

Reduplication of Verbs in Modern Chinese

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Abstract: this article is devoted to the analysis and syntactic features of reduplication verbs, as well as their usage in modern Chinese language. The article reveals the features of the formation of reduplication monosyllabic and polysyllabic verbs, specific models are indicated.

Keywords: morpheme, hieroglyph, exponent, root morpheme, reduplication, monosyllabism.

In Chinese, the verb can be repeated: the reduplicative verb expresses a specific meaning. Reduplication pattern of "AA" monosyllabic verbs: In Chinese, monosyllabic verbs are mostly repeated in the "AA" reduplication pattern. When a monosyllabic verb is repeated, its second (i.e. doubling, repeated) component is read in a light tone. For example, 看 kàn “look” - 看看 kànkān “look”, 听 tīng “listen” - 听听 tīngtīng “listen”, 想 xiǎng “think” - 想想 xiǎngxiǎng “think”. If the verb has a third tone, then its first syllable, when it is repeated, usually becomes the second tone. For example; 讲 jiǎng “to speak” – 讲讲 Jiǎng•Jiǎng “to tell” .

Reduplicative pattern of monosyllabic verbs 'A - A': The reduplicative form of monosyllabic verbs in most cases uses the morpheme 一 yī, which indicates that the action occurs in a short period of time between their components. For example, 看一看 "look", 想一想 "think", 听一听 "listen". This reduplicative verb pattern is "A-A" and is synonymous with the "AA" reduplicative pattern. This model serves to form a new form of the word.

你可以用一用这支圆珠笔

“You can use this pen”;

你听一听，他说得对不对？

“Listen, is he right?”

In Chinese, almost all monosyllabic verbs have a form based on the reduplication pattern of "AA" and "A 一 A".

When reduplicative verbs are used with the suffix 了 le, which expresses that the action happened in the past tense, the suffix 了 is placed after the first component of the reduplicative verb, i.e. “A 了 A”: 看了看 "to look". The placement of verb-specific suffixes after the first component of the verb is associated with the joint use of the verb and the counter word.

Modern writers still use numbers today in verb repetition. The Chinese scholar Li Gao writes in his book “现代汉语动词研究” Xiandai hanyu dongci yanjiu” (“Analysis of Verbs in Modern Chinese”) that “the use of a verb in verbal repetition together with the number ‘一’ expresses the one-time action” . However, in modern Chinese, the use of the number '一' to repeat verbs does not indicate that the action

happened once, but expresses its brevity. For example, if 看一看 kan in medieval Chinese meant “look (look) once”, and 摸一摸 meant “stroke once”, then in modern Chinese it means “look”, “stroke”, that is, movement looks gradual.

Reduplicate model of monosyllabic verbs ‘A 来 A 去’: a monosyllabic verb can be repeated when used with additional words denoting direction (the meaning of 来 lai in this model is “to come, the meaning of 去 qu is to go”). At the same time, the unit formed according to this model indicates that the movement (action) occurs over a certain long period of time with repetition:

在书店里，我看来看去，只卖了这么一本书

“Walking in a bookstore, I only bought this book”;

他焦急地在房间里走来走去，不知道怎么办才好

“He looked anxious, walked around the room back and forth and thought “what would I do right”.

You can also put 过来 or 过去 after the verb, i.e. ‘A 过来 A 过去’, for example:

夜已经很深了，还有人在我窗前走过来走过去，害得我睡不着觉

“At midnight, a man walked back and forth under my window, I was frightened and could not sleep”;

这件事他说过来说过去不知说了多少遍了

“He talked about this problem, and talked, I can’t even say how many times he repeated it.”

The Chinese scientist, Professor Lui Shu-xia in his book "中国语法研究" ("Chinese writing"), based on examples such as 想来想去, 跑来跑去, gives information about the appearance of reduplication in the Chinese language 'A 来 A 去'. As he writes, in a particular repetition of a verb, the verbs 来 and 去 can be used, which determine the direction of movement. At the same time, S. E. Yakhontov in his monograph "The category of the verb in Chinese" understands this phenomenon of the verb not as a reduplication of the verb, but as “combination of a verb.” In our opinion, this is one of the models of verb reduplication, where the same verbs are used instead of "A": 说来说去, 跑来跑去.

Contrary to the opinion of S.E. Yakhontov, it can be said that the repetition of verbs can express not only the brevity of the action, but also the fact that the action takes place in a slightly longer time (based on the construction of reduplication ‘A 来 A 去’).

A.A. Dragunov notes that the repetition of a verb can give two different meanings: a) strengthening the action and b) weakening the action. However, according to S.E. Yakhontov, the repetition of the verb indicates only a slowdown in movement. In verb repetition, the strengthening of the action is expressed through adjectives and adverbs that are used together with verbs:

请您好好的想想，然后给我答案

“Please think carefully and then tell me the answer.”

The reduplicative model of the verbs 'A 来 A 去' can indicate the intensification of an action and its performance over a long period of time:

她想来想去想不到结论

“He was constantly thinking, yet he could not come to a final decision.”

The repetition of the verb, according to S.E. Yakhontov, cannot indicate that the action occurs without repetition. “The repetition of verbs indicates that the action is only happening for a short period of time,” he says. Although in the reduplicative model of the verbs "A 来 A 去" it is seen that the action occurs without repetition.

Reduplicate pattern of monosyllabic verbs '东 A 西 A': This pattern of verbs in Chinese is used to indicate that an action takes place without repetition. This reduplicative model is characteristic mainly of colloquial Chinese, and its scope is comparatively narrower. For example, 东找, 西找 (“search from the west, seek from the east”), that is, “search here, seek there” (“search everywhere”). The word 东 in the reduplicative model ‘东 A 西 A’ (东“garb”, 西“sharq”) of monosyllabic verbs is translated into Uzbek as “this”, and the word 西 as “that”:

我们找他半天, 东找, 西找, 从什么地方也找不到

“We looked for him for half a day, looked there, looked here, couldn’t find him anywhere.”

Reduplicative pattern of monosyllabic verbs ‘A 巴 A 巴’: This reduplicative verb pattern is widespread in Chinese and is mainly used in colloquial Chinese:

等到老太太来到, 李小姐才把她劝巴劝巴到屋里去等汽车¹

“After they took Ms. Li, Ms. Li urged him several times to have the car wait at home”;

他也只好拿出笑脸来: “不怕, 咱们把东西卖巴卖巴, 租一个小屋, 再想办法

“Smiling, he said, “Don’t be afraid, we will buy everything we need and rent a small house, and then we will think of something.”

This model of verbs serves to soften the tone. Softening tone is expressed through the consonant 巴 BA as an auxiliary word. There are not many verbs with such a reduplicative pattern.

Reduplicative model of two-syllable verbs 'ABAB': when a two-syllable verb is repeated, each of its components must be repeated, that is, in the form of ABAB (A, B - there will be two syllables of the verb). In this case, the first syllable has its own tone and is read with an accent on it, the third syllable also has its own tone, and the second and fourth syllables are read with a light tone. For example, the word 讨论 "to discuss" can be read as 讨论讨论 "to discuss", 研究 "to check", 研究研究 "to check".

The reduplicative verb denotes the degree, the intensity of the repetition of an action.

In Chinese, almost all monosyllabic verbs can be repeated. However, the vast majority of disyllabic verbs do not have this feature.

¹李稿。现代汉语动词研究。—北京。1956年。—页 111.

The meaning and features of the use of reduplicative verbs

The reduplicative verb expresses a quantitative value-essence, that is, the time of action is short or the action is short. But upon closer observation, it becomes obvious that the semantic meanings of such verbs have rather complex manifestations: some of them characterize the process of action, some express modal meanings, and so on. Below we will look at some aspects:

1) indicates an action that takes place over a short period of time; while the suffix 了 le is usually placed between the repeated verb:

小宁伸了伸舌头，不觉摸了一下脑袋，有嘻嘻笑了起来

“Putting his tongue out, Xiyao Ning involuntarily touched his head with his hand and laughed again”;

欧艳海看了看停在旁边的火车，又看了看从火车下来的人，微笑了一下，就关上眼睛

“Ou Yanghai watched people getting on and off the train that stopped next to him, smiled a little and closed his eyes”;

2) represents an action that has not yet taken place or completed. Two methods can be used for this:

a) by value indicates the action of the attempt; after the reduplicative verb, the auxiliary word 看 can be used, which indicates a desire or attempt:

这个收音机我修不好，你来修修（看）

“I could not fix this receiver, try to fix it (look)”;

你去找小吴想想办法（看）

“Sen Xiyao find him and think about what you can do”;

这个道题他算不上来，我算算（看）

“He could not solve this problem, let me solve (look)”;

叫他生生孩子（看），她就知道做母亲的辛苦了

“Let her first give birth to a child, only then will she learn about maternal concerns”;

b) does not semantically indicate the action of aspiration or attempt; with the verb usually indicating that the action can continue:

你看看，这样写对不对？

“Look, if it’s right to write like that?”;

我的笔不见了，你帮我找找

“My pen is not visible, help me find it”;

请主席休息休息

“Please, chairman, you can rest”;

没有办法，只好暂时挤一挤

“There is no other option, it will only have to be temporarily oppressed.”

The main function of the verb in this is to give a softening tone. In the examples above, if the verbs are not repeated, a rough tone may occur, and a command sense may also be understood;

3) if the reduplicative verb is followed by 就 "immediately", meaning 快 "quickly", then it is understood that the action is short:

你别怕, 我看看就给你, 不要你的

“Don't be afraid, I'll take a look and return it to you, I don't need your thing”;

你等我一下, 我去去就回来

“Wait for me a little, I will go and return quickly”;

4) if there is an assumption in complex sentences, then, as a rule, a simple verb cannot be used in this case. In this case, the verb must be repeated; 一下 can be used after the verb:

补一补 (一下) 还可以戴几年

“After applying the patch, you can wear it for a few more years”;

想一想 (一下) 这件事关系多么重大啊! ²

“Just think how big this business is!”;

这支钢笔修修 (一下) 还能用

“After the repair, this handle can still be used.”

In the presence of a comparison, the verb may not even be used repeatedly:

这双鞋, 补还能穿, 不补就穿不了

“This pair of shoes can be worn after repair, without repair in any way”;

1) a verb that does not indicate the duration of the action, if not used in the sense of trying, is usually not used again:

他把球递给我 (the reduplicative verb cannot be used).

The correct option looks like this:

他把球递给我

"He passed me the ball."

你等一会儿, 我寄寄这封信就回来 (the reduplicative verb cannot be used).

The correct option looks like this:

你等一会儿, 我寄这封信就回来

“Wait a little, I will send this letter and return quickly”;

2) the action that the reduplicative verb expresses usually does not express quantity if it is not constant or definite in time, but often has the meaning “easy”, “convenient”, “in its own way”; used in most cases in consecutive sentences:

他退了休以后, 平常看看书, 下下棋, 跟老朋友们聊聊天, 倒也不寂寞

“After he retires, he usually reads a book, plays chess, chats with friends and is never bored”;

会议已经开完了, 这几天他看看电影, 买卖动西, 收拾收拾行李, 就等着回家了

“The meeting is over, for several days now she has been watching a movie, buying things, putting her bag in order and waiting for the day of departure home”;

打打球, 跑跑步, 就不会失眠了

²陈前软。动词重叠的情况特征及气体的地位, 语言教学与研究。—北京, 2001年。—页 97.

“If you play with the ball, if you walk, then you will not have insomnia.”

In the two sentences above, reduplicative verbs do not express a short time, a small amount, so words representing a long time, a long time can be used before them:

你要好好回记回记那天的情况

“You will remember the event of that day”;

为了全面了解情况，他要多多听听，多多看看，深入调查调查

“He should listen more, observe and study deeply in order to fully comprehend this situation”;

经常打打球，游游泳，对身体有好处

“Playing ball and swimming regularly is good for your health.”

Of the features of the use of the reduplicative verb, special attention should also be paid to the following:

1) a verb expressing an action that is happening at the moment cannot be used repeatedly, for example, cannot be said as follows:

我正在看看书 “I am currently reading a book” or 他们听一听音乐了 “They are listening to music.”

The verb is not reused, even when used after the verb 过 guò, 着 zhe;

2) the action or time of the action, the speed (frequency) of which is expressed by the reduplicative verb, is associated with the expression of the action; if the action or time of action, speed (frequency) are not related to the direction (expression) of behavior, a short period of time or a short period should be indicated, repeated use of the verb is not allowed, in this case only an additional element (compound) of the verb can be used:

~ 刚才他睡了一会儿 – 刚才他睡了睡×

“He just took a nap”;

~ 她哭了一会儿。 – 她哭了哭×

“She cried a little”;

~ 他病了一阵 – 他病了病×

“He's a little sick.”

However, the reduplicative form of the verb can be used in the following sentences:

这几天你睡得太少了，去睡睡吧

“You have been sleeping little for several days, sleep a little”;

你太难过了，哭哭心里会明快些

“You are very tormented, cry, you will feel better.”

Syntactic functions of reduplicative verbs

The reduplicative verb mainly acts as a predicate in a sentence, but in some cases it can also act as a subject:

看看是必要的

“It is necessary to observe”;

她总喜欢多看看，多听听，不喜欢下车伊始，哇啦哇啦的发议论

"He likes to watch and listen more, but doesn't like to spread."

The reduplicative verb does not function as a circumstance or auxiliary element.

A way of negating a reduplicative verb is found in the following.

a) pure and rhetorical interrogative sentences:

你也不想想，他的话还有真的？

“Have you thought yet whether he is telling the truth or not?”;

他怎么没等等我？

“Why didn't he wait for me?”;

b) in sentences expressing an assumption:

这个问题不调查调查就不清楚

“We will not clarify this issue if we do not study it carefully”;

对这种人，不教训教训不行

“It would be wrong not to advise such a person.”

The meaning and usage of the reduplicative verb is very complex, so it is not possible to change the sentence in your own way with the auxiliary words 一下 "a little" or 一会儿 "a little time", which represent a short, short period of time.

The meaning and use of the reduplicative verb is very complex, so it is impossible to change the sentence at will with the help of auxiliary words 一下 "a little" or 一会儿 "a little time", which express a short time, a short period.

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