Acquisition of Reduplication in Turkish

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Depending on the characteristics of the language in question reduplication can be partial, in which part or all of a base is duplicated and full, in which the whole word is repeated. Turkish makes use of both of these devices as in "hızlı hızlı" (in a fast manner) and "yemyeşil" (yeşil= green, yemyeşil= fully green). Additionally a third type of reduplication, "-m" reduplication as in "kapı mapı" (kapı=door, kapı mapı = the door and the like) is also utilized commonly in Turkish. Partial reduplication, also called emphatic reduplication is used with modifiers namely adjectives and adverbs and gives the modifier the meaning of "fullness" or "perfectness". Full reduplication is used to fulfill functions such as repetition, attention getting, and expressing abundance. On the other hand, -m initial reduplication assigns "blurred similarity" or "a movement away from the full quality or sense" (Demircan, 1987).

In two successive studies Demircan (1987; 1989) made a detailed phonological description of emphatic reduplications in Turkish and concluded that even adults have problems in the choice of the correct prefix. A full description of the development of different types of reduplication in Turkish and their pragmatic analysis has not yet been done. For that reason, acquisition of partial, full, and -m reduplications and their functions will be investigated in this study.

The data will come from three different sources: first, spontaneous data collected monthly from four children between the ages of 2;0 and 3;6 will be examined regarding the use of reduplication. Secondly, a set of narrative data collected from three groups of children at the ages of 4;0, 5;0 and 6;0 will be investigated for the availability of such forms and lastly, an experimental task will be given to children at the ages of 4;0, 5;0 and 6;0 respectively. The results will be analyzed and discussed in the light of the literature on adult language and on other languages.