Ablaut and Rhyme Reduplication of Bodo and Garo Language

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Abstract: This research paper provides a short analysis and discussion on the Ablaut and Rhyme reduplication of the Bodo and the Garo language, the two Tibeto-Burman languages of North-East India. The goal of this paper is to discuss the features and functions with respect to Ablaut and Rhyme reduplication in both the languages. This analysis is all about relationship between phonology and reduplication, where Ablaut reduplication relates to vowel and Rhyme duplication relates to consonant. Ablaut and rhyme reduplication create new lexis also expresses the plural meaning in both the languages helping in forming inflectional and derivational category of words.
Keywords: ablaut reduplication, derivational, inflectional, phonology, plural meaning, rhyme reduplication.

I. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background:

Reduplication is a common and interesting linguistic phenomenon in Bodo and Garo language studied under the process of morphology, where repeating exactly or a part of a word takes place. This repeating is used to carry the semantic meaning and to refer to form new words. According to Abbi - *"repetition of all or a part of a lexical item (word) carrying a semantic modification"* (Abbi, 1994:14).

The Bodo and Garo languages belong to the Bodo sub-section of Bodo-Naga group of Tibeto-Burman family. Bodo and Garo speakers are spread throughout north-east India including Assam, Meghalaya, Arunachal, Nagaland, Tripura, West Bengal and neighboring countries Bhutan, Nepal and Bangladesh. However, Bodo speakers are mainly found in Assam and the Garo speakers in Meghalaya, India.

1.2 Aims and Objective of study:

The aims and objective of this paper is-
* To study the repetition of the base in reduplicated form.
* To examine the features and functions of reduplication.
* To find out the locations of alternation of the base in repetition.

1.3 Methodology:

Comparative linguistics is a field of linguistics where comparisons of more than one language in different levels of linguistic analysis are done. Under the subject of study, researchers have visited different language speaking areas of these two groups to gather first hand information on the subject. Comparative and descriptive analysis methods are adopted to go in depth of the subject in trying to find out the similarities and dissimilarities that these two cognate languages have in case of reduplication. Data have been collected mainly using observation, interview methods and questionnaires. Voice recording and videography have been done using mobiles Samsung A10 and OPPO F9 when and where necessary.

II. DISCRETION AND ANALYSIS

2.1 Reduplication:

Reduplication is classified into two categories: complete and partial. In complete reduplication the base is reduplicated completely without any change, on the other hand in partial reduplication only part of the base is reduplicated. However, this paper presents an overview on the ablaut and rhyme reduplication of Bodo and Garo languages. The rhyme and ablaut reduplication are related to phonology, where both vowels and consonants play an important role in reduplication.

2.1.1 Ablaut Reduplication:

The ablaut reduplication is closely related to vowel phoneme. In ablaut reduplication, a base is repeated completely with slight changes when repeated. The vowel of the base changes to another vowel in reduplication.

The ablaut reduplication is defined as -*'Ablaut reduplication in which the vowel alternates while the consonants are identical.'* (Brinton, 1991:91). Bodo language has six vowel phonemes /i e a u ɯ ɔ/ and Garo language has five vowel phonemes /i e a u ɔ /.

The vowel phonemes in both the languages can occur in different places of a base form. In ablaut reduplication, the vowel phonemes of the base form may alter to another, but the consonants occur in same position and form without any changes. The changes of vowel phonemes of the base occur in the middle and final position in reduplication.

Mid vowel change:
➢ Change of vowel phonemes occur in the first syllable of the base, but the vowel of the other syllable (second or final syllable) is not variable, it is intact. For example-

	Base form	Reduplication	
Bodo	sap^{h}a	sap^{h}a sup^{h}a (neat and clean)	(/a/ contrasts with /u/)
	p^{h}rit^h	p^{h}rit^h p^{h}rat^h (tip-top)	(/i/ contrasts with /a/)
	t^{h}am	t^{h}am t^{h}im (preparation)	(/a/ contrasts with /i/)
Garo	tik	tik tak (exact)	(/i/ contrasts with /a/)
	grɔp	grɔp grap (whole)	(/ɔ/ contrasts with /a/)
	zechi	zechi zachi (everywhere)	(/e/ contrasts with /a/)

In mid vowel change shown above, existence of /a/ is present everywhere either in base form or in reduplicated form. This shows that /a/ has strong importance in ablaut reduplication both in Bodo and in Garo. Being a low central vowel, it has the capacity to change with every vowel of different capacities in tongue height and tongue advancement.

➢ Changing of vowel phoneme occurs in the second or final syllable, but the vowel of other syllables remain same. This type of reduplication is found in very limited number in both languages. For example-

	Base form	Reduplication	
Bodo	gɯt^{h}aŋ	gɯt^{h}aŋ gɯt^{h}iŋ	(inspite of being alive/in big trouble) (/a/ contrasts with /i/)
Garo	ritiŋ	ritiŋritaŋ (unequal)	(/i/ contrasts with /a/)
	cheŋgiŋ	cheŋgiŋ cheŋgaŋ (obstructive)	(/i/ contrasts with /a/)

Condition of its change is also similar to the one mention above. Here also /a/ is taking a prominent role in mid vowel change.

➢ Sometimes, changing of vowel phoneme occurs in both the syllables of disyllabic words. This type of reduplication is very rare in Bodo and Garo languages. For example-

	Base form	Reduplication	
Bodo	p^{h}iliŋ	philiŋ p^{h}alaŋ (unsteady)	(/i/ contrasts with /a/)
	dulur	dulur dalar (a round solid thing)	(/u/ contrasts with /a/)
Garo	chikchik	chikchik chakchak (disgusting)	(/i/ contrasts with /a/)

End vowel change: Bodo and Garo languages have lot of open syllabic words. In ablaut reduplication, the end vowel phoneme of open syllabic word is changed to another vowel phoneme, however, the vowel phonemes of first or second syllable remain the same if a word is disyllabic or polysyllabic. For example-

	Base form	**Reduplication**	
Bodo	elɔ	elɔ el*a* (entirely/wholly)	(/ɔ/ contrasts with /a/)
	ha	h*a* h*u* (land and the like)	(/a/ contrasts with /u/)
	ɔgra	ɔgr*a* ɔgr*i* (uneven)	(/a/ contrasts with /i/)
Garo	repa	rep*a* rep*i* (wasteful)	(/a/ contrasts with /i/)
	pekkri	pekkr*i* pekkr*a* (branchy)	(/i/ contrasts with /a/)
	rɔse	rɔs*e* rɔs*a* (scattered)	(/e/ contrasts with /a/)

As seen in the above examples the end vowel phoneme of the base is changing to another phoneme. If observe the examples above then some feature is seen in the alternation of vowel phoneme, e.g.

Tongue height-
(i)   A high and mid vowel phoneme may move to a lower vowel phoneme and
(ii)   A low vowel phoneme may move upwards (high and middle), however, a middle vowel phoneme does not move upward.

Tongue advancement-
(i)   A front vowel phoneme may move towards the central;
(ii)   A central vowel phoneme may move to front and back, and
(iii)   A back vowel phoneme may again move to the central position. However, a front vowel cannot move directly to back or back to front.

2.1.2 Rhyme Reduplication:
        Rhyme reduplication has a close relationship with consonants. In the rhyme reduplication, while the base is reduplicated the consonant of the base is changed to another consonant. Laural has defined the rhyme reduplication as- *'Rhyme reduplication in which the consonants change while the vowel remains the same.'* (Brinton, 1991:91).As consonant has important role in rhyme reduplication it is important to point that Bodo language has 16 consonants /b/, /d/, /g/, /pʰ/, /tʰ/, /kʰ/, /s/, /z/, /h/, /m/, /n/, /ŋ/, /r/, /l/, /w/, /j/; on the other hand the Garo language has 17 consonants /p/, /b/, /t/, /d/, /k/, /g/,/ʔ/ /s/, /z/, /h/, /ch/, /m/, /n/, /ŋ/, /r/, /l/, /w/.
The consonant phonemes of Bodo and Garo languages have their occurrences in different positions of words. In rhyme reduplication, the consonant phoneme of the base is changed to another consonant, however, the vowel phoneme is not changed and it stays in intact form and position. The alternation of consonant phoneme occurs only in the initial and medial positions.

Initial change:
Bodo and Garo, both the languages have the use of consonant phonemes in the initial position of words where a consonant phoneme may come at the beginning of a base or a stem or a syllable. In case of rhyme reduplication, the onset of consonant is changed to another consonant phoneme. For example-

	Base form	**Reduplication**	
Bodo	gazri	*g*azri *pʰ*azri (nasty)	(/g/ contrasts with /pʰ/)
	rɔŋgina	*r*ɔŋgina *s*ɔŋgina (colorful)	(/r/ contrasts with /s/)
	hakʰu	*h*akʰu *d*akʰu (hurriedly)	(/h/ contrasts with /d/)

Garo	zen	*z*en *t*en (hardly/barely)	(/z/ contrasts with /t/)
	kakket	*k*akket-*m*akket (rightly)	(/k/ contrasts with /m/)
	daraŋ	*d*araŋ *m*araŋ (all other)	(/d/ contrasts with /m/)

Medial change: The consonant phoneme is found in the middle place of a base or stem, but if it is looked from the view point of syllabification, its occurrence is found in the onset of the last syllable of the base or stem in a disyllabic word. For example-

	Base form	**Reduplication**	
Bodo	nara	na*r*a na*tʰ*a (incessantly)	(/r/ contrasts with /tʰ/)
	halaj	ha*l*aj ha*pʰ*aj (serious)	(/l/ contrasts with /pʰ/)
	gulaj	gu*l*aj gu*z*aj (topsy-turvy)	(/l/ contrasts with /z/)
Garo	galram	gal*r*am gal*s*am (plenty)	(/r/ contrasts with /s/)
	bɔʔrɔt	bɔʔ*r*ɔt bɔʔ*t*ɔt (full of mounds)	(/r/ contrasts with /t/)
	sɔrek	sɔ*r*ek sɔ*ch*ek (hateful/filthy)	(/r/ contrasts with /ch/)

As seen in the examples above it is found that a consonant phoneme alternates to another consonant in Bodo and Garo languages. In analyzing these examples, some special features are found in case of alternation of consonant phonemes. These features are-
(i)   If a consonant is voiced then it moves to voiceless;
(ii)   If a consonant is voiceless it moves to voiced;
(iii)   In Bodo language a consonant phoneme may move from voiced to voiced or voiceless to voiceless phoneme if the place and nature of articulation are same, whereas in Garo language a consonant phoneme may move from voiced to voiced and voiceless to voiceless if the place and nature of articulation are not same.

2.2 Base form of Ablaut and Rhyme reduplication:
In ablaut and rhyme reduplication the base form occurs in free and bound forms, hence the base is categorize into two – free base and bound base.

2.2.1 Free base: A free base has its independent meaning. In reduplication, the free base occurs in free form and is found in meaningful form without duplicating the base. The free base of the reduplication may be noun, pronoun, verb, adjective and adverb. For example-

	Free form	**Reduplication**	**Gloss**
Bodo	hulu (picked up fully)	hulu hula	entirely
	lɯrbaŋ (weak)	lɯrbaŋ tʰɯrbaŋ	frugally
	gɔlaj (mix)	gɔlaj gɔtʰaj	mixture
Garo	priŋ(morning)	priŋ praŋ	morning star
	tik (real)	tik tak	exact
	daraŋ (all)	daraŋ maraŋ	all other

2.2.2 Bound base: The base of the reduplication can also be found in bound form. A bound base is not meaningful in itself, but it becomes meaningful when reduplicating the base. For example-

	Bound form	Reduplication	Gloss
Bodo	gulaj	gulaj guzaj	topsy-turvy
	let^{h}er	let^{h}er p^{h}et^{h}er	disarray
	gɯnɯ	gɯnɯ gɯt^{h}ɯ	hesitating
Garo	sɔrek	sɔrek sɔchek	hateful/filthy
	rɔaŋ	rɔaŋ chɔaŋ	slowly
	gɔriŋrep	gɔriŋrep gɔchiŋchep	throwing about

2.3 Function of Ablaut and Rhyme reduplication:
The reduplication in a language is arranged by derivation and inflection based on the morphological function. Reduplication is used to create new words or to preserve lexical meaning as well as plurality in both the languages.

2.3.1 As derivational:
Reduplication is included under the function of word formation because reduplication can create new words and meanings in Bodo and Garo languages. For example-

	Base form	Reduplication	Gloss
Bodo	elɔ (to scoop out)	elɔ ela	entirely/wholly
	rɔŋgina (having color)	rɔŋgina sɔŋgina	colorful
	lɯrbaŋ (weak)	lɯrbaŋ t^{h}ɯrbaŋ	frugally
Garo	repa (to slice)	repa repi	wasteful
	priŋ (morning)	priŋ piraŋ	morning star
	kakket (right)	kakket-makket	rightly/actually

2.3.2 As inflectional:
Reduplication can be achieved in inflectional forms that are most common in Bodo and Garo language. As inflectional, it expresses plurality, while copying the base of reduplication it can express little extra. For example-

	Base form	Reduplication	Gloss
Bodo	gundra (particle)	gundra gundri	particles
	k^{h}amani (work)	k^{h}amani damani	work and others
	t^{h}amp^{h}ɯi (mosquito)	t^{h}amp^{h}ɯi samp^{h}ɯi	mosquito and others
Garo	kɔlgraŋ (hollow)	kɔlgraŋ kɔlgriŋ	full of holes
	daraŋ (all)	daraŋ maraŋ	all other
	magitcham (ancestor)	magitcham-pagitcham	ancestors

As seen in the above examples the ablaut and rhyme reduplication plays an important role in derivation and inflection. It is seen that a new word is formed by alternation of phoneme in reduplication. Even an alternation of a consonant and vowel of a base may express the plurality.

III. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

3.1 findings

a.   The reduplication is discussed under the morphological process, but it can be found relating to phonological features in Bodo and Garo languages;

b.   A vowel/consonant phoneme may occur in initial, medial and final positions of words in both languages. In ablaut reduplication, the contrast of vowel is occurred in medial and final positions; whereas in rhyme reduplication the contrast of consonant is found in initial and final positions;

c.   The contrast of vowel is found in between the high/middle and low vowel or low vowel and high/middle;

d.   The contrasts of consonants are found in between the voiced and voiceless phonemes. Beside this, the contrasts are also found in between voiced and voiced or voiceless and voiceless if place and nature of articulation of phoneme is same in Bodo language; whereas in Garo language, the contrasts are found in between voiced and voiced or voiceless and voiceless if place and nature of articulation are not same.

3.2 Conclusion

In this paper, an analysis is carried out on ablaut and rhyme reduplication of Bodo and Garo language. The researchers have focused on the alternation of phonemes of the base in reduplication forms, where a vowel or consonant is changed. In ablaut reduplication, the alternation of vowel occurs in middle and final positions of the base forms whereas, in rhyme reduplication, the alternation of consonant occurs in initial and middle positions of the base forms in both the languages. It seems that in both the languages the ablaut and rhyme reduplication are available and the features of their changes are same. Accordingly, a new word and plural form can also be formed by both the ablaut and rhyme reduplication in Bodo and Garo language.

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