

ANALYSIS OF APPROACHES TO THE PRESENT PERFECT TENSE
IN ENGLISH TEXTBOOKS PUBLISHED IN JAPAN
AND IN ENGLISH-SPEAKING COUNTRIES

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1. Introduction

The English tense-aspect system is a challenge for many learners, including Japanese speakers. The present perfect (PRPF) is one of the especially challenging tenses that second language learners face. There is no corresponding tense in the Japanese language. In addition, the use of the PRPF shows a point of view on the part of the speaker relating the past to the present, which can make it difficult to grasp.

There has been much research and discussion about tenses in second language acquisition (SLA). In spite of some improvement in teaching techniques, English learners (ELs) continue to have difficulty acquiring some English tenses, and especially those which do not exist in their first languages (L1s). More specifically, many studies dealing with the acquisition of the PRPF have been conducted (Bardovi-Harlig, 2001; Moy, 1977; Collins, 2007; Liszka, 2004). Some recent studies claim that learners' L1 has a negative influence in acquiring this tense (Lightbown & Spada, 2000; Liszka, 2004; Collins, 2007; Lonin & Zubizarreta, 2010). In situations where JLEs need to use the PRPF, they often end up using other tenses which are equivalent to Japanese expressions, possibly influenced by the lack of inventory that they can draw from in their native language.

There are a variety of possible factors that may hinder JLEs' utilization of the PRPF in appropriate situations: (1) since there is no PRPF in Japanese, learners do not

have a clear idea of when to use it, (2) the PRPF is more complex than, for example, the simple past (SPA) or the simple present (SPR), which generally indicate either past or present events without reference to a separate time of reference in Reichenbach's (1966) terms; the PRPF is heavily dependent upon the context, and it has a subtle meaning, (3) non-native English teachers (especially Japanese English teachers) might have difficulty explaining it, and lastly, (4) since JLEs usually do not have frequent exposure to the use of the PRPF outside of the classroom, it may be more difficult for them to acquire it than for some ESL learners.

In order to overcome these difficulties, it is necessary for learners to be introduced to this new tense and its usage in a way that allows learners to actually get involved in real-life situations. Learning English in an English-speaking environment can be helpful in mastering the subtleties in the usage of different tenses, because learners can actually use the tenses in practical communication. They need to learn to use them in actual discourse in an appropriate context; however, such is not the case with JLEs in Japan. English grammar textbooks used in Japanese secondary schools try to focus on communication skills, and give examples used in conversations, yet they seem artificial and tailored in order to stress the new grammar forms, rather than presenting authentic or natural use of the language. One way to help learners to understand the usage of the PRPF is to show how it is used in a real-life situation in an explicit way.

In this paper, the treatments of the PRPF in English textbooks that Japanese learners use in their home country are examined. In order to compare approaches to the PRPF, English grammar textbooks used in English institutions in the USA are examined as well. English textbooks published in Japan (ETPJs), and especially the textbooks most

Japanese junior/senior high school students are using, tend to be more rule oriented, and tend to have less information about of the usage of the PRPF. English textbooks published in English-speaking countries (ETPEs), generally recognized as ESL textbooks, have a different approach to grammar, since they are designed for use in an environment where English is spoken. These two kinds of textbooks are evaluated, and the approaches to the PRPF are analyzed.

In terms of textbook evaluation, no studies were found comparing ETPJs and ETPEs with a particular focus on the PRPF. In the examination of approaches to the PRPF, this paper attempts to evaluate how successful those textbooks are in explaining the concept of the PRPF and offering opportunities to utilize it in native-like contexts.

This paper first discusses the problems JLEs have in acquiring the PRPF, and examines some possible causes of their problems. Secondly, perspectives of the PRPF are discussed based on the literature, and thirdly, both ETPJs and ETPEs are analyzed. Based on the results of the analysis of both kinds of textbooks, an approach to the PRPF is suggested.

2. Literature Review

2.1. First language influence

One of the factors that make it difficult for SLLs to fully acquire an second language (L2) is the influence of their L1. Although not every researcher has agreed (e.g. Ellis, 1985, who concluded that the proportion of errors due to the L1 influence is small), L1 influence in L2 grammatical production has been acknowledged by many researchers,

including Lado (1957), who have claimed that in speaking a foreign language, the influence of the native language plays an important role. Some recent studies show that learners' non-target-like output shows some influence from their L1 (Lightbown & Spada, 2000; Liszka, 2004; Collins, 2007; Hinkel, 1992). Lonin & Zubizarreta (2010) acknowledge that a large number of SLLs are influenced by L1 language transfer. This L1 influence can be positive or negative. They make a clear distinction between positive L1 transfer and negative L1 transfer following Odlin (1989):

Traditionally, L1 transfer has been divided into positive transfer, which facilitates the course of L2 acquisition, and negative transfer, which interferes with successful acquisition. (p. 283)

If a learner's L1 and L2 share the same syntactic elements, and he/she can manipulate his/her L2 production in an appropriate way, the L1 has a positive influence. On the other hand, if a learner's L1 does not possess the syntactic elements of the L2, he/she might fail to use the L2 appropriately; hence, the L1 has a negative influence. Problems of L2 production occur when a learner's L1 has a negative influence.

There are two types of negative L1 influence on the acquisition of grammar: the first is making L2 errors due to having the same L1 grammatical forms with different functions; the second is making L2 errors due to not sharing particular grammatical elements with the L1. The first can involve L2 learners' misuse of a verb tense because of the sharing of the same type of verb morphology between a learner's L1 and L2, but with a different function. For example, in French, there is a tense called compound past, which takes the same form as the PRPF in English (Collins, 2007). A French compound past can be used in a context where simple past (SPA) should be used in English. As a

result, French learners of English overuse the PRPF where the simple past tense is required.

The second type of negative L1 influence is due to a lack of particular L2 syntactic structures in the L1. This can cause L2 learners to underuse an unfamiliar tense or substitute it with other tenses. Learners with a different L1 tense/aspect system are subject to a negative influence in L2 acquisition of the PRPF (Liszka, 2004). Liszka discovered evidence that Japanese and Chinese learners of English tend to alternate between present and past tense use in contexts where the PRPF should be used. This agrees with Hinkel's (1992) findings that English learners of East Asian languages, including Chinese and Japanese, have "less mutual conceptualization of time" than L1 speakers of, for example, Arabic and Spanish, which have a "deictic time reference" (p. 565). This type of negative influence can apply to JLEs. Since there is no inventory for JLEs to access in their L1, it might be difficult to conceptualize the time reference of the present perfect tense. Hinkel (1992) gives examples of Japanese and Chinese, comparing with English as follows:

Some languages, such as Chinese and Japanese refer to time lexically by employing nouns and adverbs; others, like English, also utilize *grammatical* references (i.e., verb tense). (p. 557)

However, she overstates the lack of tense use in Japanese reference to time. Japanese does have tense markers for past, present, and future, but Japanese tenses are not obligatory in all the same contexts that English tenses are. In the case of the PRPF, Hinkel's claim applies. Her statement presents a clear contrast between English and the other two languages. In other words, in the English PRPF, the verb itself presents the time reference, whereas in Japanese and Chinese, nouns and adverbs can serve to express

the equivalent of some tenses in English. As a result, in L2 learners' interlanguage mechanism, they substitute the PRPF with their L1 grammar. Liszka (2004) also observed this verb replacement in the use of the PRPF by Chinese and Japanese learners of English. She concludes that learners' language backgrounds do influence their acquisition of the PRPF.

The English PRPF sometimes can be translated either with the SPA or present progressive tense in Japanese, along with an adverb or adverbial phrase. Since there is no PRPF in the Japanese language, it can be difficult for Japanese learners to conceptualize the implication of this tense and utilize it in their output. As a result, they tend to replace PRPF with either the SPA or the present progressive.

2.2. JLEs' errors in the PRPF

Before determining what kind of information needs to be taught, it is necessary to analyze JLEs' errors and learn what is lacking in their understanding of the PRPF.

Problems in the use of the PRPF include learners' overgeneralization and undergeneralization of this tense (Bardovi-Harlig, 2001). Overgeneralization means that learners overuse the PRPF in sentences where it is not required. Undergeneralization occurs when learners use tenses other than the PRPF in situations where it should be used. In Bardovi-Harlig's study (2001), ESL learners' written and oral texts using the PRPF were analyzed during their sessions in ESL classes. She provides the following examples of undergeneralization of this tense by JLEs:

- 1) *I'm living* in Eigenmann Hall since March 14th.
- 2) ...but I *don't finish* it yet. (Bardovi-Harlig, 2001, p. 245)

These two examples might be direct translations from Japanese. The verb in the first sentence was replaced with the present progressive, and the second sentence involves replacement with the present tense. As suggested by Hinkel (1992), since the time reference of the PRPF in English has no equivalent in learners' L1 (Japanese/Chinese), they are less successful in choosing appropriate tense, leading to "unnaturalness" in their output.

In Bardovi-Harlig's (2001) study, both overgeneralization and undergeneralization in the use of the PRPF were detected, even after the students studied the PRPF. What is noteworthy in her study is that most of the overgeneralizations were observed in situations where the simple past (SPA) should have been used. This occurred even while learners were receiving English intensive instruction in an ESL environment. In one case, a JLE used the PRPF where the past perfect (PAPF) should have been used:

- 3) ...After that I went to College mall to buy TV. I want to buy it for quite a long while, but I didn't have money. So I **have saved** mony. (p. 242)

In another case, a sequence of past events, the most recent event was described using the PRPF by a JLE:

- 4) After class, I played base ball in front of Ashton with Kengo, Akihiko and some other guys. We have fun it. But our bat was broken off. and our ball was cut. We bought these one yesterday. After baseball, I **have finished** my homework. And I came back Eigenmann. (p. 242)

In both cases, the JLE seemed to fail to conceptualize the notion of expressing what Inoue (1979) and McCoard (1978) refer to as "current relevance" (cited in Bardovi-Harlig, 2001, p. 220) in the PRPF. This study indicates that even after receiving instruction in the PRPF, it is still difficult to utilize this tense in an appropriate, native-

like way. This leads to the question: what kind of information might help them to use the PRPF correctly?

Recalling my own experience of learning and teaching English in Japan, there does not seem to have been a clear concept of “current relevance” or “time reference to the present,” in the PRPF. In my teaching experience, when the PRPF is introduced to Japanese students, the procedure goes as follows: first, four cases in using PRPF are usually introduced: (1) continuum—when the state is continued from the past to the present, (2) completion—when the action/state is completed, (3) results—the action/fact that affects the present as a result, and (4) experience—somebody has an experience of doing something. Secondly, adverbials such as *since*, *for* and *yet* are introduced to learners to indicate that those adverbials are used with present perfect tense. Thirdly, as an exercise, students are provided with lists of sentences and are asked to choose appropriate verb tenses, without being given any circumstances. Moy (1977) points out that this can cause learners a problem in determining whether to use the past tense or the present perfect tense. He gives an example in which the adverbial phrase *three times* can be used in both the PRPF and the SPA:

5) I visited Hong Kong three times.

6) I have visited Hong Kong three times. (p. 304)

In this case, both tenses can be used, and teaching learners that the adverbial phrase *three times* should be used with present perfect tense is not correct. Just teaching that certain adverbial phrases are always used with the PRPF does not offer learners a clear concept of when to use the tense. Liszka’s (2004) study indicates that JLEs seem to have problems establishing a speaker’s viewpoint and an event/thing the speaker is talking

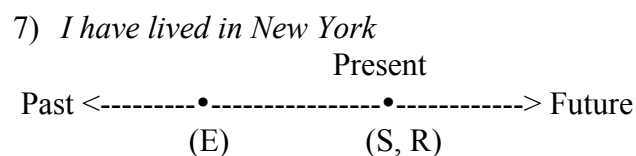
about in the timeline of the PRPF. It seems to be plausible to inform JLEs about the conceptual timeline of the RPPF.

2.3. Tense and aspect

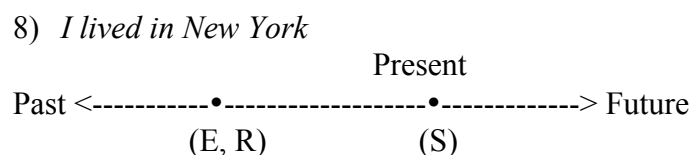
English tenses are difficult to teach without addressing tense vs. aspect.

According to Comrie (1976) and Dahl (1985), “tense is a deictic category that locates an event on the time line, usually with reference to the time of speaking” (cited in Bardovi-Harlig, 2000, p. 96). It is used to pinpoint an event or state in a specific frame of time (e.g. past, present, or future). Aspect, on the other hand, does not place an event or state on a time line. It deals with what Comrie describes as “the internal temporal constituency of one situation; one could state the difference as one between situation-internal time ([grammatical] aspect) and situation-external time (tense)” (cited in Bardovi-Harlig, 2000, p. 96). It expresses how an event or situation is viewed. For example, the verb “eat” can be presented in different forms depending on the situation. It could be used in sentences such as, “I am eating pasta now,” or “I have been eating since 10:00,” or “I usually eat at 8:00.” Aspect indicates the perception of the time when an event occurs. Linguists have categorized the PRPF aspectually in several ways. Bardovi-Harlig (2001) uses Smith’s (1983) word “viewpoint” (p. 222). A speaker’s viewpoint, how a speaker views an event/thing, determines the use of the tense. It seems to be strongly associated with aspect. The implications of the two sentences, “We were good friends,” and “We have been good friends,” are definitely very different and clearly show distinctly different viewpoints of a speaker.

Reichenbach (1966) established three temporal time elements: E stands for “point of the event,” which implies the point when the event occurs; R stands for “point of reference,” which refers to the mental connection that a speaker is making; S for “point of speech,” when the speech takes place. According to Reichenbach (1966), the PRPF can be diagrammed as follow (p. 290):



This diagram shows that (E) happened at some point in the past, “lived in New York.” This event is affecting the (R), and (R) is the same time that the addresser is speaking, (S), which is the present. (R) could be, “Living in New York has been part of my life experience.” The fact of (E) has some kind of implication at the present time: a speaker is still alive, and this experience is part of his/her life. If you compare with the past tense, there is a clear difference. In his diagram of time, the past tense is (p. 290):



As can be seen above, in the past tense, the point of reference of the speech is in the past, when the event occurred, and there is no relevance at the time of speech (present). This implies the addresser does not live in New York anymore. The important thing to bear in mind is that this reference of time (R) plays an important role in deciding which tense to use (e.g. between the PRPF and the SPA).

McCoard (1978) defines the PRPF in an accommodating way: “an identification of prior events with the ‘extended now’” (cited in Bardovi-Harlig, 2001, p. 221). If the PRPF is compared with the SPA, it is obvious that the SPA indicates that an event happened at a point of time in the past and is disconnected from the present. McCoard also distinguishes the SPA from the PRPF, describing it as “the time which is conceived of as separate from the present” (cited in Bardovi-Harlig, 2001, p. 221). Moy (1977) makes a clear difference between the past tense and the present tense, using Eckersley & Eckersley’s (1973) suggestion: “with the perfect, our interest is primarily not in the time of the action, but in the fact of its occurrence and in its result...” (cited in Moy, 1977, p. 305). For example, the sentence, “I have read all about you in the paper,” implies that now I know everything about you. There is a strong sense of current relevance as a result of the action “read about you.”

Four main uses/senses of the PRPF are suggested by McCawley (1971) and others: (1) the perfect or persistent situation, (2) the experiential sense, (3) the perfect of results, and (4) the perfect of recent past (cited in Inoue, 1978, p. 167). This view seems to correspond with the cases introduced in a typical Japanese textbook—the sense of (1) continuous, (2) experience, (3) results, and (4) completion. However, Inoue (1978) claims that the English PRPF has one basic meaning, “existential sense.” By “existential sense,” she means that the PRPF implies that the event or state that existed in the past has some connection to the present. Riddle (1988) describes the PRPF, adapting Inoue’s analysis:

...the present perfect describes a situation (including states and actions) which had its starting point in the past, in a special existential sense. It is used only

when the speaker wants to emphasize that some aspect of the situation still exists, i.e. either the situation itself or its results. (p. 6)

Rather than just addressing four independent cases when the PRPF is used, describing the usage in terms of making a connection between a past event and the present seems to be more reasonable and logical. The past event is relevant or influential to the present situation. A very important factor is to know the context in which the present perfect tense occurs.

2.4. Textbook evaluation

Textbooks are one of the most essential resources for students in learning any subject. They offer information about what needs to be learned about the subject. They do not only provide students the content to learn, but also provide teachers the content to cover. In English language teaching (ELT), “they (textbooks) are an effective resource for self-directed learning, an effective resource for presentation material, a source of ideas and activities, a reference source for students...” (Cunningsworth, 1995, cited in Litz, 2005, p. 5). Textbooks play an important role in language learning no matter what situations the learners are in—whether in an EFL or ESL environment. The importance of textbook evaluation has been shown by Vallenga (2004). She stresses the significance of the role that EFL textbooks play, especially because they are the “primary (only)” source of learners’ input. In an EFL situation, where learners have little contact with authentic English in their everyday lives, the textbook may be the only source they can learn from directly.

Textbook evaluation oftentimes reveals inadequacies or missing elements that learners need to know. Vallenga (2004) analyzes four ESL and four EFL textbooks for

the quantity and the quality of pragmatic information. The results show that ESL textbooks include more pragmatic information than EFL textbooks in terms of both quantity and quality. This lack of information in EFL textbooks could be a disadvantage to EFL learners. Collins & Lee (2005) examined English grammar textbooks used in Hong Kong. They concluded that inaccurate information about the details of English usage is found in locally produced grammar textbooks in Hong Kong. They also discuss artificiality in the dialogue. For example, in the introduction of the passive form, one person in the dialogue uses the passive in all of her utterances. This is not authentic and it sounds unnatural; it will not help learners to use the passive if it is presented as such.

In attempting to seek a tangible way for learners to comprehend the PRPF, it is reasonable to examine what kinds of approaches are presented in English grammar textbooks. What is explained or introduced in textbooks can influence learners greatly. They tend to believe what is explained or written in the textbook is authentic, and use the language the way it is presented. Yamanaka (2006) describes the authorized (by the Ministry of Education) textbooks in Japan by quoting Parmenter and Tomita (2001). According to them, textbooks used in public schools in Japan follow the Ministry's curriculum guidelines closely "in order to have [publishers'] books authorized for use in schools" (cited in Yamanaka, 2006, p. 71). Therefore, examining the textbooks used in public schools in Japan is a good way to learn what kinds of things are taught in their English classes. In order to compare these Japanese textbooks with ESL textbooks, I examine English grammar textbooks used in the ESL classroom.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research questions

Since the textbook is the first source that learners usually encounter, it is important to know what kind of knowledge is introduced and how it is presented to them. It is logical to consider whether ETPEs differ significantly from ETPJs, since the former are often used in an environment where English is spoken, but the latter are not. This consideration leads to the major research issue of this study: how do ETPEs and ETPJs differ in their approach to the PRPF? For example, are there any differences in terms of the way that it is introduced and explained? In other words, what kinds of information and exercises are provided to help learners understand the meaning and use of the PRPF?

Research results shown in the previous section, which pointed out learners' difficulties in acquiring the PRPF, indicate that instruction in the PRPF has not always been successful (Liszka, 2004; Collins, 2007; Hinkel, 1992; Bardovi-Harlig, 2001). The challenge is to find a way to help L2 learners comprehend this tense and apply it in their output. If learners are introduced to this tense with an emphasis on "present relevance," as suggested by Inoue (1978) and Riddle (1988), it might improve their use of the PRPF in English. As noted earlier, in my experience, when the PRPF is introduced, the idea of "current relevance" is mentioned in the textbooks, but they do not seem to offer descriptions of how this idea ties into the use of the PRPF. This leads to the following sub-questions:

- 1) Do the textbooks clearly state the sense of "current relevance?" (Do they address points of reference, event, and speech?)

- 2) Do they give natural examples to help learners understand this tense?
- 3) Do they include discourse context in the exercises rather than just showing an adverb to indicate the PRPF?

3.2. Material (textbooks)

Eight textbooks were chosen for evaluation: four English textbooks published in Japan (ETPJs), and four English textbooks published in English speaking countries (ETPEs). For the purpose of comparing different approaches between English classes in Japan and the USA, textbooks which are marketed for and used in the USA were chosen as ETPEs. For the scope of this paper, the number of textbooks for evaluation seems to be a reasonable number to investigate tendencies. Usually textbooks used in Japanese public schools follow curriculum guidelines issued by the Ministry of Education, and no major differences were expected in terms of the content and the style of approach in the textbooks. However, since private schools in Japan are not required to use government-approved textbooks, the fourth ETPJ examined was one not approved, which is used at a private school. To equalize the number of textbooks, four ETPEs were chosen.

3.2.1. English textbooks published in Japan (ETPJs)

Different from Vallenga's (2004) choice of EFL textbooks which were published in either the US or UK (e.g. Longman, Oxford, and Pearson), all ETPJs in this study were published in Japan. Three of the textbooks examined are used in Japanese public schools. The first three textbooks are all approved by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MECSST), and are all published by major Japanese publishers. Textbooks approved by the MECSST are written to meet curriculum guidelines issued by

the MECSST. All three textbooks are edited by Japanese people who are engaged in the professional language-teaching field. The authors of these textbooks are mainly Japanese university scholars and secondary school teachers. One (sometimes two) native English speaker is included as a co-author of each textbook. The fourth textbook is one which was used when I was a high school student in Japan and is still used in my high school. This textbook was edited by a native speaker of English and is not approved by the MECSST. The purpose of including this textbook is to see if there are any major differences between MECSST-approved textbooks and a non-approved textbook.

There has been a shift from the grammar-translation method to the communicative teaching method in the English curriculum in Japanese public high schools. As a result, there are no classes specific to grammar anymore; instead, grammar is incorporated in “English I and II” and “Writing” classes, which mainly focus on reading and writing skills. The MECSST issues curriculum guidelines that specify what content to teach in all elementary, middle, and high schools in Japan. According to the curriculum guidelines, the subject called “English grammar” was replaced by “writing” and “oral communication” to put an emphasis on communication. In “English I and II” and “Writing” classes, grammar is taught. The objectives of “English I” are described as follows:

To develop students’ basic abilities to understand what they listen to or read, to convey information, ideas, etc. by speaking or writing in English, and to foster a positive attitude toward communication through dealing with everyday topics. (MECSST, n. d.)¹

¹ When originally accessed at <http://www.mext.go.jp/english/>, but this appeared in English, now it is available only in Japanese.

As can be seen in the objectives, “English I” focuses on all skills including reading, listening, speaking and writing. Usually there are a couple of pages of reading material dealing with a current issue or some specific topic. Each lesson includes two or three grammatical elements found in the reading material. Grammatical points are presented in the textbook with example sentences. There are several exercises to help learners review the grammar points.

The “Writing” classes also deal with grammar, but they put more emphasis on conveying a message clearly through writing. The objectives of “Writing” are described as:

To develop students’ ability to write down information, ideas, etc. in English in accordance with the situation and the purpose and to foster a positive attitude toward communicating by utilizing these abilities. (MECSST, n. d.)¹

In “Writing” textbooks, each lesson typically deals with one grammar topic, usually starting out with a short text or conversation in which the grammar point is included. Compared with “English I,” there are more exercises, such as fill in the blank or translation; therefore, learners can practice more grammatical forms.

Judging from the two objectives, the “Writing” textbooks seemed to be more suitable to evaluate as grammar textbooks, than the “English I” textbooks. Thus, it was “Writing” textbooks which were chosen as MECSST-approved textbooks to compare with the ETPEs. The fourth textbook does not reflect any particular specialization but is a general English textbook covering reading, writing, and grammar.

3.2.2. English textbooks published in English speaking countries (ETPEs)

Two ESL textbooks used in the Intensive English Institute (IEI) affiliated with Ball State University were chosen (*Grammar Dimensions 2 & 3*). There are seven undergraduate levels of classes in the IEI. Level F (Fundamentals) and 1, Level 2 and 3, and Level 4 and 5 share textbooks from the same publisher in sequence. The textbook *Grammar Dimensions 2* (Wisniewska et al., 2006) is used in Level 2 and 3, and *Grammar Dimensions 3* (Thewlis, 2007) is used in Level 4 and 5 grammar classes. In Level 6 no textbook is required for students. Two other textbooks from major publishing companies were added for the analysis: *Grammar Sense 2* (Pavlik, 2004) and *Grammar in Use Intermediate* (Murphy & Smalzer, 2009). All textbooks analyzed are shown below:

Table 1. Textbooks Used in Analysis

ETBJs	ETBEs
Writing textbooks (MECSST approved) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>New Access to English Writing</i>, Kaitakusha • <i>Milestone English Writing</i>, Keirinkan • <i>Sunshine Writing</i>, Kairyudo (Non-MECSST approved) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Progress in English 2</i>, Eddic. Inc. 	Grammar textbooks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Grammar Dimensions 2</i>, Thomson Heinle • <i>Grammar Dimensions 3</i>, Thomson Heinle • <i>Grammar Sense 2</i>, Oxford University Press • <i>Grammar in Use</i>, Cambridge University Press

3.3. Evaluation criteria

Stranks (2003) lists six considerations in developing materials for teaching grammar. In establishing criteria for evaluation, three of his points were determined to be relevant to this study:

- the nature of the grammatical areas to be dealt with, in terms of their form, their inherent meaning implications (if any) and how they are used in normally occurring spoken and or written discourse;
- the extent to which any language offered to the learners for them to examine the grammar used represents realistic use of the language, and the extent to which activities for learners to produce language containing the target grammar will result in meaningful utterances, and ones which bear at least some resemblance to utterances which learners would be likely to want to produce on their own, non-classroom discourse;
- any difficulties that learners can be expected to encounter when learning these areas of grammar, especially with regard to any similarities or differences in form, function, and form/function relationship, between the target language and their mother tongue. (p. 331)

In introducing a new grammatical form to learners, it is important to teach how it is used naturally in spoken or written discourse. Then the learners can think about what situations they can use the new form in. If the learners have difficulty in using the new form, raising their awareness of form and function could help them use it appropriately. One of the criticisms of grammar teaching that Stranks mentions, using a quote from Swan (2001, p. 182), is that normally a “large number of superficial ‘rules of thumb’” will be given, and teaching such superficial rules does not “get to the heart of the matter,” which is “deeper underlying patterns that guide native speakers’ instinctive choices” (cited in Stranks, 2003, p. 333). If learners are learning the PRPF, they need to know the “deeper underlying patterns” of the PRPF, i.e., when and in what situation this tense is used in normal spoken and written discourse. Stranks (2003) argues that it is important for “learners to work with the aspects of grammar without actually producing utterances” (p. 335). They first need to be introduced to the function and meaning behind the sentences before actually producing them. This will eventually allow learners to produce new language forms in appropriate ways. In line with Stranks points of realistic use of new grammar forms, understanding implications of new forms, and awareness of

differences from the L1 grammar, the following two ideas were essential in developing evaluation criteria:

1. In learning a new language form, learners need to know its function and how and in what circumstances it is used.
2. The examples used in the textbook need to be presented in a “real-world” way.

These two ideas involve two kinds of knowledge necessary for language acquisition: declarative knowledge, which explains factual information of grammar, and procedural knowledge, which indicates how to use new grammatical information. In order to evaluate how these two kinds of knowledge are introduced, the criteria for textbook evaluation in the present study have been developed by adapting Williams’ (1983) checklists of textbook evaluation and Rubdy’s (2003) content validity. This content validity relates to how authors of the textbook intend to deliver new grammatical information to learners. In order to address the major research questions, the following items were examined:

Does the textbook “help develop both the declarative knowledge and procedural knowledge of the learners?” (Rubdy, 2003, p. 51)

- a. Declarative knowledge:
 - i. Does the textbook “offer meaningful situations” in using present perfect tense and “a variety of techniques for teaching structural units”? (Williams, 1983, p. 253)
 - ii. “Is there an explicit and conscious focus on rules of present perfect tense and explanation, or are there any opportunities for learners to discover the patterns in the first place?” (Rubdy, 2003, p. 51)
 - iii. Does the textbook provide “conscious attention to linguistic and pragmatic features” of the present perfect tense in the examples? (Rubdy, 2003, p. 52)
 - iv. Do the grammar activities encourage learners to look at examples of utterances containing present perfect tense to differentiate from other tenses (present, past)?

- b. Procedural knowledge:
- i. Does the textbook “demonstrate the various devices for controlling and guiding content and expression in composition exercises”? (Williams, 1983, p. 253)
 - ii. “Are there sufficient opportunities for students to use and practice their conversational strategies and skills?” (Rubdy, 2003, p. 54)
 - iii. Does the textbook help learners “exploit language in a communicative and ‘real-world’ way?” (Rubdy, 2003, p. 52)

4. Results

Based on the evaluation criteria, the results fall into three categories: (1) how declarative knowledge of the PRPF is presented, (2) how procedural knowledge of the PRPF is presented, and (3) how authentic the activity is/how learners can connect the activities with their personal experiences in a real-world way. The results according to these criteria for the ETPJs are summarized in Table 2, and for the ETPEs in Table 3.

4.1. ETPJs

Table 2.

(PRPF: present perfect, PAPP: past perfect, SPA: simple past, PR: present, PAPP: past participle)

Textbooks	New Access to English Writing	Milestone English Writing	Sunshine Writing	Progress in English
Theme	Job as a photojournalist	How was the studio tour?	Have you finished the math homework yet?	Why is he laughing?
Declarative Knowledge Presentation	1. completion 2. results 3. experience Example sentences, corresponding with each meaning.	<u>Writing something up to the present.</u> 1. not completed 2. continuation 3. experience Example sentences, corresponding with each meaning.	<u>The event in the past has something to do with the present.</u> 1. continuation 2. experience Example sentences,	PRPF is used: 1. when action is completed 2. when a person experienced something in the past 3. when a past

	<p>4. PRPF progressive is also introduced to explain a continuation of an action to compare with a continuation of a state used in PRPF.</p> <p>5. PRPF is not used with words which indicate a past event (e.g. ...<i>ago</i>).</p>	<p>4. Make comparison with PAF: “I finally went to Universal Studios, which I had always wanted to go to,” whereas in PRPF, the event has not happened yet.</p>	<p>corresponding with each meaning.</p> <p>4. PAF is introduced to explain an event/state of completion and a continuation up until the past event.</p> <p>5. PRPF cannot be used when describing an event at a specific time, such as last year or yesterday.</p>	<p>event is related somehow; a result or an event <u>in the past is influencing the present time</u></p> <p>4. some actions/ states are still continuing now</p> <p>5. Adverbs used with PRPF are <i>already, yet, not yet, and recently</i>.</p> <p>6. SPA is used with adverbs (e.g. ...<i>ago</i>, and <i>on July 10</i>).</p>
Procedural Knowledge Presentation	<p>Short passage: introducing Koichi’s job as a photojournalist. “He has been working for the same newspaper company since 2001.”</p>	<p>Dialogue: talking about the Universal Studios tour. “I have always wanted to go there.”</p>	<p>Dialogue: talking about finishing math homework. “Have you finished the math homework?”</p> <p>Activity: listen to the dialogue and fill in the missing words.</p>	<p>Dialogue: talking about a joke he has just heard.</p>
	<p>Exercises:</p> <p>1. using PRPF, judging from the sentences (already, not completed, experience)</p> <p>2. using <i>since</i> and <i>so far</i> in PRPF</p> <p>3. writing exercises (one JPN→ENG translation, and the other one writing about one’s own experience)</p>	<p>Exercises:</p> <p>1. looking at the pictures and composing sentences by filling in the blanks</p> <p>2. filling in the blanks, putting the appropriate tense in the dialogue</p> <p>3. writing exercises (one with the content given, the other one free composition, writing about what you have always wanted to do)</p>	<p>Exercises:</p> <p>1. telling the difference between SPA and PRPF</p> <p>2. putting the appropriate tense according to the situation in the picture</p> <p>3. JPN→ENG translation, using PRPF</p>	<p>Exercises:</p> <p>1. comparing SPA with PRPF, filling in the appropriate tense</p> <p>2. drill exercises using PRPF in both affirmative and negative sentences</p> <p>3. translation (JPN→ENG)</p> <p>4. asking if you’ve ever been to... /seen...</p> <p>5. error correction</p> <p>6. choosing the appropriate tense in a sentence</p>

Authenticity / Practicality	Write sentences about the places you have been to in the past.	Write sentences about things that you have always wanted to do.		
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Since three of the four textbooks are approved by the MECSSST, it is not surprising that they all share the same patterns of form in terms of presenting the material: (1) presentation of an opening dialogue/short text, (2) presentation of rules in Japanese followed by example sentences, and (3) exercises using the PRPF. The length of each lesson is two to four pages. The last textbook, called *Progress in English* (PIE), which I used as a textbook in my junior and senior high school, is not approved by the MECSSST and uses a different format. Each lesson usually starts with an opening dialogue using a new grammatical form. Example sentences are introduced, followed by a description of rules in Japanese. A variety of exercises is offered, including reading, grammar exercises, drill exercises, and dialogue practice.

4.1.1. Declarative knowledge presentation

The way the ETPJs present declarative knowledge is almost identical among all of the books: starting out with a short text or dialogue using the PRPF. They take a deductive approach, giving rules/explanations first, followed by example sentences. All of the textbooks explain the meaning of the PRPF in the same way: the PRPF is used to express the concepts of “results,” “experience,” “continuity,” and “completion.” Three of the four textbooks express the concept of “present relevance” as a supplementary explanation; however, none of the three textbooks seem to give precise information, explaining how the PRPF relates to the present. The presentation is very simple, describing the concepts of the PRPF, and example sentences corresponding with each

concept are introduced. This probably requires teachers to give further supplemental knowledge to learners in order to help them understand the usage of the PRPF.

All four ETPJs compare the PRPF with other tenses. For example, Shiozawa et al., (2008) use the present perfect progressive (have/has + been ~ing) to make a clear distinction between the continuation of an action and a state: “We *have been* friends since childhood,” vs. “What *have you been doing* all this time?” (p. 36).

Two writing textbooks introduce the past perfect tense to make a clear distinction between the past perfect (PAPF) and the PRPF: “I *had* always *wanted* to go,” vs. “I *have* always *wanted* to go” (Toyota et al., 2003, p. 12). The textbook PIE has a different approach compared to the other three writing textbooks. It seems to take an inductive approach, giving example sentences followed by rules/explanations. It introduces examples of sentences using the SPA first to make comparison with the PRPF: “I lost my glove, but I found it again,” vs. “I’ve lost my glove. Please lend me yours” (Flynn, 1996, p. 61). Two sentences are presented in the SPA, and then three sentences are given in the PRPF. This allows learners to notice the difference between the SPA and the PRPF. Four more sentences are presented in the PRPF with additional information so that learners can recognize in what situations the PRPF should be used. Detailed explanation is offered in Japanese after the example sentences.

4.1.2. Procedural knowledge presentation

As stated in the declarative knowledge section, all of the ETPJs start with either a dialogue or a short passage/essay using the PRPF. This gives learners some idea about when and how to use the PRPF. Relatively short explanations of the tense are presented

in Japanese. After learners recognize how it is used in example sentences, exercises are offered for learners to actually use the PRPF. The textbooks include three to five kinds of exercises. For example, one exercise in *New Access to English Writing* asks students to change verbs in a dialogue to the PRPF, as shown in the following excerpt:

1. You should comb your hair. It's untidy.
But I (already comb) it.
2. Your coat is lying on the sofa.
I know I (not hang) it up yet. (Shiozawa et al., 2008, p. 37)

As can be seen in the example above, usually key adverbs (e.g. *already* and *yet*) are included in the sentences to help students determine the tense. Learners are usually asked to choose the appropriate tense, judging from the adverb used in each question. Learners can choose a tense from the PRPF, the SPA and the present (PR). Other exercises include free composition using the PRPF related to learners' personal experiences, and translating Japanese sentences into English sentences. One textbook does not offer free composition. Usually each exercise consists of three to five questions.

PIE (Flynn, 1996) takes a similar approach in terms of identifying the tense with accompanying adverbs rather than giving a detailed situational context for each sentence. After introducing the PRPF, there is an exercise where the students must write the given verb in the appropriate tense in each sentence, as in the following excerpt:

- Fill in the blanks with the verb *make*.
- 1) He () just () a fine speech.
 - 2) He () a speech now
 - 3) He () a fine speech yesterday.
 - 4) He () the speech already. He needn't () a speech now.
 - 5) He () many speeches already. (Flynn, 1996, p. 62)

Similar to the writing textbooks, PIE asks students to identify the proper tense from adverbs in the sentences rather than from the context. A salient difference is that PIE

includes a lot of drills where learners are expected to recite sentences using different verbs (using a chart with different pictures) to get accustomed to the form of the PRPF. Other exercises include changing PRPF sentences to the interrogative form, translation from Japanese to English, and error correction exercises.

4.1.3. Authenticity and practicality

No authentic materials are found in the ETPJs. However, *New Access to English Writing* and *Milestone English Writing* both have one activity which asks learners to write about their own experiences using the PRPF, which I will call a semi-authentic exercise. One asks them to write about places they have been to in the past (Shiozawa et al., 2008, p. 37), and the other asks them to write about things they have always wanted to do (Toyota et al., 2003, p. 13).

The PIE textbook does not offer any authentic material such as actual magazine or newspaper articles. There are two reading texts which introduce American culture, but they cannot be considered authentic material, since they are not taken directly from originals written for English-speaking audiences. There are three exercises that require learners to substitute words in the sentence:

Substitute: *Have you ever been to America?*

1. Canada
2. England
3. Greece (Flynn, 1996, p. 65)

The topic of each question is given, so there is no creative or personal experience that learners can get involved in using the PRPF. There is no free conversation answering the question, “Have you ever...?”

4.2. ETPEs

Table 3.

(PRPF: present perfect, PAPF: past perfect, SPA: simple past, PR: present, PAPL: past participle, PRPG: present progressive)

Textbooks	Grammar Dimension Book 2	Grammar Dimension Book 3	Grammar Sense 2	Grammar in Use Intermediate
Theme	Medical interview	Personal essay	Tales of world traveler	Unit 7 - 13
Declarative Knowledge Presentation	<p>1. connecting the past and the present</p> <p>2. a certain event/action/state is continued until now</p> <p>3. comparing PRPF with SPA</p> <p>4. used with the adverb <i>already</i> to show that an event was completed</p> <p>5. used with <i>yet</i> when an event has not been completed before the time of speaking</p>	<p>1. past time frame (which has no direct ongoing relationship to the present) vs. present time frame (which is directly related to the present, and the event which happened in the past continues to influence the present in some way)</p> <p>2. use the PRPF to show that something is still true (PRPF) vs. no longer true (SPA)</p> <p>3. PRPF is used to describe things that begin in the past but continue up to the present moment</p> <p>4. PRPF is used if the past event continues to affect the present situation in some way; also used to describe past events that cause a result in the present</p> <p>5. PRPF progressive tense is used: a) to describe</p>	<p>1. examining the form: has/have (not)+PAPL in different types of sentences</p> <p>2. meaning and use: continuing time up to now</p> <p>3. talking about <i>how long</i></p> <p>4. use with <i>for</i> and <i>since</i></p> <p>5. indefinite past time (contrasting with definite past time)</p> <p>6. describing progress</p> <p>7. adverbs used in the PRPF (<i>yet, still, ever, never, already, so far</i>)</p>	<p>Each unit starts with an example situation:</p> <p>1. when the PRPF is used, we talk about a period of time that continues from the past until now</p> <p>2. PRPF is used to give information or to announce a recent happening; SPA can also be used but only for things that are not recent or new</p> <p>3. comparison with SPA: do not use the PRPF when you talk about finished time (e.g. <i>yesterday, 10 minutes ago, in 1999</i>)</p> <p>4. PRPF is used for an activity that has recently stopped or just stopped; there is a connection with now; PRPF can be used for actions repeated over a period of time</p> <p>5. PRPF continuous (have been doing) vs. PRPF simple (have done)</p> <p>6. PRPF is used to talk about something that began in the past and continues to the present time (<i>how long have you</i></p>

		something that is temporary rather than permanent, b) repeated rather than single occurrence, c) continuous rather than repeated or recurring, d) uncompleted rather than completed		<i>been...?</i> 7. comparison of <i>when...?</i> and <i>how long...?</i> (SPA vs. PRPF)
Procedural Knowledge Presentation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. read a medical report and compare the PRPF with other tenses to help understand the PRPF 2. role play: doctor and patient, <i>How long have you been smoking?</i> 3. difference between <i>since</i> and <i>for</i>: a) compare SPA and PRPF using <i>for</i> and <i>since</i>, b) situation is given and re-write the sentences using PRPF, c) fill in the blanks in the dialogue (SPA/PRPF: <i>since/for</i>) 4. error correction of the verb tense 5. speaking exercise, practicing the use of PRPF 6. use of <i>ever</i> in accusative (<i>Have you ever...?</i>) and negative sentences (<i>I have never...</i>) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. read an example essay in the textbook and answer why the writer chose present/past tense 2. read sentences and write the appropriate form of the verb tense (SPA or PRPF) 3. work with a partner and ask questions using PRPF. 4. choose the correct sentence that flows naturally/coherently 5. discuss why PRPF is used instead of SPA in sentences 6. use your English: speaking, speaking/listening, researching on the web, and reflection 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. read a magazine article using PRPF and recognize PRPF form that is different from SPA and PR 2. listening for form: have/has+PAPL 3. contrast PRPF and SPA (definite vs. indefinite past tense) 4. contrasting <i>for</i> and <i>since</i> 5. exercises using adverbs (<i>yet, still, ever, never, already, so far</i>) 6. read each dialogue and choose whether PRPF or SPA is appropriate 7. correcting errors (verb tenses) in an essay 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ask questions about things people have done in the past 2. read about a situation and write an appropriate sentence using PRPF 3. look at the picture and use either SPA or PRPF 4. error corrections of tense use 5. choose either PRPF or PRPG (be +...ing) 6. choose either PRPF simple (<i>have done</i>) or continuous (<i>have been doing</i>).

Authenticity /Practicality	1. asking learners' medical history, using <i>have you had...?</i> 2. ask about learners' countries' government system	1. ask each other about changes recently made 2. cross-cultural awareness: what experience have you had that is different from other people? 3. web search: find authentic personal essays on the web 4. find newspaper articles and compare how they use SPA and PRPF	1. writing practice: searching for authentic examples on the Internet (e.g. choose a text about a famous person who is still alive, and discuss why PRPF is used) 2. write about someone you admire (essay) using PRPF, SPA, and PR	1. write sentences about yourself using the ideas in the parentheses
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The first two textbooks, *Grammar Dimensions 2 & 3* (Thomson Heinle), are textbooks used in grammar classes in the Intensive English Institute (IEI) at Ball State University.

The other two grammar books, *Grammar Sense 2* (Oxford University Press) and *Grammar in Use Intermediate* (Cambridge University Press) are not used in the IEI. All textbooks present ample amounts of both declarative and procedural information. The number of pages devoted to the PRPF ranges from eight to seventeen.

4.2.1. Declarative knowledge presentation

All four textbooks take a deductive approach in general, usually starting with example sentences followed by explanations. One textbook starts with an activity allowing learners to notice the difference between the SPA and the PRPF. Each textbook offers detailed information including the situation for and the meaning of each example sentence. None of the books give specific concepts said to underlie PRPF use, such as “experience,” “continuous,” or “completion,” as presented in the Japanese textbooks; rather, the concepts evolve gradually through the core idea: some kind of connection or

involvement between the past and the present events/situation. Along with this core idea, they introduce different circumstances for which the PRPF is appropriate. The ETPEs offer detailed information about the use of the PRPF, and they do not seem to require teachers to supply additional information. For example, in explaining the relationship to the present, Thewlis (2007) uses added sentences/phrases to show how the PRPF connects to the present, as shown in the following excerpts:

I have already seen that movie, so I suggest we go see a different one. (p. 236)

Have you found the article you were looking for? Because if not, I think I know where you can find it. (p. 237)

What is written in the textbooks provides enough information for learners to obtain knowledge of the PRPF.

4.2.2. Procedural knowledge presentation

For all of the textbooks, every time new information is introduced, follow-up exercises are given in order to help learners review what they have just learned. Various kinds of exercises are offered to help them understand the PRPF: read an example essay and identify and discuss in what situation each different tense is used in the essay, fill in the appropriate form of the verb tense in a given situation/dialogue, error correction of the verb tense, rewrite a sentence using the PRPF, and discuss a certain topic with a partner to raise awareness of the PRPF. Even though the exercises take similar formats between the ETPJs and the ETPEs, the ETPEs focus more on the situations and the content of the sentences, rather than focusing on the rules. Learners are asked to think about the circumstances in which the PRPF is used.

4.2.3. Authenticity and practicality

Three of the four textbooks offer authentic activities, such as asking one another questions using the PRPF or searching on the Internet and finding an actual text using the PRPF. For authentic material, one textbook asks learners to find a famous living person's biography to use for investigation of the tenses. Another textbook asks them to find a real person's essay on the Internet. The third textbook asks them to find any article that includes both the PRPF and the SPA, so that learners can compare the different uses of the two tenses in the article. For connecting learners' personal experiences with the PRPF and the SPA, many pair-work activities discussing their own experiences are presented.

5. Discussion

As can be seen in the results section, salient differences are found between the two kinds of textbooks in various frames of reference. Three key points are discussed in terms of approaches: (1) deductive vs. inductive approach, (2) adequacy of the explanation, including the concept of the current relevance and the comparison of the PRPF with other tenses, and lastly, (3) practicality and authenticity.

5.1. Deductive vs. inductive

These two approaches are usually used in establishing hypotheses in research, and they are both effective ways to introduce new knowledge to learners. In explaining a new grammatical form, a deductive approach can be applied by explaining grammar rules first

and giving example sentences that follow the rules. This is one way to help learners understand new information.

It is fair to say that the ETPJs mostly offer the deductive approach. Two textbooks have explanations of the rules and form of the PRPF in only two lines of text. The explanations are simple and minimally written. No questions about the use of the PRPF are asked after the opening dialogue or short text, only questions about the content of the text. No situational explanation is offered; therefore, teachers are expected to add supplementary explanation of the situational use of the PRPF. Learners can have difficulty understanding the content of the textbook without being taught in the classroom. After explaining concepts of the PRPF use, three or four example sentences are presented along with Japanese translations. There is a heavy stress on absolute rules, such as “the PRPF is not used with an adverbial phrase that indicates a past event” (Shiozawa et al., 2008, 36), or “there are adverbs, such as *just*, *already*, *recently* and *yet* that should be used with the PRPF” (Flynn, 1996, p. 61). Rather than focusing on the situation of the sentence, adverbs used in the sentence are the keys to differentiate tenses. Learners are expected to use the PRPF according to these rules, which are limited to situations when: something is completed, is a result or a consequence, was experienced in the past, or continues to the present, without explanation of how they are connected to the present. In the deductive approach, language learners are informed of the rules based on the language usage. Teachers usually start with a statement of rules, and then examples are presented as proof of the rules. Rules are introduced to learners, and they can apply the rules in their language use. This seems to be very practical in a situation in which rules should be mastered in a short timespan. Diaz-Rico (2004) stresses the advantage of

the deductive approach as enabling learners to recall and produce the form explicitly on tests as a result of explicit teaching of that form. Learners might be able to get good scores on an exam that asks them to use the appropriate tense based on the given adverb, but it might be difficult for them to use the PRPF in free composition, such as an essay or conversation.

The second method is the inductive approach. It is considered to be the opposite of the deductive approach. This involves trying to find general rules by examining specific examples. The ETPEs tend to use the inductive approach. They start with examination of examples, followed by explanation. Thewlis (2007) starts with a student's personal essay and asks learners to consider "past time frame" and "present time frame," in introducing the PRPF. Questions such as, "Why did the author use past time in the first paragraph?" or "Why did the author use present time in the second paragraph?" (p. 232) are asked. Such questions give a chance for learners to think about differences between usages of the SPA and the PRPF. In the inductive approach, learners are usually given example sentences first, and are asked to find the grammar rules behind those sentences. From my own experience as a second language learner, it is very effective when a learner finds a rule by him/herself, because it allows him/her to find the logic behind it. It is what is called an "a-ha!" moment, and what was discovered usually stays in his/her mind. Dias-Rico (2004) also states the advantage of this approach as the fact that "the mind retains more from discovering patterns." This can be useful in language learning where learners need to know the situations in which rules are applied in their language use, i.e., "the focus is on end-use in meaningful situations" and "grammar is viewed as a tool or resource toward communication" (p. 262).

5.2. Adequacy of explanation

The ETPJs tend to limit or simplify the explanations as much as possible. This requires teachers to add their own supplemental explanations. This could be challenging, especially to less-experienced, non-native English-speaking teachers. There is no explanation of implication or speaker's intention for each sentence, so it is hard for learners to grasp the idea of the PRPF use. Sometimes, a sentence given in the exercises does not offer enough background information, so learners can only guess an appropriate tense by looking at an adverb in the sentence.

The ETPEs tend to give elaborate explanation of a speaker's intention, so learners are informed of the background information. Usually there is more than one sentence in each question to show the speaker's intention or the implication of the sentence. The ETPEs generally provide sufficient information, and teachers do not necessarily need to give any supplementary explanation.

Two points in regard to explanation of the PRPF in the two kinds of textbooks are discussed: relevance to the present, and comparison with other tenses.

5.2.1. Relevance to the present

As pointed out by many researchers, the idea of "present relevance" is a key feature in the PRPF. A past event is somehow influencing or has some connection with the present. I have observed that the PRPF is often used in talk shows and news commentaries on television in the United States. For example, in a talk show where the guest is usually asked about a book he/she wrote, or a movie he/she was involved in, etc.,

he/she usually talks about his/her past experience or events which have something to do with the time of speech (the present).

All of the ETPJs start with an explanation of the senses of the PRPF, without adequately discussing how each sense relates to the present. They all stress that the PRPF is used to express the following: (1) the completion of an action, (2) experience, (3) continuation, and (4) results. The way they present this gives an impression that the PRPF is used in four separate circumstances, so the learners might think they need to use the PRPF in four different occasions. Three ETPJs do mention relevance to the present time in the explanation, but it is done in a vague way, as in, “Some events in the past are connected to the present time in some way” (Azuma et al., 2009, p. 21). There needs to be further explanation of how these four cases can tie into the present situation. No further explanation is given, and there are no example sentences for learners to examine to support the idea.

Instead of offering different situations in which the PRPF is used, all the ETPEs explain the PRPF by making some connection with the present time. The descriptions of the PRPF in the ETPEs are as follows:

- Describing past events in relation to the present (Thewlis, 2007, p. 234)
- Use present perfect to show a connection between past and present situations. (Wisniewska et al., 2006, p. 196)
- The present perfect connects the past with the present. (Pavlik, 2004, p. 97)
- We use the present perfect when we talk about a period of time that continues from the past until now. (Murphy & Smalzer, 2009, p. 14)

The idea of “relevance to the present” can be interpreted in many different ways; however, there seems to be a common concept of the PRPF indicating that something began in the past, and still somehow has an effect or consequence in the present.

One of the confusions that EFL learners face is telling the difference between a sentence that describes the completion of an action and a SPA sentence. In a situation where an action is completed, both the PRPF and the SPA are possible. However, JLEs might think only the PRPF should be used (because of the way the rules for the tense use are presented in their textbooks), and have difficulty understanding the use of the SPA.

Compare the following sentences:

- 1) I have finished my homework.
- 2) I finished my homework.

The use of the PRPF can be justified in that there is a connection to the present. For example, sentence 1 can be used in a situation where a speaker has just finished his/her homework, so now she/he can watch TV and relax. If the speaker wants to stress that he/she can relax now, then the PRPF tends to be used in this situation. Sentence 2 also implies completion of the action (finish homework), but it does not have any connection to the present. It separates the action from the present. In the case of completed recent action, Riddle (1988) differentiates the use of the SPA and the PRPF based upon a speaker's point of view. She compares two sentences using the PRPF and the SPA: "Jane has received an award for community service," and "Jane received an award for community service." Both sentences can be used to state the fact of Jane's receiving the award, but she claims that the PRPF "focuses on the current existence of the fact, rather than on the act of receiving as it happened," (p. 7). Regarding the use of the PRPF, she gives further explanation of the speaker's view of receiving the award as excitement, whereas in the SPA, the speaker's focus is more on the fact of receiving the award, in answer to the question, "What happened at the banquet?" (p. 7). Rather than just defining

the use of the PRPF with specific adverbs, making connection with the current situation seems to be more convincing and consistent.

Since the Japanese language does not have the PRPF, JLEs are not accustomed to the idea of the PRPF. They need to know what is unique about the PRPF that separates it from other tenses. They need to know why the PRPF needs to be used instead of the SPA or the PR. If they are introduced to the PRPF as a tense which has a connection to the present, with contextual examples, it might help them use the tense more easily, instead of trying to remember separate uses of the PRPF every time they attempt to use the tense.

5.2.2. Comparing the PRPF with other tenses

If the PRPF is new to learners, comparing with other tenses and making distinctions between them is very useful. Both the ETPJs and the ETPEs compare the PRPF with other tenses. In the case of JLEs, since the PRPF in English can be translated into either the past or the present tense in Japanese, it is crucial that they know the difference between the PRPF and other tenses in order to use the PRPF correctly.

5.2.2.1. PRPF vs. SPA

Comparing the PRPF with the SPA seems to be the most common approach. Both the ETPJs and ETPEs compare the PRPF with the SPA, but they take different approaches.

Two ETPJs distinguish between the PRPF and the SPA by demonstrating a specific adverbial phrase(s) that is used with each tense. For example, one textbook has a footnote explaining, “Adverbs that indicate an event/thing occurred at a definite time in the past should be used with the past tense” (Flynn, 1996, p. 61). In this way, EFL

learners can recognize that adverbs such as *an hour ago* and *on July 10* should be used with the SPA and not with the PRPF. They do not offer any comparable explanation of the PRPF.

All the ETPEs offer a clear distinction between the PRPF and the SPA. The way they differentiate the use of these two tenses varies: “something still true” (PRPF) vs. “something no longer true” (SPA), “something that happened in the past without mentioning the specific time” (PRPF) vs. “something that happened at a specific time” (SPA), and “indefinite past time (not exact)” (PRPF) vs. “definite past time (exact)” (SPA). They all describe the distinction differently, but the main idea is that the PRPF has a time range starting from the past and continuing up to the present, whereas the SPA indicates one point in the past for single events as opposed to states. The ETPEs tend to give more elaborate situational explanation in the use of the PRPF and the SPA, with example sentences. As a comparison of the PRPF and the SPA, Murphy & Smalzer (2009, p. 26) compare “when...?” and “how long...?” to explain the idea of “specific time” and a “duration of an event/thing.” This will help learners to be able to use these two tenses appropriately depending on the situation.

Inoue (1978) argues that the “existential sense” is the basic meaning of the PRPF. Riddle (1998) encourages ESL/EFL teachers to adapt this explanation and compares the PRPF and the SPA as expressing “a sense of present existence” vs. non-existence. She gives two sentences to compare:

- 3) Bob has been sick all his life.
- 4) Bob was sick all his life. (p. 6)

Given the adverbial phrase “all his life,” sentence 3 shows the current existence of Bob’s sickness; therefore, Bob is still alive. Sentence 4 implies that Bob’s sickness does not exist anymore, which means Bob is dead now. Here, the SPA indicates an endpoint of an event/thing, whereas the PRPF shows the continuation of an event/thing up to now. I heard another good example showing the sense of non-existence expressed by the SPA on a radio talk show: the SPA was used to imply that a famous golfer’s career was over. Two people were talking about how a scandal involving a famous golfer could affect his career. One commentator said, “He [Tiger Woods] was a very good golfer.” Then the host replied, “Wait a minute, do you mean he is not going to play any more?” If the commentator had said, “He has been a great golfer,” the host might have reacted differently. The use of the PRPF could imply that Tiger Woods has been a successful golfer up to this point, and he is still playing at the time of speech, but that there is some doubt about the future. If the commentator had said, “Tiger Woods is a very good golfer,” it would simply state that he is still a good golfer now without any further implication. He may continue to be a good golfer in the future or maybe not, but probably in the commentator’s mind, Tiger Woods is going to play in the future. With the SPA, there is definitely an end point, but this is not the case with the PRPF.

Exercises that ask learners to tell the difference between the SPA and the PRPF are offered in both the ETPJs and the ETPEs, but the way they are presented is different. The ETPJs ask learners to note the difference on the basis of adverb use. Azuma et al. (2009) offer the following items from an exercise:

- 5) Sachiko (buy) a new bicycle two weeks ago.
- 6) My sister (live) in London since last April. (p. 21)

In both cases, learners are supposed to write verbs in an appropriate tense by looking at adverbial phrases (*two weeks ago* and *since last April*). No situational information is given. The ETPEs offer exercises that include situational information contextualized in each sentence, so that learners can grasp the situation and differentiate the PRPF and the SPA. Typical instructions are: read the situations and write in either the SPA or the PRPF, or look at the picture and complete the sentence using the SPA or the PRPF. They usually give enough contextual information for learners to choose between these two tenses.

Some of the exercises and example sentences in the ETPJs are difficult to judge; either the SPA or the PRPF could be used. For example, consider the following items in reference to a baseball glove:

7) I lost my glove, but I found it again.

8) I have lost my glove. Please lend me yours. (Flynn, 1996, p. 61)

These are presented to show the difference between the SPA and the PRPF. No explanation is given, but the message in 7 is that the speaker has resolved the problem of the lost glove; the glove is no longer lost. In 8, on the other hand, the situation has not been resolved, and the state of not having found the glove continues. However according to the explanations of the PRPF in the ETPEs, and according to native speaker judgment, the SPA could be also used in sentence 8. Murphy & Smalzer (2009) give the following example that could use either the PRPF or the SPA:

9) Tom **has lost** his key. He can't get into the house (*or Tom **lost**...*)

This example conflicts with Flynn's example 8. Murphy & Smalzer (2009) do not offer any reason to use one tense over the other, but it would be helpful if they did. It depends

on the viewpoint of the speaker. If the speaker wishes to emphasize that Tom lost his key and gave up looking for it (the act of losing the key is completed), the SPA can be used. If the speaker wishes to emphasize that Tom is still looking for his key, or if the event was recent, the PRPF may be used.

The key issue here in the difference between the PRPF and the SPA lies in the difference between the specific time and non-specific time. In the PRPF, “the experience is more important than when it happened” (Wisniewska et al., 2006). There is also an implication of existence at the time of speech (present) in the PRPF, whereas in the SPA, there is a sense of an end point. In the ETPJs, the word “experience” is used in the explanation, but they do not seem to make the contrast with the SPA in terms of the specific time vs. non-specific time frame. They tend to pay more attention to the lexical aspects, such as looking at what kind of adverbs are used in the sentence, in choosing an appropriate tense, rather than looking at the contextual reference.

5.2.2.2. PRPF vs. PAPF

One case of comparison of the PRPF with the PAPF (had + PAPL) is found in an ETPJ (Toyota et al., 2003). This does not seem to be the common pattern of teaching the PRPF, but it could be an effective approach to introduce the PRPF and the PAPF simultaneously. They make a clear distinction: the PAPF is used to make a point of reference in the past, whereas in the PRPF, the point of reference is in the present.

Compare the following opening dialogue:

- A: How was the studio tour last week?
 10) B: It was exciting. I **had** always **wanted** to go there...
 A: Sounds interesting.
 B: Let's go together, shall we?

11) A: Sure! I've always **wanted** to go there too. (p. 12)

In example 10, the point of reference is the event of going to the studio tour, which happened in the past, and speaker B had wanted to go there until he/she went there. In sentence 11, the point of reference is the present. Speaker A still wants to go to the studio tour, which has not happened yet at the time of speech.

Thewlis (2007) and Murphy & Smalzer (2009) make a comparison between the PRPF and the PRPF progressive to show different aspects of the two tenses (e.g. perfect vs. imperfect aspect), but none of the ETPes compare the PRPF with the PAPF like the ETPJ. This could be due to the fact that the PAPF has not been introduced yet in the ETPes, and it makes sense to compare with the SPA, which is closely related to the PRPF and has also already been introduced prior to the PRPF. In two of the ETPJs, Toyota et al. (2003) and Azuma et al. (2009) introduce both the PRPF and the PAPF in the same lesson.

5.3. Practicality and authenticity

One of the purposes of textbooks used in English-speaking countries in general is to help prepare non-native English speakers to be able to succeed in academic activities in school and everyday life. Hence, it is natural to see more useful exercises in the ETPes. This kind of practicality for promoting language for use in a possible real-life situation should be stressed in language teaching in the ESL environment to meet the learners' needs. For example, ESL students might have to go to doctors while staying in an English speaking country, or they might need to make reservations at a hotel; therefore, lessons on filling in a medical history, applying for admission, or making hotel

reservations can be useful. In this way, the learners will be prepared to use the language in their real-life situations.

Activities found in the ETPEs which require information that could be useful in such practical situations are writing a personal essay and asking a partner what kind of experience he/she has had in the past, using “Have you ever...?”. Another useful activity found is editing a written text. In this activity, learners are editors, paying critical attention to the use of each different tense.

In the ETPJs, not many practical activities were found. Since English is not spoken or used in learners’ everyday lives, it might not be practical to learn how to explain about one’s medical history at a doctor’s office. However, writing a personal history could be an appropriate exercise for learners, since each learner can relate the content of the writing to him/herself. Thus, it will lead to a meaningful learning activity for them.

Meaningful learning is an important learning strategy, and this is not limited to language learning. In contrast with rote learning, which has little “association with existing cognitive structure” (Brown, 2006, p. 91), meaningful learning involves connecting new information with learners’ own personal experience. The new information may be better retained. This kind of activity was found in two of the ETPJs, which include tasks where learners write about places they have been (Shiozawa et al., 2008, p. 37) or things that they have been interested in (Toyota et al., 2003, p. 13). Echevarria et al. (2007) claim that “students are more successful when they are able to make connections between what they know and what they are learning by relating classroom experiences to their own lives” (p. 38). They further explain that this kind of

meaningful experience can be authentic, because it represents their real-life experience. This leads to another important characteristic of language learning: authenticity.

Tomlinson (2003) stresses the importance of using authentic texts, which are defined as “texts not written especially for language teaching,” because they “can provide exposure to language as it is typically used” (p. 5). Authentic texts can be found in publications such as magazines, newspapers, or blogs on the Internet. Using these can help learners to recognize in which contexts the PRPF is used in the actual world. It is also helpful for learners to be exposed to “realistic input” (Tomlinson, 2003, p. 77) so that they can adapt and use it in real situations.

In the ETPEs, there are activities in which learners are asked to find personal essays (Thewlis, 2007, p. 243) or famous living people’s biographical texts (Pavlik, 2004, p. 108) on the Internet and look at how different tenses are used in them. Another example is to find newspaper articles and compare the SPA and the PRPF use in them (Thewlis, 2007, p. 243).

Tomlinson (2003) also rationalizes the use of non-authentic texts. He claims that non-authentic texts can play an important role to draw learners’ attention to a new grammatical feature. Some part of the text can be altered in a way that makes learners aware of the form. None of the ETPJs deal with authentic texts. The opening texts and dialogues seem artificially composed by authors. Some of the examples seem to contain “unnatural” use. There are examples where a sentence does not fit in the given context, or sentences that do not seem to fit any realistic context. For example, the sentence, “He has seldom eaten with his family,” (Shiozawa et al., 2008, p. 36) implies that he has not eaten with his family much in his whole life so far, and it sounds a little odd. It might be

more natural if it is in the present tense: “He seldom eats with his family.” The misuse of *before* is also frequently seen in the ETPJs. There are cases in which *before* is used in the PRPF in a conversation in a textbook where it is unlikely in a real conversation:

- A: Do you know him?
 12) B: No, I have never met him *before*. (Shiozawa et al., 2008, p. 37)

Sentence 12, “I have never met him before,” is usually used in a situation when a speaker meets somebody for the first time. If A and B in the example are talking about “him,” who is not at the scene, and B has not met “him,” B would normally say, “No, I have never met him.” *Before* would not normally be used in this situation. Overall, the example sentences presented in the ETPJs seem to stress grammatical form more than situations that are appropriate for the PRPF.

Related to authenticity, contextual features relating to discourse and situation are crucial to consider. If a speaker’s utterances do not make sense to the hearer, communication fails. It is important for learners to be able to reply appropriately in a dialogue or make logical sense in an essay they are composing. The ETPEs provide some such context in the form of dialogue exercises. For example, learners are expected to fill in the missing parts of a conversation, using the PRPF. This kind of exercise helps them incorporate the PRPF in an extended context. In the PIE textbook, there are three dialogues using the PRPF that learners can practice, but they appear to be slightly “unnatural” and tailored to stress the form of the PRPF. Dialogue exercises were found in some of the ETPJs, but they usually provide just enough information to figure out the expected tense based on the textbook rules. There are no dialogues with multiple turns to

offer learners necessary contextual information for use in real life. Without contextual information, it would be difficult to learn pragmatic use of the PRPF.

6. Conclusions

6.1. Summary

There seems to be a significant difference between the ETPJs and ETPEs in approaching the PRPF. A more practical and communicative approach was seen in the ETPEs. More contextualized and situational explanations are offered. The ETPJs give example sentences to help learners understand the PRPF; however, it would be difficult to learn the implications of the PRPF sentences without a teacher's supplementary explanation of the situational contexts, since little detail is offered in the textbooks. The ETPEs offer for practice more meaningful situations that learners can relate to, such as explaining their medical histories or writing essays about their own personal histories. Learners can actually engage in an activity as a "semi-real-life" experience, in the sense that learners are actually talking about their real selves, rather than a "pretend-to-be" activity, which often happens in language learning classrooms. Learners need to be exposed to a clearer distinction between the SPA and the PRPF; otherwise, they might send a wrong message.

There are situations where either the SPA or the PRPF can be used. It is crucial to clarify why one tense should be used rather than the other. Depending on a speaker's viewpoint, it could be either the SPA or the PRPF for a situation which occurred in the past. The ETPEs do not seem to clarify the difference in situations in which either tense

can be used. The ETPEs have a tendency to let learners discover patterns or rules of the PRPF, and this awareness-raising activity is helpful in language learning. The ETPJs, on the other hand, tend to present rules first, and demonstrate them with example sentences; this can work effectively in situations where a large amount of grammatical information needs to be learned in a limited time.

With the MECSSST's efforts to put emphasis on communication skills, dialogues are frequently used in the exercises in the ETPJs, and this is to be encouraged. The sentences used in the exercises in the MECSSST-approved textbooks show communicative characteristics; however, some unnaturalness in the utterances was observed. Students are not given many opportunities to freely communicate with others using the PRPF. Not many exercises that help learners exploit language in a communicative way are included. Especially in my old English textbook, PIE, there seems to be a heavy stress on drills and exercises. Many cases of drills using recitation and repetition of a new grammatical form occur. In comparison with the MECSSST-approved textbooks, the PIE (non-MECSSST approved) textbook has many different kinds of grammar exercises, but the approach is somewhat closer to the grammar translation method, where teachers explain the rules and students repeat and recite the "correct" answers over and over. Generally, the kinds of exercises that JLEs are engaged in tend to be passive, whereas ESL learners are expected to actively engage in the exercises in the textbooks.

It is important to bear in mind that some special factors need to be considered in EFL environments. Learners in Japan have fewer opportunities to be exposed to English and almost no opportunities to use it in their everyday lives. In most public high schools, English is taught in Japanese (there are schools where English is taught in English, but

not many), although there is what is called an “Oral Communication” class, usually held only once a week, and taught by both a native English teacher and a Japanese English teacher. Another factor is that the goal of most students is to pass a college entrance exam, and they need to get high scores on the English test. This means they need to be able to answer the questions asked in the college entrance exam correctly. Not many exams ask students to write a short essay, for instance. In writing classes, Japanese high school students learn grammar rules, and they are expected to write English translations, rather than create their own sentences. They might be able to get good grades on the English exams, but they might have difficulty writing a coherent text in English, and have difficulty communicating with people in/from other countries in real-life situations. In order to avoid this problem, it is necessary for them to read and listen to how people actually communicate in English. Thus, authentic materials and exercises introducing pragmatic features should play an important role.

6.2. Teaching suggestions

Based on the findings of this study, suggestions are offered to help learners understand the PRPF in the EFL environment. In order for learners to be able to use the PRPF correctly and appropriately, they need to recognize what it is that is unique about the PRPF and distinctive from the SPA. In other words, they need to know the reasons to use the PRPF in place of the SPA. Authentic materials, such as newspaper articles, excerpts from books, or blogs or essays found on the Internet can serve as examples of how the PRPF is actually used by native speakers. Reading a movie script or book excerpt that uses the PRPF and the SPA could help learners differentiate these two tenses.

Instead of choosing an appropriate tense in a single sentence, a situation should be given, and then learners should be asked to write a sentence, using a tense that fits the situation. EFL learners can learn pragmatic aspects of English by creating conversation, for example, between two high school friends who have not seen each other for ten years. They can ask each other how they have been doing since they graduated from elementary school. In this way, learners will be aware of how and in what situation they should use the PRPF.

6.3. Limitations of the research

I have to admit that it has been almost seven years since I left my teaching position in Japan, and my evaluation is based on my past teaching experience and the textbooks currently used in Japan. The actual English classroom could be different from what is described in this paper. The analysis could be made more precise and accurate with the help of a survey of teachers who are currently teaching in Japan. In addition, more textbooks could be examined, including more non-MESCCT-approved ones.

6.4. Suggestions for further research

For further research, testing the comprehension of the PRPF of JLEs at both the intermediate and advanced levels, and finding what is lacking in their understanding of this tense would provide some ideas for the development of more effective teaching materials. It would also be useful to ask English teachers in Japan to evaluate ETPJs and provide information about the current English curricula. Based on this information, more accurate and practical teaching suggestions could be offered.

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