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Reduplication and the Status of Ideophones in Yoruba

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Ideophones in Yoruba undergo reduplication differently from the way nouns and nominals do. Ideophonic reduplication is more varied, more productive, and certainly less morpheme-based. The paper<sup>1</sup> first examines this morphological process among nouns and related forms; and secondly exemplifies the patterns of ideophonic reduplication. Our investigation leads us to conclude that ideophones should be regarded as a separate lexical class, rather than subsumed under existing lexical classes.

La façon dont les idéophones en Yoruba subissent le redoublement est différente de celle des noms et des nominaux. En effet, le redoublement au niveau des idéophones est plus varié, plus productif et n'a certainement pas pour base le morphème. L'article examine tout d'abord ce processus morphologique au niveau des noms et formes associées. Ensuite on examine les exemples de redoublement au niveau des idéophones. Les recherches dans ce domaine révèlent que les idéophones devraient être considérés comme une classe lexicale spéciale et non comme faisant partie de certaines autres classes lexicales existantes.

0. INTRODUCTION

The ideophone in Yoruba (and in many African languages) is unique<sup>2</sup>. It is unique morpho-phonologically and semantically, and we believe this uniqueness will reflect in its syntactic properties too (cf. Newman, 1968; Samarin, 1965; Rowlands, 1970). In this paper, we intend to use a single morphological process - reduplication - to demonstrate further an aspect of this uniqueness, and further reinforce our insistent arguments for a re-analysis of the grammatical categories in Yoruba, to make the ideophone a lexical category of its own (cf. Awoyale, (1974, 1978, 1981, 1983; Doke, 1935; Cole, 1955). The paper is divided into three major parts. In the first part, the typology of reduplication in the Yoruba regular (i.e. non-ideophonic) vocabulary will be established, based on about twenty different but very productive patterns of both full and partial reduplication. The second part of the paper will examine the same phenomenon among Yoruba ideophones, using ample examples to illustrate over forty different but equally very productive patterns of both full and partial reduplication. The third and final part of the discussion will highlight several of the differences between non-ideophonic reduplication and ideophonic reduplication.

1. REDUPLICATION IN THE NON-IDEOPHONIC VOCABULARY<sup>3</sup>

We define reduplication as a morphological process whereby a copy of a morpheme (free or bound) in either slightly altered or identical form, is added to the stem in a syntagmatic relationship, to produce a new word. The patterns and the examples below will illustrate this. In this first section, the reduplicative patterns will be identified by the semantic functions of each process. The usefulness of this approach will become evident as we go along. We intend to show why reduplication in non-ideophonic vocabulary is limited to basic nouns and nominal forms. Because of lack of space, each pattern can only be illustrated with three examples, but with further annotation where necessary. We will divide these patterns into the hierarchical structures of both the stems and the derivatives.

## 1.1 FULL REDUPLICATION OF NON-IDEOPHONES

## 1.1.1 Reduplication of a Single Item

1. Nominalized Routine Reduplication illustrates something done over and over again. There are three sub-types, all built around the morpheme *tún* 'repeat, again', and the factive nominalizing prefix *à*-<sup>4</sup>:

- a. *à-še-tún-še* (*še* 'do') 'doing over again'
- b. *à-še-š-tún-še* 'doing over again and again (emphasis)'
- c. *à-túnše-tún-še* 'doing over again and again (emphasis)'

Any active verb in the language can readily undergo any of the three sub-types.

2. Nominalized Inexhaustibility Reduplication doubles a monosyllabic verb stem in a negative factive nominalization:

- a. *àbùùbùtán* (*à-bù-ì-bù-tán*; *bù* 'to scoop') 'being inexhaustible'
- b. *àròòròtán* (*à-rò-ì-rò-tán*; *rò* 'think') 'being unable to be thought out fully'
- c. *àmòòmòtán* (*à-mò-ì-mò-tán*; *mò* 'know') 'being unable to be known fully'

Unlike (1) where the restriction is on the verb stem being active, (2) applies to all monosyllabic full verbs. Disyllabic and other complex verb stems are excluded. Similarly, the serial verb stem VERB + *tán* can only be replaced by a stem which includes a verb and another verb of termination, e.g. *à-jẹ-ẹ-jẹ-gbé* 'eating without paying back'.

## 1.1.2 Reduplication of a Phrase

3. Spatial Reduplication doubles a locative prepositional phrase to indicate long distance from the point of reference:

- a. nínú-nínú:inú-nínú (ní-inú-ní-inú) 'very far inside'  
 b. lẹ̀hìn-lẹ̀hìn:ẹ̀hìn-lẹ̀hìn (ní-ẹ̀hìn-ní-ẹ̀hìn) 'very far behind'  
 c. lọ̀hùnún-lọ̀hùnún:ọ̀hún-lọ̀hùnún (ní-ọ̀hún-ní-ọ̀hún) 'very far  
 beyond/ahead'

4. All-Inclusion Reduplication adds a copy of the àti-phrasal stem to itself to express all-inclusion:

- a. tilé-tilé (àti-ilé-àti-ilé) 'everything including the house  
 (hold)'  
 b. tọ̀mọ-tọ̀mọ (àti-ọ̀mọ-àti-ọ̀mọ) 'everything including the  
 children'  
 c. tegbò-tegbò (àti-egbò-àti-egbò) 'everything including the roots'

5. Profession Reduplication doubles a verb phrase with an active (head) verb to indicate something one does regularly, habitually, routinely, more or less like a profession.

- a. gbọ̀mọ-gbọ̀mọ (gbé-ọ̀mọ-gbé-ọ̀mọ 'steal child') 'a kidnapper'  
 b. wolé-wolé (wo-ilé-wo-ilé 'inspect house') 'a house inspector'  
 c. lagi-lagi (la-igi-la-igi) 'split wood') 'a sawyer'

6. Antonym Reduplication juxtaposes two opposite ideas in reduplication,<sup>5</sup> yet retains the same verb stem:<sup>6</sup>

- a. jomi-jòkè (jẹ-omi-jẹ̀òkè; jẹ 'eat') 'consumer below water and  
 on land'  
 b. wọ̀le-wọ̀de (wọ-ilé-wọ-òde; wọ 'enter') 'a very intimate friend'  
 c. ẹ̀hín-ẹ̀hún (ẹ-ihín-ẹ-òhún; ẹ 'do') 'somebody with a double  
 face'

### 1.1.3 Reduplication of the First VCV<sup>7</sup>

7. Multiple Value Reduplication prefixes a copy of the initial VCV to the stem, to express multiple value.

- a. ẹ̀wẹ̀ẹ̀wá (ẹ̀wá-ẹ̀wá) 'in tens'  
 b. ọ̀gọ̀ọ̀gọ̀rún (ogún-òrún)<sup>8</sup> 'in hundreds'  
 c. ẹ̀tẹ̀ẹ̀tálá (ẹ̀ta-ẹ̀tálá) 'in thirteens'

8. Temporal Reduplication, like multiple value reduplication, prefixes a copy of the first VCV of the basic noun stem, to the noun stem, to express temporal regularly:

- a. oşooşù (oşù-oşù; oşù 'month') 'every month'  
 b. iriiròlẹ̀ (irò-iròlẹ̀; iròlẹ̀ 'evening') 'every evening'  
 c. ojoojúmọ̀ (ojú-ojúmọ̀; ojúmọ̀ 'day break') 'everyday'

9. Category Reduplication, like multiple value and temporal reduplication, also prefixes a copy of the first VCV of the noun stem to the original noun stem, to express grouping or category:

- a. àgbààgbà (àgbà-àgbà; àgbà 'adult') 'in different adult groups'
- b. oboobirin (obin-obìnrin 'in women's groups exclusively')
- c. ọkọọkùnrin (ọkùn-ọkùnrin) 'in men's category exclusively'

#### 1.1.4 Reduplication by Linkage

10.1 'Any'-Reduplication uses -kí- as a linker between two copies of a basic noun to express the sense of 'any, whichever, whenever, whatever, etc.'<sup>9</sup>:

- a. așókáșọ (așọ-kí-așọ; așọ 'cloth') 'any cloth'
- b. ètókétò (ètò-kí-ètò; ètò 'schedule') 'any schedule/arrangement'
- c. işékíşé (işé-kí-işé; işé 'job, work') 'any job/work/assignment'

10.2 We claim that a separate but somewhat related linker -kú- 'negative' serves reduplicated deverbal nouns (cf. Awoyale, 1974, 1978, vs. Awobuluyi, 1984, vs. Bamgboșe, 1984):

- a. işekúșe (ì-șe-kú-ì-șe' șe 'do') 'wrong action/behaviour'
- b. iwàkuwà (i-wà-kú-ì-wà; wà 'drive') 'wrong driving'
- c. i-sọ-kú-sọ (ì-sọ-kú-ì-sọ; sọ 'say') 'wrong utterance/  
statement'

11. Genitive Reduplication puts two copies of a basic noun around a potential genitive prefix -o-ní- 'one who has', to express primarily somebody else's property:

- a. ọmọọlómọ (ọmọ-o-ní-ọmọ; ọmọ 'child') 'someone else's child'<sup>10</sup>
- b. bàtòonibàtà (bàtà-o-ní-bàtà; bàtà 'shoes') 'someone else's shoes'
- c. iwóoníwéé (iwé-o-ní-iwé; iwé 'book') 'someone else's book'

12. Qualitative Reduplication puts two copies of a basic noun around a linker -èyí- 'this; real', to express good or high quality:

- a. ẹranányẹran (ẹran-èyí-ẹran; ẹran 'meat') 'choice meat'
- b. ẹmuùnyẹmu (ẹmu-èyí-ẹmu; ẹmu 'wine') 'quality palm-wine'
- c. așọyáșọ (așọ-èyí-așọ; așọ 'cloth') 'top quality cloth'

13. Link Reduplication puts two copies of a basic noun around either of the following two possible linkers -kò- and -kàn- 'to meet, connect', to express connection:

- a. **ojúkojú** (ojú-ko-ojú; ojú 'eye') 'direct contact, confrontation'  
 b. **inúkonú** (inú-ko-inú; inu 'inside') 'close understanding'  
 c. **ilékanlé** (ilé-kan-ilé; ilé 'house') 'direct neighbourhood'

14. Spatial-Temporal Reduplication uses three separate linkers -dé- 'reaches'; -rí- 'see'; -mó- 'touch', between two copies of certain nouns of time, season, parts of the body, residence, etc., to express either space in time, or time in space:

- a. **omódómọ** (omọ-dé-omọ; omọ 'child') 'down line of descendants'  
 b. **yàrádáyàrá** (yàrá-dé-yàrá; yàrá 'room') 'from room to room'  
 c. **omórómọ** (omọ-rí-omọ) 'generations of children'  
 d. **ojúrójú** (ojú-rí-ojú; ojú 'eye') 'face to face'  
 e. **odún-módún** (odún-mó-odún) 'year in year out'  
 f. **òlamọla** (òla-mó-òla) 'several tomorrows'

15. Equative Reduplication uses -ní- 'be' as linker between two basic nouns, to express 'in reality':

- a. **opélopé** (opé-ni-opé; opé 'gratitude') 'but for the sake of'  
 b. **àgbàlagbà** (àgbà-ni-àgbà) 'an adult indeed'  
 c. **okoloko** (oko-ni-oko; oko 'farm') 'a real farm'

16. Entirety Reduplication uses -ní- 'of' as a linker between two copies of a deverbal noun to express entirety:

- a. **ìbí-ń-bì** (ì-bí-ní-ì-bí; bí 'born') 'of actual/full birth'  
 b. **ìfẹ-ń-fẹ** (ì-fẹ-ní-ì-fẹ; fẹ 'marry') 'of real/full/actual marriage'  
 c. **ògbólógbòò** (ò-gbó-ní-ò-gbó; gbó 'ripe') 'of ripe/full age'

17. Comparison Reduplication uses -bí- 'like' to link two copies of a basic noun to express favourable comparison:

- a. **ẹnibẹeni** (eni-bí-eni; eni 'person') 'a person like a real person'  
 b. **èyànbéeyàn** (èyan-bí-èyàn) 'a person like a real human being'

18. In Reality Reduplication copies what looks like the first VCV of the nominalized stem as a prefix, and uses -ní- to link this VCV with the nominalized stem, to express the sense of in reality:

- a. **ìdẹ-ń-délẹ** (ìdẹ-ní-ìdélẹ; délẹ 'reach ground') 'absolutely brought low'  
 b. **ìbà-ń-balẹ** (ìbà-ní-ìbalẹ; balẹ 'hit ground') 'absolutely hitting ground'  
 c. **ìrà-ń-rálẹ** (ìrà-ní-ìrálẹ) 'the very dregs'

19. Miscellaneous. The following assorted forms are included here because although they show some semblance of reduplication, they are either not reproductive, or some of the reduplicated forms are homophones of some sort:

- a. a-bíni-bí (a-bí-ẹni-bí; bí 'born') 's'thing one is born with'  
 b. a-wá-ni-wá (a-wá-ẹni-wá; wá 'come/find') 'one who comes to  
 look for one'  
 c. a-fẹni-fẹ-ire (fẹ 'want') 'one who wants good fortune for the  
 other'

## 1.2 PARTIAL REDUPLICATION OF NON-IDEOPHONES<sup>12</sup>

20. 'Gerundive' Reduplication prefixes a syllable consisting of a copy of the initial consonant of the verbal stem, and the vowel /-í-/ , on to the stem, to express the sense of the 'gerundive', as in:

- a. gíga (g-í-ga) '(being) tall'  
 b. ẹ́ẹ́se (ẹ́-í-ẹ́e) 'cooking, cooked'  
 c. titètèdélé (t-í-tètè-dé-ilé) 'reaching/getting home early'

## 2. REDUPLICATION IN IDEOPHONIC VOCABULARY

The reduplicative patterns in the ideophonic vocabulary cannot be semantically grouped or identified as above, for reasons that we will go into later (see p. 19). We have therefore chosen to classify them according to their basic tone patterns and the types of reduplication involved: these are duplication (or doubling), triplication (for three tokens), and quadruplication (for four tokens), for what we can discern as full reduplication of the original stem, and prefixation and suffixation for partial reduplication. In what follows, we will not be concerned with what we consider as morphologically-conditioned reduplication, e.g. gbàgbàrà 'of being, bulky, wide and heavy', where, in a single morpheme, there are two instances of gbà, which though a syllable, is not a morpheme on its own.

### 2.1 FULL REDUPLICATION OF IDEOPHONES

#### 2.1.1 Duplication (Doubling)

The most common and most productive reduplicative process among the ideophones is duplication or doubling (D), where a full copy of the original stem is added to derive a new ideophone. Any predicative ideophone<sup>13</sup>, and these are in thousands, can be fully duplicated, no matter what the basic tones are. In duplication, however, the tones on the copy may vary from that of the stem; this tonal variation is usually subject to semantic constraints.

NB To save space, understand 'of/ of (things) being...' with all the glosses below.

#### D1 BASIC LOW - (+ RED)

- a. fòò-fòò (fòò)<sup>13</sup> 'repeatedly red'  
 b. pàpàpà (pàpà)<sup>14</sup> 'running very hastily'  
 c. gbàgìdì-gbàgìdì (gbàgìdì) 'big and weighty'

D2 BASIC MID - (+ RED)

- a. gboogboo (gboo) 'space being repeatedly clear'  
 b. dedeede (dede) 'opening mouth loosely'  
 c. rigidi-rigidi (rigidi) 'several things being round'

D3 BASIC HIGH - (+RED)

- a. búú-búú (búú) 'completely hidden underneath'  
 b. fínní-fínní (fínní) 'of scrutinizing very meticulously'  
 c. pánlá-pánlá (pánlá) 'several things being bony'

D4 BASIC LOW - (+ RED. on MID) (from D1)<sup>16</sup>

- a. yùngbà-yungba (yùngbà) 'honey-sweet'  
 b. gbàgìdì-gbagidi (gbagidi) 'very fleshy and bulky'  
 c. fèrègèdè-fèrègèdè (fèrègèdè) 'very wide appealingly'

D5 BASIC LOW + RED. last syllable - (+ RED. on LOW) (from D1)

- a. rùbùtù-tù-rùbùtù-tù (rùbùtù-tù) 'several things being cute'  
 b. bànbà-bà-bànbà-bà (bànbà) 'several things being wide and heavy'  
 c. fèrègèdè-dè-fèrègèdè-dè (fèrègèdè) 'several things very wide'

D6 BASIC MID + RED. last syllable - (+ RED. on MID) (from D2)

- a. koŋko-ko-koŋko-ko (koŋko) 'of a very sharp and direct blow'  
 b. rogodo-do-rogodo-do (rogodo) 'several things round and small'  
 c. porogodo-do-porogodo-do (porogodo) 'being completely used up'

D7 BASIC HIGH + RED. last syllable - (+ RED. on HIGH) (from D3)

- a. rógódó-dó-rógódó-dó (rógódó) 'several things very small, round'  
 b. lókòsán-sán-lókòsán-sán (lókòsán) 'several things being slim  
 and fragile'  
 c. fàrágádá-dá-fàrágádá-dá (fàrágádá) 'repeatedly, totally wiped  
 out'

D8 BASIC LOW + RED. last syllable - (+ RED. on MID) (from D4)

- a. rùbùtù-tù-rubutu-tu (rùbùtù) 'very cute and robust'  
 b. rògòdì-dì-rògòdì-dì (rògòdì) 'very big and imposing'  
 c. fèrègèdè-dè-fèrègèdè-dè (fèrègèdè) 'very expansive/wide'

## D9 (H)(H)HM - (L)(L)LM (very closely related to D1)

- a. yèlè-yèlè (yèlè) 'very disorganized'  
 b. gbàgìdì-gbàgìdì (gbàgìdì) 'fleshy and bulky'  
 c. fèrègèdè-fèrègèdè (fèrègèdè) 'several things expansive/wide'

D10 (H)HHHM - (L)LLLM (from D9)

- a. rógódó-do-rògòdò-do (rògòdò) 'very bulging and round'  
 b. fèrègèdè-dè-fèrègèdè-dè (fèrègèdè) 'very expansive/wide'

D11 LL - HL (very closely related to basic low tones D1)

- a. pòtò-pòtò (pòtò) 'real mud, very muddy'  
 b. yèbù-yèbù (yèbù) 'worthless, of low repute'  
 c. wùlù-wùlù (wùlù) 'wood/grass debris'

D12 LH - (+ RED.) (from basic low tone sequences D1)

- a. gbàlá-gbàlá (gbàlá) 'very free or loose movement'  
 b. gbòḡ-gbòḡ (gbòḡ) 'vegetables being deep green'  
 c. òḡbò-òḡbò (òḡbò) 'a very difficult transfer'

D13 (L)LL (H)HH (from basic low tones D1)

- a. pàlà-pàlá<sup>17</sup> (pàlà) 'very thick undergrowth'  
 b. yòbò-yòbò (yòbò) 'very sluggish'  
 c. tààrà-tàára (tààrà) 'in dead earnest'

D14 HL - (+ RED.) (from basic high tone sequences D3)

- a. bóró-bóró (bóró) 'free and fast in motion'  
 b. wésè-wésè (wésè) 'very noisy and rowdy'  
 c. pùù-pùù (pùù) 'popping intermittently'

D15 MM - HH (from basic high tone sequences)

- a. rọrọ-rọrọ (rọrọ) 'flowing/moving noiselessly'  
 b. dódó-dódó (dódó) 'severely sick or run down'  
 c. róró-róró (róró) 'very clear'

D16 (L)LL - (M)ML<sup>18</sup> (from basic low tone sequences)

- a. bìrì-bìrì (bìrì) 's' thing heavy revolving quickly'  
 b. bọ̀ùn-bọ̀ùn (bọ̀ùn) ' " " hopping'  
 c. gbàgìdì-gbàgìdì (gbàgìdì) ' " very fleshy and bulky'

D17 HH - ML (related to basic high tone sequences)

- a. yígì-yígì (yígì) 'not walking straight/upright'  
 b. wúsú-wúsú (wúsú) 'very cloudy/misty'  
 c. réké-réké (réké) 'very cunning'

D18 (M)MH - (M)ML (related to high tone sequences D17)

- a. yígì-yígì (yígì) 'not walking straight/upright'  
 b. tengé-tengè (tengé) 'standing up erect'  
 c. kolobá-kolobà (kolobá) 'running about in despair'

D19 HM - (+ RED.)

- a. kánrin-kánrin (kánrin) 'extending far and wide'  
 b. kikan-kikan (kikan) 'in dead earnest'  
 c. rọọ-rọọ (rọọ) 'very small quantity of liquid'



## D30 Doubling with -n-/-ti- as a Linker

- a. **láká-n-láká (láká)** 'very clumsy and hurried movement'  
 b. **wóbó-n-wóbó (wóbó)** 'in loose forms'  
 c. **wówó-ti-wówó (wówó)** 'following in good order'

## 2.1.2 Triplication

By triplication (T) we mean copying of an ideophonic stem twice to derive new triplicate forms, though the tone sequences may not necessarily be the same. As usual the stems are put in brackets after the reduplicated form.

T1 (H)(H)HH - (L)(L)LL - (H)(H)HH

These are derived from basic high tone sequences, particularly of those ideophones which suggest motion, location or state.

- a. **há bá-hà bá-há bá (há bá)** 'very difficult and clumsy motion'  
 b. **wórókó-wórókó-wórókó (wórókó)** 'very doubly bent'  
 c. **bírikítí-bírikítí-bírikítí (bírikítí)** 'very tightly enclosed'

T2 HHH(H)(H) - LLL(L)(L) - HHH(H)(H)

This possibility arises because T1b and T1c have trisyllabic stems which can undergo S1.3 below.

- a. **wórókókó-wórókóhó-wórókókó (wórókókó)** see T1b.  
 b. **bírikítítí-bírikítítí-bírikítítí (bírikítí)** see T1c.

T3 LL(L)(L) - MM(M)(M) - LL(L)(L)<sup>21</sup>

- a. **yùngbà-yungba-yùngbà (yùngbà)** 'very honey-sweet/festive'  
 b. **bàmbà-bamba-bàmbà (bàmbà)** 's' thing heavy being wide'  
 c. **fèrègèdè-fèrègedè-fèrègèdè (fèrègèdè)** 'impressively wide'

T4 LLL(L)(L) - MMM(M)(M) - LLL(L)(L)

The trisyllabic stems in T3 can undergo S1.3 below to derive the following.

- a. **bàmbàbà-bambaba-bàmbàbà (bàmbàbà)** see T3b.  
 b. **fèrègèdèdè-fèrègedèdè-fèrègèdèdè (fèrègèdèdè)** see T3c.

T5 LL(L)(L) - LL(L)(L) - LL(L)(L) (from basic low tones)

- a. **bìrì-bìrì-bìrì (bìrì)** 'revolving very fast'  
 b. as T3b above with low tones throughout  
 c. as T3c above with low tones throughout.

T6 MM(M)(M) - MM(M)(M) - MM(M)(M) (from basic mid tones)

- a. **guu-guu-guu (guu)** 'landing swiftly many times'  
 b. **koro-koro-koro (koro)** 'winding many times'  
 c. **rigidi-rigidi-rigidi (rigidi)** 'round in groups'

T7 HH(H)(H) - HH(H)(H) - HH(H)(H)

- a. búú-búú-búú (búú) 'completely hidden underneath'
- b. bírí-bírí-bírí (bírí) 'repeatedly revolving fast'
- c. tóntó-tóntó-tóntó (tóntó) 'of several smaller things'

T8 HM - HM - HM (from basic HM sequences (D19))

- a. kikan-kikan-kikan (kikan) 'continuously being in dead earnest'
- b. róo-róo-róo (róo) 'very small quantity of liquid'
- c. búle-gúle-gúle (gúle) 'breathing in and out very fast'

T9 MH - MH - MH (from basic MH sequences (D20))

- a. nigín-nigín-nigín (nigín) 'very clean/white'
- b. tingín-tingín-tingín (tingín) 'very clean/white'
- c. digbí-digbí-digbí (digbí) 'very full'

T10 LM - LM - LM (from basic LM sequences (D21))

- a. kiji-kiji-kiji (kiji) 'forest being majestically thick'
- b. ríti-ríti-ríti (ríti) 'several chunks of meat'
- c. gbòga-gbòga-gbòga (gbòga) 'leaves being green, fresh and wide'

T11 HL - HL - HL (from basic HL sequences (D14))

- a. bórò-bórò-bórò (bórò) 'very loose in motion'
- b. páà-páà-páà (páà) 'quick succession of sharp taps'
- c. fii-fii-fii (fii) 'exceeding very far'

T12 LH - LH - LH (from basic LH sequences (D12))

- a. gbàlá-gbàlá-gbàlá (gbàlá) 'varied and non-uniform in motion'
- b. ògbó-ògbó-ògbó (ògbó) 'difficult transfers'
- c. şùú-şùú-şùú (şùú) 'touching very hard at different points'

T13 MM - LL - MM (from basic MM sequences)

- a. pii-pii-pii (pii) 'turning off light quickly and severally'
- b. foo-fòò-foo (foo) 'having holes in many parts'
- c. gboro-gbòrò-gboro (gboro) 'dangling very loosely'

T14 (H)(H)HM - (L)(L)LM - (L)LLLL (from low tones)

- a. jinni-jinni-jinnijinni (jinni) 'being extremely nervous'
- b. bàmba-bàmba-bàmbà-bà (bàmbà) 'heavy things being wide'
- c. fèrègèdè-fèrègèdè-fèrègèdè-dè (fèrègèdè) 'heavy things being expansive'

T15 (H)HHHM - (L)LLLM - (L)LLLL

This possibility exists because T14b and T14c can undergo S1.3 below to derive the following:

- a. bámbábá-bàmbàba-bàmbàbà (bàmbà-bà)
- b. ràgbádúdú-ràgbàdùdù-ràgbàdùdù (ràgbàdù-dù)
- c. fèrègèdè-fèrègèdèdè-fèrègèdèdè (fèrègèdè-dè)

### 2.1.3 Quadruplication

Quadruplication (Q) is a process by which an ideophonic stem can be copied three times, usually without identical tone sequences.

Q1 (H)(H)HM - (L)(L)LM - (L)(L)LL - (M)(M)ML (from basic low tone sequences.)

- a. yòbọ-yòbọ-yòbọ-yòbọ (yòbọ) 'very clumsy and sluggish'
- b. bàmbà-bàmbà-bàmbà-bàmbà (bàmbà) 'many heavy things being wide'
- c. fèrègèdè-fèrègèdè-fèrègèdè-fèrègèdè (fèrègèdè) 'very, very, wide'

Q2 (H)HHHM - (L)LLLM - (L)LLLL - (M)MMML

This possibility exists because Q1b and Q1c can undergo S1.3 below to derive the following:

- a. bámbába-bàmbàba-bàmbàbà-bambabà (bàmbà-bà)
- b. fèrègèdèdè-fèrègèdèdè-fèrègèdèdè-fèrègèdèdè (fèrègèdè-dè)

Q3 HM - LM - LL - LL (from basic low tone sequences)

- a. jìnni-jìnni-jìnni-jìnni (jìnni) 'extremely nervous'
- b. pàti-pàti-pàti-pàti (pàti) 'very rough and disorderly'
- c. kùru-kùru-kùrù-kùrù (kùrù) 'skin having lost its tenderness'

## 2.2 PARTIAL REDUPLICATION OF IDEOPHONES

The patterns of partial reduplication take main forms : (a) Suffixation (S) in the literal and metaphorical senses, and (b) Prefixation (P) in a metaphorical sense.

### 2.2.1 Suffixation

S1 Copying of final syllable of polysyllabic ideophones<sup>22</sup>  
(S1.1 through S1.3 are instances of a single copying process.)

S1.1 Basic Low - (+ PRTL. RED. last syllable)

- a. lẹ̀kọ̀tì-tì (lẹ̀kọ̀tì) 'very sticky'
- b. làndẹ̀-dẹ̀ (làndẹ̀) 'conspicuously oblong'
- c. hàràgbàdù-dù (hàràgbàdù) 'very stout and bulky'

S1.2 Basic Mid - (+PRTL. RED. LAST SYLLABLE)

- a. konko-ko (konko) 'being very blunt'
- b. rogodo-do (rogodo) 'being very round and small'
- c. porogodo-do (porogodo) 'being completely used up'

S1.3 Basic high - (+PRTL. RED. LAST SYLLABLE)

- a. lẹ̀kọ̀sán-sán (lẹ̀kọ̀sán) 'being very slim and agile'
- b. sánpónná-ná (sánpónná) 'being very blunt or plain'
- c. fàràgádá-dá (fàràgádá) 'being totally wiped off'

## S2 Copying of initial syllable of polysyllabic ideophones<sup>23</sup>

These ideophones have either C<sub>i</sub>V<sub>i</sub>C<sub>i</sub>V<sub>i</sub>rV<sub>i</sub> or C<sub>i</sub>V<sub>i</sub>C<sub>i</sub>V<sub>i</sub>lV<sub>i</sub> segmental sequences. (S2.1 through S2.3 are instances of a single copying processes.)

### S2.1 Basic low - (+PRTL. RED. INITIAL SYLLABLE)

- |                    |                        |                              |
|--------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|
| a. gègèrè-gè       | (gègèrè)               | 'being very stout and bulky' |
| b. tààrà-tà        | (tààrà)                | 'being on a straight course' |
| c. (cf. yèkutu-yé) | (yèkùtù) <sup>24</sup> | 'being clumsily bow-legged'  |

### S2.2 Basic mid - (PRTL. RED. INITIAL SYLLABLE)

- |                 |            |                                |
|-----------------|------------|--------------------------------|
| a. pepere-pe    | (pepere)   | 'being very cute and robust'   |
| b. gbugburu-gbu | (gbugburu) | 'rattling and clumsy movement' |
| c. fiiri-fi     | (fiiri)    | 'throwing out fast'            |

### S2.3 Basic high - (+PRTL. RED. INITIAL SYLLABLE)

- |             |         |                                |
|-------------|---------|--------------------------------|
| a. fáára-fá | (fáára) | 'wiping toward oneself easily' |
| b. giiri-gi | (giiri) | 'wiping fast'                  |

## S3 Extension with -ní as suffix<sup>25</sup>

This -ní is affected by the n/l alteration rule in Yoruba. If the preceding vowel is /l/, n applies to the following sequence: CV-N-CV, where size is the semantic content.

### S3.1 -ni suffix

- |                 |             |                            |
|-----------------|-------------|----------------------------|
| a. tín-ń-tín-ní | (tín-ń-tín) | 'very small quantity/size' |
| b. kín-ń-kín-ní | (kín-ń-kín) | 'very small quantity/size' |
| c. sín-ń-şín-ní | (şín-ń-şín) | 'very small quantity/size' |

### S3.2 -lV suffix

- |             |         |                                |
|-------------|---------|--------------------------------|
| a. bémbé-lé | (bémbé) | 'being very small in size'     |
| b. tóntó-ló | (tóntó) | 'being very small in size'     |
| c. jénjé-lé | (jénjé) | 'being very small and fragile' |

## S4 Extension with -rV as suffix

- |             |         |                            |
|-------------|---------|----------------------------|
| a. bembè-rè | (bembè) | 'very heavy, big things'   |
| b. bembè-rẹ | (bembẹ) | 'very heavy, wide things'  |
| c. bambà-rà | (bambà) | 'very heavy, thick things' |

### 2.2.2 Prefixation - Copying of initial syllable

#### P1 Forward partial reduplication in agentive nominalization

- |               |         |                               |
|---------------|---------|-------------------------------|
| a. a-la-laṅlà | (laṅlà) | 'something big and oblong'    |
| b. a-ba-bambà | (bambà) | 'something big and wide'      |
| c. a-fa-faṅfà | (faṅfà) | 'something big and very wide' |

#### P2 Forward partial reduplication in factive nominalization

- |                    |               |                          |
|--------------------|---------------|--------------------------|
| a. a-de-dekúndekún | (dekún-dekún) | 'sound of a rubber horn' |
| b. a-de-demúdemú   | (demú-demú)   | 'sound of a rubber horn' |
| c. a-do-domídomí   | (domí-domí)   | 'sound of a rubber horn' |

These examples occur mostly in children's lullaby; that is why they echo sounds.

## 2.3 MISCELLANEOUS

### 2.3.1 Silent Vowel

This involves deletion of the morpheme-final /u/ after the preceding bilabial nasal stop, so that a syllabic nasal is realized instead.

- |              |   |         |                            |
|--------------|---|---------|----------------------------|
| a. bàmù-bàmù | > | bàm-bàm | 'heavy noise falling flat' |
| b. demu-demu | > | dem-dem | 'rubber ball landing fast' |
| c. wómú-wómú | > | wóm-wóm | 'being completely crushed' |

### 2.3.2 Double Vowel Alternating with Duplication

In the following examples, the final vowel of an ideophonic morpheme is lengthened or doubled in place of full duplication of the ideophonic stem. This is very common with disyllabic ideophones of state:

- |          |                 |                                 |
|----------|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| a. sùtàà | (vs. sùtà-sùtà) | 'troubling for a long time'     |
| b. kòtìì | (vs. kòtì-kòtì) | 'very reluctantly moving ahead' |
| c. gùdẹẹ | (vs. gùdẹ-gùdẹ) | 'seriously upturning things'    |

The two forms can be used interchangeably.

### 2.3.3 Miscellaneous Duplication with Varying Tones

The following are assorted forms with a semblance of reduplication, but for which no regularity of patterns can be ascertained at the moment:

- |       |   |                                      |
|-------|---|--------------------------------------|
| (i)   | yàtà-yòtò                               | 'being festive'                      |
|       | kùrù-keṛeṛe                             | 'seeking seriously'                  |
|       | yáá-yúú                                 | 'oozing/flowing profusely'           |
|       | faka-fiki                               | 'sound of a locomotive train'        |
|       | jaga-jìgì                               | 'sound of a moving locomotive train' |
|       | hẹṛẹ-huru                               | 'sound of a severe cough'            |
|       | wáá-wúú                                 | 'very free movement'                 |
|       | kàlá-kìnní                              | 'assorted colours'                   |
| (ii)  | sílá-sílo = sílà-sílo                   | 'real palaver'                       |
|       | gìgì-rọ́rọ́ = gígì-rọ́rọ́ > gígì-rọ́rọ́ | 'a very bulky presence'              |
|       | ràrà-rírí = ràrà-riri=rara-rírí         | 'deep vibrating sound'               |
|       | làgbá-lùgbú = lagba-lùgbú               | 'being plentiful'                    |
|       | wàrà-wéré = wàrà-wéré                   | 'instantaneously'                    |
|       | wàwà-roro = wawa-roro                   | 'standing stiff'                     |
| (iii) | làlà-koko-fẹfẹ                          | 'being too presumptive'              |
|       | kerere-pàpà-kerere                      | (a refrain)                          |
|       | fùrù-gbá-gbòó                           | (in a folk tale)                     |

### 3. REVIEW OF THE REDUPLICATIVE PROCESSES

In this section, we want to highlight some of the major differences in the way and manner that reduplication applies to lexical categories in Yoruba. But first, how useful is reduplication as a criterion, in determining lexical classes?<sup>26</sup> We can begin to answer this question by looking at those lexical categories that take part in reduplication. Except in the context of phrases, the verbs, adjectives, prepositions, conjunctions and pronouns, cannot on their own be fully reduplicated to create new words. Verbs and adjectives can be systematically repeated for recurrent actions, or for emphasis, as in:

1. Adé jẹ, jẹ, jẹ, jẹ, ó yó (emphasis and/or recurrence)  
'Ade ate, ate ate ate, ate; he was-full'

Besides the ideophones, only basic nouns and nominalized forms, and some verb phrases, (for agentive nominals) can reduplicate, as our numerous examples have shown.

What we refer to as ideophones have been classified as a subset of nouns (cf. Awobuluyi, 1969, 1978, 1975, 1982; Rowland, 1970), and as adverbs (cf. Bamgbose, 1966, 1972, and 1976). However, it has been our contention (cf. Ayoyale, 1974, 1978, 1979, 1981, and 1983) that these lexical items are only secondarily nouns or adverbs or verbs or adjectives. They are first and foremost ideophones; how they function in a sentence is another matter. And we believe that reduplication has clearly justified our contention.

The following are the major differences that reduplication has brought out between ideophones and non-ideophones (especially, the basic nouns and the nominalized forms), in the language.

First, the major determinant of reduplication is different in both types. While the lexical meaning of the regular vocabulary contributes more to the reduplicative patterns in such forms; among the ideophones on the other hands, tone and tonal patterning play a major role in determining the reduplicative patterns. The classification of the reduplicative patterns in the regular vocabulary can be semantically-based; that is, we can very clearly identify the semantic functions of the reduplicative patterns. Among the ideophones, that is not quite possible at the moment, not necessarily because of the sheer number of the patterns, but because of the sheer diversity of the process. This is clearly borne out by the glosses offered for the reduplicated forms.

Secondly, there is a clear difference between the manner of reduplication. While reduplication among the ideophones can be recursive, as many of our examples have shown, (and certainly, this avenue will increase both the potency and the spread of the process); this is hardly the case with the same process applying to non-ideophones. Of the nineteen patterns discussed among the non-ideophonic forms, not one of them is recursive.

Thirdly, ideophonic reduplication has more variety than the non-ideophonic type. While reduplication of the regular forms concentrates more on linkage, ideophonic reduplication on the other hand hardly uses this device; the latter has more variety than the former.

Fourthly, the two types differ in the domain of reduplication. Non-ideophonic reduplication tends to restrict itself to the morpheme, and we can say it is morpheme-based; ideophonic reduplication on the other hand is tone- and syllable-based, hence the intricacies in both the full and partial reduplication patterns. Consequently, despite the fact that we cannot say we have identified all the semantic functions of these diverse patterns of reduplication, it is reasonable to expect more semantic functions in ideophonic than in non-ideophonic types of reduplication. In the words of Sapir (1921:76):

'Nothing is more natural than the prevalence of reduplication; in other words, the repetition of all or parts of the radical element. The process is generally employed, with self-evident symbolism, to indicate such concepts as distribution, plurality, repetition, customary activity, increase in size, added intensity, continuance.'

These facts on the functions of reduplication in a language are confirmed generally by our regular vocabulary. But among the ideophones, the functions of reduplication cannot be so simply classified because tone functions differently among the ideophones. The functions of tone in the ideophones have been identified (cf. Awoyale, 1979):

- a. tone indicates the lexical meaning of each ideophonic stem;
- b. tone indicates emphasis;
- c. tone indicates intensity;
- d. tone in ideophonic reduplication frequently indicates the speaker's changing attitude to an event; that is, over and above the lexical meaning, is superimposed the attitudinal meaning. Often, the attitudinal meaning gains prominence over the lexical meaning, but the latter cannot be completely erased.

Now, if ideophones should be separated from nouns, as we argue, why do the two of them undergo reduplication? In Awoyale (1981) it was argued that predicative ideophones behave largely like verbals in that nominals can be derived from the two categories. For example, we have the following:

- |                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| a. <b>gbirigidi</b>  | 'of rolling over on the ground many times' |
| <b>bò-gbirigidi</b>  | 'the state of rolling over many times'     |
| b. <b>gbala-n-ja</b> | 'being long and dangling (of hand)'        |
| <b>ò-gbala-n-ja</b>  | 'the state of being long and handy'        |
| c. <b>pepere</b>     | 'of being slim and cute'                   |
| <b>a-pepere</b>      | 'one who is slim and cute'                 |



<sup>2</sup>A still imperfect but workable definition of the ideophone is given in Awoyale (1979) as

'a non-derived consonant-initial word, which is not primarily a surface verb, but can be predicated of another predicate or a nominal; or where such a word has been nominally idiomaticized, it functions fully as a noun.'

Some other aspects in which the ideophone is unique have been examined in Awoyale (1974, 1978, 1978, 1981, and 1983).

<sup>3</sup>In this paper, we shall not look at examples of ideophonization of the regular forms, which may also have a semblance of reduplication. These examples include puns, tongue twisters (cf. Awoyale, 1979, 1983). But look at the following:

Awóyalé kò ò,      Àwòyàlè ni in  
 Awoyale be-not      Awoyale be  
 'It is not Awoyale; it is Awoyale'

where from Awóyalé, Àwòyàlè (a completely different formation with different tonal patterning) is derived. This is not an instance of reduplication, by our definition, since the two formations are not joined to form new words.

<sup>4</sup>We consider à- to be factive nominalizing prefix, as noted in Awoyale (1974:409), to distinguish it from its non-factive counterpart i-.

<sup>5</sup>This pattern has several meanings, e.g. doer of things, left and right; extension to both left and right; in thought and deed; etc.

<sup>6</sup>The order of the items in these phrases is usually fixed; its violation will result in ill-formed phrases.

<sup>7</sup>Contrary to former views (cf. Awobuluyi, 1977) that this process duplicates two basic nouns, it will be seen that when we apply the same process to polysyllabic nouns as in (7c), (8c), and (9c), and possibly (18), it is the VCV that is copied, rather than the whole nominal stems, to express these meanings.

<sup>8</sup>The reduplication rule must have applied twice in this example; but note that it is VCV that is copied.

<sup>9</sup>These can also mean 'wrong'; 'bad'; etc.

<sup>10</sup>These forms can have other meanings apart from genitive; such include 'having good luck'; 'nobody or no one person'; 'nothing'; etc.

<sup>11</sup>It might be argued that -ní- is not present in the basic forms of these examples, so that íbì-n-bí would come from íbì-íbì; however, we suspect that the surfacing of a syllabic nasal instead of a mere vowel contraction is due to the /n/ which is already present. Furthermore, íbì-íbì does not have the meaning of earnestness present in íbì-n-bí.

<sup>12</sup>Note that copying the first VCV need not be treated as partial reduplication technically, since it always embraces a free morpheme (monosyllabic or disyllabic) ò, whereas 'gerundive' reduplication always involves a bound morpheme. Technically therefore, gerundive reduplication is the only example of partial reduplication that we have on our list for reduplication in the non-ideophonic vocabulary.

<sup>13</sup>See Awoyale (1979) for more evidence on the distinction between predicative ideophones and ideophonic nouns.

<sup>14</sup>The issue of the quality of these vowels has been touched upon in Awoyale (1974, 1979).

<sup>15</sup>Awoyale (1974) has argued that forms like *pāpāpā* be derived from /*pāpā-pāpā*/ after a consonant deletion rule. Note that we also have /*pāpā*/ of the same meaning.

<sup>16</sup>Most of the examples of monosyllabic ideophones that have a semblance of this type of duplication are ideophonic nouns:

- wāā-winin* 'too much talking/complaining'  
*finin-finin* 'a tiny flying insect'  
*kinin-kinin* 'somebody from a sacred place (heaven)'

<sup>17</sup>(a) is now a frozen form since it has become a noun.

<sup>18</sup>These look like shortened forms of 2.1.3; that is, the second part of the pair.

<sup>19</sup>This pattern was produced and confirmed at the 'Issues in Yoruba Syntax' class (June 1979).

<sup>20</sup>The examples for this pattern were formed from a pattern heard over Radio O.Y.O (Ibadan) *ewi* recitation. Note that both /*giri*/ and /*gigi*/, which occur, can serve as a stem, which would further increase the possibilities.

<sup>21</sup>Produced and confirmed at the 'Issues' class (June 1979).

<sup>22</sup>This rule is restricted to trisyllabic and quadrusyllabic forms.

<sup>23</sup>This can also apply to a CV<sub>i</sub>V<sub>i</sub>rV<sub>i</sub> form.

<sup>24</sup>This example was picked up at a conversation; this type of copying must increase the possibilities further. It could be that some of the trisyllabic and quadrusyllabic forms could undergo this type of copying.

<sup>25</sup>The *-ni* is probably a diminutive suffix.

<sup>26</sup>This question was raised by Professor Awobuluyi during the first presentation of this paper at the staff seminar in March 1980.

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