

HJALMAR P. PETERSEN

The Dynamics of Faroese-Danish Language Contact



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Preface and acknowledgment

This book is part of the result of my research into Faroese-Danish bilingualism and language contact. The research was done as part of the project: *K8 Variation in Bilingualism on the Faroe Islands*, which was funded by the *Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft*, that is *The German Research Council*. The K8 project was one of many at the Research Centre 528: Multilingualism, or Sonderforschungsbereich 538: Mehrsprachigkeit, as it is called in German. In short, we just call it the SFB.

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Abbreviations and symbols

>	becomes
<	comes from
*	reconstructed form; ungrammatical
-∅	No ending, null morpheme
~	corresponding to
⊂	proper set inclusion: $U \subset V$ means that U is a proper subset of V
⊆	Set inclusion: $U \subseteq V$ means that U is a subset of or equal to V
< >	What is mentioned between < > refers to an optional (occasional) occurrence
{ }	What is mentioned between { } is or may be of temporary nature
	Vertical bar symbol, indicating what is less stable (left of the bar) and what is more stable (right of the bar)
—	as in <u>RL</u> : underscored symbol of a language or language name indicates that the language is linguistically dominant
v as in AvB:	stands for 'and/or'
A, B	Symbols for languages in general
Acc.	Accusative
Adj.	Adjective
Adv.	Adverb
AdvP	Adverbial Phrase
AF	Afrikaans
AM-EN	American-English
AM-IC	[North]-American Icelandic
Australian-GE	Australian-German
BM	Bokmål
BS	Borrowing Scale
CL	Clitic
COMP	Comparative
CP	Complimentiser Phrase
DA	Danish
DAN-GER	Danish-German (on the border between Denmark and Germany).
D.	Dative
Dat.	Dative
DO	Direct Object
DM	Discourse marker
DU	Dutch

DUR	Durative
EI	Embedded Islands.
EL	Embedded Language.
EN	English
EV2	Embedded V2
EXPL	Expletive
-f.	Feminine
FA	Faroese
FAR-DAN	Faro-Danish
FTR	Future time reference
4-M model	The four morpheme model
G	Grammar
GE	German
GD	Gøtudanskt
GMC	Germanic
GO	Gothic
H	High variant
IO	Indirect Object
K8	The Hamburger Database on Faroese-Danish bilingualism. It consists of informal interviews with three generations, 16-20, 40-50 and 70+. The informants come from different parts of the Faroe Islands.
IC	Icelandic
IE	Indo-European
IMP	Imperative
IMPERF	Imperfect
INF	Infinitive
INFM	Infinitive marker
IP	Inflectional Phrase
ISc	Insular Scandinavian
L	Low variant
L1	First language
L2	Second language
LA	Latin
LG	Low German
MED-PASS	Medio-Passive
MidSc	Mid Scandinavian
MSc	Mainland Scandinavian
-m.	Masculine
ML	Matrix Language
NEUT	Neutralization
NO-AGR	No agreement
Nom.	Nominative

n.	Noun
-n.	Neuter
NN	New Norwegian
NP	Noun Phrase
OD	Old Danish
ODS	Ordbog over det danske sprog = the largest Danish Dictionary available at: http://ordnet.dk/ods/ .
OE	Old English
OIr	Old Irish
ON	Old Norse
OS	Old Saxon
P.	Person
Part.	Partitive
Pl.	Plural
PP	Prepositional Phrase
PART	Partitive
PASS	Passive
PAST	Past tense
PH	Phonology
POS	Positive
PPP	Past participle
PP	Preposition
PRES	Present tense
PROG	Progressive
PRT	Particle
red	Reduction
REFL	Reflexive
RL	Recipient (or receiving) Language
RLAg	Recipient Language Agentivity
RU	Russian
Sg	Singular
SL	Source Language
SLAg.	Source Language Agentivity
SLA	Second Language Acquisition
SP	Spanish
Standard DA	Standard Danish
SW	Swedish
SUFF	Suffix
SUP	Supine
SUPERL	Superlative
TEC	Transitive Expletive Construction
TL ₂	Target Language 2
TRS	Transitive suffix
U	Subset of V
V	Vocabulary

V_f	Functors
V_1	Primary vocabulary (contentives)
V_2	Secondary vocabulary (contentives)
v.	Verb
VP	Verb Phrase
WFR	Word Formation Rules

1 Introduction

One could well claim that the Faroe Islands today is one of the countries with the most consequent bilingualism, as the grownups to a high degree master two official languages as spoken as well as written medium. (Hagström 1984: 240)

The question to be addressed in this book is: what happens in the speech of asymmetrical bilinguals when language A, the dominant language, and language B, the embedded language, are closely related?

The data are from Faroese, henceforth FA, and Faro-Danish, henceforth FAR-DAN, which is the special variant of DA that is used on the Faroe Islands as a first second language. In this bilingual language situation, FA is always the dominant language, as will become clear later when the notion of dominance is addressed.

FA is a North Germanic language. It is usually grouped together with Icelandic, IC, as an Insular Scandinavian language, ISc, as it has many of the same syntactic features as IC. This grouping will be addressed again in Ch. 7. *Some typological differences between Faroese and Danish*, but it should already be pointed out here that the division between ISc and Mainland Scandinavian, MSc, cannot be upheld, since FA allows both ISc syntax, and, as the result of language contact, MSc syntax (Barnes & Weyhe 1994). In addition to MSc there are other loans from DA, especially lexical ones, but also derivational suffixes, as will be shown in 9.3.

The framework used is van Coetsem's (2000) theory of the transmission process in language contact, where he focuses on the nature of the (psycho-)linguistic processes of change that reside in the minds of individual bilinguals. This I have combined, partly, see especially ch. 10 on SL agentivity, with Myers-Scotton's and Jake's 4-M model, as this model predicts what can be transferred from the dominant language, FA, to the non-dominant language, which is FAR-DAN in our context. I will not use their distinction between Matrix and Embedded Language, for reasons that will become clear later.

In asymmetrical bilingualism situations as the one under consideration, the agent speakers of the dominant language, that is FA, imitate and borrow the unstable parts of grammar, secondary vocabulary, syntax, modal and discourse markers from the source language, DA. The result is a complication of FA, as will be shown in detail in ch. 9. Complication is then to be understood as a system "that needs [a] longer description" (Dahl 2009: 42).

In FAR-DAN, the agent speakers impose the stable parts, mainly the articulatory habits of the source language, FA, onto the receiving language, FAR-DAN, but also some bound morphemes like infinitive, verb + particle, plural and past participles. The reason is that

these morphemes are early in the sense of Myers-Scotton & Jake (2000), see ch. 10 for details. There is a chapter specially devoted to the articulation of FAR-DAN, where it is shown that agent FA speakers usually accommodate their pronunciation to DA, but without reaching a perfect DA pronunciation. We measured the vowels *-e*, *-ø* and *-o* and found that the pronunciation in FAR-DAN is an intermediate one, not purely FA, and not purely DA (Petersen & Rakow 2010), for details see ch. 11.

FAR-DAN is a case of Source language agentivity, SLAg, with the imposition of FA linguistic material onto the receiving language, which is FAR-DAN. The result of SLAg is reduction, at least from the point of view of Faroese agent speakers. Reduction means that e.g. the FA agent speakers do not speak FAR-DAN with the marked glottal stop, the *stød*, and they do not use many vowel distinctions, which are otherwise found in DA, see ch. 11. From time to time, they make their processing easier by using e.g. FA syntax and even morphology, as will become clear in ch. 10. It should be noted that there is no reduction of standard DA. The Faroese agent speaker of FAR-DAN simplifies his/her L2 for himself/herself. There is thus no change in the standard DA system.

The syntax shows median stability in both RLAG and SLAg, where the main result of the transference is a twofold conversion-process, with the complication of FA and the reduction of FAR-DAN.

An example of complication in RLAG is when agent Faroese speakers imitate different syntactic structures of DA, as with future time references such as *koma* 'to come' as *hann kemur at siga* 'he is going to say' (< DA *hann kommer til at sige* 'he is going to say'), using this in FA side by side with the 'proper' future time reference construction *fara at* 'go to', *hann fer at siga* 'he is going to say.' This is what is meant by complication of the receiving language. It takes longer to describe the standard FA system than the IC one when speaking about this particular construction.

The same speakers occasionally impose FA syntax onto FAR-DAN, like the supine *jeg har prøvet at arbejdet* 'I have tried to work' instead of *jeg har prøvet at arbejde* 'I have tried to work.' In doing so, s/he simplifies his/her FAR-DAN by covertly using FA syntax.

The morphology and the mental lexicon come from FA and DA, as does the syntax, while the phonological system comes solely from FA, although we have found an intermediate pronunciation in FAR-DAN (Petersen & Rakow 2010).

Regarding the syntax, it is sometimes difficult to say whether the speaker uses FA or DA syntax in RLAG, since the languages are linearly equal in many cases. But then there are other reasons for presuming that there are two syntactic systems at play. If this were not the case, one should find such specifically FA syntactic constructions like the *hjá*-possessive, double-definiteness, supine-attraction and FA gender in FAR-DAN, and this is generally not the case. The *hjá*-possessive is seen in e.g. *báturin hjá manninum*, which lit. means: boat-the(N) with man-the(D) = 'the man's boat.' Supine attraction is seen in *eg havi prøvað at arbeiða* 'I have tried to work', where the supine spreads from *prøvað* 'tried' to *arbeiða* 'work.' Double definiteness is the rule in FA, as in *tann stóri maðurin* (lit.: the big man-the) = 'the big man' opposite to DA *den store mand* 'the big man.'

If the speakers used FA syntax when speaking FAR-DAN, we should expect to find many of these features in FAR-DAN, but as I will show, this is not the case, and this shows that the agent speakers use two syntactic systems in their language processing.

Reference is made to the K8 database. This is the Hamburg Database on Faroese-Danish bilingualism. The work was done in the context of SFB 538, that is the

Sonderforschungsbereich Mehrsprachigkeit 538 or *Research Center 538: Multilingualism* in Hamburg, Germany, where many different projects on multilingualism are conducted. The K8 project consists of informal interviews with three generations, 16-20, 40-50 and 70+. The informants came from different parts of the Faroe Islands, and they spoke about different topics such as children's games, books they have read and so on. For details see Ch. 6. *Methodology*. Of these, I have only included the youngest and the oldest generation into the present work primarily for time reasons.

The book is organized as follows. First there is a short overview on language contact and bilingualism. This chapter may seem trivial to readers confident with the topic and it is not intended for the specialist but rather as an overview for readers who are not acquainted with language contact and bilingualism in general. It is followed by an overview of the history of the FA language, a chapter that is intended for readers not familiar with FA so that s/he can obtain a picture of the language situation. Chapter 4 offers a more detailed description of bilingualism on the Faroe Islands, where it is shown that the process towards the high proficiency of FAR-DAN found on the Faroe Islands has been a gradual one. In that same chapter, there are a few words about the domain of each language, a section on when children acquire FAR-DAN, and one section about the attitude towards DA. Here it becomes clear that the Faroe Islands are a so-called open linguistic society with regard to borrowings, although the purist movement may try to delay the changes in progress, c.f. 4.5. *Language awareness and purism*. Chapter 5 is a novel report showing that amazingly little scientific work has been done on Faroese-Danish language contact, even though it has existed for centuries. This chapter is followed by the methodology chapter and a chapter on the typological differences between FA and DA, after which the theoretical framework is introduced in chapter 8. The actual data are then presented in chapters 9 and 10. In chapter 11, I show how the agent FA speaker pronounce the mid vowels *-e*, *-ø* and *-o*. Ch. 12 is about the increasing influence of English, EN, on FA, showing that many young speakers are not bilingual, but rather trilingual, and in ch. 13 I have a conclusion and a discussion.

When on the Faroe Islands, you may hear the term *Gøtudanskt*, GD, (lit.: street-Danish), or Danish from the village *Gøta*. GD is used to refer to DA, which is heavily influenced especially by FA pronunciation, and it is said to originate from a teacher from the village of *Gøta* in *Eysturoy* (Poulsen 1993). He lived from 1850 to 1930, and spoke DA with a lot of Faroicisms. One example from Poulsen (1993) is:

- GØTUDANSKT:
- (1) a. De store for flesn, de kan brække traver.
- FAROESE:
- b. Teir stóru fyrí flesini, teir kunnu bróta tráður.
the big(N) for skerry-the(D), they(N) can break fishing rods(A)
 'The big ones [coalfish] outside the skerry can break fishing rods'.

It is said that the teacher spoke this kind of DA everywhere he went, and this is why the first part of the compound has the place name *Gøta*.

Maybe this is the case, maybe not; still, it is a good story.

2 A short overview of language contact and bilingualism

This chapter is trivial for many readers acquainted with language contact and bilingualism. It is intended for readers who are not all that familiar with the topic under consideration.

No language contact situation is context free. The notion of context is not unimportant, as it is necessary to have a good understanding of the history and social dynamics that exist between the language societies in contact (Thomason 2001: 78, Winford 2003: 28, Aikhenvald 2008: 36), as extra-linguistic matters such as social factors, the intensity of contact, speaker's attitude towards the source language, purism and the length of contact play a strong role in explaining why closely related languages like IC and FA, for example, develop as differently as they have done and do.

It is not possible to predict when a contact-induced change can or will happen or what kind of change will occur, as this is governed by probabilities, not possibilities, and because speakers are unpredictable, as pointed out by Thomason (2001: 61).

Language contact occurs naturally as a reflex of humans' social nature (van Coetsem 2000: 31), and one can claim, as does Schuchardt, that "es gibt keine völlig ungemischte Sprache" [there are no completely unmixed languages] (Schuchardt 1884: 5).

Different factors promote bilingualism/multilingualism. One is a close proximity between the languages in contact, as at the Danish-German border, where many speak German, GE, and the special variant of DA which is called Danish-German (Fredsted 1998, Köhl 2008). Another example from North Germany is the contact between Frisian and High German and previously Low German, and there are thousands of other similar examples, too many to mention here. Displacement promotes bilingualism, e.g. the many immigrants to Europe and USA. The third factor that promotes bilingualism is colonialism, as on the Faroe Islands and Greenland, where DA became the High, H, variant after the Reformation.

Bloomfield (1933) wrote that bilingualism is the result of the addition of a perfectly learned foreign language to one's own, but as pointed out by many others, e.g. Myers-Scotton (2006: 36), the criterion of speaking of two or more languages with a native-like ability would rule out most bilinguals, as one of the two languages is always or will always be the dominant language, even in balanced bilinguals, that is children who learn languages A and B simultaneously between the ages of 0 and 3. Children who learn their second language between 3-4 up until to puberty are child second language learners, while those who learn their L2 after puberty are adult L2 learners (Klein 1986: 15). This means that the Faroe Islanders are child L2 learners, see ch. 4.

The question is whether a balanced speaker can and will remain such, as s/he will almost certainly use one language as the dominant one later in life due to different social circumstances such as where they end up in life and where and in which domain they use each language, examples of domains being understood as family, friends, religion, education and work (Fishman 1972). This is illustrated very nicely by Hartmann Jacobsen's (1984) MA thesis, where she describes how her two sons gradually become more and more

dominant in FA after initially being dominant in DA, simply because FA became the dominant language after they moved from Denmark to the Faroe Islands.

A bilingual may not have the same command over the four basic language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. The bilingual may, for example, understand and speak language B fairly well but not write it, or s/he may have good command of the morphology and syntax of B, but not of the phonology. Even if s/he is grammatically competent in B, his or her communicative competence may be halting.

There is a fluency continuum in learning a second language. First, one has to take into consideration the age of acquisition, where puberty is a good candidate for a cut-off point. Klein (1986: 15) distinguishes between three acquisition periods. The first language acquisition period extended between the ages of 0-3. This corresponds to Meisel's (2007: 14ff) 2L1 (two first languages), but Klein differs from Meisel in having a child L2, that is child second language, cL2, between the ages of 3-4 and puberty, after which he has second language acquisition, SLA. I will adopt this classification in this book, simply because Meisel's approach implies that e.g. a Faroese learner who starts with German, GE, at the age of 14 should have the same knowledge of GE as of DA, which s/he formally starts with at the age of 10/11. This is not the case. Everyone speaks DA with a high level of proficiency, and this is definitely not the case with GE on the Faroe Islands, which some people begin speaking after the age of 14. Exposure obviously also plays a role here, as do language use and the need to use language B.

In addition to age, one must take into consideration the domains in which the bilingual uses his/her languages. These are family, friends, religion, education and work (Fishman 1972). Then there is the question of how language B is learned. One point is the aforementioned age; another, whether there is/has been any formal instruction e.g. in a class-room setting, how this instruction has been, and to what extent the child (or the adult) is exposed to the second language. Another possibility in SLA is that the speaker learns language B simply by interacting with native speakers, and may in this case reach a high level of proficiency, especially with regard to speaking and pragmatics, but not always in terms of grammatical correctness.

In the study of bilingualism, one language is always the dominant language; possible exceptions are speakers who are so-called balanced bilinguals, but as the circumstances these children live under change later in life, the result generally being that one of their languages will be the dominant one, as mentioned. I understand dominance as reported in Weinreich (1953: 75), where he says that "the dominant language is the language the speaker has greater proficiency in." In the concrete setting, FA is always the dominant language, both in Recipient language agentivity, where the agent speakers speak FA, and Source language agentivity, where the agent speakers speak Faro-Danish, FAR-DAN.

I will follow van Coetsem (2000) and use the letters A and B and underscoring, e.g. A, to indicate which language is dominant. I will also follow van Coetsem and use Recipient language, RL, and source language, SL, and underscoring to show dominance. These terms will be explored and explained in detail in ch. 8.

What may or can be transferred in language contact?

According to Thomason (2001), everything. In a way she is right, but it is important to make a distinction between borrowing/imitation and what Thomason (2001: 75) calls TL₂ (Target Language 2), that is Source language agentivity.

In the case of a TL₂ or SLAg, learners transfer some features of their native language into their version of the TL₂. The difference between borrowing and TL₂ is the same as the distinction between Recipient language agentivity and Source language agentivity in van Coetsem (2000). It is of some importance to keep these terms and distinctions in mind, as the mechanisms in RL and SL agentivity are complimentary. It is thus not the case that everything can be transferred in any way in language contact, as I will show in detail in ch. 9 and ch. 10. The main point is that what is transferred from DA to FA is complimentary to what is transferred from FA to FAR-DAN by the same agent speakers.

A typical case of RL agentivity is when Faroese agent speakers borrow/imitate DA linguistic material and adopt it into FA. In this process of borrowing/imitation in the dominant language, the stable parts of grammar, phonology and morphology, are left basically unaffected, while the unstable parts of the language, meaning the non-basic vocabulary, and the somewhat stable parts of the language, including its syntax, and modal and discourse markers, are transferred from the source language, DA, to the recipient language, FA. The opposite situation is TL₂, Source language agentivity, where agent speakers of FA impose FA linguistic material onto FAR-DAN. FAR-DAN is, as mentioned earlier, the special variant of DA that Faroemen use. In SL agentivity, the stable parts of the source language, FA, are imposed onto the recipient language, FAR-DAN. The result is a DA that is spoken with a FA accent, an approximation of vowel values, see ch. 11, with some FA morphological features, but almost no FA vocabulary, with the exception of a few nonce borrowings and code switches. In addition to this, the median parts of grammar, syntax, modal- and discourse markers are also imposed in SL agentivity, just as in RL agentivity.

One principle in a contact situation, according to Aikhenvald (2008: 28), is: “be as iconic with your neighbor as you can.” In the concrete contact situation, this manifests itself with the complication of FA, as when the agent speaker borrows e.g. the argument structure of the ditransitive verb *at give* ‘to give’ into FA and uses a prepositional phrase instead of an IO, DO construction. As such, s/he remains as faithful to DA as s/he can. Iconicity, so to say, in SLAg is observed in, for example, the lack of *stød*. The agent FA speakers use parts of the FA consonant system, simplify FAR-DAN and get rid of the marked glottal stop, which is quite difficult to master. The receiving system thus becomes more natural, meaning less marked. An example of iconicity as a complication/enrichment is e.g. the increasing use of prepositional phrases after *at geva* ‘to give’ instead of an indirect object, IO, or direct object, DO. I call this complication or enrichment, as FA now allows both DO + PP + DO and IO, DO, as opposed to IC, which has only IO, DO after *gefa* ‘to give.’

The new emerging structures in RLA_g may be ‘spoiled’ by language planners/purists, who encourage speakers to avoid the ‘new’ structures. These extra linguistic factors do play a role in a contact situation, as they may slow down a change or prevent it from happening.

The problem in discussing some of the FA data in ch. 9 is definitively determining which changes are caused by inherent tendencies, especially drift, and which changes are due to language contact. Another question is if extra-linguistic factors such as age and sex play any role at all.

The question about language change is of course not new, and it has occupied linguists for years. The Neogrammarians claimed in the 1870s that all sound changes are regular and

internally motivated. This view has been extremely influential, although there have been others, such as that of Schuchardt, who wrote that:

Ich habe behauptet, daß unter allen Fragen mit welchen die heutige Sprachwissenschaft zu tun hat, keine von größerer Wichtigkeit ist als die der Sprachmischung.

[‘I have maintained that of all the questions contemporary linguistics must tackle, none is of greater importance than that of language mixing’].

(Schuchardt 1884: 3)

The view that all linguistic change is internally based was not only a view that was upheld by the Neogrammarians only, but was the dominant, perhaps only view of the Structuralists and is the main assumption among Generative grammarians, all of which do not work with language variation and the individual speaker.

Variationist work on language change, starting with especially Weinreich (1953) and Haugen’s study (1950) on language contact and followed by the influential works of Labov in the sixties, have focused on extra-linguistic and external linguistic factors as triggers of change.

Labov’s research is a reaction to Chomskyan formalism, and changes are usually explained as the result of variation in speech between sexes, generations or classes, for example. It is important to differentiate between internal changes, external changes due to contact, and changes that have come about as the result of extra-linguistic factors such as age, sex, dialect, attitude towards a source language, purism and so forth. Contact as a trigger for a change was seen by linguists such as Weinreich (1953) to play a significant role, and research in contact linguistics since then has shown that contact induced changes are by no means exceptional or rare, and are even very common (Thomason & Kaufman 1988, Thomason 2001 and references therein).

The main focus of this book is contact induced changes, as e.g. when a FA speaker starts to use the verb *at koma* ‘to come’ for a future time reference, FTR, as in (2.1a) and (2.1b), where the latter is prediction-based. These are based on the DA construction, and a grammaticalization of *koma* ‘to come’ is currently occurring in FA, as illustrated with the sentences in (2.1), which show that the verb *koma* ‘to come’ in this specific context has lost its lexical meaning. It is important to recognize contact as the trigger for the new FTR in FA.

- (2.1) a. FAROESE:
Eg komi at siga henni tað í morgin.
I(N) come(FTR) to tell(INF) her(D) it(A) in morning(A)
‘I am going to tell her it tomorrow.’
[DA base: *jeg kommer til at sige* ‘I come(FTR) to(PRT) to tell(INF)']
- b. Tað kemur at regna í morgin.
it(N) comes(FTR) to rain(INF) in morning(A)
‘It is going to rain tomorrow.’

The DA base is *det kommer til at regne* (lit.: it(N) comes(FTR) to(PRT) to(INFM) rain(INF)))))) ‘it is going to rain’.

In *geva klæðini til Frelsunarberin* ‘give the clothes to the Salvation Army’, which is emerging in FA at the cost of IO, DO, and the analytic comparative *meira sjúkur* ‘more sick’, which is spreading at the cost of the synthetic comparative *sjúkari* ‘sicker’, both are examples of what Sapir (1921: 171-172) called a drift, which he defines (ibid) as cases in which related languages pass through the same or similar phases. For more on this problematic term and a discussion thereof see Malkien (1981).

This is exactly what makes it sometimes difficult to work with Germanic languages, GMC, as they generally show a drift towards analyticity. In saying difficult, I mean that the very dichotomy between language internal and language external induced changes is not at all clear-cut, as “several factors are usually at work in orchestrating a change. To put it simply: in each case, the possibility of multiple motivations muddies the waters” (Aikhenvald 2008: 9).

By multiple motivations she means, I guess, internal, external and extra-linguistic factors, and she points out that “the more facilitating factors are at work, the likelier is a form, or a pattern to be established in a contact-affected language.” (Aikhenvald 2008: 48); this is her Mutual Reinforcement Principle.

The phrasing “multiple motivations muddies the waters” is not unimportant in the present context, as I want to avoid getting into an ‘either-or’ mentality (Farrar & Jones 2002: 3) when presenting and discussing some of my data. That is, either the change is internal or it is external, and I certainly want to avoid the not uncommonly expressed view that ‘If-in-doubt-do-without’, meaning the assumption that all changes can be explained as internal, and if we cannot identify these, then we must as a last resort try to establish some external causes or extra-linguistic factors for the changes. Generally, however, it is better to do without any external and extra linguistic explanation (Farrar & Jones 2002: 4).

I take the position that an external explanation alone is appropriate for a particular change or in conjunction with an internal motivation, see also Thomason & Kaufmann (1988: 63).

It is important to stress that the internal changes such as the change in argument structure of *geva* ‘to give’ from IO, DO to DO + PP + DO and the analytic comparative are changes that might originally have been internally motivated. They have been sped up, however, by language contact. As pointed out by Dahl (2001), the chance that a certain morpheme or construction in a language will undergo a particular kind of grammaticalization is rather small on the whole, but given a contact situation, the probability of a change increases dramatically when a neighboring language is undergoing or has undergone the process in question.

It is not a must, although it might seem so, to treat internal and external changes as mutually exclusive. Rather, and this is the view I take in this book, an internal change like the drift towards analyticity in FA, is sped up by language contact. Additionally, it is historically incorrect, even naïve, to assume that the huge influence DA has on FA, e.g. the borrowing of phonemes, suffixes, syntactic constructions and a lot of vocabulary, does not have any effect on the drift towards analyticity, even though the same drift happened in DA and e.g. EN centuries ago.

DA has undergone a change towards analyticity, and FA is presently changing in the same direction, while IC is not showing the same level of change.

Why is this so?

I will often use IC, and of course Old Norse, ON, as a kind of control language(s) when discussing the data. This is justified, as IC has as a rule preserved ‘older’ syntactic structures, such as the mentioned general lack of drift towards analyticity with a verb such as IC *gefa* ‘to give.’ The reason for the change in FA is simply that FA has had intense contact with DA (and Norwegian, NO) for centuries (Sandøy 2005), and speakers generally have a positive attitude towards DA. There is, in addition to this, a lack of a strong purist tradition on the Faroe Islands as opposed to Iceland (Kvaran 2007), and FA does not have such a large text-corpus as Iceland has. Most texts, e.g. novels and so on, are in DA, the dominant intruder, and these facts facilitate the changes in FA. In addition to this, the Faroe Islanders have a much higher proficiency in DA than the Icelanders.

This is very nicely illustrated by the following example from the Danish newspaper *Politiken*, 13/01/2010, accessed on the same day. The Icelandic writer Auður Jónsdóttir tells how she came to Denmark in 2003. She stayed there until 2006. Upon her arrival, she ordered something at a hot dog stand in broken DA, and the woman in the hot dog stand suggested that she should go back to where she came from. The same is extremely unlikely to happen to a Faroe Islander, as s/he has a much higher proficiency in DA, as do older Icelanders. J. G. Jónsson responds in an e-mail about the Icelanders proficiency in DA by saying that: “Ég er ekki hissa á því. Ungir Íslendingar eru almennt mjög lélegir í dönsku og alls ekki jafngóðir og Færeyingar”, which means: ‘That does not surprise me at all. Young Icelanders’ proficiency in DA is bad, and is not at all as good as the Faroe Islanders’. Another example is from the newspaper *Sosialurin* in July 2010, where they write about an Icelandic, who has to stand court on the Faroe Islands. The language spoken in court is FA or DA, and the Icelandic does not understand neither.

The extra-linguistic settings of FA and IC are nearly as different as can be, and my claim is that this influences the direction in which the languages move. Perhaps the increasing EN bilingualism on IC will result in similar changes to those that FA has undergone and is undergoing.

A language change might be complex, as pointed out by Aikhenvald, and it is important to keep in mind that internal, external and extra-linguistic factors all have to be considered, and that there is often a complex interplay between these (Farrar & Jones 2002: 1, Papazian 2007: 161).

But how can one tell whether a change in FA has come about as the result of DA influence or an inner change?

Drift could apply to “a triad of resembles in language growth” (Malkien 1981: 566):

- (1) Those resulting from common descent of two or more given languages and traceable to an earlier common stage (recorded or reconstructed).
- (2) Those best explained as instances of independent if parallel development within the same language family, and
- (3) Those, obviously of a typological order, which cut across genetically unrelated languages (without necessarily amounting to universals).

Note that point (2) is problematic as it stands, as it might be difficult to say for sure whether a change is a case of independent or of parallel development within the same language family. Is a change to a prepositional phrase like *geva klæðini til Frelsunarberin* ‘give

the clothes to the Salvation Army’ instead of IO, DO or *meira sjúkur* ‘more sick’ instead of *sjúkari* ‘sicker’ the result of an independent drift towards analyticity in FA and DA only? Malkiel would treat these changes as the result of drift, whereas I think that contact is accelerating the change, which might originally have been triggered by an inner change.

It is often easy to cite foreign influence when focusing on loanwords. The word *argi/argi* ‘summer pasture’, which is used in place names, is found according to Magnússon (1998) in FA and IC, and is a loan from Old Irish, OIr, *airgbe*. As it is not found in GMC, it is obviously a loan in FA. Another example is the FA phrase *tað er ótti á mér* (lit.: there(N) is fear(N) on me(D)) = ‘I am afraid.’ This collocate does not exist in any of the other North GMC languages, but it does exist in OIr *tá eagla orm* (lit.: is fear on me) = ‘I am afraid’, and it is argued in Barnes & Weyhe (1994: 217) that it is borrowed from Celtic.

But things become complicated when investigating structural features, especially syntactic transfer, as it should always be considered that an internal motivation combines with an external motivation to produce a change. Thus it may be difficult to determine whether contact is responsible for the change or not.

One way of telling is to look at the language system as a whole, not just bits of it, as a language is a system with many subsystems.

In ch. 9, section. 9.3., I introduce the Borrowing Scale and illustrate it with examples of DA borrowings into FA which are not only lexical, but also phonological, morphological and later in ch. 9 also syntactic borrowings. The point in bringing it up here is that as DA influence is deeply embedded in other parts of grammar, vocabulary and even language planning, contact is a good candidate for triggering and/or speeding up the changes I discuss in ch. 9. This means that we cannot ‘do without’ contact, contrary to e.g. structuralist and generativists belief.

Another way of seeing whether a change has come about as the result of contact is to keep in mind that the structural features must be shared by both the receiving language and the source language, as pointed out by Thomason (2001: 93). The shared linguistic material does not need to be identical in all respects, and it will often not be, simply because agent speakers are innovative, as numerous examples from language contact studies show (Matras, Y. 2009). I will give examples of innovative replication particularly in ch. 9, section 9.5.14. *Innovative imitation*, where I mention examples like *bvaðani... frá* (lit.: whence...from) = ‘where...from’ and *meira sjúkari* (lit.: more sicker) = ‘more sick.’ Both structures show that language replication, as it is called in Heine & Kuteva (2005), is not pure copying.

The comparison with IC and ON does help, as the former has not had the same intense contact with DA as FA has. As a construction like the de-venitive *kemur at síga* ‘is going to say’ is found in FA and DA but not in IC or ON, it is fairly certain that we are dealing with a DA loan in FA.

There are cases where the shared material does not even exist in DA, or IC for that matter, like the root-imperative *ikkei tak!* (lit.: not take(IMP)) = ‘don’t take!’ (Petersen 2008c). This sentence structure is only accepted by the youngest speakers, and is presently spreading in FA. We should be dealing with a purely inner change, which is presently happening in FA, but then one has to consider the increasing influence of EN on FA; see ch. 12, where I put forward the opinion that the root-imperative *ikkei tak* ‘don’t take’ has come about as an innovative imitation of the EN imperative. The imitation is innovative, as FA does not have any *do*-support.

The fourth point that must be taken into consideration in order to determine whether linguistic material has come about as the result of language contact is that “the proposed interference features – were NOT present in the receiving language before it came into close contact with the source language” (Thomason 2001: 93-94).

The aforementioned de-venitive construction is a case in point, but there are also other structures in which pre-existing structures facilitate the change. In the previously mentioned change of the argument structure of *at geva* ‘to give’, which now takes IO, DO and DO + PP + DO, and the change from a synthetic comparative and superlative to analytic comparative and superlative, pre-existing structures within FA facilitate the changes. That is, DO + PP + DO exists after e.g. *at senda* ‘to send’ in FA (and IC), and analytic comparatives are present with indeclinable adjectives like *ótolandí* ‘intolerable’ and compounded adjectives like *framsíggín* ‘visionary.’

The fifth point that Thomason (2001: 94) mentions in explaining how to tell whether contact induced change has occurred is that we must prove that the shared features were present in the source language, before they came into contact with the receiving language.

But what can be borrowed in language contact?

Thomason (2001) says everything, as mentioned, and this is true when we look at the different parts of grammar. Phonology is borrowed, as well as morphology, syntax, modal and discourse markers and even pragmatics.

In SL agentivity, the speakers of the source language impose especially the phonological habits of the SL onto the RL, and this is why SLA learners speak the RL with a foreign accent. The reason is that phonetic features are acquired between the ages of 0 and 7. Myers-Scotton (2006: 341) mentions studies of immigrants who learn an L2 upon the arrival to a foreign country. Of these only the youngest children, those up to about age 7, achieved a native-like or near-native-like pronunciation. This is then why an asymmetrical bilingual will always speak his/her non-dominant language B with an accent. Phonological borrowing is not ruled out in RL agentivity, and can often be observed as gap-filling, as when the long /a:/ in *statur* ‘state’, the long /y:/ in *hyða* ‘type’, and the diphthong /au:/ in *aula* ‘meeting hall’ are borrowed into FA. These phonemes fill a gap in FA phonology, as these long sounds have only come to be as the result of different mergers and the development from ON to FA (Rischel 1967-1968, Snædal 1986). As such, the borrowed phonemes make the system more natural.

Loan morphology is borrowed in both SL and RL agentivity, but differently. The imposition of loan morphology is more frequent in SL agentivity, while it is not as frequent in RL agentivity. I find e.g. verb + particle in codeswitching in FAR-DAN, FA plural endings, and infinitives as well as past participles. These structures are easily imposed both because FA is the dominant language and because these are early system morphemes, as opposed to tense and agreement, which are late in language processing. For more on early system morphemes and late system morphemes see ch. 8.

Easily separable forms with clear boundaries are more prone to being borrowed than forms involving complex morphological alternations (Aikhenvald 2008: 33). Evidence from RL agentivity (DA > FA) are the prefixes *an-*, *be-* and *for-*, and the suffixes *-agfígur*, *-ári*, *-beit*, *-ilsí* (Wittkugel 2009). On the other hand, declinational and inflectional borrowings are rare in RLAg, and this is because e.g. a plural *-s* is a fused morpheme meaning ‘nominative, accusative, plural, indefinite’ e.g. in *jeans* in FA. This ending is extremely rare (Simonsen 2006, Sandøy & Petersen 2007).

But question then becomes why FA plurals occur in FAR-DAN, that is in SL agentivity, while DA plurals are rarely seen in FA, in RL agentivity.

I think the answer to this question is straight forward: language dominance. It is easier to impose an early system morpheme onto the non-dominant language than the other way around, where the morphology of the dominant language blocks foreign declensional morphology.

Aikhenvald (2008: 30) mentions that “borrowing a practice may facilitate borrowing a set of linguistic expressions which correlate with it.” As an example, she names speakers of languages in contact that may share cultural practices like building houses. An example from FA is the Danish trade monopoly and the Danish school system on the Faroe Islands, which have given rise to the use of the Danish counting system, so that the colloquial language has *ein-og-tjúgu* (with no hyphen) = (lit.: one-and-twenty) from DA *en-og-tvye* (with no hyphen) (lit.: one-and-twenty) = ‘twenty one.’ I should also mention that one of my informants from the K8 projects says that he remembers how an older man in his village sang the multiplication table in DA.

The practice of seamanship came from England, as the Faroe Islanders bought many sloops or smacks from England towards the end of the 1800s, and coal-trawlers in the fifties, and this gave rise to borrowings such as *spinnigarður(in)* ‘the spin-garden’ from EN *spinnaker*. The FA word does not make any sense at all. The agent speakers have just taken the first part *spinn-* and translated it as *spinna* ‘to spin.’ Phonetic transferences from EN are seen in ship names, so that e.g. *H.M.S Slater* became *Slatrið* ‘the Gossip’, as /sløtər/ resembles FA /slea:^htuɪ/ ‘gossip.’ Loans from the coal trawlers are e.g. *at táttu i* ‘to tighten’ from EN *haul taught*, that is, the *taught* of EN is very similar to FA *at táttu* ‘to tighten’ (Poulsen 1989). Other loans are *hálmáni* ‘half moon’, which is from EN *banana-link*, where the shape has obviously given rise to the FA noun. Another loan is *kameleyga* ‘camel’s eye.’ It is a bit difficult to explain exactly what it is, but the main point is that it is something that cannot get through a link or an eye. The EN word is *Kelly’s eye*, and there the agent speakers have used their knowledge of the Bible.

The sociolinguist settings must be taken into consideration, when evaluating a contact-induced change. The higher the degree of knowledge in the second language, the higher the degree of borrowings, and the longer the bilingual situation has existed historically, the more we expect to find borrowings of different kinds. That is, the intensity of contact is important, as is proficiency in language B and speakers’ attitudes towards their second language. Agent speakers of FA have a high level of proficiency in DA, and the bilingual situation has lasted for centuries, for details see ch. 3 and ch. 4. In addition to that, speakers do not typically have a negative attitude towards Danish. Jacobsen (2008: 292) shows, for example, that Faroe Islanders think that the situation as it is, with two official languages, should not be altered in any way, while more than 50% of the Icelanders think that DA should not be taught in Icelandic schools. Indeed it is the case that Icelanders sometimes have a very poor proficiency in DA compared to the Faroe Islanders. On the other hand, their proficiency in EN is better.

Some language societies are more open towards loans than others. Again, it is fruitful to compare the Faroe Islands, Iceland and Denmark. In Iceland, people are very conservative regarding borrowings. In Denmark, borrowings are generally accepted, and many borrowings come into colloquial DA from EN. Innovations have a better chance of spreading in a language society with little or no resistance towards the innovations. On the

Faroe Islands, speakers say that they prefer neologisms, but in their actual speech they often use borrowed Danish words (Gotved-Jacobsen & Nattestad-Steintún 1992, Jacobsen 2008). Purists have tried for more than a century to ‘improve’ FA, and they have succeeded to some degree when we look at written FA. By succeeded, I mean that some neologisms have found their way into written FA, and that it is just recently that writers and e.g. translators have started to use more spoken FA in their work, a case in point being the conjunction *vissi* ‘if’ from DA *hvis* ‘if’, which is used in spoken FA, while *um* ‘if’ is the rule in written FA, and not uncommon in spoken FA either.

There are other socio-cultural parameters that promote transference. They include the size of the community, interaction between rural and urban communities, marriage patterns, patterns of trade and warfare, the lifestyle of the speakers, the division of labor between the sexes and between generations, social organization and the kinship system, and religion and mythology. Given the Faroese-Danish situation, the size of the community is relevant. The Faroese language society is small, and there is not enough economical recourse to translate everything into FA. Hence, people read (and hear) a lot in DA, and this is why I find it important to stress role of the listener in a language change when discussing some of the changes currently happening in FA.

In a contact situation, the receiving language may adopt certain patterns without losing the old ones, and it is not uncommon that older and newer constructions exist side by side for generations before the older one disappears, if it ever does. In this context, I would like to point out Kurołowicz’s 4th law of analogy, which says that when two forms compete for one function, the newer form may take over that function, while the older form may become relegated to a subcategory of its earlier function.

The fact that older and newer forms can coexist is observed in FA with e.g. the ditransitive verbs, which alternates with DO + PP + DO, and the regular comparative/superlative with *-(a)ri* vs. the analytic comparative/superlative; cf. also Heine & Kuteva’s (2005: 71) notion of incipient categories, where they point out that these may be used optionally, and that they are not generally recognized by some speakers (or grammarians) of the language as distinct entities of grammar, and are usually rejected by purists.

To summarize: I have touched upon factors that may promote bilingualism and facilitate contact induced changes. In the present setting, I would again like to stress that it is important to keep in mind that the distinction between internal, external and extra-linguistic factors influencing a change are all but clear-cut. Further, I support the notion that some of the changes I will discuss, especially the borrowing and conversion of DA syntactic structures into FA, have come about as the result of an inner change which is sped up by language contact. It is unreasonable to rule out language contact as a factor, or, to put it in the words of Thomason (2001: 92), “...it is not historically realistic to assume that contact-induced change is responsible only for changes that have never occurred elsewhere through internal causation.” As we shall see in ch. 3 and ch. 4, Faroe Islanders hear and read a lot of DA, and this is why I would like to stress the listener’s role in linguistic change.

3 An overview of the history of the Faroese language

This chapter is included for the sake of completeness so that the foreign reader can get an idea of the language situation on the Faroe Islands. It is not a chapter on the historical development of FA showing the numerous lexical, phonological and morphological changes from ON, nor does it concern itself with contact-induced changes, the chapter is an outline of the sociolinguistic setting of FA with an emphasis on the status of the language and a few words on the growing text-corpus.

The Faroe Islands were first inhabited around 800 AC (Arge 1997, Edwards 2005). The settlers arrived directly from Norway or indirectly via the Nordic colonies in England, Scotland and Ireland, and this gave rise to a linguistic melting pot, just as in Iceland.

There are some Celtic loanwords in FA as in IC. These came with Celtic slaves and mistresses, and/or they entered the Norse language of the settlers in the colonies in England, Scotland and Ireland. In addition to the loanwords, it has been argued that a phrase like *tað er ótti á mær* (lit.: there(N) is fear(N) on me(D)) = ‘I am afraid’ is borrowed into FA from Celtic, c.f. Old Irish *tá eagla orm* (lit.: is fear on-me) = ‘I am afraid.’ This phrase does not exist in any other North GMC language, only FA, hence the hypothesis that it is borrowed from Celtic (Barnes & Weyhe 1994: 217). Among the Celtic loanwords are, for example, *kejallámur* ‘the left hand’ (Gael. *lamb chearr*) and perhaps *dunna* ‘duck’ (Gael. *tunna*) (Matras, Chr. 1965). Some contact with EN existed later, mainly through sailors who people came into contact with in trade situations; thus, there are loanwords such as *búkur* < *book* and *peia* < *pay* from around the 15th to 16th century. Among the EN loans from around 1600 to 1800 are *fittur* ‘nice’ < *to fit*, *gegl* < *jail* and *besnissaður* ‘cunning’ < *business*; there are also newer EN loans such as e.g. *trolari* < *trawler* and *tineygjari* < *teenager* (Jóansson 1997).

In 1035, the Faroe Islands became a tributary of Norway, and there was close contact between the countries up until the first decades of the 17th century. During this time, some Faroe Islanders lived and worked in Norway, and whole families moved back and forth between the countries (Sandøy 2005: 1930). This may have resulted in some language-induced changes, especially in the syntax, so that “Faroese has developed a language structure with an obviously Scandinavian character, first and foremost syntactically” (Sandøy 2005: 1930). Sandøy mentions, as an example, the use of the *s*-passive, which is restricted to a position following the modal verb as in *kann skjótast* ‘may be shot’, as opposed to *verður skotin* (lit.: become shot) = ‘is shot.’ The former, *kann skjótast* ‘may be shot’, is impossible in IC. Note that the syntactic changes I discuss in this book are more recent, and they are not the result of contact with NO. In addition to trade, many bishops on the Faroe Islands were Norwegians. Norwegian laws were also used, mainly *Seyðabrævið* (‘the Sheep-letter’) from 1298. One version is from approximately 1310, and some have argued that it was written by a Faroese living in Bergen (Sørli 1965). Others are sceptical of this hypothesis (Weyhe 2009).

Two merchant houses in Bergen belonged to an estate in Húsavík on the Faroe Islands, as did houses in Rogaland, Sogn and Shetland. There was direct contact with foreigners,