

Reduplication of bi-morphemic words: Patterns in Chinese

Introduction: Reduplication is the iteration of a category in morphology: it can be the doubling of a stem or of a root, giving rise to full reduplication. Units different from the morphological ones can be doubled, i.e. prosodic units, and that will be partial reduplication. Function-wise, reduplication displays a great amount of iconicity, but, crucially, it implies a formal encoding and thus is by all means *grammatical*. This iconicity emerges in the increasing function, cross-linguistically spread: for example in the augmentative modification. Reduplication however has also counter-iconic functions, like the diminutive one; it also gives rise to categorial shifts, and other merely grammatical functions.

Case Study: Mandarin Chinese is revealing in this sense, especially in verbal and adjectival domains. In fact, it displays two different patterns of reduplication, with different functions: diminutive function, resulting in the so-called 'tentative'/'delimitative' aspect (see [1],[5]); increasing function, which involves a higher degree of liveliness or intensity (e.g. [1],[5],[10]). The difference in function is mirrored by the structural pattern of reduplication of disyllabic (AB) bases: in the increasing function, each syllable (morpheme) is independently reduplicated in pre- and post- base position, [A[AB]B]; in the diminutive function, the base is reduplicated as a whole, [AB][AB].

Structure	Function	Input Cat.	Output Cat.	Base	Reduplication
[A[AB]B]	increasing	Adj and V	Adj and V	高兴 <i>gāoxìng</i> 'happy'	高高兴兴 <i>gāogāoxìngxìng</i> 'very happy'
[AB][AB]	"diminutive"	V and Adj	V	介绍 <i>jièshào</i> 'introduce/present'	介绍介绍 <i>jièshào-jièshào</i> 'introduce (a little)'

Claims: First, we intend to clarify that both patterns are instantiations of full reduplication: units are handled on a morphemic and not on a prosodic base, as proved by the ban on [A[AB]B] reduplication of disyllabic bases that are *monomorphemic* (see [4],[8]). Further, we point out a series of constraints that reduplication, as much as other standard derivational phenomena, poses at different levels of linguistic analysis.

At the formal/categorial level, the diminutive function is found only in verbal reduplication. If it applies to adjectival bases, they take on the same structure and tentative/delimitative meaning of reduplicated Vs (see [6],[11]), e.g. 高兴高兴 *gāoxìng-gāoxìng* 'happy-happy = have some fun'. Notably, at a semantic level, not all Adjs undergo this kind of reduplication, which seems to be limited to stage-level ones (often used as change-of-state predicates, see [9],[7]). Moreover, reduplication is possible only for processes and states, but not for achievements and resultatives. We argue that this is due to semantic incompatibility between the delimitative aspect conveyed by reduplication and the inherent aspectual properties of these Vs.

The increasing function is mostly found in adjectival reduplication, but it can apply to some Vs too (the latter is a scantily studied aspect of verbal reduplication). Our data (from literature and corpora) reveal that it is available only among coordinate Vs, e.g. 来来往往 *lái-lái-wǎng-wǎng* 'come-come-go-go = go back and forth/come and go in great numbers', 进进出出 *jìn-jìn-chū-chū* 'enter-enter-exit-exit = shuttle in and out'. Here, the structure is [A[AB]B], like in Adjs.

Interestingly, in Taiwan Southern Min (TSM) too verbal reduplication apparently has either a diminutive or an increasing function (see [2]), and the increasing function seems to be limited to coordinate Vs; the reduplication pattern is the same as in Mandarin ([A[AB]B]), e.g. 来来去去 *lai5lai5khi3khi3* 'come-come-go-go = come and go (repetition), see [3].

Based on the analysis of Mandarin and TSM data, we argue that the increasing pattern of reduplication is sensitive to the structural/semantic relation between the constituents of the verbal or adjectival compound bases. In particular, the [A[AB]B] pattern can apply only to coordinate bases, intended as units *separable* at the phonological, structural and semantic layers. It cannot be easily applied to the (idiomatized) disyllabic bases perceived as a morpho-semantic unit. Furthermore, strictly subordinative structures can only be reduplicated as a whole or, even, are not available to reduplication altogether.

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