Reduplicated Structure in Manipuri

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Abstract: Reduplication is a predominant phenomenon in Manipuri, a language belonging to the Tibeto-Burman family of the Sino-Tibetan languages. The language productively employs both partial and full reduplication. The present paper is an attempt to analyse and systematize some characteristic type of partial reduplication structure in Manipuri. The study of reduplication has generated a great deal of interest in terms of understanding a number of properties associated with the word-formation process. As with morphology in general, two considerations that arise in reduplication are related to form and meaning. As for form, the term “reduplicant” has been widely used to refer to the repeated portion of a word, while “base” is used to refer to the portion of the word that provides the source material for repetition. There are three key issues regarding reduplicative form for which theories of reduplication aim to account: segmental identity effects between base and reduplicant, the shape of reduplicants, and factors to consider in identifying the base of reduplication.

Keywords: Reduplication, Syntactic structure, Prefix, Suffix, Verb.

I. INTRODUCTION

Reduplication is the repetition of all or part of a lexical item carrying a semantic meaning. Reduplication refers to a word formation process that repeats all or part of a word or phrase. The definitive feature of reduplication—that it involves copying a portion of the word—has generated a large variety of mechanisms to account for how repetition takes place. Because there are other phenomena in languages that involve the repetition of linguistic elements, there has also been research in how to determine whether or not a repetition is reduplication. In terms of the meaning, several recurrent meanings arise in reduplication, often related to “plurality” and “repetition.” This has led to research that explores issues related to iconicity in language.

Partial reduplication:
Partial reduplication involves reduplication of only part of the word (generally a syllable). The following three types of reduplication are discussed:

I. Reduplication of prefix
II. Reduplication of suffix and
III. Reduplication of verbs.

II. REDUPLICATION OF PREFIX

In this type of reduplication, the reduplicating element is prefixed to the two elements:

1. ‘ә’

1.1 ә-nem (low) ә-waŋ (high) >әnemәwaŋ ‘low and high situation’.

ә is prefix to the two elements which are opposite or complementary in meaning. Its form is ә-___+ә-___; the slots can be filled by elements indicating relativeness. The reduplicated form gives a sense of relativity and the meaning is context dependent. It indicates:

i. The relative measurement:

әnemәwaŋ o-lu
RED measure-CMD
‘Measure the heights.’

ii. Stating a universal truth:

әnemәwaŋ nai-bә punsi ni
RED depend –NZR life COP
‘Life is full of ups and down.’

iii. In warning against a particular act:
әnәmәwaŋ khaï-gәn
RED divide-PRHB
‘Do not divide people by class.’

iv. In giving an advice in general:
әnәmәwaŋ khaï-bә phә-te
RED divide-NZR good-NEG
‘It is not good to divide people by class (high and low).’

The same form can be drawn as in:-
әhәo (tasty) әtәm (sweet) >әhәoәtәm ‘sweet and tasty’
әsәŋ (pure) әmәn (impure) >әsәŋәmәn ‘pure and impure’
әrәum (heavy) әyәŋ (light) >әrәumәyәŋ ‘weights’

1.2. әwok (receive) әkәhәum (respond) >әwokәkәhәum ‘back answer’.
Its form is ә-  + ә-  ; the slots can be filled by elements the meaning of which is not apparent from the independent element. ә- is prefix to the two elements to indicate the independent character of an action or state. The reduplicated forms thus have some negative connotation associated with it.

i. in advising someone of a particular act:
әwokәkәhәum tәubә phә-te
RED do-NZR good-NEG
‘It is not good to back answer.’

ii. in warning or prohibiting someone of a particular act:
әwokәkәhәum tәu-gәnu
RED do-PRHB
‘Do not back answer.’

iii. criticizing someone of a particular act:
әwokәkәhәum yәmәnә kәnbәni
RED QTF strong-NZR COP
‘One who is good at back answering.’

The same form can be drawn as in:-
әәpәraŋ > unquenchable
әәmәnә > lassitude
әәpәnәәi > hastiness

2. ‘i—’
i-mә (mother) i-pә (father) >i-mәpa ‘parents’.
The elements have an independent meaning and the reduplicated form provides a combinatory meaning. Its form is i— + i— ; the slot is filled by kinship terms and is analysed as follows:-
imaïpa mitәnә u-bә lay ni
RED eyes-INST see-NZR God COP
‘Parents are a form of God that we see with our eyes.’
It is a very famous saying that parents are taken to be a form of god.

The same form can be drawn as in:-
ibun (elder) ipwa (younger) >ibunipwa used by females to brothers.
ice (elder) icәl (younger) > ice icәl used by males to sisters.

3. ‘m—’
3.1. mә-tik(capacity) ma-gun (quality) >matikma-gun ‘possession of esteemed quality’.
Each of the elements have an independent meaning. The elements in their cohesive form is an indicator of self-determination of an entity involved. Its form is mә-___+ mә-___; the slot is filled with abstract and self-determining quality (of persons or things) and can be analysed as in

matkәmәgun yanna laibo mi/pot-ni

RED QTF have-NZR person/thing COP

‘Possession of esteemed quality (could be either by a person or of a thing).’

The same form can be drawn as in:-

mәmә́n (name) mәtә́a (address) >mәmә́nmә́a ‘one’s name and address’

mәsә́k (face) mәmә́n (name) >mәsә́kmәmә́n ‘one’s identification’

3.2 mәwoŋ (ways) mәtәu (nature) >mәwoŋmәtәu ‘overall appearance’.

Each of the element gives an independent meaning in its cohesive form. Its form is mә-___+mә-___; the slots are filled with words that can occur cohesively with each of the first syllables. There exists a varied meaning according to the context in which it is used.

The following analysis can be drawn.-

i. It shows one’s approval or disapproval of a particular act as in (a) and (b) respectively.

a. magi mәwoŋmәtәu du phәja-y
   he-GEN RED DET nice-ASP
   ‘His attitude is nice.’

b. magi mәwoŋmәtәu du phәja-de
   he-GEN RED DET nice-NEG
   ‘His attitude is not nice.’

ii. It determines surety or doubtfulness of the nature of a person from the action involved as in (a) and (b) respectively.

a. magi mәwoŋmәtәu du әy khәŋ-әji
   he-GEN RED DET I know-ASP
   ‘I know of his nature.’

b. magi mәwoŋmәtәu du әy khәŋ-әji
   he-GEN RED DET I know-NEG
   ‘I am doubtful of his nature.’

The same form can be drawn as in:-

The reduplicated form provides varied meaning-
mәkә́k (up) mәkә́a (down) >mәkә́kmә́kә́a

a. relative direction ‘up and down’

b. wearing clothes ‘inside out’

c. extreme hungriness ‘butterflies in the stomach’

d. when younger ones starts to dictate their elders

mәnә́n (back) mәkә́a (down/lower) >mәnә́nmә́kә́a

a. back and down/lower

b. freedom

mәrә́k (breadth) mәyuŋ(length) >mәrә́kmәyuŋ

a. relative length and breadth

b. shows proportion.

III. REDUPLICATION OF SUFFIX

The reduplication here is one of rhyming reduplication. Here each element is formed by two syllables in which the second syllable of the first element is repeated in the reduplicated form.

1. ka-rә́n (unusual behaviours) tu-rә́n>karә́nturә́n ‘unusual behaviours’.
The first element alone conveys an independent meaning of the entity involved. The second element serves as an additive for intensifying the character of the first element. Its form is A-___+B-___; the slots are filled up with the same syllable.

It is used –

i. while advising someone
Reduplicated Structure in Manipuri

karәnturәn тәu-әә pʰәt-te
RED do-NZR good-NEG
‘It is not good to misbehave.’

ii. while warning someone
karәnturәn тәu-gәnu
RED do-PRHB
‘Do not misbehave.’

iii. in criticizing of someone’s act
karәnturәn yamnә тәu-әә mi ni
RED QTF do- NZR person COP
‘He or she is a person who misbehaves a lot.’

The same form can be drawn as in:-
cirol (whisper) parol >cirolpәorol ‘whispers’
натәi (inappropriate)putәi >natәipәi ‘inappropriate’

2. nin-jинәм-жиң>нинжинманжин ‘reluctance in carrying out an activity’.
The two elements do not have an independent meaning but convey a cohesive idea in the reduplicated form. It is an indication of some behavioural tendency.

Its form is A-__+B--; the slots are filled up with the same syllable. The particular act has a negative connotation involved.

The same form can be drawn as in:-
pʰәireŋtureŋ > haphazard/careless

3. mи (person)-маң(front) pu-маң>mиманпуман ‘in front of people’.
The first element mиmаң is a compound word conveying an independent meaning of the entity involved. Its underlying form is mи-GEN (gі) + suffix (ma-)>-maң (front) >mиman (in front of people). There is a genitive marker and a suffix in the underlying structure that do not surface in the compound word thus formed.

The second element serves as an additive for intensifying the character of the first element. The reduplicated form is A-__+B--; ‘A’ is a noun form and the slots are filled up with the same syllable. The reduplicated form can be analysed as below:-
It is used:-

i. while advising someone
mиmanpumаң kʰәŋ-ju
RED know-NZR
‘You should know how to behave in public.’

ii. while warning someone
mиmanpumаң kʰәŋ-dә-bә тәu-gәnu
RED know-NEG-NZR do-PRHB
‘Do not unknowing as to how to behave in public.’

iii. in criticizing of someone’s act
mиmanpumаң kʰәŋ-dә-bә mi ni
RED know-NEG-NZR person COP
‘A person who does not know how to behave in public.’

4. mи (eyes)-yeң (look) na-yeң>mиtyөңnаeң ‘manner of looking’.
The reduplicated form is A-__+B--; where A is a noun form and the slots are filled up with the same syllable which is a verbal form.

The same form can be drawn as in:-
pʰи (cloth)-jet (wear) sa-jet >pʰиjетаsajет ‘manner of dressing’

5. pʰи (cloth)-jet(wear) laк-set >pʰиjетлакset ‘manner of dressing’.

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The reduplicated form is A-__+B-__; where ‘A’ is a noun form and ‘lak’ is the first syllable of the second element ‘B’, the slot is filled up with the same syllable which is a verbal form. The reduplicated words thus formed are implication of excessiveness in one’s manner leading others to feel a kind of awkwardness toward.

The same form can be drawn as in-

- sam (hair)-hat (comb) lak-hat (comb) >səmhatlakhat ‘manner of hair-do’
- sam (hair)-bun (tie) lak-pun (tie) >səmbunlakpun ‘mode of tying hair’
- cak (rice)-ca (eat) lak-ca (eat) >cakcalaka ‘mode of eating’

### IV. REDUPLICATION OF VERBS

The element is composed of two syllables.

Here, the verb form that is the second syllable of the first element is reduplicated in the second element.

1. \( k^b\text{u}-\text{cat} \text{ (go)} \text{ lak-}\text{cat} \text{ (go)} \) >\( k^b\text{u}\text{catlakcat} \) ‘one’s manner/way of walking’.
   \( k^b\text{u} \) is prefix to the verb in the first element and lak- to the second. Its form is \( k^b\text{u}-__+\text{lak-__} ; \) the slot is filled up with the same verbal form.

   The following analysis can be drawn:-
   i. The reduplicated form is a reflection of some degree of undesirable excessiveness of one’s action or behaviour.
      \( k^b\text{ucatlakcat p}\text{ja-de RED nice-NEG} \)
      ‘One’s manner of walking is not nice.’
   ii. \( k\text{hu-ph}a \text{ (good)} \text{ lak-ph}a \) >\( k\text{huphakpha} \) ‘excessively good’.
      The reduplicated form is a reflection of some elevated degree of positive action or behaviour. Its form is \( k\text{hu-__+lak-__} ; \) the slot is filled with a verbal form and is analysed as
      \( k\text{huphakpha smo ni RED EXC COP} \)
      Exceptionally good in quality (of a person or thing).

   The same form can be drawn as in:-
   \( k\text{u-hay} \text{ (aptness)} \text{ lak-hay} \) >\( k\text{uhzhylakhay (exceptionally apt)} \)

2. \( l\text{au-b}\text{oklu-sin} \text{ >lau} \text{boklausin} \text{ -t\text{ok~dok} is suffix to the verb in the first element and -sin ~ -jin to the second. Its form is __t\text{ok} \text{ (outward) + __ sin (inward); the slot is filled with verbal form. The meaning of the reduplicated form changes according to the context in which it is used and creates an ambiguity in the meaning.} \)

   The following analysis can be drawn:-
   i. The reciprocity of an action is reflected.
      layrik laut\text{oklausin t}\text{au-n\text{a-si} book RED do-REC-SUG} \)
      ‘Let us exchange books.’
   ii. Shows to and fro movement of a person or thing.
      \( s\text{an du skulda} \text{ laut\text{oklausin} tau-bi-yu child DET school ABL RED do-REQ-CMD} \)
      ‘Please pick up and drop the child to school.’

   The same form can be drawn as in:-
   \( p\text{ut\text{okpusin} It indicates- a. carry in and out b. lend and borrow hndokh\text{anjin It indicates - a. screw and unscrew} \)

DOI: 10.9790/0837-2208150106 www.iosrjournals.org 5 | Page
b. repeat
c. exchange

V. CONCLUSION
An attempt has been made to study the constituent elements and examine the structural patterns of reduplication in Manipuri. All cases of reduplication are created by syntactic structures. It can be inferred from the present study that in some of the reduplicated words thus formed both the elements have an independent meaning and that the cohesion of the elements gives a supplementary meaning. In some of the forms, the first element can convey an independent meaning and the second serves as an additive, intensifying the character of the first element. Some of the forms are found to be context dependent and have varied meanings. This work is a modest exploration and would hopefully incite further studies of reduplication.

VI. ABBREVIATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ASP</td>
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<td>Determiner</td>
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<td>Exceptional</td>
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<td>Nominalizer</td>
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<td>Quantifier</td>
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<td>RED</td>
<td>Reduplicated form</td>
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REFERENCES