

Lexical Reduplication in Urdu

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Abstract

This study investigates the phenomenon of reduplication in Urdu by examining its various types. Reduplication, a widespread linguistic process, involves the repetition or modification of words, segments, or syllables to extend meaning or emphasise specific linguistic functions. It is analysed through phonological and morphological lenses, distinguishing among full, partial, and redundant reduplication. Reduplication serves diverse functions, including intensification, augmentation, diminution, and distributivity, which are observed universally, though regional variations reflect areal influences and morphological dynamics. The primary objectives of this study are to identify and describe the different types of reduplication in Urdu and to analyse their characteristics across phonological, morphological, semantic, and pragmatic levels. The study also aims to uncover previously unexamined forms of reduplicant formation in Urdu, providing a comprehensive understanding of their types, nature, and functional domains. By comparing Urdu reduplicants with broader linguistic patterns, this research offers a novel analysis of reduplication and its multifunctionality within the language.

Keywords: reduplication, morphological, phonological, functions, intensification

1. Introduction

This study presents the reduplication process in Urdu. Reduplication involves the repetition of partial or complete lexical items within words. Complete repetition occurs in two forms: either the full word is repeated exactly, or it is repeated in a slightly modified form (Yliniemi, 2024). Anderson (2018) provides examples of complex reduplication in the Kherwarian language, where only a single consonant in the middle of the target word is replaced.

The existing literature shows that reduplication is a worldwide phenomenon and has been extensively studied within various theoretical paradigms, such as Optimality Theory (OT) (Alderete, Beckman, Benua, et al., 1999; Kiparsky, 2010; Weijer & Atta, 2020) and Lexical-Functional Grammar (LFG) (Mistica, Andrews, Arka, & Baldwin, 2009), among others. The dominant existing theories of reduplication are briefly summarised in Section 1.2.

1.2 Theories of Reduplication

Two major approaches have been adopted in the study of reduplication: the phonological approach (Marantz, 1982; McCarthy & Prince, 1993/2001) and the morphological approach (Inkelas & Zoll, 2005). According to Ghaniabadi, Ghomeshi, and Sadat-Tehrani (2006, p.1), the phonological approach treats a reduplicant as a copy of its base. In contrast, the Morphological Doubling Theory (MDT) views a reduplicant as involving semantic rather than phonological identity. The units in MDT are independent morphological constituents, each spelt out separately. Godwin-Ivworin (2023, p.45) notes that, under MDT, “a morphological construction can call for two instances of the same morphological constituent targeting a whole word, stem, root, or affix.” MDT does not require phonological correspondence between the base and the reduplicant, though morphological reduplication is often accompanied by phonologically modified forms.

Steride’s Full-Copy-Plus-Cancellation theory (1988) proposes that a full copy of the base is initially generated and later amended to an unmarked structure. Kager (2010, p.198) raises a relevant question: why does the same simplification to the unmarked form not occur with the base, as it does with the reduplicant, when both involve the emergence of the unmarked? McCarthy and Prince (1986) explain that the base is preserved due to faithfulness constraints, whereas no such pressure exists on the reduplicant, allowing it to simplify to the unmarked structure.

Kim (2005, p. 127) summarises the characteristics identified by Alderete et al. (1999) for classifying reduplication into phonological and morphological domains.

“a. The phonological type: 1. The fixed segment is often the default segment of the language. 2. The fixed segment arises as a result of TETU ranking. 3. The fixed segment may alternate across different realizations of the reduplicative morpheme. b. The morphological type: 1. It has the faithfulness properties typical of an affix, i.e., it can contain marked structures. 2. It has the alignment properties of an affix, i.e., it is peripheral or minimally displaced from a peripheral position under crucial domination. 3. It has the context-sensitivity of an affix,

i.e., it participates in any phonological process that affects other affixes, and it can alternate by suppletion or allomorphy. 4. In some languages, the overwriting string is an affix that also occurs independently of reduplication.”

Kim (2005) further clarifies the distinction between phonological and morphological reduplication:

“Simply put, in the phonological type, the reduplicative fixed segment is inserted by the ‘phonology’ of the language, i.e., by phonological markedness constraints under TETU ranking, while in the morphological type, it is determined morphologically, just like an affix, except that the fixed segment overwrites part of the base in the reduplicative syllable” (p.128).

He adds: “The difference is that in the phonological type, the fixed segment may alternate across different realizations of the reduplicative morpheme, while in the morphological type, the alternation may occur by suppletion or allomorphy” (p.129).

Kim also comments on the broader dichotomy:

“As Alderete et al. (1999) make implicitly clear in their paper, the fixed segments are often the default segment in phonological fixed segmentism, but they are often non-default in morphological fixed segmentism because in phonological fixed segmentism the fixed segment is ‘inserted’ by the ‘phonology’ of the language but in morphological fixed segmentism it is ‘overwritten’ morphologically, by the process of affixation” (p.135).

1.2 Types of reduplication

Matts (2017, p.817) has identified several types of reduplication. Berg (2022) further distinguishes between inherent and non-inherent reduplication: the former does not have an independent base as a meaningful word, while the latter does. According to Berg (2022, p.8), partial reduplication is less common than full reduplication in world languages. Reduplicants convey associative, distributive, specific, and collective meanings.

Agnihotri (2021, p.111) classifies reduplication into three types: full, partial, and redundant. Full reduplication involves taking a form X and repeating it as X-X. Partial reduplication modifies the base partially, as in X-X'. Redundant reduplication combines two elements, X-Y, which have approximately the same meaning but historically originate from different sources.

Lakra and Rahman (2017) identify two major types of reduplicants: lexical and morphological. Lexical reduplication can be further divided into (i) echo formation, (ii) compounds, and (iii) word reduplication, which may be complete, partial, or discontinuous. Expressive reduplication, a type of morphological reduplication, involves “sound symbolism, mimic, iconicity, and onomatopoeia” (p.121). Among these, lexical reduplication is most frequent in Urdu.

Ghaniabadi et al. (2006) list various types of reduplicant structures, including echo constructions (e.g., چائے والے chai-wai, “tea-etc.”), co-compounds such as hyponyms (e.g., مالِ شیشی mal-maveshi, “cattle-etc.”) or imitative forms (e.g., جنگ و جدل jang-o-jadal, “war-etc.”, where two words are similar in meaning), numeral compounds (e.g., دو تِنتِ do-teen, “two-three”), and associative compounds (e.g., رِہِ یوِغِ پردہ, “curtain etc.”). Other types identified include intensive reduplication, analogous reduplication, contrastive focus reduplication, and indifference reduplication. Ghaniabadi et al. (2006) also suggest that English tag questions can be considered reduplicants, although they have not been previously recognized as such in the literature.

Philips and Harris (2017) differentiate between echo and partial reduplication: in echo reduplication, part of a word is replaced (e.g., English nitty-gritty), while in partial reduplication, part of a word is repeated (e.g., Urdu تو تکرار tu-tukar, “exchange of harsh words”). They also discuss embedded reduplication, where multiple phonological segments are reduplicated within a word. Such multiple reduplications are often called ordered reduplication, as in the Mundaword [dadaŋ-dadaŋ] (Philips & Harris, 2017, p.239), where the entire word is repeated, illustrating the iteration of phonological material.

Yoshioka (2021) enumerates several types of reduplication in Indian languages:

- Complete Reduplication: Repetition of a word or clause without phonological or morphological variation, e.g., kartekarte (کرتے کرتے), “by and by.”
- Partial Reduplication: The second word has partial phonetic similarity, e.g., chai-wai or cha-sha, “tea-etc.”
- Echo Words: The second word is meaningless out of context.
- Mimic Words: Complete onomatopoeic reduplication, e.g., [ci: ci:] سیج سیج, “noise of mice.”
- Reduplication with an Infix: A syllable or segment is infix between the two words.

Abbi (1991) identifies four categories of complete reduplication in South Asian languages: Distributive, Emphasis (abstract), Exclusive, and Time (discrete) (pp. 90–92). Mohan (2006) lists four types of reduplication in Hindi:

1. **Expressive:** Minimally meaningful, indivisible morphemes with iterated syllables, e.g., *[tip-tip]* “dripping sound” or *[cip-cip]*, “sticky.”
2. **Lexical Reduplication:** Complete repetition of identical words, e.g., *bai-the-bai-the* (بایٹے بایٹے, “while sitting”) or *[da:ne-da:ne]* (دانے دانے, “on each grain”).
3. **Partial Lexical Reduplication/Echo Formation:** Frequently termed “echo” by Indian linguists, e.g., *[kha:na: wa:na:]* “food etc.”, *[roti:-woti:]* “bread etc.” (Montaut, 2009). Rubino (2005) notes that partial reduplication implies the existence of full reduplication.
4. **Redundant Compounds:** Juxtaposition of two lexical items, also called “synonymic compounds” (Dongare, 1975), “semantic reduplication” (Vacek, 1994), or “redundant compounds” (Singh, 1982, 1995), e.g., *[dhan-daulat]* “money etc.”, *[dharm-ima:n]* “religion etc.”

In Rubino’s words, the existence of partial reduplication implies that of full reduplication (Rubino, 2005).

Redundant Compounds: The expressions like ‘the juxtaposition of two lexical items variously referred to in the literature as ‘synonymic compounds’ (Dongare, 1975), ‘semantic reduplication’ (Vacek, 1994) and ‘redundant compounds’ (Singh, 1982, 1995) are considered for this class of reduplicants by linguists.

[dhan-daulat]	[dharm-ima:n]
money- money	religion-religion
‘money etc.’	‘religion etc.’

Kajitani points out that reduplication is used for weakening, diminution, and approximation (2005, p. 93). In the words of Kajitani, there is a scale of the frequency or priority for using different semantic contexts for reduplication. For example, an increase in quantity (Augmentation) and degree (Intensification) is preferred over a decrease in quantity (Diminution and Attenuation) in the formation of reduplicant compounds. Based on the study of sixteen languages, Kajitani determines the following universal scale of preference or ranking for reduplication.

Augmentation $\Rightarrow$ Intensification $\Rightarrow$ [Attenuation $\Rightarrow$ Diminution] (where $X \Rightarrow Y$ indicates that ‘X is universally preferred over Y and $\Rightarrow$ stands for statistical preference) (Kajitani, 2005, p. 94).

Balusu (2006) has described distributive numeral reduplication in Telegu, which illustrates an equal number of numerals with each participant, for example, ‘They received two rupees each.’ The same is also common in Urdu and other Indo-Aryan languages (e.g., (Urdu) ہر ایک کو ایک ایک روپیہ انعام دیا گیا). In such constructions, reduplicants give a plural effect of distributivity (Balusu, 2006, p. 2).

Idiophones: This is another type of reduplication. Nelson (2005) lists these English idiophones from Awoyale (1974, p. 137):

wishy-washy tick-tock fuzzy-wuzzy hurly-burly higgledy-piggledy
hanky-panky roly-poly criss-cross flip-flop tip-top zig-zag riff-raff
wishy-washy tick-tock fuzzy-wuzzy hurly-burly higgledy-piggledy
hanky-panky roly-poly criss-cross flip-flop tip-toe zig-zag riff-raff.

An interesting fact about reduplication in Igbo and Hausa languages is that reduplication may lead to tone metathesis in Igbo and Hausa (Uwaezuoke & Anachunam, 2023; Uwaezuoke & Onwudiwe, 2022).

1.3 Pseudo reduplication

Kouwenberg and LaCharité (2015) identify examples of what they call pseudo-reduplication in some African Creoles. Any instance of such reduplication which does not have a simplex base, although the simple form of the word does exist in the donor language in the case of a loanword example, is not accepted as reduplication by these authors and is treated as pseudo reduplication. They reject examples of so-called reduplications that do not exist in their simple forms, although the original forms of these words exist as meaningful lexical entries in the source languages like Dutch or English, from where these words have been taken as loans in the target language (p. 974). They differentiate between reduplication and ‘non-morphological repetition’; their examples for such repetitions which are not reduplication include Pak- and Indian-English expression ‘He is very, very angry’ (ibid, p. 975). Citing Gil (2005), the authors provide some measures to differentiate between repetition and reduplication. In their words,

“First, whereas repetition can span more than one intonation group, TR falls within a single intonation group. Moreover, in repetition, each occurrence is independent and retains its formal, semantic, and syntactic properties. This also means that contiguity is not a requirement of repetition” (Kouwenberg & LaCharité p. 975) (TR=Total reduplicant).

According to this yardstick, repetition is into nationally non-contiguous, but reduplication is prosodically contiguous, occurring in the same intonation pattern. Regarding a previous study (Gooden, 2003), Kouwenberg and LaCharité assert that reduplication is always a well-constituted prosodic unit with no such prosodic constraints

on repetition (2015, p. 976). Discussing the relationship between semantics and reduplication, Kouwenberg and LaCharite (2015) think that a reduplicated form can communicate an extension in the meanings of the base but not thoroughly deviate from it. In their words, “the meaning of the simplex form must be completely preserved in the TR form” (2015, p. 978).

1.4 Previous Analyses of Reduplication

Alderete et al. (1999) treat reduplication as a phonological and morphological phenomenon and analyze some examples using OT constraints. According to them, a reduplicating segment may be treated as overwriting a segment, and the whole process is considered as that of affixation. Thus, a segment is suffixed, prefixed, or infixes in different languages. All constraints of affixal morphology will apply to this phenomenon when it is treated as a morphological issue. In some languages, the single segment used for reduplicant formation has two allophones, like /f/ and /m/ in Saraiki (Weijer & Atta, 2020). They treat a specific segment as an allomorph of the general segment, and such cases are considered by Alderete et al. as examples of suppletion. Identity avoidance is the main reason for such suppletion to occur (Alderete et al., 1999, p.356). On the other hand, they treat some examples of reduplication of single segments, which are most unmarked, as a phonological phenomenon and claim that they emerge from the interaction of markedness constraints. Alderete et al. treat it as an emergence of the unmarked and think that only markedness constraints can accurately capture this phenomenon. They claim that only an unmarked segment is used for reduplication in such contexts (though markedness is language-specific and may vary from language to language). They compare this process with epenthesis because there are a lot of similarities between these two processes.

An important question regarding total reduplicants is whether the direction of the reduplication process is progressive or regressive. For example, Anderson (2018) opines that though the Munda languages Ho and Sora show similar functional reduplication patterns, the total reduplication process is regressive or leftward in Ho but rightward or progressive in Sora. The reason for this is described in these words: “Ho has historically eliminated almost all derivational prefixes in favor of nearly exclusive suffixation (and a handful of infixes), but Sora still uses many archaic inflectional and derivational prefixes with parallels in other non-Munda Austroasiatic languages” (Anderson, 2018, p. 40). Based on excessive complex reduplication, Anderson (ibid, p. 41) also assumes that it must have been a dominant feature of the proto-Munda language. In Urdu, the difficulty arises when a word is repeated fully without any change. It becomes challenging to determine which repetition is the base and which one is the reduplicant. In the words of Albadr (2023), we can determine the status of base and reduplicant by analyzing the prosodic pattern of such compounds or phrases. A base typically has a stressed or more prominent position than a reduplicant.

Kager claims that the reduplicant is more unmarked than the base (2010, p. 196). Still, we also see examples of more marked reduplicants in Pakistani languages. The substitution of the first consonant of a reduplicant with /ʃ/, /m/, or /v/ in Saraiki, Pashto, and Urdu, respectively, is not the unmarked option because, in some of these cases, the consonant in the reduplicant is more marked than its correspondent in the base. Mohanan and Mohanan (2003) provide examples of the emergence of marked structures in Malayalee English (ME), which they call the emergence of not ‘so unmarked’. Related to this is the opinion of Berg (2022) that there is a worldwide bias toward rightward affixation (suffixes are more frequent than prefixes), but reduplication, being an affix, has a left-ward bias (i.e., there are more prefixal reduplicants than suffixal reduplicants). In this regard, the reduplicants prefer a more marked morphological position.

1.5 Objectives of the current study

In this study, we present and analyse the examples of reduplication in Urdu. Although some researchers have already discussed this phenomenon in Urdu, there is still scope for further discussion of reduplication in this language. There are some crucial studies on Urdu/Hindi reduplication, such as those by Montaut (2009), Abbi (1980), Mohan (2006), Singh (1995), Dogare (1975), etc. However, these studies are old or missing in some aspects of the phenomenon (as identified in the previous section). This study aims to present examples of different types of reduplication in Urdu that have not been discussed in previous studies.

The current research aims to study Urdu reduplicant formation types, their nature, sources, and domains. To achieve this aim, this study sets the following objectives.

- a. To identify and describe different types of reduplication in Urdu.
- b. To compare and identify similarities and differences between reduplicants at phonological, morphological, semantic, and pragmatic levels.

1.6 Reduplication in Urdu

The fixed segment for reduplication may be a vowel (Akinlabi, 1985) or a consonant (Alderete et al., 1999; Nevins & Vaux, 2003). The fixed segments in English are /ʃm/. The consonant in Hindi and Urdu is /v/ or /w/ for reduplication (Singh, 1969). In the words of Inkelas and Dowling, in Hindi the ‘et cetera’ echo construction uses a replacive v-: ‘Narendra’ (propername)→narendra varendra ‘undesirables like Narendra’ (Singh 2005:266), tras ‘grief’→tras-vras ‘grief and the like’ (Nevins 2005:280). However, for stems that are already v-initial, š is used instead: vakil ‘lawyer’→vakil-šakil ‘lawyers and the like’ (Nevins 2005:280). In Urdu, some vowels change in reduplication, like ‘jhomte jhamte’ جھومتے جھامتے (Swinging). About vowel reduplication, Montaut (2009, p. 53) comments as below:

“Alliterating formations are made mainly by modifying the radical vowel: dekh-dâkh ‘see/look’ on dekh ‘see/look’, pûch-pâch ‘inquire’, on

pûch ‘ask’; the vowel –â- is practically always substituted to any other vowel (e> â, i> â, u> â). But in Punjabi we have examples with different vowels for such constructions [.....]. In some cases, the vowel alteration occurs in Urdu with a consonant modification (kabhî-kabhâr ‘occasionally’, on kabhî ‘once, ever’), and in other cases, the first consonant is suppressed (âs-pâs ‘around’, on pâs ‘near’).”

In the opinion of Anderson (2018), echo, segmental, expressive, or substitutive reduplication are terms commonly used for the same phenomenon (p. 36). In Mohan’s words,

“Echo-word formation applies to all open lexical categories..... Echo forms based on nouns, adjectives, and various verbal forms are attested in Hindi. Echoing of pronouns, postpositions, and particles are unacceptable in Hindi” (Mohan, 2006, p. 122). He has given the following examples to support his claim.¹

(1)

(a) Nouns

[pen – ven]	[kagʌz – vagʌz]	[kita:b – vita:b]
Pen & such thing	paper & such thing	book & such thing

(b) Adjectives

[pila: – vila:]	[mota: - vota:]	[mi:tha: – vi:tha:]
Yellow & like	fat & like	sweet & like

(c) Verbs

[bola:-vola:]	[likhna:-vikhna:]
speak. 3 per.-EW	read.inf.-EW

(d) Adverbs

[ni:ce-vi:ce]	[jaldi:-valdi:]
‘below and so forth’	‘soon-etc.’

(e) Pronoun: *[hʌm] [vʌm]

we- EW

¹ Examples used in Hindi may also be used in Urdu. The common man's language in the street is understandable for the speakers of both languages.

Mohan (2006) has detailed the categories of words and their morphological and syntactic nature that go with or do not go with reduplicants. Urdu has different types of reduplication, which are briefly discussed below.

1.6 Onomatopoeic Reduplication

Like Regier (1994), Lakra and Rahman (2017) also compared onomatopoeic reduplication with baby talk. In Urdu, onomatopoeic words are used repeatedly to express the continuity in noise. The following examples of onomatopoeic reduplication are used in all three languages.

(2)

[ʃarʃar]	<i>the noise of falling water</i>
[kuʔkuʔ]	<i>the noise of fowls</i>
[kaẽ-kaẽ]	<i>the noise of a crow</i>
[far far]	<i>quick repetition of some text</i>
[ci: ci:]	<i>the noise of mice</i>

1.7 Imperative Reduplication

Reduplicants are used for (continuative) imperative, stress (superlative) or repetition, etc., in Urdu, as the following examples illustrate:

(3)

[Kha-kha],	<i>eat-eat</i>
[pi-pi]	<i>drink-drink</i>
[Kala-kala],	<i>black-black</i>
[lal-lal],	<i>red-red</i>
[pila-pila]	<i>yellow-yellow</i>
[Golgol]	<i>round round</i>

These are examples of total reduplicants. Nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs all participate in total reduplication. Reduplication occurs in words, phrases, and compounds in Urdu.

1.8 Word Reduplication

As pointed out earlier, semi-vowel /v/² or /w/ is used to replace the first consonant of the base to form a reduplicant in Urdu, e.g., ‘pani-wani’ *water-etc.* If an Urdu word

² In Urdu, like other Indo-Aryan languages, the phoneme corresponding to English /v/ is a labio-dental approximant, which may also be considered a semi-vowel.

starts with v/w, its reduplicant will start with the /j/ sound. Reciprocally, in Punjabi and Saraiki, for the words which begin with /j/, the reduplicant is formed by adding a consonant /m/ or /v-w/, e.g., shakk-makkor shakk-wakk (doubt etc.). This seems to be an areal linguistic phenomenon as Urdu, which uses /v w/ is on the Eastern side of the Saraiki-Punjabi zone, and Pashto, Balochi and Brahvi, which use /m/ for this purpose, are on the western side of this zone. Saraiki and Punjabi get loan segments /m/ and /v/ from both neighbours for the specific reduplicants of the bases starting with the /j/ sound. However, the following examples illustrate some consonants other than the fixed segments also appear in the reduplicants.

(4)

- [catte-batte] (of same kind)
- [karta-dharta] (activist)
- [bacca-khucca] (left over)
- [xalt-malt] (confused)
- [Jhoot-moot] (lies)
- [cat-pat] (instantly)
- [khat-pat] (tension/scuttle)
- [yallat-salat] (wrong)
- [jese-tese] (byhook or crook)
- [lambda taranga] (long)
- [mang-tang] (borrowing)
- [ban than kar] (decoration)

Ali (2020) believes that this type of non-template reduplicant structure came from different sources that contributed to the lexicon. However, those hypothetically different sources have yet to be explored.

1.9 Ablaut Reduplication

In the following compounds, reduplication occurs in Urdu with a change of some vowels. These examples do not use fixed vowels for reduplicants because these phrases are part of the lexicon and have developed due to the language's evolution.

(5)

- [di:ldol] *form and feature*
- [id^her-ud^her] *Here and there,*

[en-an] *Anyone*

Lakra and Rahman (2017) used the term ablaut reduplication for the change of vowels in one of the parts of the reduplicant-base set, e.g., Urdu ‘pal-pos’. They are also called ‘zigzag’, ‘chit-chat’, ‘riffraff’, ablaut, or apophonic reduplication in English (Weijer et al., 2020). Mostly peripheral vowels are used for ablaut reduplication worldwide (van de Weijer et al., 2020, p. 9; Jespersen, 1942, p.176, cited in the former). However, van de Weijer et al., (2020, p. 10) provide some words that do not undergo such reduplication, based on which they conclude that it is not a productive process in the synchronic grammar of English.

1.10 Discontinuous Reduplication

In the words of Huang, “The reduplicant can be placed in different positions relative to the base, as a prefix, infix, or suffix..... However, it is not always the case that the reduplicant has to occur next to its base. The reduplicant and the base can be interrupted by other morphological material, and this type of reduplication is termed discontinuous reduplication, which is a non-canonical type of reduplication” (2023, p. 7). In some cases of discontinuous reduplication, a phoneme or syllable is added as a connector between the base and the reduplicant. Examples of this kind of reduplication are common in Urdu. Some of these are listed below.

(6)

[jang-o-jadal] ‘wars’
[lamha-ba-lamha] ‘moment by moment’
[gut^ha-mgut^ha] ‘entangled’
[sal-ha sal] ‘year after year’
[din-ba din] ‘day by day’
[gram a gram] ‘very hot’
[ranj o gham] ‘sorrow and worries’

These examples do not provide a principle for the linking segment, so further investigation is required. Minkova (2002) provides examples of this phenomenon in English (164-5).

1.11 Repetition of Complete Words

In Urdu, complete words are sometimes repeated to stress or highlight significance. In the following phrases, word repetition appears as a form of total reduplication in Urdu. Some examples are listed below.

(7)

[dindin mēi] in the daytime
[mazaqmazaq mēi] by way of joke

[xudaxudakarke] with difficulty
[batbat par] every now and then

1.12 Rhyming and non-rhyming compounds

Reduplication is the repetition of complete words, modified words, or parts of words. In modified reduplication, the reduplicant is slightly modified from the base. Sometimes, the base and reduplicant rhyme, and sometimes, they do not. The following rhyme words are compounds; both compound members have almost similar meanings. Some linguists consider these as reduplicants because of their semantic relations. Examples of both rhyming and non-rhyming compounds are listed below.

(8)

Non-rhyming compounds

[di:nd^haram] 'religion'
[lajsharam] 'honor'
[zarzameen] 'wealth and land'
[izzatshuhtrat] 'respect and fame'
[piarmuhabbat] 'love and affection'

(9)

Rhyming compounds

[toDphoD] vandalism
[razniaz] secrets
[zauqshauq] deep interest
[safshafaf] neat and clean
[atejate] coming and going

In the above examples, both words are meaningful and rhyming. However, some words with different rhymes and sometimes meaningless reduplicants are also used in Urdu. The following examples show that reduplicants are meaningless as they are not part of the lexicon independently.

(10)

[Hashash-bashash] happy
[Chorchakar] thief etc.
[dhoomdhaam] celebration
[chiknachubra] silky or overly polished

[bhool chook] mistakes and oversights

The above examples show that different classes of words are used in word reduplication. Nouns are very commonly used in reduplication formation. Verbs and adjectives are also used as reduplicants. According to Montaut (2009), only nonfinite verbs can be reduplicated in Urdu/Hindi (p. 27). Singular adjectives are also used in intensive meanings, but plural adjectives are used in distributive meanings in reduplication. For example, *chotachotabacha* 'is the smallest child, but *chotechotebache* means every small child (ibid). The plural adjective also indicates the speaker's empathetic relation with the children (Montaut, 2009). Philips and Harrison (2017, p. 229) have reproduced from Dingemanse the following hierarchy of adjectival reduplication.

(11)

“sound < movement < visual patterns < other sensory perceptions < inner feelings and cognitive states (Dingemanse, 2012, p. 663).”

Urdu follows this hierarchy, as illustrated in the above examples of reduplication.

1.13 Reduplication in Phrases

Reduplication also occurs in phrasal forms. The following expressions have repeated words in phrases with some linking words/syllables in between the repeated/reduplicated words. These are also examples of discontinuous reduplication. Full syllables are added in these constructions. A syllable or word is added with the base to make a reduplicant, e.g., *‘din-ba-din’ دن بدن daily*.

(12)

‘kabhinakabhi’	some other time
‘tarkibatarki’	to retaliate in the same coins
‘rozbaroz’	daily
‘seenabaseena’	from heart to heart, without written record/ oral
‘kam-az-kam’	minimum
‘hathke hath’	immediately
‘pechdarpech’	complications

As Huang (2023) also points out, the interposing elements, such as [am] in *‘Bhag→Bhag+ambhag’*, sometimes cannot be interpreted; if full words are used for linking, they can be interpreted. In the expression *‘sal-ha sal,’* the interposing [ha] is used for a plural marker, but [m] is meaningless out of context.

Two different types of reduplications of a single base are also possible in languages (Huang, 2023, p. 11), such as ‘bhagambhag’ and ‘bhagabhaga’ in Urdu. Having similar meanings of the base, both reduplicative compounds have different connotations. Sometimes, reduplication may be used only to show syntactic functions with precise semantic functions (ibid). It is used for inclusivity, totality, and reciprocity. The same is true in these Pakistani languages, e.g., ‘jolallalhae?’ (Something red?). This reduplication formation technique is also used in other languages of the world. For example, in Manila Bay Creole, a linker is added between the reduplicant and the base, like ‘bunita’ → bunita-ng-bunita. This is like Urdu ‘bhagambhag’ (Hyman, 2008).

1.14 Summary and Conclusion

The process of reduplication is the repetition of base, which might be partial or complete. In literature, this phenomenon has been studied through two major approaches: the phonological approach, which views reduplicants as phonological copies of their bases and the morphological approach, exemplified by Morphological Doubling Theory (MDT), which focuses on semantic identity and treats reduplicants as independent morphological units. Phonological reduplication often involves fixed segments inserted by markedness constraints under the emergence of the unmarked (TETU) ranking, while morphological reduplication involves affixation. Reduplication can be full, partial, or redundant, with variations such as lexical reduplication (e.g., echo words and expressive forms), numeral distributive reduplication (e.g., "one-one rupee"), and idiophones (e.g., "tick-tock"). Pseudo-reduplication lacks a meaningful simplex base but maintains prosodic contiguity, distinguishing it from simple repetition. In Urdu, reduplication shows distinct patterns, including onomatopoeic reduplication (e.g., *sharshar* for water sounds), total reduplication (e.g., *kha-kha* for emphasis), and ablaut reduplication (e.g., *deeldol* for form and feature). Discontinuous reduplication employs linking elements (e.g., *jang-o-jadal* for wars), while full-word repetition conveys emphasis or significance. Rhyming and non-rhyming compounds, as well as phrase-level reduplications (e.g., *kabhinakabhi*, sometimes), highlight the syntactic and semantic richness of reduplication. Functions of Urdu reduplication include intensification, augmentation, diminution, and distributivity, with universal preferences for augmentation and intensification. South Asian languages like Hindi and Urdu exhibit rich reduplication types, such as distributive, emphatic, and echo formations. Urdu reduplication reflects a wide array of linguistic and semantic functions across languages, extending meanings without significant deviation from the base.

In Urdu, rhyming and non-rhyming compounds exhibit semantic and phonological relationships in that some reduplicants are meaningful (*raz-o-niyaz*, secrets) and others nonsensical (*hashash-bashash*). Reduplication also occurs in phrases through linking words or syllables, exemplified by expressions like *kabhinakabhi* (sometimes). These patterns shared globally in languages like Manila Bay Creole, serve diverse

syntactic and semantic functions. Reduplication in South Asian languages reflects complex morphological and areal dynamics, demanding further exploration of its origins and lexical contributions. Cross-linguistically, reduplication reflects shared features, as seen in languages like Manila Bay Creole, yet retains unique regional characteristics. The phenomenon underscores linguistic creativity and highlights the interplay between phonological markedness, morphological processes, and areal linguistic influences.

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