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The Role of Formulaic Sequences in Language Proficiency and Contact

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TITLE

The Role of Formulaic Sequences in Language Proficiency and Contact

RELEVANT SIG

Pragmatics

FORMAT

Research-oriented Oral Face-to-face presentation (25 minutes, including Q&A)

Short English description

KEYWORDS

Formulaic Sequences,
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Language Contact

First-time presenter?

ABSTRACT

Formulaic sequences—pre-constructed, conventionalized phrases—are essential in language learning, promoting fluency, naturalness, and proficiency. While their role is well-documented, less is known about how knowledge of these sequences interacts with language proficiency and language contact. This study investigates these relationships, focusing on the interplay between learners' knowledge of formulaic sequences, their proficiency levels, and their engagement with target language speakers.

Sixty Japanese learners of English in an Intensive English Program at a Japanese university participated. They were categorized into three proficiency levels: low-intermediate, intermediate, and high-intermediate. Data collection involved a 30-item oral-production discourse completion task to assess participants' ability to use

formulaic sequences and a questionnaire measuring their language contact frequency and type.

Results revealed strong positive correlations between knowledge of formulaic sequences and both language proficiency and language contact. Higher proficiency learners demonstrated a broader repertoire and more accurate use of formulaic sequences, while learners with greater language contact exhibited richer usage in communicative tasks. These findings highlight the importance of incorporating formulaic sequences into language instruction and fostering opportunities for meaningful interactions with target language speakers to enhance proficiency.

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