ECHO-WORD FORMATION IN BANGLA

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This paper describes and analyzes echo-word formation in Bangla, one of the eastern Indo-Aryan languages of South Asia. Echo-word formation, one kind of partial reduplication, has lexical as well as syntactic implications in Bangla grammar. More specifically, this paper investigates different functions of this partial reduplication and presents its unified account in the grammatical system of Bangla.

1 Introduction

Emeneau (1956), Masica (1976) have defined the Indian subcontinent as a "Linguistic area" i.e., an area that includes languages belonging to more than one language family but sharing the linguistic features that prototypically do not belong to a specific language families because of the age long contacts. This linguistic area comprises languages primarily belonging to Indo Aryan, Dravidian, Tibeto-Burman and Austro-Asiatic language family and some language isolates. These genetically unrelated languages share some common traits as a result of their geographical proximity and language contact. Echo words (EW) or Echo Reduplication (ER) is one of such common areal features.

Bangla, an Indo-European, has been influenced by languages of other language families spoken in this linguistic area. These genetically unrelated languages have contributed to Bangla vocabulary and provided the language with some structural forms. Emeneau (1956:10) has claimed that echo words are indeed a pan-Indic trait but Indo-Aryan languages like Bangla have received it from non-Indo-Aryan languages as it has not been found in Indo-European languages.

Echo word formation is a kind of Lexical Reduplication (LR) in which the base word is duplicated (in some cases preceded also) by an echo word which is actually the partially reduplicated form of the base word. It is partially reduplicated rather repeated because of the replacement of the initial phoneme (vowel or consonant) or syllable of its base word. So, ER is basically 'Partial Lexical Reduplication'. The meaning conveyed by the echoed part of a base word is mainly 'and the like or etc.'

(1) a. Bangla
         pʰul -ṭul
         flower-ER   "flowers and the like"

     b. Hindi
         nam-vam
         name-ER "names and the like"

2 Structure of echo words in Indian languages

Echo words are formed mainly by replacing the initial phoneme or syllable of the base words with a completely different phoneme or syllable. These replacing phonemes or syllables vary according to the language, but in a particular language it is more or less fixed and rigid. Echo word formation has been studied by Emeneau 1956, Prof. S.K. Chatterjee 1939, Abbi 1992, Trivedi 1990 etc. and these works mainly focus on the phonological structure of Echo words. Trivedi 1990 has given eight sets that different Indian languages follow in order to form echo words, but Abbi 2018 in her most recent work has given five strategies which analyze the echo word formation in these languages more precisely. Hence five strategies given by Abbi have been followed to describe the echo words of Bangla in the present paper. Five different strategies that Indian languages undergo to form echo words are enumerated below:

First strategy: Replacing the initial phoneme (mostly consonant) of the base word by a specific phoneme that is unique to the particular language.

Second strategy: Initial syllable of the base word gets replaced by an entirely distinct syllable and the remaining part is canonically copied in the formation of the echo word.

Third strategy: Base word is preceded by its echoed counterpart instead of getting followed.

Fourth strategy: Nucleus of the initial syllable of base word is altered by another vowel in order to form the echo word.

Fifth strategy: Forming echo words by expressive morphology.

2.1 Structure of echo-words in Bangla

Bangla follows the first, third and fourth strategies in order to form echo words. First strategy is the most common device to form echo words and Bangla has few words which undergo the third strategy. The fifth strategy is also followed but it is mainly used to form onomatopoeic words in Bangla.

The first strategy can be schematized by the formula: CVX >CVX-C'VX where CVX and C'VX are base word and its echoed counterpart respectively. C is the initial consonant whose alternation with a distinct phoneme i.e. C' triggers the formation of echo words. VX is the remaining part of the base word which is copied in the echoed part and V represents a pure vowel or a diphthong. It has been mentioned that each Indian language has a more or less constant replacing phoneme, Bangla is no exception. Unvoiced retroflex consonant i.e. /ʈ/ is the most commone replacing phoneme in Bangla echo-formation.

(2) a. dzama-ʈama
         dress-ER   "dress and the like"

     b. pen-ʈen
        Pen-ER   "pen and the like"

     c. tsʰele-ʈele
        boy-ER   "boy and the like"

In Bangla the replacing phoneme is /ʈ/. But this language exhibits some instances in which phonemes also occur as replacing phonemes in echo-formation. Bangla unvoiced bilabial aspirated stop i.e. /pʰ/ occurs as replacing phoneme when the base word has /ʈ/ as its initial phoneme.

(3) ʈaka-pʰaka
     Money-ER"Money and the like/etc."

/pʰ/ is also used to form echo words in Bangla when the echo words tend to express the negligence of the speaker as in (3).

(4) amigan-pʰan korbo na
     I   song-ER do-FUT-1P not
     "I shall not sing songs and the like."

Echo word in example (4) expresses the sense of unwillingness in the part of the speaker in activities like singing and the like.

Bangla echo words formed by following the second strategy is very few in number. In case of such echo formation the initial consonant gets dropped in the echoed part and this echoed part precedes the base word. This can be formulated as CVX > VX-CVX, where word initial consonant i.e. C gets dropped and VX, the remaining part, is copied and precedes the base word.

(5) altu-pʰaltu
     ER -nonsense/rubbish
     "nonsense / rubbish and the like"

Here C= /pʰ/, VX= altu, remaining part of the base word pʰaltu "nonsense/rubbish".

Fourth strategy can be represented by- CVX > CVX-CV'X where CV is the first syllable of the base word CVX, V is the nucleus of this syllable and X is the remaining part which gets copied in the echoed part, V' is the replacer vowel/phoneme or nucleus.

(6) gol - gal
     round-ER   "round shaped and the like"

V=/o/, V'= /a/ so, in (6) nucleus /o/ is replaced by a new nucleus i.e. /a/.

(7) dʰaka-dʰuka
     cover-ER   "cover and the like"

In example (7), V= /a/ is replaced by V'= /u/ to form echo word.

Based on the discussion so far, the intermidiary conclusion could be: (a) if the base word has a vowel as its initial phoneme then in its echoed part a phoneme which is mostly a consonant is added to form echo words and (b) if the base word has a consonantal conjunct in its initial position then the first consonant of that conjunct is replaced and the second consonant is dropped in the echo word.

 Rule [a] can be formulated as:

VX > VX-CVX, V is the initial vowel of the base word and a consonant i.e. C is added to form the echo word.

(8) am - ʈam
     mango-ER   "mango etc."

Rule [b] is schematized by the formula:
$C_1C_2VX > C_1C_2VX-C'VX$

(9) prem-ʈrem
     love-ER   "love and all"

3 Types of Bangla echo-words

Echo words have been defined as well as analyzed mainly on the phonological basis. It has been mentioned that echo words express the meaning of "and the like or etc." In other words they echo the meaning of the base words along with the phonological shape of the same. These echo words never occur independently in the language. But Bangla vocabulary contains some echo words which copy or echo the sense of its base word only, that is to say in case of such instances the word that echoes the meaning of base words has its own meaning and independent occurrence but whenever it gets attached to the base word, it loses its original independent status and starts echoing the sense of its base word.

(10) a. dziniʃpɔtro'   "things etc",

     b. 'malpɔtro'   "luggage etc."

     c. 'boipɔtro'   "books and all",

     d   'tsiʈʰipɔtro'   "letters etc."

Bangla word 'pɔtro' originally means "letter", but in 'dziniʃpɔtro' "things", 'malpɔtro' "luggage", 'boipɔtro' "books" it loses its original meaning and echoes the sense of the words it gets attached to. In case of Bangla word 'tsiʈʰipɔtro', 'tsiʈʰi' and 'pɔtro' are synonyms and together they convey the sense of "letters".

Bangla vocabulary contains some pair of words which seem to be echo words in which the initial syllable of the base word get replaced (second strategy of echo word formation seems to get followed here). But if the diachronic study is taken into consideration, it is found that the 'echoed part' of the base word used to be a free morpheme with a lexical meaning but in the course of time it has lost its independent status and at the synchronic level it is serving as a 'echo' to a base word. It may precede or follow the base word.

(11) a. kapor-tsopor   (tsopor< tsupri "small
                          bucket") " clothes etc."

     b. aʃ-paʃ (<Sanskrit arʃe-parʃe, arʃe has no
         independent occurrence now)
         "surroundings"

     c. radz-radzra
         "king and other aristocrats"

[radzrais no longer meaningful and serves as an echo to the base word   'radz' meaning "king" though it does not phonetically echo its base word.]

4 Morpho-syntactic Function of echo words in Bangla

Rabindranath Tagore (1909), Prof. S. K. Chatterjee (1939) etc. have mainly studied phonological structures of Bangla Echo words and not focused on its morpho-syntactic function. Lidz (2000) has analyzed Echo word formation in Kannada and mainly emphasized its morpho-

syntactic status in this language. It has been described in his paper that how echo reduplication in spite of being a morphological rule occurs at both lexical and post-syntactic level in Kannada.

(12) a. bagli-annumuʧ-giʧ-id-e anta hiɭa-biɻa
door-ACC [close-ER]-PST-1P that say-PROH
"Don't say that I closed the door or did related activities."

b. bagli-annumuʧ- id-e-giʧʃide anta hiɭa-biɻa
Door-ACCclose-PST-1P-ERthat say-PROH
"Don't say that I closed the door or did related activities."

In (12a) echo reduplication occurs inside of the inflectional elements-'-id' (past tense marker) and '-e' (first personal marker) while in (12b) it occurs outside of the inflectional markers. So, echo reduplication is occurring both at the lexical and phrasal or syntactic level in Kannada respectively. Similarly echo reduplication can be allowed by Bangla words of different grammatical categories post syntactically as well as lexically i.e. this word formation process applies equally to words, subparts of words and entire phrasal categories. Therefore , morpho-syntactic function of Bangla echo words has been analyzed in this paper by following Lidz's work on Kannada Echo words.

4.1 Echo formation of Different Grammatical Categories and Their functions

Bangla words belonging to different grammatical categories undergo echo word formation, though this morphological rule cannot affect Bangla pronouns and adverbs. Nouns, adjectives, verbs, indeclinable words of Bangla can be echoed but they have some restrictions i.e. words belonging to these grammatical categories do not occur with their echoed counterpart in all kinds of syntactic constructions. Echo word formation is generally used in negative statements, prohibition, commands, and interrogative sentences. Some instances of echo formation in declarative sentences are also found.

Echo word formation of Bangla nouns and verbs with different inflectional markers are mainly discussed in the present paper.

4.1.1 Nouns

Echo reduplication applies to both Bangla common nouns and proper nouns, though the instances of echo formation of proper names are rare. Bangla nouns with inflectional markers (case markers/ plural markers) generally allow the echo reduplication inside the inflectional markers i.e. the base is reduplicated first, and then the inflectional markers get added to the word. In such cases echo reduplication occurs at the lexical level.

(13) boi-ʈoigulo gutʃʰijerakʰo
[Book-ER]PL arrange-NF keep-2P-IMP
"Arrange the books etc..."

In (13) Bangla noun 'boi' meaning "book" is reduplicated first resulting in 'boi-ʈoi' "books etc." ,then the plural marker '-gulo' gets added to this reduplicated base and becomes [boi-ʈoi] gulo. So, echo reduplication can be allowed inside the Bangla plural marker.

(14) ami ekʰane kono lok-ʈokke tsinina
I here any [man-ER]ACC know-1p-PRES no
"I don't know anyone here."

Example (14) shows that the Bangla accusative marker '-ke' is added to a reduplicated base i.e. [lok-ʈok]. So, echo reduplication is applied inside the Bangla case marker like plural one.

Echo reduplication cannot be applied outside these above mentioned inflectional markers as *boigulo-ʈoigulo and *lokke-ʈokke are considered as ill formed constructions in Bangla.

Application of echo reduplication to the Bangla proper nouns are found in some specific

constructions such as interrogative and negative constructions in order to express speaker's doubts about some people or their activities, for example:

(15) a. ram-ʈam keu eʃetsʰe ki?
Ram-ER anyone come-3SPRES.PRF what
"Has Ram or anyone else come?"

b. adz ram-ʈam keu aʃeni bodʰhoj
Today Ram-ER anyone come-
3p.PRES.PRF.NEG may be
"May be Ram or anyone else has not come today."

4.1.2 Verbs

The echo words of Bangla verbs copy the tense, person markers of the base words.

(16) ami kʰabo- ʈabo na
I eat-1p.FUT-ER not
"I shall not eat and the like."

In (4.1.2.a) echo word of the finite verb 'kʰabo'
(root =kʰa) "shall eat" is '–ʈabo' which has the same tense and person marker or inflectional suffix '-bo', hence it can be said that echo word formation is applied outside these inflectional suffixes or at the post syntactic level.
Echo formation of Bangla finite verbs is mainly found in negative sentences while non-finite verbs with echo formation can occur in affirmative sentences.

(17) ami kʰeje-ʈe jeskule dzabo
I eat-NF-ER school to go-1p.FUT
"I shall go to school after having some food."

Like Bangla nouns, some Bangla verbs allow echo word formation inside their inflectional markers (i.e. at lexical level) and some verbs allow it outside the markers (i.e. at post syntactic level).

(18) ami gaite-ʈaite parina
I [sing-INF]-ER cannot
"I cannot sing etc."

In (18) Bangla infinitive marker '-te' is added to the base first then the echo formation is applied to the whole word 'gaite' meaning "to sing". Here, echo word formation is applied outside the inflectional marker or at post syntactic level. Had it been applied to the base first, then it would result in an ill formed construction i.e. *[gai-ʈai]te.

(19) ami kal kek banije-ʈanijetsʰilam"
I yesterday cake [make-ER]PERF.1p.PST
"I made a cake yesterday."

In (19) echo formation is occurring at the lexical level as at first the verb is reduplicated and then the inflectional markers are getting added to that reduplicated base. So, in case of [banije-ER]tsʰilam, echo formation is affecting the sub parts of the word banijetsʰilam "made".

5 Conclusions

Echo words echo the meaning of the word which they get attached to. They have the power of adding a meaning of 'and the like'. 'et cetera', 'such and such' and also the meaning of 'ignorance or negligence' to the base word. So, they cannot be considered as meaningless and they are not 'empty morphemes'. These echo words rather 'echo morphemes' may be considered as one kind of 'bound base' existing in Indian languages.

Abbreviations

ACC	- Accusative case
ER	-Echo Reduplication
FUT	-Future tense
IMP	- Imperative
INF	- Infinitive
NF	-Non finite
PL	- Plural
PRES	- Present tense
PRES.PRF	-Present Perfect
PERF	-Perfective particle
PROH	-Prohibitive
PST	-Past tense
1p	- First person
2p	- Second person

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