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## **Reduplication in Creole and Sign languages**

A close look at both Creole languages and Sign languages (emergent or established) reveals some striking similarities between these two groups of languages. I will focus on several established sign languages e.g. American Sign Language (ASL) (Newkirk 1998), British Sign Language (BSL) (Sutton-Spence and Woll 1999), and German Sign Language (DGS) (Boyes-Braem 1990; Perniss 2007). Under emerging sign language I understand the case of Nicaragua Sign Language (NSL) (cf. Senghas 1995; Kegl et al. 1999; Kegl 2008 among others.) In this paper, reduplication is understood as a morphological process of word/sign repetition (repetition of parts of words) to form new words/signs with different meanings.

In the first part of the paper, I discuss the theories that have been put forward to explain the various types of reduplication such as full and partial reduplication, taking into account which part of the base is reduplicated (e.g. final reduplication, medial reduplication). In the second part, the various patterns of reduplication in both Creole and Sign languages, are discussed with a special focus on iconicity. I also take a close look at the functions of reduplication in both language groups. Verbal reduplication has the function of aspectual marking (continued or repeated), whereas nominal reduplication is used for plurality, collectivity and distribution. Adjectival reduplication is used for intensity (very X) or decrease (less X). Reduplicated numerals are also witnessed in some Creole and Sign languages. Finally, I discuss the similarities in the reduplication patterns found in these two language groups, relating them to the issue of genesis. This comparative study can be seen as a first attempt to shed light on the role of reduplication in language genesis.

### **References**

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