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INTENSIFYING REDUPLICATION IN ESTONIAN

Abstract. The article focuses on (non-textual) reduplicative constructions in Estonian. From the formal point of view, reduplication in Estonian is total reduplication. From the semantic point of view, reduplication in Estonian reveals three main types: 1) intensifying reduplication, e.g. *vana-vana mees* 'old-old man'; 2) quantifying reduplication, e.g. *(aina) inimesed ja inimesed* 'only people and people'; 3) aspectual reduplication, e.g. *jookseb ja jookseb* 'is running and running'. The article will focus on intensifying reduplication. This type of reduplication is represented by the largest number of constructions, and here the opposition between scalar and totality reduplication is most clearly manifested. Scalar reduplication is manifested in coordinate constructions, comparative constructions, and genitival attributive constructions. At this coordinate reduplication is mostly asyndetic. Totality reduplication occurs in the form of relative and equative constructions. The reduplicative constructions in Estonian will be compared with similar constructions in other Finno-Ugric languages, mainly Finnish.

Keywords: Estonian, Finnish, syntax, reduplication, intensification, aspect.

Since the groundbreaking treatment of reduplication by Edith Moravcsik (1978) reduplication as a grammatical device has attracted increasingly more attention, especially in the recent work by Thomas Stolz (e.g. 2004; 2006; 2007; 2009). The University of Graz has organized two international conferences on this topic. The first Graz Conference on Reduplication (2002) focused on empirical evidence and typology, the second conference (2007) addressed diachrony and productivity. The papers of the first conference were published in "Studies on Reduplication" (2005). The Graz Database on Reduplication is being set up, the objective of which is to provide access to reduplication data of the languages of the world. The present article deals with reduplication in Estonian with a focus on the previous work of the author (Erel't, Punttila 1992; 1993; 1999; Erel't 1997) and taking into account the developments that have taken place in the meanwhile.

The present paper defines reduplication rather broadly as a construction where to a word stem is attached another stem that is formally and semantically identical to the former, and the resulting construction is in systematic functional contrast with a single occurrence of the word stem, e.g. Est. *suur-suur maja* 'a big-big house'. Only structural types of syntactic

reduplicative constructions and their meanings will be considered leaving aside their actual use in written and spoken language (frequency, various discourse functions etc.). Reduplication in Estonian conversation has been discussed in Keevallik 2000.

The article will focus on reduplicative constructions in Estonian, but sometimes comparisons will be drawn with similar constructions in other Finno-Ugric languages, mainly Finnish. One has to state in the very beginning that when comparing the Finno-Ugric languages, for example, with the Austronesian languages or with languages spoken in Africa and America, reduplication in the Finno-Ugric languages shows a modest degree of grammaticalization and is usually accompanied by a psycho-pragmatic shade of meaning (emotional stance, non-neutral (i.e. positive or negative) attitude, surprise), which makes it sometimes difficult to distinguish the latter from textual reduplication. Nevertheless, one can find a whole range of reduplicative constructions that express specific meanings.

From the formal point of view, reduplication in Estonian is total reduplication (Moravcsik 1978), i.e. the copy is the whole word stem and not a part of it.

From the semantic point of view, reduplication in Estonian (similarly to other FU languages and probably many other languages) reveals three main types:

1. intensifying reduplication — expresses intensity of property, e.g. *vana-vana mees* 'old-old man', *väga-väga vana mees* 'very-very old man';
2. quantifying reduplication — expresses multiplicity (plurality, numerousness) of the participants, e.g. (*aina*) *inimesed ja inimesed* 'only people and people', *tuhanded ja tuhanded inimesed* 'thousands and thousands of people';
3. aspectual reduplication — expresses repetition or continuation of the process, e.g. *jookseb ja jookseb* 'is running and running', *proovib veel ja veel* 'tries again and again'.

These three groups represent types of iconic reduplication because the quantitative mode of expression (repetition of the same element) corresponds to quantitative meaning. In addition to iconic reduplication, Estonian reveals also cases where the use of reduplication is not motivated iconically, namely, indefinite reduplication, e.g. *niisugune ja niisugune* 'such and such', *see ja see* 'this and this', Fin. *silloin ja silloin* 'then and then' (for a more detailed treatment see Erelt 1997 : 33–34; Erelt, Punttila 1999 : 10–11). On the other hand, diminutive reduplication, which is common in many languages, is absent in Estonian.

The previously mentioned three types of reduplication are related to specific meanings — property (including property of process), process and participant, rather than specific parts of speech. For example, intensity may be expressed by the reduplication of adjectives (*vana-vana* 'old-old'), qualitative or quantitative adverbs (*kiiresti-kiiresti* 'quickly-quickly', *väga-väga* 'very-very') or evaluative nouns (*lurjuste lurjus* 'scoundrel of scoundrels').

It is well known that dynamic processes expressed by verbs may but need not have an internal boundary, that is, the processes may be telic or non-telic. The attainment of the boundary is marked by various lexical and grammatical means. However, the internal boundary need not be

limited to processes. Also, in the case of gradable properties one can speak about the presence or absence of the internal quantitative boundary, and, accordingly, the properties can be divided into bounded gradable properties and unbounded gradable properties (cf. Ereht 1986; Paradis 2001). Words expressing property (or state), the meaning of which includes a boundary, include, for example, *haige* 'ill', *rumal* 'stupid', and *katki* 'broken'. Whether the quantitative boundary necessary for the presence of the property has been achieved, or how close one is to achieving the boundary, are indicated by the so-called totality modifiers — maximizers *täiesti* 'completely', *absoluutselt* 'absolutely', etc., and such approximators as *peaaegu* 'almost' and others (Ereht 1986 : 111–117; Paradis 2001). Scalar modifiers express intensity of a property without binding it to the boundary, e.g. *väga* 'very', *hirmus* 'terribly' (Ereht 1986 : 111–117; Paradis 2001). At this scalar modifiers combine with any words expressing gradable property, including words expressing bounded properties, e.g. *väga suur* 'very big', *väga haige* 'very ill' while totality modifiers only combine with words that express bounded properties, e.g. **täiesti suur* 'absolutely big', *täiesti haige* 'absolutely ill'.

Configurationally, from the perspective of relation to boundary, also intensifying reduplication is divided into two: scalar reduplication, e.g. *vana-vana mees* 'old-old man', and totality reduplication, e.g. *haige mis haige* 'absolutely ill'.

As for participants, scalar reduplication expresses multiplicity of participants and performs the same function as the adverb *palju* 'many'. The set of participants is interpreted as an indeterminate mass, e.g. (*aina*) *inimesed ja inimesed* 'only people and people'. On the other hand, totality reduplication expresses exhaustiveness of a set, having the same function as universal quantifiers *kõik* 'all' and *iga* 'every'; the set is interpreted as an amount of determinate countable elements, e.g. Fin. *mies kuin mies* [man than man] 'every single man'. Estonian lacks such reduplication.

Processes do not have such a binary division. Here the function of reduplication is to express the continuation or repeatability, the so-called quantitative aspect, of the process in the framework of the imperfective aspect, for example *Poiss jookseb ja jookseb* 'The boy is running and running'. On the other hand, reduplicative non-finite constructions (V + Vma) *läheb minema* [goes to go] 'goes away' and *tuleb tulema* [comes to come] occur with the motion verbs *minema* 'go' and *tulema* 'come'. Their source meaning is the meaning of the beginning of the action, but in the contemporary language its non-finite component has developed the general directional meaning 'away, away from the deictic centre' and it combines also with other verbs.¹ It is especially true of *minema*, e.g. *Ta jooksis minema* 'He/she ran away'; there are fewer examples where *tulema* is used outside the reduplicative construction, e.g. *Ta jooksis sealt tulema* 'He/she ran away from there'. Such uses of the infinitives are synonymous with the particle *ära* 'away'. The latter is also used in the purely perfective meaning, e.g.

¹ Even today Estonian dialects reveal such reduplicative constructions that denote beginning, e.g. *ma läksi pidule menemä* (Varbla dialect) 'I was going to go to the party'; *tüdruk [---] tulnu ussöst sisse tulõma* (Urvaste dialect) 'The girl is said to have been about to enter the room' (cf. Sepp 1985 : 41).

Ta sõi supi ära 'He/she ate up the soup' (for a detailed discussion see Metslang 2001). However, the development of the forms of *minema* and *tulema* has not reached that stage as yet. In fact, the verb *minema* can combine with verbs that do not express directly motion, being rather close to the purely perfective particle, e.g. *Ta viskas paberi minema* 'He/she threw the paper away'. However, in this case the meaning of *minema* includes at least metaphorical distancing from the centre.

Main types of Estonian reduplicative constructions

	SCALAR REDUPLICATION	TOTALITY REDUPLICATION
PROPERTY	<i>suur-suur maja</i> 'big-big house'	<i>Purjus mis purjus</i> 'as drunk as can be'
PARTICIPANT	<i>inimesed ja inimesed</i> 'people and people'	Absent (Fin. <i>mies kuin mies</i> 'every man')
PROCESS	<i>söön ja söön</i> 'I'm eating and eating'	Absent

Below we will focus on intensifying reduplication in Estonian as the morphologically and syntactically richest type of reduplication with the clearly manifested opposition of scalarity—totality.

Intensifying reduplication

The claim that the intensifying reduplication of a word expressing property has the same meaning as degree adverbs is not fully accurate. The meanings of the phrases *suur-suur maja* 'big-big house' or *suuremast suurem maja* 'bigger than ever house' is not exactly the same as that of the phrase *väga suur maja* 'very big house'. Rather, it has the same meaning as the phrase *väga-väga suur maja* 'very-very big house'. While *väga* 'very' and other augmentatives express a high degree of intensity, reduplication expresses ultimate intensity.

1. Scalar intensifying reduplication

In Estonian scalar intensifying reduplication can be realized as a coordinate construction, a comparative construction, or a genitival attributive construction.

1.1. Coordinate constructions

There are three types of scalar coordinate reduplication in Estonian:

- a) non-reduced asyndetic reduplication: *pikk-pikk* 'long-long', *väga-väga pikk* 'very-very long';
- b) reduced asyndetic reduplication: *sini-sinine* 'blue-blue';
- c) syndetic reduplication: *väga ja väga* 'very and very'.

In Estonian, as well as in Finnish, the main type of scalar reduplication is (non-reduced) total asyndetic reduplication. There are two equal options for the expression of ultimate intensity: either to repeat the word expressing property or to repeat the degree modifier modifying the latter, e.g.:

- (1) *Pakikeses oli kaks peenikest-peenikest abielusõrmust*
in the little parcel was two thin-PART thin-PART wedding rings
'The little parcel contained two thin-thin wedding rings' (FICT)²
- (2) *Vesi on siin puhas ja sinine-sinine*
water is here pure and blue blue
'Here the water is pure and blue-blue' (FICT)
- (3) *Praegu tundus, et kõik see juhtus väga-väga ammu...*
now seemed that all it happened very very long ago
'Now it seemed that it all happened long-long ago' (FICT)

Reduced asyndetic reduplication is a rather rare type of coordinate reduplication, e.g.

- (4) *Taevas oli sini-sinine*
sky was blue blue
'The sky was blue-blue' (FICT)

In Standard Estonian, reduced asyndetic reduplication occurs optionally mostly with *ke(ne)*- or *ne*-suffixed adjectives, especially with colour adjectives, where the affix of the first component is dropped: *rohe-roheline* 'green-green', *sini-sinine* 'blue-blue', *puna-punane* 'red-red'; *õhu-õhuke* 'thin-thin', *psi-pisike* 'tiny-tiny' etc. The dialects reveal some more possibilities to drop the first component, as *ala-alatu* 'mean-mean', *igaves-igavesti* 'ever-ever', *ilu-ilus* 'beautiful-beautiful', *julk-julge* 'brave-brave', *kank-kanged* 'stiff-stiff', *kuit-kuidagi* 'somehow-somehow', *kõver-kõveride* 'curvy-curvy', *kerk-kergede* 'light-light', *väiku-väikuke* 'tiny-tiny' etc. (cf. Mäger 1966).

In addition to asyndetic reduplication, one can also find such examples of repetition in Estonian, where the connecting element is the coordinating conjunction *ja* 'and', e.g. (5)–(7).

- (5) *Kindlasti on väga ja väga paljud meist teda tähelepanelikult lugenud*
certainly are very and very many of us it closely read
'I'm sure many of us have read it closely' (NEWS)
- (6) *Oeh, askeldamist on küll ja küll*
oh bustling is enough and enough
'Oh, there has been enough and enough bustling' (FICT)
- (7) *Ja me tunneme teid ka mujal — khm — läbi ja läbi*
and we know you also elsewhere well throughout and throughout
'And we know you — also elsewhere — well — throughout and throughout' (FICT)

The conjunction is rarely used to express intensity. In most cases the adverb of degree *väga* 'very' is intensified, whereas asyndetic construction is another possible option, as in (2). The word pairs *küll ja küll* 'enough and enough' and *läbi ja läbi* 'throughout and throughout' have become fixed expressions. It is common, however, to express continuation/repetition of a process and the concomitant change in the intensity of property by means of syndetic repetition, e.g. *Päevad on ikka pikemad ja pikemad* [long.COMP and long.COMP] 'The days have become longer and longer all the time'.

² The examples marked as FICT and NEWS come from the 1990s subcorpus of the Tartu University Corpus of Standard Estonian; they denote fiction and journalistic texts, respectively.

Asyndetic reduplication of adjectives and adverbs is highly common also in other FU languages, e.g. Fin *se on erittäin, erittäin mielenkiintoinen* 'it is very very interesting', Liv *vana vana imi* 'old old man' etc. (cf. Майтинская 1964 : 125; Erelt, Punttila 1999 : 5–6). Syndetic reduplication is very rare, e.g. Fin *juuri ja juuri* 'with great difficulty, hardly', Kar *kylläine da kylläine* 'very very fat' (Erelt, Punttila 1999 : 6).

1.2. Comparative constructions

In Estonian, as in many other FU languages, comparative reduplication is a rather common type of intensifying reduplication. The following four constructions have a clearly comparative character:

- a) Adj/Adv-COMP than Adj_s.POS (syndetic construction, where the standard of comparison is in the positive degree): *hullem kui hull* [bad-COMP than bad.POS] 'very very bad', cf. (8);
- b) Adj_s.POS-EL Adj/Adv-COMP (relative-marked construction, where the standard of comparison is in the positive degree): *hullust hullem* [bad.POS-EL bad-COMP], cf. (9);
- c) Adj_s-COMP-EL Adj/Adv-COMP (case-marked construction, where the standard of comparison is in the comparative degree): *hullemast hullem* [bad-COMP-EL bad-COMP], cf. (10), (11);
- d) Adj_s-COMP-EL Adj/Adv.POS (case-marked construction, where only the standard of comparison is in the comparative degree): *hullemast hull* [bad-COMP-EL bad.POS], cf. (12).

All the constructions have the same meaning. Type d is rare.

- (8) *See tüdruk on ilusam kui ilus*
this girl is beautiful-COMP than beautiful
'This girl is extraordinarily beautiful' (FICT)
- (9) *Saak nigelast nigelam, sissetulek närune*
crops poor-EL poor-comp income lousy
'The crops are extremely poor, the income is lousy' (FICT)
- (10) *Tunnen end vahel lollimast lollimana*
I feel myself sometimes stupid-COMP-EL stupid-ESS
'Sometimes I feel that I'm extremely stupid' (FICT)
- (11) *Aga selgemast selgemini on meeles,*
however clear-COMP-EL clear-COMP-ly is in mind
kuidas ühel suvisel õhtul tulid külalised...
how on a summer evening arrived guests...
'However, I remember very clearly how guests arrived on a summer evening...' (FICT)
- (12) *Taevas on sinisemast sinine*
sky is blue-COMP-EL blue
'The sky is very blue' (FICT)

The comparative reduplicative construction can be found in other FU languages as well, whereas the occurring patterns differ somewhat from the Estonian ones (see e.g. Майтинская 1964; Феоктистов 1974). Finnish has mostly comparative and superlative constructions where the standard of comparison is in the positive degree: *selvääkin selvempi*

[clear-PART-EMPH clear-COMP] 'very-very clear', *onnelisista onnelisin* [happy-PL-EL happy-SUP] 'very-very happy' (cf. Ereht, Punttila 1992).

1.3. Genitival constructions

In Estonian one can find mostly the reduplicative substantival construction where the possessive genitive attribute is in the plural, e.g. *raamatute raamat* book-pl/gen book 'the ultimate book; originally the Bible'. This construction can be found in a large number of languages, and it is likely that it may have been borrowed into Standard Estonian. Several expressions with this structure come from the Bible, e.g. *raamatute raamat* 'book of books', *kuningate kuningas* 'king of kings', *lõppude lõpuks* 'eventually'.

The construction is usually substantival, cf. (13), but there are a few examples with adjectives, too (14).

(13) *See on mulle ka üks probleemide probleem...*
it is for me also one problem-PL.GEN problem
'For me, too, it's an ultimate problem' (NEWS)

(14) *Kuivade kuiv on Ivanikesel...*
dry-PL.GEN dry is Ivan
'Little Ivan is perfectly dry...' (FICT)

The pattern with the genitival attribute in the singular is unproductive. It occurs in spoken language only with two nouns: *kuradi kurat*, *saatana saatan* [devil-GEN devil] 'damn it, oh shit', cf. (15).

(15) *Kuradi kurat, mis loba sa ajad!*
devil-GEN devil what nonsense you talk
'Go to hell, stop that nonsense!' (FICT)

In contrast, in the Finnish language this pattern is highly productive and can be applied both to nouns and adjectives: *suuren suuri* 'very-very big', *hienon hieno* 'very very gentle/refined', *elämän elämä* 'perfect life', etc. (see Ereht, Punttila 1992 : 9).

1.4. Non-finite constructions

Many FU languages make use of converbal constructions to indicate the intensity of a process, e.g. Fin *odottamalla odottaa* 'is eagerly waiting', Veps *söden söbäd* [eating eat] 'heartily eat' (cf. Ereht, Punttila 1999 : 7; Майтинская 1964 : 130; Феоктистов 1974 : 130). In Standard Estonian converbs are not used in this function. However, the dialects reveal occasional examples of the action-noun construction with the same function, e.g. *Sie tüüd akkab rabama, siis rabab rabamise viisi* [slogs away in the manner of slogging away] 'The one who starts to slog away, slogs away as hard as he/she can' (Iisaku dialect) (Neetar 1988 : 45). The standard language does not reveal any examples of this type.

2. Totality intensifying reduplication

Totality reduplication indicates the existence of some quantity that is presumed by some quality. Such is, for example, the construction *See mees*

on loll mis loll 'This man is the ultimate fool'. The sentence indicates that the man under discussion has so many manifestations of stupidity that we could consider him a fool. In this case, to the reduplication corresponds the construction with an adverb of degree *See mees on täiesti loll* 'This man is an absolute fool'. As to its meaning, totality reduplication is also close to the construction with the modal adverb *tõesti* 'really', e.g. *See mees on tõesti loll* 'This man is really stupid'. The boundary between bounded quantity (completeness) and epistemic modality is not clear-cut.

There are two types of totality reduplication. Both types of constructions are syndetic:

a) *mis*-construction (relative construction): *haige mis haige* [sick REL.PRON sick] 'as ill as can be', cf. (16)–(18);

b) *nii ... kui* -construction (equative construction): *nii märg kui märg* [so wet as wet] 'as wet as can be, absolutely wet', cf. (19)–(20).

In the first type the connecting word is the relative pronoun *mis* 'that'. The repeated word is an intrinsically bounded adjective or adverb that can also occur with the totality modifier *täiesti* 'absolutely, completely', e.g. *selge* 'clear', *kindel* 'sure', *haige* 'ill', *küps* 'mature', *purjus* 'drunk', *täis* 'full', *läbi* 'through', *katki* 'broken', or it can be a noun as well.

(16) *See rohi aitab — kindel mis kindel*
 this medicine helps sure REL.PRON sure
 'This medicine will help — I'm absolutely sure about it' (FICT)

(17) *Kali on otsas mis otsas*
 kvass is finished REL.PRON finished
 'The kvass is finished to the last drop' (FICT)

(18) *Keerasin oma tinatükki — maja mis maja*
 I turned my piece of lead house REL.PRON house
 'I kept turning my piece of lead — a real house' (FICT)

This pattern can be found in Finnish as well, but it is not common, e.g. *puhdas mikä puhdas* [clean REL.PRON clean] 'absolutely clean', *kuollut mikä kuollut* [dead REL.PRON dead] 'absolutely dead' (cf. Erelt, Punttila 1992 : 20). In most cases the adjective has a negative connotation.

The repeated words in the construction with the compound conjunction *nii ... kui* 'both ... and' are the same bounded adjectives or adverbs as in the *mis*-construction. However, the construction is not used with nouns.

(19) *Ta on nii märg kui märg*
 he/she is so wet as wet
 'He/she is completely soaked' (FICT)

(20) *Ta on nii läbi kui läbi* (FICT)
 he/she is so finished as finished
 'He/she is totally finished'

Examples of the equative reduplicative construction can be found in Finnish, e.g. *turha kuin turha* 'absolutely useless' (Erelt, Punttila 1998 : 7) and Votic, e.g. '*ai siä hullu ku hullu* 'voi sinä pähkähullu' 'hopping mad' (Kettunen, Posti 1932 : 32–33). However, the type is not as common as in Estonian.

Conclusions

Among the three main types of reduplicative constructions — intensifying, quantifying, and aspectual reduplicative constructions — Estonian has the largest number of intensifying reduplicative constructions. Here the opposition between scalar and totality reduplication is manifested most clearly. Scalar reduplication is manifested in coordinate constructions, comparative constructions, and genitival attributive constructions. At this coordinate reduplication is mostly asyndetic. Totality reduplication occurs in the form of relative and equative constructions.

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Abbreviations

Adj — adjective, **Adv** — adverb, **COMP** — comparative degree, **EL** — elative, **EMPH** — emphatic particle, **ESS** — essive, **FICT** — fiction, **Fin** — Finnish, **GEN** — genitive, **Kar** — Karelian, **Liv** — Livonian, **PART** — partitive, **PL** — plural, **POS** — positive degree, **RL.PRON** — relative pronoun, **SUP** — superlative degree, **V** — verb, **Vma** — *ma*-infinitive

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МАТИ ЭРЕЛТ (Тарту)

ИНТЕНСИФИЦИРУЮЩАЯ РЕДУПЛИКАЦИЯ В ЭСТОНСКОМ ЯЗЫКЕ

В статье рассматриваются редупликативные конструкции в эстонском языке. С точки зрения формы редупликация в эстонском языке тотальная, а с точки зрения семантики она может быть трех основных типов: 1) интенсифицирующая редупликация, например *vana-vana mees* 'старый-старый мужчина', 2) квантифицирующая редупликация, например (*aina*) *inimesed ja inimesed* '(все) люди и люди', 3) аспектуальная редупликация, например *jookseb ja jookseb* 'бегаёт и бегаёт'. В фокусе данного изложения интенсифицирующая редупликация. Рассматриваемый тип представлен наибольшим числом конструкций и здесь особенно ярко проявляется оппозиция между скалярной (scalar) и тотальной (totality) редупликациями. Скалярная редупликация выступает в виде бессоюзных сочинительных конструкций, например *pikk-pikk* 'длинный-длинный', сравнительных конструкций, например *pikemast-pikem* 'длиннее длинного', и конструкций с генитивным определением, например *hurjuste hurjus* букв. 'подлец из подлецов, большой подлец'. Тотальная редупликация представлена релятивными конструкциями, например *haige mis haige* 'совсем больной', и эквативными конструкциями, например *nii märg kui märg* 'совсем мокрый'. В статье редупликативные конструкции эстонского языка сравниваются с соответствующими конструкциями в других финно-угорских языках, прежде всего в финском.