

Resolving the Issue of the Target of Vowel Copy in Fijian Loanwords

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► **Introduction:** Vowel copy is an option for determining epenthetic vowel quality in loanword adaptation. English loanwords into Fijian undergo vowel epenthesis because Fijian disallows coda consonants and consonant clusters. Some of the loanwords exhibit vowel copy (Schütz 1978). In the Fijian loanwords, the target of vowel copy seems either the preceding or following vowel of the epenthetic site. However, the choice of the target vowel is indeterminate because there is no vowel copy in Fijian native phonology.

This study proposes three conditions on the target of vowel copy in Fijian loanwords by adopting an expanded version of prosodic projection theory (Martínez-Paricio 2012) based on Itô & Mester's works (2007 et seq., 2013). I argue that the domain where vowel copy applies can be circumscribed by Foot[±max/±min], and that not only minimal feet ([+min]) but also maximal feet ([-min]) play a decisive role in opting for the target of vowel copy.

► **Proposal:** I propose three conditions on the target of vowel copy in Fijian loanwords. First, interacting segments must be as close as possible (Adjacency Condition). Given that a \underline{v} is inserted in a hypothetical form $CV_2CV_1C\underline{v}CV_1CV_2$, the condition favors the copy with V_1 over that with V_2 since \underline{v} is closer to V_1 than V_2 . Second, an epenthetic vowel copies an inherited vowel from English (Base Condition). Third, an epenthetic vowel is required to show copy the vowel within the foot where it belongs (Foot Condition). While Adjacency and Base Conditions are never violated, Foot Condition is sometimes violated.

In Fijian, bimoraic trochee feet are formed from the right edge of the word, except that degenerate feet would be formed (Kenstowicz 2007). In addition, I assume that feet can be recursive in Fijian, and that an unparsed syllable is incorporated into a recursive foot (e.g., $\sigma(\sigma\sigma) \rightarrow \langle \sigma(\sigma\sigma) \rangle$). Recursive feet invariably contain a light syllable on the left hand and a minimal foot on the right hand.

► **Analysis:** This analysis depends on the data compiled from Schütz (1978). I show three types of vowel copy in Fijian loanwords. Type I enforces all the conditions presented above, and allows vowel copy to occur in the minimal foot. Illustrative examples are presented in (1). The (highlighted) epenthetic vowel copies the preceding or following vowel within the minimal foot to which it belongs.

| (1) Type I | | v (bold) = relevant epenthetic vowels; () = minimal feet; < > = maximal feet | |
|------------|----------------|--|------------------------|
| English | → Fijian | English | → Fijian |
| cake | → (kéke) | Píng-Pong | → (pìgi)(pogo) |
| mark | → (máka) | Hòng Kóng | → (ògo)(kógo) |
| bill | → (bíli) | Octóber | → (òko)(tóva) |
| ball | → (pólo) | Fébruary | → (fèpe)<ru(éri)> |
| block | → <bu(lóko)> | décimal | → (dèsi)(mólo) |
| clock | → <ka(lóko)> | Micronésia | → (mài)(kòro)<ne(sía)> |
| táxi | → (tèke)(sí:) | nítrogen | → (nài)(tòro)(jíni) |
| vélvet | → (vèle)(vétí) | Métropole | → (mè:)(tòro)(pólo) |

In Type II, Foot Condition is violated while Adjacency and Base Conditions are enforced. The data listed in (2) show that the (highlighted) epenthetic vowel does not copy the vowel within the foot which it belongs because the target of vowel copy is also an epenthetic vowel, which would violate Base Condition. In this case, the (highlighted) epenthetic vowel copies the adjacent non-epenthetic vowel at the expense of violating Foot Condition.

| (2) Type II | | | |
|--|---|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| v (bold) = relevant epenthetic vowels; () = minimal feet; < > = maximal feet | | | |
| English | → | Fijian | English → Fijian |
| strike | → | (sì ta)(ráke) | belt → (bè:)(léti) |
| spring | → | (sì vi)(rígi) | table → (tè:)(péli) |
| screw | → | (sù ku)(rú:) | cable → (kè:)(véli) |
| | | | Óxford → (ò:)(kòsi)(vóte) |

Type III allows vowel copy to take place within the maximal feet while enforcing all the three conditions presented above. The (highlighted) epenthetic vowel in (3a) copies the following vowel, indicating that the vowel copy takes place within the maximal foot. The data (3b) highlights the present proposal with recursive feet. Though the (highlighted) epenthetic vowel in (3b) has two options to determine the target of the vowel copy (i.e. the preceding or following vowel), it copies the following rather than the preceding vowel because Foot Condition requires that vowel copy occur within the foot. The data (3b) show that maximal feet help to circumscribe the domain where vowel copy applies.

| (3) Type III | | | |
|--|-----------|---|---------------------|
| v (bold) = relevant epenthetic vowels; () = minimal feet; < > = maximal feet | | | |
| (a) | English | → | Fijian |
| | bróther | → | <ba(ráca)> |
| | plan | → | <pe(léni)> |
| | trump | → | <ta(rábu)> |
| | train | → | <te(réni)> |
| | cross | → | <ko(lósi)> |
| (b) | English | → | Fijian |
| | télegram | → | (tàli)<ka(rámu)> |
| | geógraphy | → | (jò:)<ka(rávi)> |
| | télegraph | → | (tàle)<ka(rávu)> |
| | prógram | → | <pa(rò:)><ka(rámu)> |
| | páragraph | → | (pàra)<ka(rávu)> |

► **Conclusion:** This study can resolve the issue of the target of vowel copy in Fijian loanwords by proposing three conditions (Adjacency, Base, and Foot Conditions). The proposal of Foot Condition suggests that not only minimal feet but also maximal feet can play a role in determining the choice of the target of vowel copy.

► **References:**

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