Texts, language consultants & linguistics

Understanding Reduplication in Neverver

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The Neverver Documentation Project

Background

- Oceanic language
- Population approx. 560
- Originally located in interior
- Undocumented & unwritten

Project outputs

- grammatical description
- development of community orthography & literacy materials
- collection of audio recordings
- collection of digital images
- video material (recorded in New Zealand)

The evidence: full and partial

te 'hit'	*te-te* 'fight reflexive'
dri 'turn'	*dri-dri* 'roll iterative'
tas 'scratch'	*tas-tas* 'file, sharpen iterative'
nok 'knock'	*nok-nok* 'knock iteration'
vavu 'walk'	*va-vavu* 'walk durative'
malu 'leave'	*mal-malu* 'disperse plural action'
takhtakh 'damage, destroy'	*takh-takhtakh* 'damage, destroy prohibitive'

Left-to-Right selective

tnga 'search'	*ta-tnga* 'search duration/emphasis'
kkekh 'call s.o.'	*ke-kkekh* 'call s.o. plural object'
vkhal 'fight'	*va-vkhal* 'grate iteration'
sber 'reach'	*se-sber* 'touch'
rrav 'laugh'	*ra-rrav* 'laugh habitual'
lles 'bathe'	*le-lles* 'bathe habitual'

Reduplication Constraint:
In a reduplicated construction, the reduplicative prefix (or prefixes) is realised by the structure CV(C).

Reduplication

Formation and syllabification rules for reduplicated stems in Neverver
(After Broselow and McCarthy 1984:27)

a. Create an unassociated copy of the phonemic melody of the stem.
b. Associate from the copied phonemic melody onto the CV-skeleton one-to-one from left to right filling the available CVC prefix positions, applying any lexical constraints.
c. Syllabify according to the general syllabification rules for Neverver:
i. Peak formation: Assign each V to a syllable node.
ii. Onset formation: Associate one C with each right-hand V (in accordance with syllable constraint).
iii. Coda formation: Associate any single remaining C with a left-hand V (in accordance with syllable constraint).

If the verb stem has an unassociated C, it takes precedence over any copied Cs and is associated with the preceding V of the reduplicative prefix.

d. Erase all material from the phonemic melody or the CV skeleton that remains unassociated.

Texts, language consultants, and linguistics: Understanding reduplication in Neverver

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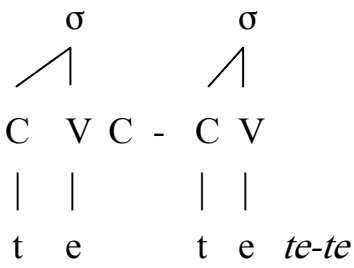
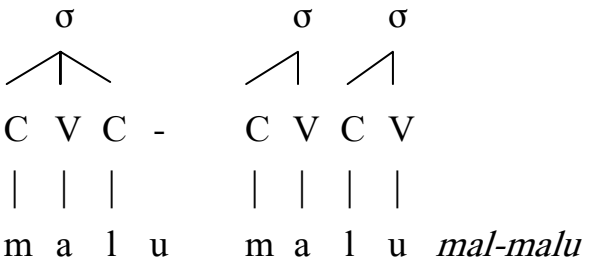
(1) CV stem: reduplication of *te*

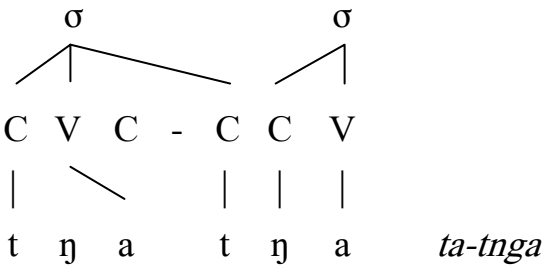
'hit, cut'



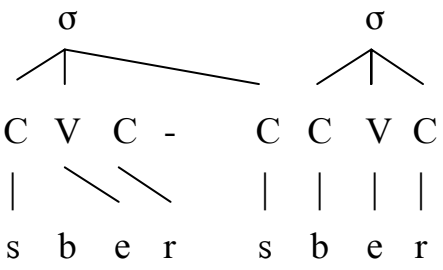
(2) CV stem: reduplication of *malu* 'go out'



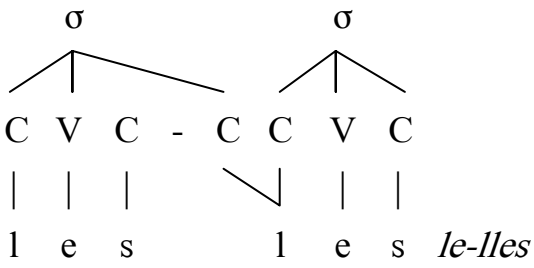
(3) CCV stem: reduplication of *tnga* 'search visually)'



(4) CCV stem: reduplication of *sber* 'reach'



(5) CCV stem: reduplication of *lles* ‘bathe’



Functions of Reduplication	In conjunction with…	Examples	
Unspecified object deletion		*vul* 'buy'	*vulvul* 'go shopping'
Inherent object		*leb* 'carry s.t.'	*lebleb* 'carry a load of food'
Incorporated object	loss of noun marker *n(V)-*	*sil* 'burn, roast'	*sil-sil-kha* 'burn trees'
		nakha 'tree, wood'	
Reflexive/Reciprocal	pronominal object co-referential to subject argument	*te* 'hit'	*At-te-te adr* 'they all fought each other'
Nominalisation	noun marker *n(V)-* and suffix *–ian*	*sien* 'think, consider'	*ni-si-sien-ian* 'thought, decision'
Stative verbs	(the marker *m-)*	---	*m-roro* 'be withered'
		tur 'stand up'	*tur-tur* 'be standing'
Verb modification	nuclear serial verb	---	*ngis-langlang* 'smile drunkenly'
Noun modification		*tev* 'begin to grow'	*nani tev-tev* 'germinated coconut'
Iterative		*tukh* 'strike'	*tukh-tukh* 'strike repeatedly'
Durative action	(multiple reduplicative affixes)	*dum* 'run'	*dum-dum-dum* 'run on and on'
Habitual	(progressive aspect)	*lles* 'bathe'	*le-lles* 'bathe habitually'
Diminutive	V2 nuclear serial verb *da*	*sakh* 'go up'	*sakh-sakh-da* 'go up a bit'
Participant number (S/P)		*dum* 'run'	*dum-dum* 'all run'
		likh 'tie up'	*likh-likh* 'tie up a lot of s.t.'
Prohibition	impersonal subject/mood prefix	*ver* 'say'	*ar-ver-ver si* 'Don't say it'
Inability		*vu~uv* 'go'	*nimt-uv-uv mo si* 'we couldn't go any more'
Negative condition	conditional adverb *besi* 'if'	*lav* 'get'	*Besi abit-lav-lav si* 'if they hadn't got...'
Semantic extension of Verbs		*vkhal* 'fight'	*va-vkhal* 'grate'
		dev 'carry (fire)'	*devdev* 'damp a fire'
Inherent/Fossilised Reduplication			

Table 1. Functions of reduplication in Neverver

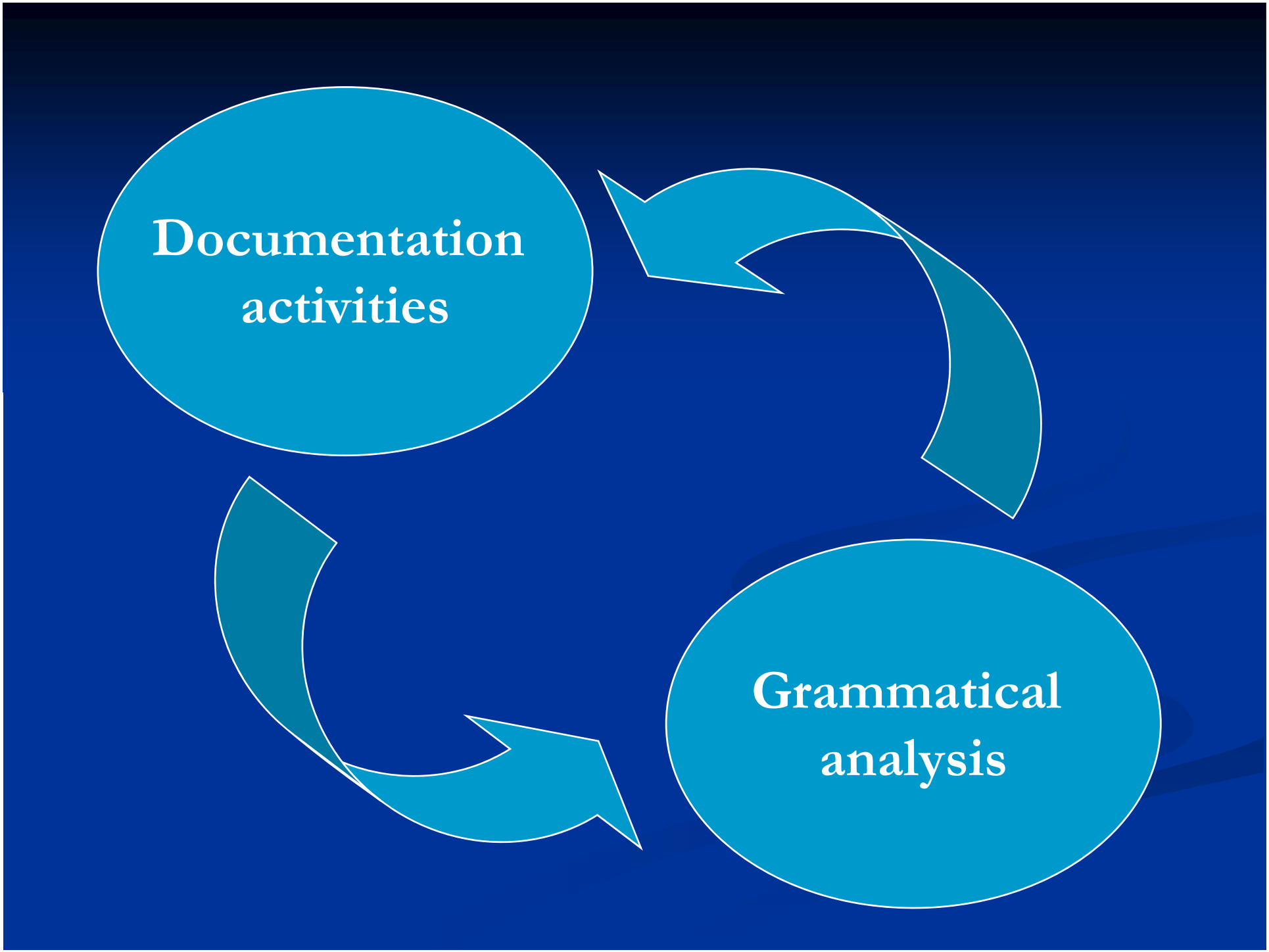
Functions of Reduplication

- Unspecified object deletion
- Inherent object
- Incorporated object
- Reflexive/Reciprocal
- Nominalisation (V to N)
- Stative verbs
- Verb serialisation
- Noun modification
- Iterative
- Durative action
- Habitual
- Diminutive
- Participant number (S/P)
- Prohibition
- Inability
- Negative condition

Reduplication serves as a marker of reduced or low transitivity

Not necessarily reduplication

bor	1. 'be shy' 2. 'be tasteless'	*borbor*	'be of rough texture'
vas	'four'	*vasvas*	1. 'be powerful' 2. 'start a pandanas mat'
lov	'flood'	*lovlov*	'beat out/flat (of walling bamboo)'


Documentation activities
Grammatical analysis