

The Syntax of Iteration

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1 Introduction

Reduplication

is a morphophonological reflex of the syntactic configuration of iteration
is triggered by a head/complement relation which expresses quantity
can be satisfied in the syntax
(i) by content in Spec (either overtly or covertly)
(ii) by head movement

2. Iteration in phonology: Reduplication

2.1 As iteration

(1) from Moravcsik (1978)

repeated events: Tzeltal, Thai, Twi, Ewe, Sudanese, Rotuman, ...

(2) Madurese (Davies to appear)

Hasan kolmokol(-an) Ali.
H RED.AV.hit-AN A

kol-m- $\sqrt{\text{pokol}}$ (-an)

'Hasan hit Ali several times.'

2.2 Is it iconic? No

(3) Hopi:

dual: N-vit	maana	'girl'	maanavit	'2 girls'
plural: σ_n	saaqa	'ladder'	sasaaqa	'ladders' (more than 2)

(4) Tagalog:

magkita	'see one another (two or more actors)'
magkitakita	'see one another (more than two actors)'

❖ Reduplication is *many* not *two*

2.3 As reciprocals

(5) from Moravcsik (1978)

reciprocals ('repeated events with participants reversed'):

Yami, Tzeltal, Pacoh, Dyirbal, ...

(6) Madurese reciprocals (Davies to appear)

At first glance, reduplication seems a rare bird among morphological processes, an exotic curiosity. Struck by the apparent novelty of reduplication, previous investigators have treated reduplication as a special case – and were confronted with problems as a result. Beginning with the assumption that reduplication is minimally different from processes we are accustomed to, I have not only constructed an elegant account of reduplication and its properties but have also been able to illuminate important issues in phonology and morphology. When we recognize that the same theory must cover the duckbill platypus as well as the house cat, we gain a deeper understanding of both the platypus and the cat.

Marantz (1982:480)

4.2 It's different from other affixes

i. Form

parasitic on root
 can vary in position (Tagalog inner aspect morpheme)
 can vary in what domain it targets

ii. Meaning

There is no *a priori* reason why reduplication, or any other form device of language, should serve as the expression of some meanings rather than as that of others. Nonetheless, as pointed out by a number of linguists, the particularly (sic) meanings associated with reduplication strikingly recur across languages.

Moravcsik (1978:316)

On one hand ...

Increased quantity:

❖ quantity of referents

Plural: Samoan, Papago, Amharic

'all', 'every': Pacoh, Yoruba, Tagalog, Mandarin

distributive plurals (one by one, etc): Turkish, Sierra Aztec, Twi,

indefinite pronouns (whoever): Sundanese, Javanese, Ngbandi

repeated events: Tzeltal, Thai, Twi, Ewe, Sudanese, Rotuman

reciprocals ('repeated events with participants reversed'):

Yami, Tzeltal, Pacoh, Dyirbal

❖ amount of emphasis

more:

Turkish, Agta, Thai, Ewe, Tagalog, Sundanese

diminution (small, a little):

Agta, Nez Perce, Thompson

attenuation (rather, somewhat):

Quileute, Swahili, Thai, Mandarin, Tagalog

On the other ...

There is, however, an equally large and indeed disparate set of examples of derivational meanings that cannot be seen related to any of the non-derivational meaning categories surveyed above.

... no explanatory or predictive generalization about the meanings of reduplicative constructions can be proposed

Moravcsik (1982:325)

In spite of this ...

Speculation 1:

Under most circumstances reduplication is an underspecified iterative head which gets the meaning of 'quantity (of some sort)'

5 Causative puzzle

5.1 Reduplication also encodes causatives

(20) Sudanese (from Moravcsik: 325)

rVwas	'to be afraid'	NarVrVwas	'to frighten'
panas	'to be angry'	mamanas/mapanas	'to anger'

(21) Arabic (from Fassi-Fehri 1987:6)

(reduplication of the second consonant of the base form)

fahham-tu-hu	d-darsa	
caus.understand-I-him	the lesson	'I made him understand the lesson.'

If V movement to higher (empty) head were to create a V-VP structure in I-syntax, according to Hale and Keyser, we would expect a causative construction

Speculation 2:

Under rarer circumstances, when this underspecified head triggers head movement, it may take on the categorial signature of the moved element, and if this configuration has meaning, the construction will get that meaning.

5.2 Ambiguities of reduplication

(22) Arabic (from Fassi-Fehri 1987:34)

a.	jawwala	r-rajul-a	'He made the man take a walk.'
	caus.walked.3ms	the-man-acc	

b.	jawwala	r-rajul-u	'The man took a lot of walks.'
	caus.walked.3ms	the-man-nom	

6 Conclusions and speculations

Syntactic iteration is created by a semantically empty underspecified head with reduplicating properties

This head can be checked by (copied) material in its Spec or moved material in its head

Reduplication can occur either overtly or covertly into Spec

Since the head is underspecified, it can take the category of the head that moves into it creating a causative structure (V selecting VP)

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