

Asymmetrical Adaptations of Sounds in Loanwords

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In loanwords literature we occasionally come across two types of asymmetrical loanword adaptations of sounds. One, the same sound from two different languages is adapted in different ways in one language. For example, German /œ ø/ are adapted as /e/ in Japanese, while French /œ ø/ are adapted as /u/ (Dohlus 2005). Two, a sound from one language is adapted in different ways in different languages/dialects. For example, English sibilants /θ ð/ are adapted as /s z/ in French French and as /t d/ in Quebec French (e.g. Brannen 2002).

This presentation discusses the adaptation of the French and Turkish front rounded vowels and the Turkish back unrounded vowel. On one hand, French front rounded vowels /y œ ø/ are adapted as front unrounded vowels /i e/ in Serbian, while Turkish front rounded vowels /y œ/ are adapted as back rounded vowels /u o/. On the other hand, Turkish back unrounded vowel /u/ is adapted in three different ways in various languages.

I have done a phonetic experiment on C-to-/u/ coarticulation in order to determine how prone /u/ is to coarticulation in different consonantal contexts and if that may explain some of its adaptation patterns. I discuss differential adaptation patterns by reference to the phonological and phonetic accounts on loanword adaptations (e.g. Paradis and LaCharité 1997; Peperkamp and Dupoux 2003).