Morphologically driven underapplication, lexical exceptions, loanword phonology and foreign language acquisition. Which is their lowest common denominator

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### Introductory remarks

Languages exhibit a set of phonological processes which underly due to morphological reasons (2), which have lexical exceptions (3), and which show a different behavior in loanwords (4). The purpose of this paper is to draw attention to the correlation between these three phenomena, and to investigate its consequences on foreign language acquisition.

This paper departs from the — not yet acknowledged — observation that those processes which underly in a given language due to morphological reasons (such as paradigmatic pressure or the need to realize a specific morpheme) tend to coincide with those processes that have more lexical exceptions and with those processes which exhibit a peculiar behavior within loanword phonology. Overall, a gradation can be made between the processes which meet all these three factors, the processes which meet just some of them and the processes which do not meet any one, and our expectation is that this must have significant consequences in the acquisition of a second language. In this paper we provide empirical evidence in favor of this expectation. In order to illustrate our argument, we focus on the phonology of Catalan, although it can be extended to the behavior of other languages.

### 1. Regular phonology

#### 1.1. Deletion of posttonic –n and –r in (absolute) word-final position

Camó[n] beta – camo[β̃]

‘song dim.’ – ‘song’


‘street dim.’ – ‘street pl.’

#### 1.2. Cluster reduction in word-final homorganic clusters

Sant jordi – sayo[n]

‘saint fes.’ – ‘street masc.’

q[β̃] – a[i]

‘tall fem.’ – ‘tall masc.’


‘camp’ – ‘countryside’

Bo[n] – bo[i]

‘banker’ – ‘bank’

#### 1.3. Epenthesis in word-final rising (other) sonority clusters

Cent[n] – cent[n]

‘center’ – ‘central’

Retall[n] – retall[et]

‘altar piece’ – ‘altar piece dim.’

#### 1.4. Vowel reduction

C[a]sina ‘house’ – c[a]sina ‘house dim.’

M[i] ‘month’ – M[i]n ‘month dim.’

M[i] ‘honey’ – M[i]los ‘honeyed’

(extrapolable to posterior vowels series)

#### 1.5. Epenthesis in word-initial sc- clusters


#### 1.6. Word-final obstruent devoicing

Bo[n] ‘wolf fem.’ – Bo[p] ‘wolf male’

Po[β̃] ‘(he) could’ – Po[p] ‘(he) can’


### 2. Morph. driven underapplication

#### 2.1. Underapplication of deletion of posttonic –n and –r in (absolute) word-final position (→ frequent)

Cat. eno[n], contorn[n]

‘(a)he understands’, ‘(they) will sing’

Bal. na[n], reme[n]

‘(I) order’, ‘(I) mix’

Bal. mi[n], conside[n]

‘(I) look at’, ‘(I) consider’

#### 2.2. Underapplication of cluster reduction in word-final homorganic clusters (→ very frequent)

Cat. resol[t], miol[t]

‘solved’, ‘milled’

Eiv. (s) col[n], (s) col[n] – col[n] (ac)omp[n]

‘(I) sing’, ‘(I) jump’, ‘(I) camp’

#### 2.3. Underapplication of epenthesis in word-final rising (other) sonority clusters (→ very frequent)

Cat. asoll[t], mioll[t]

‘(I) buy’, ‘(I) enter’, ‘ente[n]’

Asoll[et], resual[et]

‘(to) strike up’, ‘to restore’

#### 2.4. Underapplication of vowel reduction (→ very frequent)


Esp&(f) [e]n ‘he waits’ – esp&(f) m&(e)m ‘we wait’

(extrapolable to posterior vowels series)

### 3. Lexical exceptions

#### 3.1. Lexical exceptions to deletion of posttonic –n and –r in (absolute) word-final position (→ several)

Be[n], un[n], m[un]

‘well’, ‘which one’, ‘midget’

Ac[e], mi[n], ce[n]

‘steel’, ‘sea’, ‘heart’

Mote[n], fute[n], amo[n]

‘engine’, ‘future’, ‘love’

#### 3.2. Lexical exceptions to cluster reduction in word-final homorganic clusters (→ some)

Cat. insul[t]–[o], ocull[t]–[o], indul[t]–[o]

Tumul[t]–[o], cozz[t]–[o], cocol[t]–[t–o]

#### 3.3. Lexical exceptions to epenthesis in word-final rising (other) sonority clusters (→ marginal)

R[al], rawo[n], linoll[n] ‘wm’, reñol[n] ‘wm’

#### 3.4. Lexical exceptions to vowel reduction (→ several)

Cat. claus[e], Balme[a], bañe[a]


#### 3.5. NO lexical exceptions to epenthesis in word-initial sc- clusters

#### 3.6. NO lexical exceptions to word-final obstruent devoicing

### 4. Loanword phonology

#### 4.1. NO deletion of posttonic –n and –r in (absolute) word-final position.

Camc[n], caimau[n], taul[n]

To[copau[n], oranagnau[n], xuamau[n], ai[n]

Desol[er], sfer[er], amat[er], somelt[er], aw[π][er]

#### 4.2. NO cluster reduction in word-final homorganic clusters

PowerPout[τ–2]

Pa[n]×–[2]

Ko[n]×–[2]

Co[l]×–[2]

#### 4.3. NO epenthesis in word-final rising (+ other) sonority clusters

Gim[a], Inter[a], Do[di], Indu[a], Fils F[el], O[-π]n, prime [f]×j, New York [Tej]×…

BUT: Ip[b]on

#### 4.4. NO vowel reduction

Cat. cat[e], mοd[e], cab[e], exca[e], c[e]l[e], re[e]l[e], Ri[e]n[sel], Ri[e]n[s]…

(extrapolable to posterior vowels series)

#### 4.5. Epenthesis in word-initial sc- clusters (→ systematic)


Sp[t]e[n], [s] script, [s] cocukter, [s] snowboard, [s] jenex-bar, [s] dute…

#### 4.6. Word-final obstruent devoicing

Cat[b], ps[p], Wor[t]

Moe[t] in China, Kebe[p]