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**PHONOLOGICAL, MORPHOSYNTACTIC AND SEMANTIC  
PROPERTIES OF REDUPLICATED ONOMATOPOEIAS  
IN KARAKALPAK**

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Reduplication, the repetition of a word or its part, is a linguistic mechanism found across many languages, including Karakalpak. This process is particularly common in onomatopoeic words. Karakalpak onomatopoeia exhibits various types of reduplication, including total, ablaut, echo and synonymous reduplication. These reduplicative patterns often convey the repetition, duration and continuity of sound events. Karakalpak onomatopoeia has some phonological features, including vowel and consonant frequencies and a preference for closed syllables. This paper examines phonological, morphosyntactic and semantic properties of reduplicated onomatopoeia in Karakalpak.

**Keywords:** Karakalpak language, reduplication, onomatopoeia, types of reduplication, function, semantics.

**ФОНОЛОГИЧЕСКИЕ, МОРФОСИНТАКСИЧЕСКИЕ  
И СЕМАНТИЧЕСКИЕ ОСОБЕННОСТИ РЕДУПЛИЦИРОВАННЫХ  
ЗВУКОПОДРАЖАНИЙ В КАРАКАЛПАКСКОМ ЯЗЫКЕ**

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Редупликация, повторение слова или его части, является лингвистическим механизмом, встречающимся во многих языках, включая каракалпакский. Этот процесс особенно распространен в звукоподражательных словах. Каракалпакские звукоподражания демонстрируют различные типы редупликации, включая полную, аблаутную, эхо- и синонимическую редупликации. Эти редупликативные паттерны часто передают повторяемость, длительность и непрерывность звуковых событий. Каракалпакские звукоподражания имеют некоторые фонологические особенности, включая частоту гласных и согласных звуков, а также предпочтение закрытых слогов. В

данной статье рассматриваются фонологические, морфосинтаксические и семантические свойства редуцированных звукоподражаний в каракалпакском языке.

**Ключевые слова:** каракалпакский язык, редупликация, звукоподражание, типы редупликации, функция, семантика.

## **Introduction**

Karakalpak is an agglutinative language belonging to the Kipchak-Nogai subgroup of the Kipchak branch of the Turkic language family. Native speakers of Karakalpak live mainly in the Republic of Karakalpakstan in Uzbekistan. Karakalpak is also spoken in the Khorezm and Ferghana regions of Uzbekistan, the Dashoguz region of Turkmenistan, in some regions of Kazakhstan, the Astrakhan region of Russia and Afghanistan. Spoken by about 870,000 people, the language is considered endangered.

In Karakalpak, onomatopoeic words are considered a subgroup of imitative words (i.e. mimetics), which, along with interjections, represent a single category of words [1, p. 235]. In some works, onomatopoeias are also treated as a subgroup of imitative words [3; 6]. Baskakov refers to onomatopoeic words as ‘sound imitative words’. Along with sound imitative words, imitative words also encompass “image imitative words” [1, p. 239].

N. Baskakov characterizes Karakalpak onomatopoeias as those that imitate animal noises and sounds of knocking, noise, clapping, crunching, and so on [1, p. 235]. According to U. Embergenov, onomatopoeic words imitate natural sounds, sounds created from the movement of objects, sounds caused by the collision of objects, human sounds, animal and bird sounds [3, p. 17]. Baskakov further defines onomatopoeias as words that imitate “involuntary” human sounds, animal noises, and sounds produced by objects [1, p. 239].

## **Methodology**

Reduplication is the “repetition of phonological material within a word for semantic or grammatical purposes” [9, p. 11]. Reduplication is observed in many

languages, including Karakalpak, and it frequently occurs in onomatopoeic words.

Many studies have been conducted on the peculiarities of onomatopoeic words in the Karakalpak language. Notable research on reduplicated onomatopoeic words in Karakalpak has been carried out by N. Baskakov [1], A. Nazhimov [5], A. Bekbergenov [2], U. Embergenov [3] and others.

This paper aims to conduct phonological, morphosyntactic and semantic analyses of reduplicated onomatopoeias in Karakalpak.

### **Main results and discussion**

The phonological features of onomatopoeic words are determined by their basic characteristics, including the use of vowels and consonants, the sequence of sounds, possible syllable structures, and possible syllable combinations.

Karakalpak has nine vowel phonemes (/a, æ, e, i, o, œ, u, y, uʊ/), which are employed in onomatopoeias. Of the nine vowels, /a, uʊ/ are the most frequent, and /æ, œ/ are the least common vowels. The other phonemes /e, i, o, u, y/ are commonly used in Karakalpak onomatopoeias. There are twenty-five consonant phonemes: /m, n, ŋ, p, t, k, q, b, d, g, ts̄, tʃ̄, f, s, ʃ, x, h, v, z, ʒ, ɣ, l, j, w, r/. The fifteen consonant phonemes /m, ŋ, p, t, k, q, b, d, g, s, ʃ, ʒ, ɣ, l, r/ frequently occur in onomatopoeias. The consonant phonemes /n, j, k, g, z, w/ do not appear often. The phonemes /ts̄, tʃ̄, f, x, h, v/ can only occur in onomatopoeic loanwords. The components of the Karakalpak reduplicative onomatopoeias are not subject to sound change [3, p. 44].

Karakalpak reduplicative onomatopoeias prefer closed syllables rather than open syllables in the final position, as in *shuq-shuq* ‘sound of a mouse squeaking, the chirping of birds, and the sound of a grasshopper chirping’, *ǵars-ǵurs* ‘a sound of a hammer hitting something’, *shaldır-shúldır* ‘a sound of rippling, rushing, running and flowing water’, and *lıq-lıq* ‘sound of a hiccup’. However, there are a few examples of onomatopoeias ending in open syllables, such as *jalba-julba* ‘in tatters, in rags’, *mulja-mulja* ‘broken’, and *árre-tárre* ‘haphazardly; messy, clumsy’.

Karakalpak onomatopoeias are usually monosyllabic or disyllabic and exhibit the following structures: VC, CVC, VCC, CVCC, CVCV, CVCVC, VCCVC and CVCCVC. Trisyllabic onomatopoeias are rare, as in *ǵojalaq* ‘dirty, grimy’. These

monosyllabic or disyllabic structures are also found in reduplicated forms, for example, *iz-iz* ‘a buzzing sound’, *toq-tuq* ‘a sound of knocking’, *shart-shurt* ‘a cracking sound’, *dabır-dabır* ‘a sound of hubbub, clamor’, and *dańǵır-dańǵır* ‘sounds of knocking, rumbling’.

Many onomatopoeias in Karakalpak occur only in a reduplicated form. In typological studies, reduplication can be full or partial, and further partial reduplication can be classified into “logically possible subtypes” [8, p. 304]. Karakalpak onomatopoeias exhibit four types of reduplication: total reduplication, ablaut reduplication, echo reduplication, and synonymous reduplication.

Total reduplication, which involves the repetition of the entire word, occurs more frequently than other types. A few examples of this type are *pısh-pısh* ‘sound of whispering’, *ǵaq-ǵaq* ‘sound of crows cawing’, *ǵırs-ǵırs* ‘sound of hitting with a hammer’, *tors-tors* ‘sound of an unexpectedly falling body’, *qıńq-qıńq* ‘sound of strumming, jingling’, and *tıq-tıq* ‘sound of a stick striking’. Nazhimov mentions that some reduplicated onomatopoeias of full type “are used only in pairs” (*pir-pir uyıqlaw* ‘snoring’, *eńk-eńk jılaw* ‘crying, sobbing’) [5, p. 25].

Ablaut reduplication, which entails reduplication with vowel alternation, occasionally appears. Examples of this type are *shirt-shurt* ‘sound of crunching’, *tákir-túkir* ‘sound of knocking, rumbling’, *sart-surt* ‘a clapping or cracking sound’, and *shaw-shuw* ‘shout, commotion; noise and uproar’. These forms are created by the “repetition of a phonetic variant” of an onomatopoeic word [5, p. 17] or their second component lacks semantic meaning [2, p. 70].

Echo reduplication, which involves reduplication with a change of the initial consonant, can be found in some Karakalpak onomatopoeias, such as *shij-pij* ‘sound of sizzling meat’ and *bıǵan-jıǵan* ‘sound of commotion’.

Synonymous reduplication, which involves the repetition of the same meaning [4, p. 70], rarely occurs, for example, *saldır-ǵúldır* ‘sound of thunder, rumbling’, *sıbir-ǵúbir* ‘sound of whispering’, and *satır-ǵútır* ‘a sound of cracking, knocking, thunder’. However, such words are often referred to as ablaut reduplication or echo reduplication, as they involve a vowel change along with a consonant change.

Moreover, Bekbergenov [2, p. 70] and Nazhimov [5, p. 8] classify these words as “paired”, representing a separate group of compounds. Nevertheless, they should be classified as synonymous reduplicatives as both components in *saldır-gúldır*, *sıbir-gúbir*, and *satır-gútir* are content words.

In some cases, an affix is inserted between identical components, i.e. the affix is attached to the first component, for example, *pańqa-pańq* ‘boom’, *tarsa-tars* ‘a cracking sound’, *dúmpá-dúmp* ‘noise, uproar’, *gúrpá-gúrp* ‘boom’, *góqo-góq* ‘sound of a chicken, a pheasant or a rooster’. The affix can be mainly *a*, sometimes *á* or *o* [3, p. 48].

Additionally, onomatopoeic words in the Karakalpak language can be triplicated, quadruplicated, and repeated multiple times [3, p. 48], though less frequently than other reduplicative patterns. Examples include *ır-ır-ır* ‘sound of a dog growling’, *lıq-lıq-lıq* ‘gurgling sounds of water’, *dúk-dúk-dúk-dúk* ‘sounds of hard impacts or gunshots’, and *diń-diń-diń-diń-diń* ‘sound of constant ringing, e.g., in the ears. This phenomenon is widespread in other languages of the world. For example, in English the onomatopoeic ideophone [ʃ-ʃ-ʃ-ʃ-ʃ ...] ‘be quiet!’ illustrates the repetition of “single segments” [7, p. 1].

In Karakalpak animal, bird, insect names and other names of objects, actions or images have an onomatopoeic origin. For example, *shekshek* ‘a grasshopper; a locust’ is obviously derived from reduplicated onomatopoeia *shek-shek*, which is used to imitate the sound it produces. Also, *tuqtıq* ‘a small bird’ and *shımshıq* ‘a sparrow’ are derived from the sound of their call. Other examples are *saqsaq* ‘a type of rat’, *mijmij* ‘chatterbox, chatty/annoying person’, and *lıqlıq* ‘a hiccup’.

Onomatopoeias can function as subject (1), adverbials (2), modifiers (3), object (4) and predicates (5):

(1)	<i>Shambır-shambır</i>	<i>esit-il-di</i>	
	sound of splashing	hear-PASS-PST	
	‘The sound of splashing water was heard’		
(2)	<i>Taslar</i>	<i>tasır-tusır</i>	<i>tús-ti</i>
	stone-PL	sound of knocking, rumbling	fall-PST
	‘The stones fell with a crash’		
(3)	<i>Ayǵısh-uyǵısh</i>	<i>jol-lar</i>	

	criss-cross	road-PL	
	‘Intersecting roads’		
(4)	<i>Tarelka-lar-din</i>	<i>shaqir-shuqir-i</i>	<i>esit-il-di</i>
	plate-PL-GEN	crackling-POSS	hear-PASS-PST
	‘The crackling of plates was heard’		
(5)	<i>Suw</i>	<i>shalp-shalp</i>	<i>et-ti</i>
	water	sound of gurgling	do-PST
	‘The water gurgled’		

Karakalpak onomatopoeias express the natural and artifact sounds, which are commonly found in many related forms based on sound symbolism and reduplications. Consequently, natural sounds include human sounds, animal sounds, and sounds of natural elements (such as water, air, earth, fire). Human sounds can be further classified into the human voice (*gubir-gubir* ‘sound of people whispering, murmuring’, *gawir-gawir* ‘sound of noise, chatter and hubbub’) and body sounds (*dup-dup* ‘sound of a heart beating rapidly’, *qorr-qorr* ‘sound of snoring’). There are also numerous onomatopoeias that imitate the animal sounds, such as mammals (*shiq-shiq* ‘sound of a mouse squeaking’, *waw-waw* ‘sound of a dog barking’), birds (*gaq-gaq* ‘sound of crows cawing’, *goqo-goq* ‘sound of a chicken, a pheasant or a rooster’), insects (*shiq-shiq* ‘sound of a grasshopper chirping’) and others (*barq-barq* ‘sound of a frog croaking’). It is evident that the onomatopoeias in the examples are in reduplicated forms although there are some non-reduplicated ones (*pir* ‘sound of snoring’). Cross-linguistically, reduplication is typically employed to express a wide range of meanings, such as “increased quantity, intensity, diminutiveness, and attenuation” [2, p. 325]. Moreover, these meanings can encompass “distribution, plurality, repetition, customary activity, increase of size, added intensity, [and] continuance” [4, p. 325]. In the case of Karakalpak onomatopoeias, reduplication often conveys the repetition, duration, and continuity of sound events. The sounds of natural elements (such as water, air, earth, fire) also occur in reduplicated forms, for example, *tasir-tasir* ‘sound of rain falling heavily’ (of rain), *gúw-gúw* ‘sound of wind blowing’, *shart-shurt* ‘a cracking sound of a tree’, *pishir-pishir* ‘sound of crackling fire’.

Furthermore, artifact sounds, including those of musical instruments, vehicles, machinery, electronic devices, weaponry, and signalling equipment (such as bells and gongs), exist in reduplicated onomatopoeias in Karakalpak. For instance, *gúńgir-gúńgir* ‘sound produced by the beating of a drum’, *gúrr-gúrr* ‘sound of a tractor’, *shúńgir-shúńgir* ‘sound of the telephone ringing’, *pańq-pańq* ‘sounds of gunshots’, *dań-duń* ‘sound of the bell ringing’ and so on.

Reduplicated onomatopoeias in Karakalpak exhibit synonymy in various categories. For instance, *patır-patır*, *tars-tars*, and *shart-shart* can mean ‘a cracking sound’. Also, reduplication is a common feature of Karakalpak, used to distinguish between single sounds and their continuous repetitions. For example, *dańgir* ‘a single sound of knocking, rumbling’ and *dańgir-dańgir* ‘repeated sounds of knocking, rumbling’. Some Karakalpak onomatopoeias can represent different sounds. For example, *gúldir-gúldir* can mean ‘sound of horse neighing’ and ‘sound of rumble, thunder’.

This paper has conducted the phonological, morphosyntactic and semantic analyses of reduplicated onomatopoeias in the Karakalpak language. Karakalpak onomatopoeias exhibit various phonological properties, including frequent use of particular vowels and consonants, and a preference for closed syllables. Reduplication plays a main role in Karakalpak onomatopoeias, with total reduplication being the most common type. Other forms include ablaut reduplication, echo reduplication, and synonymous reduplication. Reduplication often conveys the repetition, duration, and continuity of sound events. Karakalpak onomatopoeias represent a wide range of sounds, including those produced by humans, animals, natural elements, and artifacts. They function as members of various word classes.

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