Research on the formal integration of English loanwords into Swedish has been primarily focused on nouns. This article contrasts the integration of recent (1945–1999) English adjective imports with the patterning of noun imports as described in earlier studies. The data in the present study consist of a Swedish newspaper text corpora from 1995–2004 (103 million words).

Whereas nouns are rarely formally adapted to Swedish orthography or morphology, by contrast almost 80 percent of the adjectives are formally integrated. It is argued that this integration process takes place on the basis of the morphosyntactic requirements that apply to all adjectives in Swedish. The study shows that these requirements are most applicable as regards grammatical agreement in number and definiteness.

Although the formal integration of English adjectives follows established patterns for orthographic and morphological adaptation, the integration patterns for different types of adjectives vary in strength; some patterns apply without exception, while others do less strictly so. The study shows that the pattern strength depends on three interrelated factors: the etymology of the adjective, its length, and its semantico-pragmatic features.

Generally, it is shown that in order to gain a fuller understanding of the underlying principles behind formal integration processes, we need to look in detail at the behaviour of relatively infrequent loan words, such as adjective imports.

Keywords: adjectives, import words, lexical borrowing, orthography, morphology, grammatical agreement, newspaper texts, corpus linguistics, Swedish.