

Predicting the outcomes of linguistic contact in an EFL setting

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Traditional accounts of language contact have considered intensity of contact, relating to the duration, volume of speakers involved, the dominant culture, and socioeconomic dominance (see, e.g., Thomason 2001). While these classifications may well hold true for native varieties in contact, it is unclear which or to what degree these dimensions apply when considering the phenomenon of English as a contact variety in its capacity as a foreign language. However, given the presence, hold, prevalence, and longitude of English in several environments in the world today, evidence of contact is most likely observable. Ample evidence shows that when languages are in contact, the transference of discourse markers from one language to another is expected (see, e.g., Hlavac 2006). Likewise, it is the case that frequent use of discourse markers is the hallmark of the fluent speaker of a foreign language (Sankoff et al 1997). It is not surprising that discourse markers are a site of influence from English on native languages, as noted, for example, in Finland by researchers such as Taavitsainen & Pahta (2003), manifesting in such forms in Finnish as *pliiis*, *jees*, *enivei*, *cool*, etc. Such discourse markers in Finnish appear, in fact, to be incorporated to the point that they are no longer considered as influence from English, but as resources in Finnish vernacular (Meyerhoff & Niedzielski 2003). These findings point to consideration of such factors as grammatical functionality and versatility, the primacy of lexicon over grammar, the relationship of the L1 self to the multilingual self, and salience as a promoter of language change. This paper offers an overview of research on such language contact, using data from my own studies and others to illustrate the importance of discourse markers in observing contact with English.

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