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Where is Nasality Anchored in Maxakalí Loanwords?

We examine the distribution of nasality in Maxakalí as it is preserved and extended in loanwords coming from Portuguese, specifically comparing the extent to which a stressed vowel induces nasal harmony across the three domains of tautosyllabic codas, tautosyllabic onsets, and across syllables to other vowels. The results, combined from elicitation with 18 native speakers across a broad demographic range, demonstrate that these three processes have distinct distributions: coda nasalization is exceptionless, while the other two processes resist nasalization under certain conditions. In particular, the onset of stressed syllables resist nasalization more than those of unstressed, and Maxakalí avoids nasalization of certain places of articulation in part based on the extent to which the nasalized variant would show greater dissimilarity from the source language. Finally, vowel harmony shows the lowest overall rate of application, and the greatest extent of age- and gender- conditioned variation, suggesting it has a weaker effect in loanword adaptation than syllable-bounded phonotactics. The results provide quantitative confirmation for the observations in Wetzels (2009), and provide refinements to the model developed by Wetzels based on an emerging oral-nasal contrast.