REDUPLICATION IN KANASHI

Satarupa Dattamajumdar  
The Asiatic Society, Kolkata

ABSTRACT

Kanashi, a Tibeto-Burman language is spoken in the Malana district of Himachal Pradesh in India. The present discussion concentrates on a particular grammatical phenomenon known as ‘reduplication’. By definition the concept of Reduplication stands for repetition or copying of a word or a syllable either exactly or with partial change in the phonological or morphological structure and the copied part is affixed to the base element in order to bring some modification in the semantic interpretation of the base element or to convey some special meaning. (Dattamajumdar, 2001:3). This study of reduplication is a part of the grammatical study of the Kanashi language which is an ongoing work. The data of the present work has been collected from Kanashi mother tongue speaker, an inhabitant of Malana district of Himachal Pradesh. The data has been collected and presented here using International Phonetic Alphabet.

1. INTRODUCTION

Kanashi is the language spoken in the Malana district of Himachal Pradesh. Genealogically, Kanashi is identified as a Tibeto-Burman language of Sino-Tibetan language family. The language has been classified as a Kinauri language belonging to West-Himalayish group of Tibeto-Kanauri branch of Tibeto-Burman group. It is said to be related with Milchang, a sub-branch of Kinnauri group of languages. That Kanashi language is an admixture of Sanskrit and Tibetan varieties has been stated by Bangroo and Stronski(2002). The language has been observed to have no intelligibility with the neighboring languages spoken in Lahul-Spiti and Kinnaur. The language has been referred to as a definitely endangered by UNESCO. According to http://archive.ethnologue.com the speaker strength of Kanashi is 1,400.

2. THE CONCEPT OF REDUPLICATION

Reduplication is a grammatical feature found in the modern Indian languages. By definition the concept of Reduplication stands for repetition or copying of a word or a syllable either exactly or with partial change in the phonological or morphological structure and the copied part is affixed to the
base element in order to bring some modification in the semantic interpretation of the base element or to convey some special meaning. (Dattamajumdar, 2001:3).

3. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

Abbi(1992) claims the phenomenon of reduplication as an areal feature not only of the languages of the Indian sub continent but also of the South-Asian languages. The present discussion which concentrates on a particular grammatical phenomenon known as ‘reduplication’ is a part of the grammatical study of the Kanashi language which is an ongoing work. The data of the present work has been collected from Kanashi mother tongue speaker, an inhabitant of Malana district of Himachal Pradesh. The data has been collected and presented here using International Phonetic Alphabet.

4. REDUPLICATED STRUCTURES IN KANASHI

As observed in Kanashi, reduplicated structures may belong to the category of full reduplication as well as partial reduplication. Fully reduplicated forms refer to those structures which are formed by exact doubling of the base form without any phonological alteration in the copied affixed part of the structure. On the other hand partially reduplicated forms refer to those structures which involve alteration in the phonological shape of the affixed copied part of the reduplicated structure. Fully reduplicated structures can be of two types- fully reduplicated words and fully reduplicated expressives.

 Fully reduplicated structures can be formed by reduplicating the words or lexical items of the language and by reduplicating expressive (that are imitation of natural sounds or expressive of senses).

Partially reduplicated structures can be formed from word or lexical items as well as from expressive (that are imitation of natural sounds or expressive of senses) by means of partial phonological alteration in the affixed copied part. Partially reduplicated expressive can be formed by:

i. Insertion of a vowel in the final position of the prefixed copied part

ii. Replacement of a consonant in the initial position of the suffixed copied part

iii. Insertion of a vowel in the final position of the suffixed copied part

The types of reduplicated structures as realized in the Kanashi language is presented in the following table.
Table-1: Formal classification of Reduplicated structures as realized in the Kanashi language

The reduplicated structures may involve semantic modifications or may also be employed to convey the meaning of some peculiar expressions of senses or feelings. The semantic modifications which are involved in the reduplicated structures can be realized only when compared with the meanings of the non-reduplicated counterparts or base elements. These are morphologically and semantically distinct structures of a language having unique characteristics of their own. Being an important structural phenomenon of the South Asian languages reduplicated structures play a vital role in the system of communication and so demands a vivid description of its form and function with reference to the semantic interpretation.

5. FULL REDUPLICATION

Word Reduplication

The words or the lexical items belonging to different word classes are found to be reduplicated in order to bring modification in the semantic interpretation. This is what is known as word reduplication. Kanashi attests reduplicated nouns, pronouns, verbs, modifiers (both nominal and verbal), whereas reduplicated conjunctions and postpositions are not available.

Reduplicated nouns

1.  *du kimǝkimǝŋa hɔɳɖe uta.*
   he house-pl. house-pl.-loc. walk-conj. be-3rd pr. sg.

   ‘He goes to each and every house.’
2. *riñka riñkəna* ɗ̱ onefi utʃ.  
sister-pl. sister-pl.-with talk-conj. be-pr.cont. 3rd pl.  
‘(Only) the sisters are talking.

Reduplicated Pronouns

3. *haʔge haʔge kutab̥ ʔe dʒo reʃi utʃe ?*  

‘What(pl.) are the books being sold(/selling) here?’

4. *əŋ əŋ bɔntəŋ dug ə deny.*  
those those go-fut.1st pl. they go-fut.pf.2nd pl.(imp.)  
‘Those who will (wish) to go they (will) go.’/ ‘Those who want to go they will go.’

Reduplicated Nominal Modifiers

5. *dus pʰaʔke pʰaʔke ʈₕsə p lobige uta.*  
she-ag. small-pl. small-pl. thing-acc. like-conj. be-pr.3rd sg.  

‘She likes small small thing(s).’

6. *ʃurarti ʃurarti təɾəɡ dʒo bʰurʔke.*  
naughty naughty child-pl. here come-pr.pf. 3rd pl.  

‘(Only) naughty children have come here.’

Reduplicated Verbs

7. *du bɔŋpɔ bɔŋpɔ datk.*  
he go-impf. parti. go-impf.parti. fall-past3rd sg.  

‘He fell while going’.

8. *dus giɾəɡ labɔ labɔ ʈi bʰariyag utɔ.*  
he-ag. song-pl. sing-impf.parti. impf.parti. water fill-pr.cont. 3rd sg.  

‘While singing he was filling the water.’
9. *mfishcatch evening be_past3*nd* sg.

‘It became evening while catching fish.’

Reduplicated Verbal Modifiers

10. *iske iskes mfish acc. neg.eat be_pr.3*rd* pl.

‘Some people do not eat fish.’

11. *roz roz duk*body be_pr.3*rd* sg.

‘Each and every day his body remains unwell (sick).’

Expressives (Fully Reduplicated)

Kanashi attests a number of fully reduplicated expressives. These may be imitation of natural sounds or may be expressive of senses. The fully reduplicated expressives are both phonologically and semantically significant in the language.

Some examples are given in the following.

12. *ʧchild expr. of jumping spoil do_pr.pf. 3*rd* pl.

‘The children hampered (the peace) by making the sound of jumping.’

13. *ʧbird-ag. imitative sound of chirping do_pr.cont.3*rd* pl.

‘The birds are chirping (with the sound).’

6. PARTIAL REDUPLICATION

Word Reduplication

Partially reduplicated words or lexical items in Kanashi involve deletion of the final consonant in the prefixed copied part. Examples are given below.
Expressives (Partially Reduplicated)

Partially reduplicated expressives which involve a partial phonological alteration in the affixed copied part is prevalent in Kanashi. Alteration of a vowel or a consonant in the affixed copied part has been observed in case of the partially reduplicated structures in Kanashi. Depending upon the phonological alteration, partially reduplicated expressives can be of three types-

I. Insertion of vowel in the final position of the prefixed copied part
II. Replacement of the consonant in the initial position of the suffixed copied part
III. Insertion of vowel in the final position of the suffixed copied part

Such partially reduplicated expressives are exemplified below.

i. Insertion of vowel in the final position of the prefixed copied part

16. ʧā ɡde ɡd ubyte ɔ.  
  tea imitative sound of boiling boil-pr.cont.3rd sg.  
  ‘The tea is boiling with the boiling sound.’

17. puʧus  kʳ ɲup kʁte kʁt ɔ.  
  mouse-ag. sugar-acc. imitative sound of biting eat-pr.cont.3rd sg.  
  ‘The mouse is eating the sugar by making the sound of biting.’

ii. Replacement of the consonant in the initial position of the suffixed copied part

It is to be noted that such reduplicated expressive can take the suffix -e to form nominal modifiers.
18. teləzər bərp oil imitative sound of smoking/burning be-pr. cont. 3rd sg.

‘The oil is smoking with the sound’.

19. putfiis gər bər rat-ag. imitative sound of rapid movement do-pr.cont. 3rd sg.

‘The rat is moving by making the sound.’

iii. Insertion of vowel in the final position of the suffixed copied

20. du tfarə dada ɡəp dərdərni 1ɔk.
det. child having fall lot expr. of panting of heart seem-past pf. 1st sg.

‘The fall of the child I (my heart) started panting a lot.’

21. ɡəndʒ waʃ tərərni 1ɔk.
me-acc. hunger expr. of hunger seem-past pf. 1st sg.

‘I am feeling extremely hungry out of hunger.’

Apart from above discussed reduplicated structures Kanashi attests a peculiar structure used for the imitative sound of thundering. This particular form does not fully conform to the definition of reduplication but only a syllable in the medial position is found to be reduplicated. The example is cited below.

21. ɡərgəna ɡururug ɡəke.
sky-loc. imitative sound of thundering be-pr.pf. 3rd pl.

‘It is thundering (with the sound) in the sky.’

7. SEMANTIC INTERPRETATION OF THE REDUPLICATED STRUCTURES

The identified semantic features of the reduplicated structures as realized in the Kanashi language are- Distributive plurality, Exclusiveness, Degree of
Manifestation, Simultaneity of action and Repetition. Each of the semantic features is discussed below.

1. Distributive Plurality
Reduplicated structures are often found to be employed in order to express plurality and distributiveness of a form. This is a widely and very commonly used semantic interpretation of the reduplicated structures. The above examples number 1, 3, 5 and 11 convey the semantic feature – distributive plurality.

2. Exclusiveness
The semantic feature exclusiveness refers to the interpretation of the reduplicated structures which are employed to convey the sense of ‘only’ or something ‘particular’. Examples number 2, 4, 6 and 10 (mentioned above) convey this semantic feature.

3. Degree of Manifestation
Reduplication is often used in order to mean different degrees or measures of some feelings, emotions, senses, state, process and actions. The different degrees of the senses like ‘hesitation’, ‘mildness’, ‘excellence’, ‘similarity’, ‘immediacy’, ‘intensity’, ‘incompleteness’, ‘certainty’ are conveyed by the reduplicated structures. Examples number 12, 20, 21 and 22 convey the semantic feature – degree of manifestation.

4. Simultaneity of Action
This is a semantic feature which involves two events or actions taking place at the same time. This has been referred by Abbi (1992) as an aspectual category. Simultaneity of action involves synchronization of two events or actions in terms of the completion of the events together or protraction of one of the action or continuity of two events along a span of time. Abbi (1992: 32) rightly points out that though this sense of simultaneity can be expressed by temporal phrases or clauses starting with the expressions like “while…”, “at the time of …” and “when …”, the language speakers are found to use reduplicated structures with more acceptability in case of communication. This semantic feature is restricted to the reduplicated verb forms. Above examples number 7, 8 and 9 convey the semantic feature – simultaneity of action.

5. Repetition/Continuation
The reduplicated expressive that are imitative of sounds, are often found to convey ‘repetition’ or ‘continuation’ of the sound or ‘plurality’ of the sound. That is, a sense of repeated or continued
action is conveyed by the expressive imitating the sounds. Usually, as such a repeated action is not followed by any resultant effect. (Dattamajumdar 2001:42) This semantic feature is conveyed in the above examples number -13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18 and 19.

NOTES:
1. The suffix /-pɔ/ for imperfective participle is used after vowel ending verb forms whereas /-bɔ/ is used after consonant ending verb forms.

Acknowledgements
I am extremely thankful to Prof. Ashoke Kumar Dutta and Shri Amlan Dutta of Bom-Bom Charitable Trust for initiating me in the present study and helping me to collect the data. I am also thankful to Prof. Krishna Bhattacharya for her insightful comments in dealing with the language data.

List of abbreviations used

- acc.=accusative
- ag.=agentive (suffix)
- conj.=conjunctive
- det. = determiner
- expr.=expressive
- gen.=genitive case
- imp.=imperative mood
- impf. parti.= imperfective participle
- inter.=interrogative
- loc.=locative case
- neg.=negative
- past =simple past
- past pf.=past perfect
- pl. = plural number
- pr.=simple present tense
- pr. cont. =present continuous tense
- pr.pf. =present perfect tense
- sg. =singular number
- 1st =first person
- 2nd =second person
- 3rd =third person
8. REFERENCES


