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Reduplication in Liangmai

I. D. Raguibou, Ph.D. Research Scholar

1.0 Introduction

Liangmai is one of the tribes of Zeliangrong Naga. Zeliangrong is a name given to the amalgamation of four tribes, namely, Zeme, Liangmai, Rongmei and Puimai. It is said that these tribes are the descendants of the same father. Liangmai is the name of both the people and of the language. Ethnically, Liangmai are Mongoloids and their language belongs to Kuki-Naga section of the Kamarupan group of the Baric sub-division of Tibeto-Burman family of languages (Matisoff, 2001). Liangmai language is mainly spoken in the Tamenglong and Senapati districts of Manipur and Tening and Jalukie areas of the Paren district of Nagaland. The other languages spoken in the neighborhoods include Zeme (TB), Rongmei (TB), and Meitei (TB). According to the 2001 census of India, the total population of Liangmai in India was 34,232 with 17,477 males

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and 16,755 females. The majority of Liangmai speakers reside in Manipur with a total population of 32,787 as per the 2001 census report.

1.1 Reduplication in Liangmai

Reduplication is the repetition of a part or a whole of a lexical item carrying a semantic modification. It is a common phenomenon in the languages of the world, taking a variety of forms which serve different purposes. Liangmai language also uses various reduplication processes for the purpose of creating new words by either repeating a syllabus or the whole word. Different process of reduplication like expressive that includes onomatopoeias, sound symbolism, idiophones and imitative, compounds and word reduplications are used in Liangmai.

Expressives in Liangmai

The expressives are used in Liangmai to convey all the five senses of perception, i.e. the sense of smell, sight, touch, hearing and taste.

- a. **Acoustic noises:** It includes noises of natural phenomena, noises made by human, noises made by miscellaneous inanimate objects etc. that the Liangmai language copy audibly to describe that particular object. The reduplication can be either complete or partial. Consider the following examples in Liangmai.

Noises of natural phenomena:

/ru:ru/ ‘sounds of raining’ as in

/tiŋriu ru:ru bəm e/

rain+fall sound prog asp

‘It is raining heavily’

/ho:ho/ ‘sounds of water flowing’ as in

/tədui luaŋ ho:ho bəm e/

water flow sound prog asp

‘The water is flowing making a sound’

Noises made by human beings:

/prum:rum/ ‘clapping sounds’ as in

/cəben kəphi prum:rum bəm e/

hand clap sound prog asp

‘There is a sounds of clapping hands’

/he:he/ ‘panting sound’ as in

/pəsiu lu he:he bəm e/

3p+breath take sound prog asp

‘he is panting/puffing making sound’

Noises made by miscellaneous inanimate objects:

/kliŋ:liŋ/ ‘sounds of falling coin’ as in

/pico məkai kliŋ:liŋ bo I ciu e/

Coin fall sounds NOM I heard asp

‘I heard the sound of falling coin’

/ti:ti/ ‘sound of vehicle’s horn’ as in

/gəri ti:ti mərə bam e/

Vehicle sounds shout prog asp

‘the vehicle is making a horn sound’

- b. Sense of sight:** These kinds of expresives are used in Liangmai to refer to the glimmering, sparkling or glittering aspects of an object. The reduplicating syllabus or whole word may be either complete or partial in nature. Examples in Liangmai are given below:

/cən:cən/ ‘shining brightly’ as in
/nəimik thau cən:cən bam e/
Sun shine bright prog asp
‘the sun is shining brightly’

/priŋ:riŋ/ ‘glittering’ as in
/naŋlan priŋ:riŋ e/
2p+earring glittering asp
‘your earring is sparkling’

/phiŋ:phiŋ/ ‘sparkling’ as in
/nəŋmik siu phiŋ:phiŋ e/
2p+eye cl. Sparkling asp
‘Your eye is sparkling’

- c. **Sense of touch:** These kinds of expressives are used in Liangmai to indicate the sense of feeling while touching the objects. They occur only in complete reduplication. Examples are given below:

/nəp:nəp/ ‘sticky’ as in
/aben nəp:nəp e/
1p+hand sticky asp
‘my hand is sticky’

/ni:ni/ ‘slippery’ as in
/puiki ni ni/
Road slippery
‘The road is slippery’

/nuai:nuai/ ‘soft’ as in
/haibo cəphai nuai:nuai e/
Det+Nom clothe soft asp
‘This clothe is very soft’

- d. Sense of taste:** These kinds of expressives are used in Liangmai to describe the taste of a particular item. If a particular sense of taste is reduplicated in Liangmai, it indicates that the degree of taste is high or extreme. They occur in complete reduplication. The following examples will make the above statement clear.

/hum:hum/ ‘very sweet’ as in
/haibo ca hum hum/
Det+Nom tea sweet
‘This tea is very sweet’

/khə:khə/ ‘very bitter’ as in
/haibo cəraŋi khə:khə/
Det+Nom fruit bitter
‘This fruit taste very bitter’

/thiu:thiu/ ‘very hot’ as in
/tədui thiu thiu/
Water hot
‘The water is very hot’

- e. Sense of smell:** Liangmai makes use of expressives for good and bad smells. They occur only in complete reduplication. Consider the following examples.

/hun:hun/ ‘aroma/odour’ as in
/nəmwi bo rim hun hun e/

Sniff+good Nom smell odour asp

‘There is a good smell or odour around’

Onomatopoeias and imitative:

Onomatopoeias are those words that are used to imitate sound. It is a kind of figure of speech in which the sounds tries to reflect the sense. Imitative or onomatopoeias denotes a sound or an object, which gives out a sound (Bloomfield 1935). These forms are in reality are nothing but imitative as it copies the sounds of natural phenomena as well as action. It also expresses the physical or mental feelings of pain, joy, agony etc. Liangmai is not an exception in this regard. There are many words of this type found in Liangmai language and the function of these words is to reflect as accurately as possible those natural phenomena. Onomatopoeias and imitatives are also examples of complete reduplications. Consider the following onomatopoeias and imitative words found in Liangmai.

/we:we/ ‘crying sound of pig’ as in

/kəbak məra we we bam e/

Pig shout sound prog asp

‘the pig is crying making a sound’

/ŋəŋ:ŋəŋ/ ‘barking sound of dog’ as in

/təthi thaŋ ŋəŋ ŋəŋ bam e/

Dog bark sound prog asp

‘the dog is barking making a sound’

/riŋ:riŋ/ ‘tearful eyes expressing joy or physical and mental pair’ as in

/pəmik dui riŋ riŋ bam e/

2p+eye water tearful prog asp

‘He has a tearful eye’

1.2 Lexical Reduplication

Reduplication can be partial or complete at the lexical level. Lexical reduplication is divided into three types and they are echo formations, compounds and word reduplication.

(a) Echo formation: The formations of echo words as a widespread phenomenon in most of the languages of South-Asia is acknowledged by almost all the scholars in the field (Abbi, 1992). She further says that the phenomenon is more common in the colloquial variety of a language than in its standard or literary counterpart.

Liangmai does not use echo words extensively in their speech but there are some traces of echo words found in Liangmai. They are discussed below with suitable examples.

- a. In this type, the final syllable with a consonant and vowel are replaced by another consonant and vowel as in /pətut pətəp/ ‘fragment or piece’ here the final syllable ‘ut’ is replaced by ‘əp’

/pətut pətəp kəcaŋ kam məha dulo/

Fragments upto do lost Neg+Comm/Req

‘Don’t lost even the fragment/pieces’

- b. In this type, the final syllable of vowel and consonant are replaced by only one vowel as in /pəman pəmi/ ‘price etc.’ here, the final syllable ‘an’ is replaced by a single vowel ‘i’.

/pəman pəmi lamga kəphiet khe/

Price, etc. about discuss Req.

‘let us discuss about the price etc.’

- c. In this type, the final syllable of vowel and consonant are deleted in the reduplicated word. In the word /məliam məli/ ‘available’ the final syllable of vowel and consonant –am is deleted.

/tek məliam məli bam e/

Food available prog asp

‘foods are available’

- d. In this type, the final syllable –niu is replaced by another syllable –tu as in
 /khətniu khəttu/ ‘one another’
 /khətniu khəttu lungsa lo/
 One another love Req
 ‘love one another’

1.3 Compounds

The compounds refer to paired constructions in which the second word is not an exact repetition of the first but has some similarity or relationship to the first word either on the **semantic syntactic?** or on the semantic level. It is to be noted that each constituent word of a compound has a meaning of its own and hence can be used independently in a sentence. However when combined in a compound formation, the two constituent words retain their original meaning to some extent more often than not, the paired construction has new meaning and new reference.

Compounding is a very important factor in word formation process for Liangmai. The most common types of compounds are the compound nouns. Both the compound of two semantically identical words and two semantically related words are found in Liangmai. Examples of these types of compounds are given below:

- a. /pou/ ‘grandfather’ + /pe/ ‘grandmother’ = /poupe/ ‘ancestor’
- b. /pui/ ‘mother’ + /piu/ ‘father’ = /puipiu/ ‘parents’
- c. /cəheŋ/ ‘dagger’ + /cəŋiu/ ‘spear’ = /cəheŋcəŋiu/ ‘weapons’
- d. /cəphai/ ‘shawl’ + /cəni/ ‘pant’ = /cəphaicəni/ ‘dresses’
- e. /tiŋ/ ‘sky’ + /kədi/ ‘earth’ = /tiŋkədi/ ‘universe’

1.4 Word reduplication

Word reduplication means the repetition of the base word either partially or completely. Abbi (1992) divided complete reduplication into two types and the division was based on functional criteria. The two sub-types are (a) Class maintaining type, referring to those words which remain in the same grammatical class even after reduplication and (b) class changing type, refers to

those reduplicated words which change its grammatical class after reduplication from its non-reduplicated counterpart. Both the types are discussed below by citing Liangmai examples.

a. Class maintaining:

/siam/ ‘small’ (adj) /siam siam/ (adj) as in

/cəkha duŋ siam siam/

fish Pl small

‘fish are very small’

/dun/ ‘short’ (adj) /dun dun/ (adj) as in

/təθun dun dun/

Stick short

‘very short stick’

b. Class changing:

/tiu/ ‘eat’ (v) /tiu tiu/ (adv) as in

/tiu tiu pien de/

Eating satisfied asp

‘Satisfied by eating’

/koi/ ‘slow’ (adj) /koi koi/ (adv) as in

/koi koi na tət lo/

Slow go Comm/Req

‘go slowly’

Duplicating only a part of the base word (generally a syllable) can constitute partial reduplication. Liangmai makes use of a few partially reduplicated forms. Consider the following examples of final partial reduplication:

/pəkak kak/ ‘sometimes’ as in

/pəkak kak ga waŋ lo/
Sometimes Abl. Come Comm/Req
'do come sometimes'

/Pəkhien khien/ 'own will' as in
/Pəkhien khien thiu lo/
Own will do Comm/Req
'do your own will'

/pəgu gu/ 'for himself' as in
/pəgu gu lu lo/
For himself take Comm/Req
'Take your own'

1.5 Reduplication of verbal adverbs (RVADV)

Reduplicated verbal adverbs in conjunction with the appropriate main verbs indicated two aspectual categories in Liangmai. They are simultaneity and non-precipitation. The word order allows reduplicated verbal adverbs to precede main verb.

Simultaneity: Simultaneity identifies synchronization of two events/actions (non-states) at a particular point of time which in turn may signal the completion of events or actions together or protraction of one of the events/actions or continuity of two events for a certain point of times (Abbi 1992). In Liangmai, the situation could be that while one activity is in action (reflected by the RVADV) the activity coincides with the first one in such a way that either both of them get completed at the same point of time or the second one continues along with the first one simultaneously or it could be that the two allow only one of them (here reflected by RVADV) to continue further. Consider the following examples:

/pə məraŋsi tiuja tiuja cəlat ra e/

He betel eating language speak asp

‘he speaks while eating betels’

/pə cəlat raja raja pəmik dui kum e/

He language talking 3p+eye water down asp

‘while talking, tears came out of his eyes’

Non-precipitation: The cases where the main events/actions, represented by the main verb (y) occurs on the verge of operation of another event/action, manifested in RVADV (x) and put a stop to the operation of x: the result is that x never takes place. The verb inflection for RVADV for simultaneity and non-precipitation is identical in many of the languages. It is the semantic constructs of the main verb which are always antithetical manifested in verbs like ‘stop’ escape, ‘stage’ along with reduplication structure of verb adverbial that gives us non-precipitation aspect (Abbi 1992). She further says that “an antithesis is a counter-preposition: something that is set up against something else”. This holds true in the case of Liangmai language, consider the following examples:

/tiŋ riurəkum riurəkum riu mak e/

Rain likely Neg asp

‘it was going to rain/about to rain but did not’

/pə kəprakum kəprakum lu kəp mak e/

He cry+likely cry Neg asp

‘He was about to cry but did not cry’

1.6 Modification and reduplication:

Nominal modifiers: The state of a noun could be either relatives or absolute state, verbs modifying nominal can be studied or distinguished under two basic kinds i.e. taste and colour in Liangmai. They are intensified by reduplication both in distributive and non-distributive uses. The following examples with reduplication structure indicate intensification.

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/cərapen duŋ heŋ heŋ ŋa bam e/

Flowers Pl red red Prog asp

‘there are many red flowers’

/Jon napui duŋ tik tik ga e/

John daughters Pl black asp

‘John daughters are so dark’

There are other nominal modifiers like quantifiers which when reduplicated emphasize the numeral that quantify the particular nominal under consideration as in

/haibo kiduŋ ga kəbaŋ khaŋne khaŋne tətien tien e/

These house+Pl servant Cl+two work asp

‘two servants work in these houses (i.e. two servants in each house).’

Verbal modifiers i.e. adverbs in a sentence can be used to indicate focus or intensity of the action/event provided they can be used in reduplicated form in Liangmai.

/pə kətum kətum jiu haiga waŋ e/

He fast fast here come asp

‘he came here hurriedly’

/rim rim e/

Silent asp

‘Very quiet’

Interrogative pronouns such as *who*, *what*, *where*, *when*, *which*, etc., are also reduplicated in Liangmai.

/səu səu delhi tatra lo/

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Who who delhi going Qmk

‘Who are going to Delhi?’

/de de luni lo/

What what take+want Qmk

‘What are the things you want?’

Liangmai also reduplicated main verb as in

/I təθi cu piŋ piŋ kumai/

I dog acc fear Prog+asp

I am very afraid of the dog’

Proper nouns are reduplicated for designates recurrence in Liangmai as in

/pə arapiu arapiu ciu ku bam e/

He God God call Prog asp

‘he kept saying ‘God God’

In the noun, there is full reduplication, the entire word is copied and the resulting word has an augmentative meaning as in /saŋ/ ‘thousand’ /saŋ saŋ/ ‘innumerable’

Noun reduplication also expresses the meanings ‘x’ and ‘x’ by ‘x’ thus in Liangmai

/kəne/ ‘two’ /kəne kəne/ ‘two by two’

/kəriu/ ‘ten’ /kəriu kəriu/ ‘ten by ten’

/kai/ ‘hundred’ /kai kai/ ‘hundred by hundred’ etc.

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I. D. Raguibou, Ph.D. Research Scholar
Department of Linguistics
Assam University
Silchar-788011
Assam
daimairagui@yahoo.com