Reduplication in Bantawa

Novel Kishore Rai
Deccan College, Poona.

Bantawa is one of the pronominalized languages of Tibeto-Himalayan Branch belonging to Tibeto-Burman sub-family. It is widely spoken in the eastern part of Nepal. Bhojpur, Dhankutta, Panchtar, Ilam, Jhapa, Morang and Sunsari are the major districts of Mechi, Koshi and Sagarmatha zones of eastern Nepal where Bantawa is spoken mostly. It is also spoken in some parts of Darjeeling district of West Bengal (India), Sikkim and Bhutan.

Reduplication is one of the most productive morphological processes in Bantawa. Broadly, this process has two major functions: grammatical and semantic. The grammatical function of reduplication is to indicate the various grammatical categories (Apte, M. L. 1968) such as number, gender, tense and mode etc. This function is not common in most of the languages. Bloomfield gives some of the examples of this type from Tagalog and Fox. The semantic function of reduplication is to show intensity, less intensity, continuity, certainty, distribution, repeated action and specification of the meaning which is expressed in the basic unit before reduplication. This is the most common function which is found in most of the languages. Bantawa has both of these functions of reduplication.

The term 'reduplication' is defined by various scholars in various ways regarding different languages. Apte, M.L. (1968) has given a detail description of reduplication process and its structure in Marathi. He writes, "The term reduplication may now be defined as either 1) the repetition of an entire or a partial phoneme sequence of a stem morpheme which, together with the stem, constitutes a word; or 2) the repetition of the initial or the first two syllables within a unit already established as a primary word, such repetition of the initial or the first two syllables being either complete or partial...." He has taken a 'word' as the basic unit for reduplication in Marathi. A morpheme is considered as a basic unit for reduplication in Bantawa. A bound or free morpheme can be repeated as a process of reduplication.

Reduplication can be both partial and complete in Bantawa. When the whole base or the first unit is fully repeated as a second unit then that is known as a complete reduplication. When a bound form of a morpheme as the part of a word is being repeated then that is considered as a partial reduplication.

Onomatopoeia and echo-formation are not included in this paper. The grammatical function of reduplication which is considered to be the specific function of the language is dealt first and the semantic function which is supposed to be the general one is discussed later in this paper.
Grammatical function:

a. Change of grammatical categories v. redup. (part) > N.
   1. /kín/ 'to scare' /kinkin/ 'scare-crow'
   2. /lak/ 'to hang' /laklak/ 'hanger' (furniture)
   3. /Im/ 'to press' /TimTim/ 'suffocation'. (esp. in sleep).
   4. /kûn/ 'to hang' /kûn kûn r i / 'a swing'

   N. redup. > adj
   1. /yum/ 'Salt' /yumyum/ 'Salty',
   2. /hû k/ 'air' /hûkhûk/ 'airy'
   3. /Caʔ waʔ/ 'water' /Caʔ waʔ Caʔ waʔ / 'watery'
   4. /aʔ waʔ/ 'oil' /aʔ waʔ aʔ waʔ/ 'oily'

b. Change in number

   Interrogative, demonstrative and referential pronouns are reduplicated, for dual and plural.
   1. /saʔ/ 'who' /saʔ saʔ/ 'who' (dl.or pl.)
   2. /oko/ 'this' /oko oko/ these (dl. or pl.)
   3. /moko/ 'that' /mokamoko/ those (dl. or pl.)
   4. /khoʔ/ 'that' /khokhoʔ/ those (dl. or pl.)

   There is no distinction of dual and plural in the pronominal forms but they are marked distinctly in verbal form. The nonsingular marker /ci/ is optional in the reduplicated part.

c. Change of aspect.

   Simple non-past rudup.
   1. ʔû n k a Ḳaʔna
       ũnka Ḳaʔna'na
   2. ũnkaci Ḳaʔci
       ũnkaci Ḳaʔci'nci
   3. ũnkaca Ḳaʔca
       ũnkaca Ḳaʔca'nc'a
   4. Ḳhac'ci ṭukhaTci
       Ḳhac'ci ṭukhaTci'nci

   Non-past progressive
   'I go'
   'I am going'
   'We two (inclus.) go'
   'We two (inclus.) are going'
   'We two (exclus.) go'
   'We two (exclus.) are going'.
   'You two go'
   'You two are going'.
5. mokoci khaTci
   mokoci khaTcinc 
   'They two go'.
   'They two are going'.

In the above example the verb root /khaT/ meaning 'to go' is not reduplicated but the suffixes are reduplicated in order to achieve the progressive aspect. Pronominal marker /nä/ in the first person singular dual exclusive marker /ca/ and non-singular marker /ci/ are reduplicated in dual in all persons. It is to be noted that the pronominal marker /n/ is intervening before the reduplicated suffix in all dual numbers.

II. Semantic function:

a. Nouns: Reduplication of nouns is possible except in the proper and abstract nouns and it suggests the sense of specification of meaning in general.

Examples:-

1. lam lam
   road road
   Walk on the road only.
   biye
   walk

2. kok kok
   rice rice
   Eat rice only
   coye
   eat!

3. bak bak
   pig pig
   kill the pigs only
   sere
   kill!

4. ca wa ca wa
   water water
   Remove the water only
   kese
   remove

Reduplication of nouns may also suggest the sense of sequencing.

Examples:-

1. ùnka khimkhim khaTña
   I house house go
   I go house to house.

2. khana TenTen Kole
   You Village village walk
   you go (walk) village to village
3. Tān Tān khipTe
head head count
count the head to head

b. Numerals

Reduplication of numerals gives the sense of distribution

Examples:

1. ūk Tā ūk Tā hase
one one divide
Devide one to each.

2. ḥūs a T ḥūs a T cane
two two eat
(you) eat two each.

3. ūkke wa ūkke wa mūye
one half one half make
Make one half of each.

c. Adjectives

Reduplication of adjective is very interesting. There can be two types of reduplications: partial and complete. The partial reduplication is meant for the intensification of the meaning and the complete reduplication suggests deintensification or less intensification (Bhaskararao 1977) of the same.

Partial reduplication > intensification.

1. lemchok
   lemchok chok
   'sweet'
   'very sweet'

2. suncuk
   suncuk suncuk
   'sour'
   'very sour'

3. khūkpak
   khūkpak khūkpak
   'bitter'
   'very bitter'

Complete reduplication > deintensification

1. lemchok lemchok
   'a little sweet'

2. suncuk suncuk
   'a little sour'
3. khūkpak khūkpak 'a little bitter'
4. wacekwacek 'a little watery'

d. Adverbs

There can be no partial reduplication of adverbs and complete reduplication suggests intensification and specification of the meaning.

**Examples:**

1. HaTna
   haTna haTna 'after a while'
   'a little after while'
2. ODa
   Oda Oda 'here'
   '(particularly) here'
3. Dani
   Dani Dani 'above'
   'up above, far above'
4. aTThu
   aTThu aTThu 'before, early'
   'very early'

e. Post-positions

Reduplication of postpositions shows the closeness or specification of the meaning. They also show the sequence of the action and place.

**Examples:**

1. busiT busiTDa Yūnse
   in front in front at keep
   keep closely in the front.
2. cūk cūkDa Kharān
   near near at went (I)
   (I) went closely near by.
3. mosowo den den dhumTun
   his of back back followed (I)
   (I) followed him closely back to back.

f. Verbs

Verbs are reduplicated along with the particles and give the sense of constiuity.
Examples:

1. moko cayansa cayansa khara
   He kept on eating while going.

2. ūnkaca cepyanṣa cepyanṣa banaca
   We two (excl.) kept of talking while coming.

3. ūnka minyanṣa minyanṣa kahīna.
   I keep on thinking while going.

In the above examples the verb roots /ca/ /cap/ and /min/ are associated with the progressive suffix /yan/ and the particle /sa/. The meaning of verb roots is 'to eat' 'to speak' and 'to think' respectively and the meaning of the suffix /yan/ and the particle /sa/ suggests the sense of 'continuity and manner but they may while to give meaning in isolation. It is to be noted that ions are taking place simultaneously.

Reduplication of the verb roots with the particle /si/ suggests the sense of repeated action.

1. ūnka casicasi hoTTan
   I am tired of eating (repeatedly)

2. moko khapsi khapsi hoTTu
   He is tired of weeping (repeatedly)

3. khana cepsicepsi tuhoTTa
   You (sing) are tired of speaking (repeatedly)

In the above examples we find that two actions are taking place one after another and the second action is the result of the first one. The first repeated action is the result of reduplication.

Verbs may suggest continuity of the single action with a single verb in a sentence.

1. moko khakokhaT
   He goes on and on.

2. moko bisobi
   He walks on and on.

3. ūnka cepnaōcepna
   I speak on and on.
4. Oko epkoep.
   This (man) stands on and on.

In the above examples the intervening suffix /ko/ and /wo/ are phonetically identical to the genetive suffix but they are applied as the adjectival suffix to denote the quality of the action. The condition is /ko/ after the consonant and /wo/ after the vowel.

When the verbs are reduplicated without any particles then they suggest the sense of certainty.

Examples:-

1. moko
   He/she
   TaTa
   comes (certainly)

2. moko
   He/she
   khaTkhaT
   goes (certainly)

3. mocī
   They two
   KhaTci khaTci
   go (certainly)

4. Khana
   you (sing)
   tūbanban
   come (certainly)

Triplication

There are certain nouns and verbs which can be repeated twice with the formative suffix at the end. We find the grammatical category also changes with intensification of the meaning in the same time. Here, this process is known as triplication in general.

Examples:-

1. mūk
   mūkmūkmūkwa
   'eye'
   'full of tears'

2. nop
   nopnopnopwa
   'to touch'
   'very affectionately'

3. hūk
   hūkhūkhūkwa
   'wind' 'air'
   'full of air or wind'

4. rak
   rakrakrakwa
   'living coal'
   'burning brightly'
5. sip
   sipsipsipwa 'to close'
   'very much closed'

6. sop
   sopssopswa 'to touch' 'to veel' (by hand)
   'blindly'

7. Ton
   TonTonTonwa 'to arrange'
   'a big heap'

This process is very much productive in Bantawa and the roots can be free and bound both. The formative suffix /wa/ is phonetically identical to the suffix suggesting the liquid element in a compound word.

NOTES

abbreviations and diacritics.

u unrounded high back vowel
ñ velar nasal consonant
V. verb
N. Noun
redup. reduplicated
part. particle
Adj. Adjective
dl. Dual
Pl. Plural
excl. exclusive
incl. inclusive

REFERENCES


