

The feature of reduplication in the Typological Database of the Volga Area Finno-Ugric Languages



Ditta Szabó, Laura Horváth, Erika Asztalos, Nikolett F. Gulyás & Bogáta Timár
Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest



Aims of the study

The present poster focuses on some formal and functional properties of reduplication in two Permic (Udmurt and Komi-Permyak) and one Volgaic (Meadow Mari) language of the Uralic language family. The languages examined in the study are target languages of the ongoing project *Typological Database of the Volga Area Finno-Ugric Languages* (henceforth, VTDB).

Word-formation in general has been the subject of a couple of studies in Permic and Meadow Mari languages (see, e.g., Riese 2015, Fejes 2015), but the possible functions of the reduplication itself and the similarities between these languages in their use of this process has not really been in the center of the research.

In our presentation, we aim to concentrate on the evaluative and inflection-like functions of the reduplication in the languages of the VTDB, with possible parallel examples from the languages of the *Typological Database of the Ugric Languages* (UTDB) and from the Turkic languages of the Volga area.

Theoretical background: the notion of reduplication

1.Approaches to the study of reduplication

Reduplication can be broadly understood as the repetition of a linguistic constituent to form a new constituent with a different function. The phenomenon can be discussed, for instance, within the framework of Sign-Based Morphology, Morphological Doubling Theory (see, e.g., Inkelas & Zoll 2005), or Evaluative Morphology (see, e.g., Körtvélyessy 2015). According to the MDT, for example, duplication can be classified as phonological or as morphological. In the case of typical phonological copying, “small pieces of phonological structure are copied to satisfy a phonological well-formedness constraint” (Inkelas & Zoll 2005: 2), while the clearest cases of morpho-semantic feature duplication are those which are not motivated by phonological well-formedness but rather have a morphological or syntactic motivation and can be phonologically completely distinct – the duplicants are expected to be matched only semantically (cf. Inkelas & Zoll 2005).

Structurally, we can distinguish two basic types of reduplication: complete/total and partial (Štekauer, Valera & Körtvélyessy 2012: 107). Other canonical subtypes are, for example, echo reduplication, synonym reduplication, and syntactic doubling (Inkelas 2014: 169–170).

2. Reduplication as an inflectional/derivational device

Reduplication can be used to perform a wide range of both derivational and inflectional functions. It can change the word class and often creates new lexemes, and can, for instance, change the valency of verbs. As an inflectional device, the process is frequently employed for encoding plurality of nouns, or used to encode aspectual distinctions (cf. Inkelas 2014, Beard 1998).

However, the derivation-inflection relation also having a cline-like nature itself, there are many examples regarding cases of reduplication that are not so clear-cut. Moreover, some of the most common functions of reduplication shares the properties of both derivational and inflectional parts of this cline (cf., for example, evaluatives, in Körtvélyessy 2015: 22–31, Inkelas 2014: 175–176).

3. Evaluative morphology

In this presentation, evaluation is treated “as a continuum such that prototypical cases express the meaning of quantity under or above the default value.” The “default quantity” is rather a relative concept: these reference points are influenced by extralingual factors: culture, experience and knowledge of the speakers. (Körtvélyessy 2015: 41–42)

Evaluatives in the Volga area Finno-Ugric languages

The formation of expressive, evocative or onomatopoeic formations is among the most common functions of reduplication in the languages of VTDB (see, e.g., Riese 2015, Shlyakhova 2013, Fejes 2015), as well as in the Turkic languages of the area (see, e.g., Iskandarova 2015, Semenova & Ivanova 2015). In Bashkir (cf. Iskandarova 2015: 3395) and Meadow Mari, for example, reduplication can even change the word class: (1) Meadow Mari *manēš-maneš* ‘gossip’ ← *manēš* ‘(s)he says’ (Riese 2015: 3287). Beyond these functions, reduplicative evaluative formations are frequently used in the area by both Finno-Ugric and Turkic languages. The main semantic functions of the evaluative reduplicates are as follows:

1. Higher quantity of a quality (augmentatives)

Total reduplication

(2) Udmurt (Kel'makov & Saarinen 1994: 112)

gord ~ *gord*

red ~ red

‘very red’

(3) Udmurt (Shlyakhova 2013: 1331)

umoj ~ *umoj* *vala-ny*

well ~well understand-INF

‘to understand very well’

(4a–4b) Komi-Permyak (Informant)

görd ~ *görd* *basök* ~ *basök*

red ~ red beautiful ~ beautiful

‘very red’ ‘very beautiful’

- In Udmurt/Komi-Permyak: also with conjunctions *da/i* ‘and’

(5a–5b) Meadow Mari

kande ~ *kande* *šokšən* ~ *šokšən* *öndal-eš*

blue ~ blue warmly ~ warmly hug-3PRS

‘very blue’ ‘he/she gives a very warmly hug’

(Riese 2015: 3287) (Informant)

Partial reduplication

(6) Meadow Mari

joltaš-em *tap* ~ *taza*

friend-1SG RED ~ healthy

‘my friend is fit as a fiddle’ (www.marilanguage.com)

- due to Turkic (Tatar and Chuvash) influence (Riese 2015: 3287)
 - (7) Tatar

kap ~ *kart*

RED ~ old

‘very old’ (Károly 2015: 3411)

Echo reduplication

(8) Udmurt

kyryž ~ *meryž*

crookedly ~ RED

‘very crookedly’

(Shlyakhova 2013: 1330)

(9) Meadow Mari

kadyr ~ *gudyr*

crooked ~ RED

‘very crooked’

(Riese 2015: 3287)

Reduplication accompanied by case affixes & postpositions

(10a –10b) Komi-Permyak (Informant)

görd-ša ~ *görd* *basök-ša* ~ *basök*

red-PRECL~ red beautiful-PRECL ~ beautiful

‘very red’ ‘very beautiful’

(11) Udmurt: ABL (*leš*): *čeber-leš* ~ *čeber* ‘very beautiful’

(12) Mari: postposition *deč* ‘from’: *motor deč motor* ‘very beautiful’, or particle *at*: *motor-at* ~ *motor* ‘very beautiful’ (Informant)

(13) Udmurt

kužm-yš ~ *kužm-yš*

bašty-ny

strength-ELA ~ strength-ELA take-INF

‘to take away with all his/her might.’ (Shibanov 2014: 524)

2. Lower quantity of a quality (diminutives)

(14a) Komi-Permyak *šug* ~ *šug* (Shlyakhova 2013 : 1330)

(14b) Udmurt *myrdem* ~ *myrdem* (Shlyakhova 2013: 1331)

(14c) Meadow Mari *pəkše* ~ *pəkše* (Informant)

hard ~ hard

‘very hard’, ‘hardly’, ‘barely’

Reduplication as an aspectual device in the languages of the VTDB

As has already been mentioned, reduplication is often used to encode various aspectual values: cross-linguistically, reduplication is not uncommonly linked with imperfective aspectual categories (Inkelas 2014: 173–174, Štekauer, Valera & Körtvélyessy 2012: 126–127).

1. In the languages of the VTDB (at least in Udmurt and Meadow Mari), **total reduplication of a verb** can express the longer duration of an imperfective non-pluractional event. These kinds of formations can be understood as augmentatives as well – they express the higher quantity of (the duration of) an action than the prototypical default value (cf. Körtvélyessy 2012: 41–47). This is not uncommon in the case of the languages of the UTDB either, at least in Surgut Khanty and Hungarian (Csepregi 2015, F.Gulyás 2015)

(15) Udmurt

gužembyt *uža-šk-od* ~ *uža-šk-od* (..)

all.summer work-PRS-2SG ~ work-PRS-2SG

‘you work all summer (and still, you can achieve nothing)’ (Shibanov 2014: 529)

2. From an aspectual point of view, some **reduplicated adverbs** can also have an effect on aspectual language systems (they can mark, for example, pluractionality): Meadow Mari *ugăč-ugăč* ‘repeatedly’ ← *ugăč* ‘anew’, Udmurt *vylyš* ~ *vylyš* ‘repeatedly’ ← *vylyš* ‘anew’, Hungarian *egyszer* ~ *egyszer* ‘a few times’ ← *egyszer* ‘once’

3. Doubling of suffixes and verbal particles

In some Northern Udmurt dialects, the pluractionality and habitual value of an action can be intensified using reduplicated frequentative suffixes:

(16) Udmurt (Kel'makov & Saarinen 1994: 125)

pios-jos *no*, *nyl-jos no*

man-PL too girl-PL too

kyrʒa-lʔa-lʔa-zy *udmort krežž-os-ty*

sing-FREQ-FREQ-PST.3PL Udmurt song-PL-ACC

‘[A long time ago], men and girls used to sing Udmurt songs.’

- In Komi-Permyak, pluractional or habitual meaning can also be expressed by doubling the frequentative suffix.

- In the Ugric languages, verbal prefixes can be reduplicated and provide different meanings that can be linked with aspectuality, and/or Aktionsart. Repeated prefixes can express, e.g., frequentative Aktionsart (irregular repetition in the case of perfective prefixverbs) in Hungarian (Kiefer 2006: 149–155).

Conclusions

Reduplication is often a tool for expressing augmentatives in both the Turkic and Finno-Ugric languages of the Volga area. This word-formation progress is not regarded as a typical nature of the Finno-Ugric proto-language, but it was already used for the expressive intensification of color names and other adjectives in Old Turkic. The Tatar partial reduplication in example (7) (and the Meadow Mari example (6)) is claimed to be a feature of Old Turkic as well (Erdal 1991: 65). The derivation of diminutives using reduplication seems to be much less common in the area.

Reduplication has a role in encoding aspectual values as well: in the languages of the VTDB, different aspectual distinctions linked to imperfective aspect are marked with reduplicated verbs, suffixes, and adverbs.

About the database and acknowledgements

The *Typological Database of the Volga Area Finno-Ugric Languages* (VTDB) is, after the *Typological Database of the Ugric Languages* (UTDB) compiled by Havas et al. (2015), the second major step towards the creation of a complete online typological database of the Uralic languages. Both the UTDB and the VTDB aim at analyzing over 200 morphosyntactic parameters covering a various range of topics from possession to the encoding of different grammatical relations.

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