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A Study of Reduplicative Expressions in Iraqi Dialect

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Abstract

As part of interactional communication, reduplication is a morphological process by which certain features of the root are used in the formation of a prefix or suffix. It forms a reinforcing role of everyday language in Iraqi dialect to create a specific semantic effect. The data are collected by observing daily linguistic interactions among Iraqi speakers. In accordance with English language, the collected data prove to have the three types of reduplication: full, vowel change and partial reduplication. The study is descriptive qualitative having morphological and semantic orientations as a crucial part of the analysis. It is worth mentioning that this study is representative not comprehensive. It is based on Vogel's classifications of this phenomenon.

Keywords: Iraqi dialect, morphological process, reduplication, reduplicative expressions, repetition

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دراسة التعبيرات التكرارية في اللهجة العراقية

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المستخلص

كجزء من التواصل الفعال، يُعدّ التكرار عملية صرفية تُستخدم فيها سمات معينة من الجذر في تكوين البادئة أو اللاحقة. ويلعب دورًا معززًا للغة اليومية في اللهجة العراقية، مما يحدث تأثيرًا دلاليًا محددًا. حيث تم جمع البيانات من خلال مراقبة التفاعلات اللغوية اليومية بين متحدثي اللهجة العراقية. ووفقًا للتصنيفات باللغة الإنجليزية، أثبتت البيانات المُجمعة وجود ثلاثة أنواع من التكرار: التكرار الكامل، وتكرار تغيير الحروف المتحركة، والتكرار الجزئي. الدراسة وصفية نوعية، وتُعد التوجهات الصرفية والدلالية جزءًا أساسيًا من التحليل. ومن الجدير بالذكر أن هذه الدراسة تمثيلية وليست شاملة، وتستند إلى تصنيفات فوغل لهذه الظاهرة. الكلمات المفتاحية: اللهجة العراقية، العملية الصرفية، التضعيف، التعبيرات التكرارية، والتكرار.

1.1 An overview of Reduplication

Reduplication is a process that is situated in most languages. It is considered as one of the processes of arranging words, assembling and intensifying, as well as causing internal modification of grammatical and radical elements. Reduplication is used to accomplish various lexical, grammatical, or morphological purposes with various forms. Modifications can include changes such as a letter or a shape which consequently causes modifications to a word. Emphasis has been placed on phonological processes that are part of repetition, since these processes distinguish fixed elements from reduplicative elements. Reduplication includes units that start by a phoneme and end by a morpheme, or word that reduplicates in whole or partially (Igaab, 2010: 6). They are considered as formulaic expressions that are a linguistic unit used for referring to verbal expressions that are fixed in form, often non-literal in meaning typically refers to a phenomenon that includes using various types of word strings previously stored in the mind and readily retrieved whole from memory (Wary and Perkins, 2000 cited in Mahmmoud, 2024:167). They can be classified under lexical chunks as “multi-word sequences”, those sequences are stored mentally as one unit that can be “retrieved holistically” whenever needed instead of building the chunk word by word as it is done

with normal utterances. Therefore it is easy for native language users to recall them at the time of use (Dahaam, 2019: 4). The linguistic forms of reduplicative vocabulary were discovered previously but their functions were overlooked. That is why there is a need to interpret aspects of reduplication in a way that goes beyond the level of vocabulary. Reduplication is a morphological phenomenon on the one side and involves lexical and pragmatic one on the other side (Hasan, 2011:179). Reduplication is a phenomenon of great importance in the study of language. It has been studied in all its linguistic forms in terms of different formal theories. Recent studies based on the compilation of texts have suggested that the use of reduplication among English speakers is more common where it needs to be studied deeply (Nadarajan, 2006:39-53). Stageberg (1981:127) states that the formation of a new word is by doubling the syllable, while Spencer & Zwicky disagree and say that reduplication is morphological phenomenon in which the lexical stem or root is modified with a small change in the stem of the word, which indicates the indivisible unit that is linked to different affixes (Cited in Omer, 2012: 71). The concept of reduplication is related to the Peircean concept. What has been studied is not a single grammatical or lexical element, rather a stand-alone grammatical process, and though it has been accustomed to linking a particular physical grammatical form with a specific function, such as English “s” which indicates plural. Substantially, in reduplication one cannot isolate a specific phonetic form and divide it to be related with a specific function. The reduplication is a morpheme with a form depends on the phonetic form that is subject to grammatical change (Mattes & Hurch, 2009: 301).

1.2 Definitions of Important Concepts

1.2.1 Reduplication: Attributed to a word formation phenomenon in which some part of a base (a segment, syllable, or morpheme) iterated, either on the left, or on the right of the word or, sometimes, within the center of the word. While reduplication is available in a wide range of language varieties, its levels of linguistic productivity are diverse and is sometimes used mutually with repetition. Repetition is used to signal sounds and concepts that are repeated in one way or another to provide reinforcement and emotional intensity or emphasis. (Nadarjan, 40) Reduplicative expressions, also known as “echo words”, “sing-song words” or “rhyming words”, are a quite recent process of word-formation” in English which, together with their marginal occurrence mostly in informal language, might have contributed to the confused nomenclature of reduplicative expressions (Matiello, 2013:128). To Hogg et al. (1992:545) reduplication is a morphological process by which certain features of the root are used in the formation of a prefix or suffix”. In addition, reduplication might occasionally appear in the middle of the word.

1.2.2 Iconicity: Traced back to Peirce (1932) iconic signs are characterized by their homology with the entity referred to. It includes more abstract relation between meaning and form. One of the types of iconicity represents instance where the number of

repetition of the stem (reduplication) mirrors the repeated number of shuddering events. Studies show that there is a great tendency for reduplicative morphology to have an iconic sense. Reduplicative morpheme indicates iconicity of complexity, that is, adding the reduplicative morpheme to a stem makes its output phonologically and semantically complex. Reduplication illustrates iconic homology, repetitive form reflects repetitive meaning. It either increases quantity of events or increases amount of emphasis (Downing& Stiebels, 2012, 1-3).

1.2.3 Binomials: Are coordinated phrases formed by two words from similar class which are usually linked by “and” or “or”. Reduplicative expressions are not typical binomials because of the absence of lexical liners. Yet, they share many important features. Wang (2005:3) who conducted two studies using base corpus approach agrees that most of the binomials are products of reduplicative word formation (Preuszová, 2017:3).

1.3 Functions of Reduplicative Expressions

The process of reduplication in English is generally operated to accomplish "functions such as distribution, plurality, repetition, customary, activity, increase of size, intensity and continuance" Sapir (1921:79). AL -Tameemi & A. Farhan list some functions with their explanations:

1- Intensity: Reduplication may occur to express the severity of the action or its importance, an intensifying is situated in English reduplicative expressions like easy peasy ‘really simple’, super duper ‘very good ’and tip-top ‘very good’. Increasing intensity, duration or emphasis

2- Plurality: Sometimes reduplication means multiplication for certain events, for example: I have Pooh-Pooh feeling towards marriage.

3- Contrast: The first name is usually emphasized for a literal meaning of the sentence when the word is repeated for meaning, for example: Is that carrot cheese-cake or carrot cake - cake?

4- Imitation: It means that sometimes reduplication can mean imitating the sounds of things such as tick-tick, brum-brum (2018: 86-87).

5-Incrementality:is also part of repetition through a “part for whole metonymy.” This metonymy can be applied here as incrementality, the idea of performing some actions bit by bit, the repeated application of some subpart of the whole action, to complete the action gradually.

6-Lack of Control: reduplication can express lack of order and disorder in a number of languages (Hasan:2002,196-198).

It is worth mentioning that emphatic reduplication, that indicates emphasis, may also ensure the sense of intensity. When reduplicative expressions function this way, they show an interesting morphological phenomenon. In place of the stem, the repetition may have only the last morpheme or syllable; and the more the repetition, the stronger the intentional emphasis will be (Dansieh, 2011:171).

1.4 Classifications of Reduplicative Expressions

The categorization of reduplication varies depending on the various authors dealt with the study of this linguistic phenomenon and is fundamentally based on their analytical perspectives. Although the most widely used definition of reduplication - where it is understood purely as a repetition of a morphological base, restricts the phenomenon exclusively to the field of morphology, reduplication should be viewed as a formal linguistic concept that can probably be applied to all levels of linguistic structure, not only at the morphological level, but also on the levels of semantics and pragmatics (Omer, 2012: 70). To Stageberg (1981:127) Three classes can be distinguished, (1) the base morpheme is repeated without any change such as *clop-clop*. (2) the base morpheme is repeated changing the initial consonant such as *fuddy-duddy*. (3) the base morpheme is repeated with a change in vowel such as *chitchat*. While Katamba (1994:54) classifies reduplication into two types; according to him reduplicative expressions are classified differently: ablaut motivated compounds and rhyme motivated compounds. The first one means what it denotes in poetry: the vowels and any consonant(s) that appear after it in the last syllable are identical while the second indicates a change in the root of vowel. Usually, ablaut signals a grammatical change in the function. These labels for the two classes of reduplicative expressions ensure that the repetition of the bases in compounds of this type involves copying the rhyme in what is called rhyme motivated compounds, and copying the consonants alongside altering the vowel in ablaut motivated compounds. Some rhyming compounds are shaped by combining bases which are pre-existing words as in *black Jack* and *brain-drain*. Commonly, are rhyming compounds where one or both bases are not an independent word, such as *namby-pamby*, *hobnob*. Lastly, there are ablaut motivated compounds in which one or the two bases may not be an independent word such as *tip-top*, *riff-raff*. Vogel (2012:20) (whose classifications is the model of this study) divides reduplication into three types: a) repetitive reduplication, where the base element is fully reduplicated, such as in *drip-drip*, b) repetitive reduplication with extension, where the base element is fully reduplicated and an affix is added to the reduplicant, such as in *clickety-click* or *cloppety-clop*, and c) non-repetitive reduplication, which Vogel claims is the most common and divides it into two subtypes, the first containing reduplicates in which is the base of a word repeated with the change of a vowel, such as in *dilly-dally*, *wishy-washy*, or *flim-flam*, and second type, where the base morpheme is repeated with altering the initial consonant(s), as in *niminy-piminy*, *pell-mell* or *clatter-patter*.

1.5 Previous Studies

There are many studies conducted in different varieties of languages. A contrastive study that is introduced by Iggab (2010) between English and standard Arabic phonologically, morphologically, syntactically and semantically. The data were collected from English and Arabic books shedding light on emphatic reduplicative expressions. Many differences between the two languages in terms of reduplicative expressions are presented in conclusions. Hassan (2012) presented reduplication from phonological and semantic perspectives. The data used for the analysis were child-centered tool of teaching especially pre-school stage. The study concluded that reduplicative expressions have moral and instill values for children. A study conducted by Al-Asbahi (2020) in which differences and similarities between English and Arabic languages are examined. The data in both languages are collected from nursery rhymes, cartoons, newspaper headlines, advertisement, and tongue twister. The semantic analysis classified the data into full\ part, free\ bound\, and continuous\ discontinuous. The study concluded that reduplicative expressions in Arabic language are more productive than that of English. The current study differs from the previous studies in terms of data, perspective and model.

2.1 Methodology

The study depends on Iraqi dialect as a source of analysis through observing daily interactions considered the limit of the study. When selecting the data, the researcher does not tackle rhythmic syntactic expressions or that in one word. Due to the representative nature of the study, fifteen reduplicative expressions have been collected. They are analyzed according to Vogle's model (2012) and interpreted morphologically and semantically alongside their functions to show their significance to everyday speech. Vogal (2012) supplies three classes of reduplicative expressions a) repetitive reduplication, b) repetitive reduplication with extension, and c) non-repetitive reduplication which has two subtypes, the first: a word repeated with the change of a vowel, and the second type: a word is repeated with a change of the initial consonant(s).

2.2 Data Analysis

The collected data are classified into three subsections in line with Vogal's classifications:

1. Repetitive reduplicative (fully reduplicative).
2. Fully reduplication with extension.
3. Non repetitive which has subtypes: vowel change and initial consonant change.

2.2.1 Repetitive Reduplicative Expressions: where the base element is fully reduplicated, without any modification or addition such as in drip-drip.

Table (1) Repetitive Reduplicative Expressions

Reduplicative Expression	Meaning	Function
1. براسك براسك	Said to a person who has to do the job as it is his responsibility even if s/he postpones it	Intensity and emphasis
2. وراك وراك	When someone follows the other person whether personally or when something cannot be delayed as it is a responsibility	Intensity and emphasis
3. منا منا	Asking about getting or finding something from anywhere	Distribution
4. نص ونص, هيج وهيج	When something is in between or fifty-fifty	distribution
5. حار حار	When something has to be reacted at the same time of action	Intensity and emphasis
6. ركض ركض	When actions are done quickly without any stopping	Intensity and emphasis
7. احم احم	A sound made for others to listen or pay attention	activity
8. عينك عينك	When someone does something rude openly and publicly without being ashamed	Intensity and emphasis
9. ناس وناس	When asking about	Distribution

	traits or actions giving two choices. This expression indicates some-some describing people.	
10. شوية شوية , حبة حبة	Something has to be done gradually not entirely, one by one.	Incrementality
11. سد بسد	Where two entities or persons don't owe anything to each other usually financially	Activity
12. هنا وهنا	When someone goes and is present in two places	Distribution

2.2.2 Repetitive Reduplicative Expressions with Extension : where the base element is fully reduplicated and an affix is added to the reduplicant, whether to the right or left such as in clickety-click or cloppety-clop.

Table (2) Repetitive Reduplicative Expressions with Extension

Reduplicative Expression	Meaning	Function
1. خيط وخرايط	When someone doesn't arrange his plans or decisions, it indicates disorder	Intensity and emphasis
2. علمي علمك	When someone asks about something the other answer (what I know is the same as yours)	Intensity and emphasis
3. يوم بيومه	Used to indicate that something is reacted on the same day of action	Intensity and emphasis
4. بالقيط والقرميط	When something is	Intensity and

	measured without increasing more, usually used about money or staffs	emphasis
5. حالي حالك	When someone complains about something, the other person says that my guess is the same as yours	Intensity and emphasis
6. كتابنا وكتابكم	Used to describe suffering from red tape usually in transactions	Continuity
7. كلشي وكلاشي	Used to say that all things are available without any lack	Intensity and emphasis Intensity and emphasis
8. تحصيل حاصل	Used to describe an inevitable consequence	Intensity and emphasis
9. زينة وخزينة	Used to describe the value of gold as a matter of saving and ornament	Intensity and emphasis
10- رخص الرخص	Used to describe the cheapness of a product	Intensity and emphasis

2.2.3 Non Repetitive Reduplicative Expressions

A) Vowel Change: in which is the base of a word repeated with the change of a vowel, such as in dilly-dally, wishy-washy.

Table (3) Non Repetitive/ Vowel Change

Reduplicative Expression	Meaning	Function
1. حام حيم	When someone beats without a target, used usually in a fight	Lack of order

2. طاب طيب	It is imitation for continuous sounds usually by devices	Imitation
3. قال وقيل	It is about gossip about other people	activity
4. قلباً وقالباً	When someone fully agrees with another's decisions or plans	Intensity and emphasis
5. واق ويقى	Sounds indicate children's crying	imitation
6. طاخ طيخ	Usually indicate the strong sounds of staff touching each other	Imitation

B) Non- Repetitive/ Initial Consonant Change: , where the base of a word is repeated with a change of the initial consonant(s), as in pell-mell or clatter-patter.

Table (4) Non- Repetitive/Initial Consonant Change

Reduplicative Expression	Meaning	Function
1. لا اصايل ولا فصايل	When something loses its value (usually describes people and their deeds)	Intensity and emphasis
2. لا سلام ولا كلام	Shen some ignores others and doesn't greet them.	Intensity and emphasis
3. لو تصيب لو تخبب	Used to describe unexpected results; either good or bad	Contrast
4. حال ومال	Describe someone as very rich	Intensity and emphasis
5. لا حس ولا نس	When someone doesn't pronounce a word or performs actions	Intensity and emphasis
6. قرض فرض	When someone has	Intensity and

	to do something necessarily.	emphasis
7. لو هرا لورا	When someone is unbalanced rather goes that side or the other side	Contrast
8. تاج وباج	Describes someone who has authority in the society	Intensity and emphasis
9. شكو ماكو	It is a question used between informal relationships	Customary
10. لا يصد ولا يرد	When someone doesn't respond and ignores other's speech	Intensity and emphasis
11. صافية دافية	It is an answer to how are you? What is going on, this expression suggests nothing is new	Intensity and emphasis
12. عكا ومكة	When someone travels everywhere or goes here and there to search about something	Intensity and emphasis
13. عطل بطل	When someone doesn't have a job	Intensity and emphasis
14. شيش بيش	Describes someone who doesn't have a plan, or chooses things randomly	Lack of order
15. عدا ووطا	When some excess all the boundaries	Intensity and emphasis
16. نار وشرار	Describes a high level of nervousness and angry	Intensity and emphasis
17. حاصل فاصل	When someone holds the floor and doesn't give the	Intensity and emphasis

	chance to others to speak	
حانة ومائة. 18	Where someone is between two things one is good, and the other is bad	Contrast
جر وعر. 19	When two people do not agree about something	Contrast
لا يدفي ولا يعفي. 20	Describes clothes as not good and don't have any value	Intensity and emphasis

3.1 Conclusions

The data prove to have the following properties:

- 1- All classifications of reduplicative expressions referred to by Vogal are available in Iraqi dialect.
- 2- Some of reduplicative expressions (especially that with vowel change) are attributed to iconicity such as طاب طيب، واق و يق.
- 3- Some of the reduplicative expressions are part of binomials as they contain (or) or (and) between its two parts.
- 4- Although most of the data are emphasizing and intensifying meaning, other functions are also present such as activity, distribution and contrast.
- 5- The reduplicative expressions with a change in initial consonant are the most common ones in Iraqi dialect.
- 6- In general, reduplicative expressions have a fixed meaning in different contexts that is why pragmatic analysis has no value in reduplicative expressions.

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