

## **Predictions on foreign segment importation**

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When a borrowed word enters into another language, the form of the word is normally changed in order to fit foreign elements to the phonological system of the borrowing language. Previous research has shown that these changes are widely predictable and that they are conditioned by several principles such as the Minimality Principle, which predicts that an adaptation should be the least costly in terms of structure and processes as possible (Paradis and LaCharité 1997, among others). However, in our corpus a certain percentage (28.7%) of foreign segments are not adapted but are imported into the borrowing language. This percentage can vary widely with some foreign phonemes being adapted in nearly all cases in a given language, while others are rarely imported. Our aim is to predict under which circumstances foreign phonemes are most likely to be imported. More specifically, our objective is to verify a hypothesis that a segment is most likely to be imported if its preferred adaptation strategy involves insertion of a marked feature to the underlying form. Our data demonstrates that where the preferred adaptation strategy of a foreign segment involves the insertion of a marked feature such as [+continuant] or [+voice] the importation levels consistently are the highest. For example, English /dʒ/, when repaired, is adapted into /ʒ/ in Quebec French after insertion of the marked feature [+continuant]. However, in our data /dʒ/ is overwhelmingly imported in Quebec French (94.8%) in order to avoid the insertion of a marked feature.

## Reference

Paradis, Carole and Darlene LaCharité. 1997. Preservation and minimality in loanword adaptation. *Journal of Linguistics* 33: 379-430.