86	2.60	0.85	2.41	0.88	2.53	0.85
7	2.31	0.89	2.50	1.00	2.31	0.81	2.18	0.87	2.12	0.82	2.27	0.80
8	2.83	1.08	3.11	0.95	3.08	0.90	3.09	0.92	2.82	0.96	2.90	0.83
9	3.42	0.73	3.64	0.68	3.49	0.76	3.48	0.67	3.45	0.77	3.53	0.69

Table 5 shows that, though there were no significant differences among the groups, students in Groups A and C became fond of listening to English in the class, after the lesson. It also indicates that students in Group A appreciated the usefulness of what they learned in the English class, after the lesson, and they gained more confidence in listening to English. Thus, dictogloss-J apparently improved their attitude regarding the English class and confidence in listening to English.

However, the average scores for item 7, “I have confidence in writing English in the class,” were relatively low in all three groups. On the other hand, those for item 9, “I want to improve my English,” were relatively high. This suggests that students were highly motivated to learn English. At the same time, dictogloss-J did not make them feel confident in their writing skills compared to their listening skills.

4.4 Reflection Sheets

Students filled out a reflection sheet immediately after the lesson in order for us to evaluate their attitude and degree of engagement in the dictogloss-J lesson. The scoring method was the same on as the questionnaire, with 4 meaning “strongly agree” and 1 “strongly disagree,” resulting in an average score of 2.5.

Table 6 shows the results of the 6 items common to all groups. Scores were analyzed by using a one-way repeated-measures ANOVA, with alpha being set at the .05 level. There were no significant differences among the groups. Scores are relatively high, apparently because of the ceiling effect.

Table 6
Mean and Standard Deviations on the Reflection Sheet

Group → Items ↓	A		B		C	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
① I actively participated in today's activity.	3.11	0.86	3.24	0.54	3.19	0.72
② I understood the content which I listened to in today's activity.	3.11	0.83	3.32	0.65	3.29	0.70
③ I think today's activity was difficult.	2.74	0.80	2.72	0.84	2.68	0.85
④ I think today's activity will be helpful to improve my listening ability.	3.39	0.68	3.51	0.65	3.43	0.64
⑤ I think today's activity will be helpful to improve my writing ability.	3.55	0.65	3.51	0.58	3.39	0.61
⑥ I'd like to join activities like this from now on.	2.97	0.79	2.82	0.88	2.72	0.91

Table 7 below shows the results on two questions asked of the students in Groups B and C, who worked in pairs. There was a significant difference on item 8 ($p = .038$). It seems that the students enjoyed the collaborative work, which suggests that engaging them in such work after explicit explanations rather than before explicit explanations may lead to a more positive effect on their motivation.

Table 7
Results on Items 7 and 8

Items	Group B		Group C		<i>P</i> <i>Group B – Group C</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
⑦ I cooperated with my partner in today's activity.	3.22	0.76	3.36	0.69	ns
⑧ I enjoyed cooperating with my partner in today's activity.	2.94	0.80	3.20	0.68	※

(Note) ※ ⇒ statistically significant ($p < .05$) ns ⇒ no significance

The students were free to write comments on the reflection sheet. Their comments were quantitatively analyzed using software called a KH Coder (Higuchi, 2014). It automatically analyzed word frequency in a network style.

Table 8 shows the top 10 characteristic words in each group, which were originally written in Japanese but are here translated into English. The students in Group A characteristically wrote “myself”, “can” and “understand.” On the other hand, those in groups B and C (the pair-work groups) tended to use the word “fun.” These choices reflect the format of the groups.

Table 8
Top 10 Characteristic Words

Group A	Group B	Group C
think	English sentences	think
can	fun	class
listen	pair	write
write	person	listening
understand	English	fun
myself	words	different
grammar	cooperation	catch
English Sentences	friends	sentence
catch	memo	activity
listening	content	English

In sum, students in all three groups had positive attitudes toward the dictogloss-J lesson. Those engaged in pair work enjoyed the activity together.

5. Discussion and Conclusions

This study had two assumptions:

1. Collaborative work will lead to discussion about meaning, form and use. In order to examine this assumption, collaborative work in pairs was compared with individual work only.
2. Collaborative work in pairs should be assigned after explicit grammar explanations. Beginning-level

students do not have enough metalinguistic knowledge to discuss grammar and to correct themselves.

The findings on the grammar tests suggest that the implementation of dictogloss-J in pairs (i.e., Groups B and C) was more effective in helping students retain the target structure than in individual work (i.e., Group A). Collaborative work leads to discussion about the meaning and form of the target structures as well as the content of the text.

Regarding the second assumption, which had to do with the ordering of the grammar explanations before or after dictogloss-J, we could not come to a conclusion. In both Groups B and C, significant differences were found between the pre-test and the delayed post-test. The ordering of grammar explanations did not seem to be the issue.

6. Implications

These findings suggest that implementing dictogloss-J can be effective in helping enhance students' comprehension and retention of a specific target structure, i.e., the present perfect tense, in connection with other time-related structures. Thus, we strongly recommend that dictogloss-J be integrated regularly into lessons. In addition, when teachers provide explicit grammar instruction as feedback at the last stage, it is crucial to focus on 'use' as well as 'form' and 'meaning.' As Larsen-Freeman (2003) emphasizes, in the language classroom, it is important for learners not only to know the form-meaning mapping rules of the language, but also to know where and why they are there in the context. That is, understanding the connections between form, meaning and use helps learners develop sensitivity to language use.

This will have to be verified in the future in more detailed studies. We focused only on the target structure, the present perfect tense, not on the present, the past, or the past progressive, assuming that the students already understood them. We will turn our attention to those other structures as well to see if the students have learned English tense and aspect comprehensively.

It is uncertain as yet when and where dictogloss-J should be introduced to ensure the maximum effect. It seems to be more effective when students have time to talk with each other during the lesson. Lastly, the content, length and reading speed should be carefully taken into account.

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