The significance of English (or Englishes) as a means or tool of communication has become more prominent worldwide. In March 2011, the new *Course of Study for Elementary School* was implemented, and Foreign Language Activities for the 5th and 6th graders were introduced into all elementary schools. Moreover, a new *Course of Study* is to be introduced into junior high schools in 2012 and high schools in 2013. Each new curriculum is being introduced by the Ministry of Education, and each revised curriculum shows some changes aimed at improving the content and diversity of English education. The changes mark an attempt at designing curricula that are integrated from elementary school upwards. Each new proposed *Course of Study for Lower and Upper Secondary Schools* emphasizes nurturing communication abilities through the integration of the four skills. However, there is the continuing problem that what students have learned in the classroom often does not carry over or transfer to its use in an authentic situation. That is, students are required to act primarily as language users, not merely as language learners. In order to solve this problem and develop students' communication abilities, it is significant to focus on 'tasks,' which hold a central place in second language acquisition research and language pedagogy. More and more emphasis has been placed on using English interactively in the classroom under the guise of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT).

Tasks are supposed to elicit the kinds of communicative behavior that naturally arises from performing language tasks. However, considering that our common instruction in Japan is given based on prescribed textbooks and further that our learning environment is in the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), the utilization of tasks, not in TBLT, but in Task-Supported Language Teaching (TSLT), is greatly recommended. TSLT is a teaching approach that utilizes tasks to provide free practice in the use of a specific linguistic feature,
so TSLT is more feasible in the EFL context. In Japan, the Presentation—Practice—Production (3Ps or PPP) approach based on a structural syllabus, i.e., a syllabus that specifies the content in terms of the linguistic structures to be taught, is very common in the classroom and its teaching procedures. Tasks can be utilized to provide free language production in the 3Ps’ stage of production in the use of a specific linguistic feature that has been previously presented. Considering that Japan is an EFL learning environment and especially that the official textbooks are based on a grammar-orientated syllabus, focused tasks are recommended. After all, a focused task aims to induce students to process, receptively or productively, some particular linguistic feature, such as a grammatical feature, i.e., it is an activity that has all the qualities of a task but has been designed to induce the focusing of students’ attention on some specific linguistic form when processing either input or output.

We have, in this study, researched the efficacy of two particular focused tasks: a Task Activity (TA) (Takashima, 2000, 2005) and a dictogloss (Wajnryb, 1990). The features and effectiveness of each will be discussed respectively. The purpose of this study is to investigate the applicability of and the extent to which the independent use or the integrated use of these two focused tasks (the TA and the dictogloss) can improve students’ communication abilities at the high school level in Japan. In order to generalize the results of this experimental study and enhance its reliability, two different experimental studies were conducted within one year. The number of subjects was approximately 160. The target structures were the present perfect tense (Experimental Study I) and postmodification (Experimental Study II). In Experimental Studies I and II, three different combination patterns of activities were given to three groups: Group A, Group B, and Group C. Group A received the TA-implementation after the dictogloss. Group B received the dictogloss after the TA-implementation. In Group A and Group B, the effectiveness of the order needed to be examined, that is, the order of speaking and writing. Group C received grammar practice after the TA-implementation. In the case of Group D, the control, no particular activities, such as TA-implementation, dictogloss, or grammar practice, were implemented. Two kinds of assessment tests were administered: multiple-choice grammar tests and speaking tests. The multiple-choice grammar tests were administered three times in the form of pre-, post-, and delayed post-tests. Similarly, the speaking tests were also administered three times in the form of Speaking Tests I, II, and III. Furthermore, because the dictogloss implemented in this study was a slightly modified one, an Experimental Study III was conducted in order to examine the effectiveness of the modified dictogloss itself.

This research study tested two hypotheses: (1) Implementation of a dictogloss after a TA has a positive effect in enhancing students’ understanding of the target structure as
compared with either implementation of a TA after a dictogloss, or grammar practice after a TA, and (2) Implementation of a dictogloss after a TA has a positive effect in enhancing students' utterances both in accuracy and fluency as compared with either implementation of a TA after a dictogloss or grammar practice after a TA. Statistically, the quantitative results of the grammar tests showed that connecting the dictogloss after the TA-implementation (Group B) is an effective means for providing improvement and a residual effect in understanding the target structures, as compared with either implementation of the TA after the dictogloss (Group A) or grammar practice after the TA (Group C). Furthermore, especially Group B has a positive effect in enhancing students' utterances in accuracy, as compared with the other groups.

In sum, this study proved to be positive, i.e., utilization of a dictogloss after a TA is beneficial for students in order to enhance not only their comprehension and retention, but also their production of accurate and fluent utterances. Therefore, TA-Dictogloss-Supported Language Teaching, not TA-Dictogloss-Based Language Teaching, similar to TSLT, should be considered. In conclusion, in order to encourage the implementation and dissemination of a TA.Dictogloss, this study provides four pedagogical implications for teachers: (1) it is practicable to integrate a TA-Dictogloss-Supported Language Teaching with the 3Ps commonly implemented in Japan with TSLT, (2) English teachers need to consider not only the feasibility, but also the adequacy of their instruction methods and proposed activities in making a pedagogical selection of material, (3) students are motivated to learn grammar through TA-dictogloss implementation, and (4) it is significant that teachers have a clear picture of assessment opportunities.