Loanword adaptation is always fascinating as it bears the traces of native phonology, default setting of Universal Grammar, adaptation as perception and perceptual similarity (Kang, 2010). This paper deals with the loan words in Assamese phonology which are mainly borrowed from Sanskrit and English with reference to constraint ranking approach embedded within Optimality theory (Prince and Smolensky 1993). Although Assamese, an Indo Aryan language spoken in the north eastern part of India shares some commonalities with English and Sanskrit phonology all the three languages are characterized by language specific phonemic inventories and phonotactic principles. Hence, it is quite evident that borrowed loan words in Assamese are marked by significant differences in relation to their original source Sanskrit and English words from which they have been derived and phonologized in the course of time. This paper shows the phonological processes that loan words undergo, and patterns that emerge as a result of this process of borrowing not only at the segmental level but also at the syllabic level. The main purpose of this paper lies in showing how the Assamese phonology repairs borrowed syllables and segments derived from Sanskrit and English. As far as the data of this paper are concerned they are collected from secondary sources and published description of these languages and the theoretical model which is used here to analyse the phonological processes that loan words have undergone is Optimality theory and ranking orderings between faithfulness and markedness constraints. At the segmental level English sounds which are not the part of native phonology of Assamese are avoided and substituted by some other sounds available within the phonotactic domain of the borrowing language. As for example, + continuant segments become – continuant and - distributed become + distributed in Assamese loan words borrowed from English.

As for instance English word

\[
tʃɪkən \quad \rightarrow \quad sɪkən \quad \text{(Assamese)} \quad \text{‘chicken’}
\]

\[
fæn \quad \rightarrow \quad \text{ph.n} \quad \text{(Assamese)} \quad \text{‘fan’}
\]

Prothesis seems to be the best option to avoid onset and coda consonant clusters as shown in the loan word data of the paper mostly in the consonant clusters /sk/ and /st/.

English word ‘school’ - iskul (Assamese)

However, it is the repair strategy of epenthesis which is adopted in the cases of words with consonant clusters of sibilants and laterals /sl/.
English word ‘slate’ - silet (Assamese)

The similar patterns are attested with the Bangla clusters beginning with sibilants /s/ and some common patterns of language universals can be predicted keeping in mind the literature of Fleishhackker (2005), Flemming (2008) etc.

The consonants /n/ and /l/ are not syllabic in Assamese phonology and hence the loan adaptation leads to the emergence of epenthetic vowels to adhere to the notion of repair strategy of Assamese phonology.

English word teibl (table) - tebul (Assamese)

Here, *Peak(+cons) >> *OR >> DEP-IO >> ALIGN-R >> Contiguity

Even the distribution of epenthetic vowel is conditioned by phonetic conditions.

As for instance, sample [s· mp· ] becomes sampul but ‘medel’ [m· d· ]does not become medul. Here we can see the re ranking of the constraints *C Liquid, Max (+Dors) and Dep (V).

In the same manner, it is observed that the underlying liquids and semi vowels j r l w trigger gemination to the preceding obstruents in Assamese and it is in consonance with its source Sanskrit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Underlying form</th>
<th>Surface form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>putɔ (son)</td>
<td>put.trɔ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xukło (dark)</td>
<td>xuk.klo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xanti (peace)</td>
<td>*xan.nti</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This issue is highlighted with the ranking and reranking of the constraints SWP, Syllable contact Ident (long)-C, *Complexions, No Coda and No Gem.

However in Assamese, in the surface forms j and w get dropped and a process of metathesis occurs in the form of an insertion of a vowel before the geminates.

Sanskrit word pəddyə (poem) -- pəiddo (Assamese)

tətwə (theory) - tɔtɔ (Assamese)

Here the constraints are *CG >> Max >>Linearity