

Different Types of Contact Situations, hence Different Types of Linguistic Effects:
Evidence from northeastern Siberia and the Bering Strait area

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The goal of this paper is to provide evidence from a number of contact areas in order to illustrate the hypothesis that linguistic results of a language contact correlate with the type of social contact between the speakers of the languages in question. The areas under study are as follows: the Lower Kolyma River, Chukotka Peninsular, Commander Islands, Aleutian Archipelago, Kodiak Island. The pairs of contacting languages are distributed in the following way: Lower Kolyma – Russian vs. locally speaking native languages, Chukotka – Naukan Yupik vs. Russian, Chaplino Yupik vs. Russian, Chukchi vs. Chaplino Yupik, Chukchi vs. Naukan Yupik, Commander Islands – Atkan Aleut vs. Russian, Attuan Aleut vs. Russian, Aleutian Islands – Atkan Aleut vs. Russian, Atkan Aleut vs. English, Kodiak Island – Russian vs. Alutiiq. Not going into detail as regards all the pairs of contacting languages, I should only mention here that the results of the Russian language in contact turns out to be quite indicative. Being spoken in all the areas mentioned above at different historic periods, Russian either occupied a dominant position (which is quite a customary situation), or was a minority language. The dominant or marginal social position of Russian depended on a particular location and historic time span. With this perspective in mind, the proposed presentation focuses on three contact cases that seem quite rare and intriguing – Old-Settlers’ “sweet-tongued” Russian (the Lower Kolyma River), Mednyj Aleut mixed language (Commander Islands), and Old-Settlers’ Kodiak Russian (particularly, the case of secondary borrowing into Russian, via the Alutiiq language, of previously borrowed Russian loan words, which reflects the change of the social status of Russian).