



On the Structural Types of Reduplicative in *The Book of Songs*

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Abstract

The Book of Songs is a collection of poems and songs in Chinese Qin Dynasty, in which featured by a lot of using of reduplicative. This paper, based on the results of previous scholars, analyzes the structural types of reduplicative in *The Book of Songs* from the aspects of reduplicative in radical, in rhymes and both. This paper is aimed to better understand the meaning of *The Book of Songs*, so as to improve language teaching and practical using, as well as help with corpus and theories.

Key words: *The Book of Songs*; Reduplicative; Structure; Reduplicative in radical; Reduplicative in rhymes

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The Book of Songs is a collection of poems and songs in Chinese Qin Dynasty, featured by a lot of using of reduplicative.

What is reduplicative? Academic definitions are quite different. Reduplicative of rhymes and reduplicative of words can be mixed. This is because that they are aimed to the same goal. Based on analyzing the previous studies on this, the widely recognized idea is that, the reduplicative is referring to the repeated two words which are completely

the same in the pronunciation and the form, including reduplicative of rhymes as well as reduplicative of radical, in other words, simple words and compound words.

Due to the specialty in reduplicative, it plays a very import role in not only increasing a beautiful rhyme but also enhancing the language effect and atmosphere. Since we are clear about the definition, we will analyze the structural types of *The Book of Songs*. The summary is as follows:

1. REDUPLICATIVE IN RADICAL

Reduplicative in radical refers to two words sharing the same radical. It is a kind of compound word. As a part of reduplicative, the radical also contains a certain meaning. In *The Book of Songs*, reduplicative of radical is widely used. Based on the research from YANG Heming, “words with reduplicative radicals are adjectives”, which are mainly used to describe articles' features and moods. The original meaning of the radical in reduplicative has not changed. Rather, the descriptions are added, which is used as emphasis. The radical of this kind of reduplicative can also stand alone, to be a simple word, which contains the meaning itself. As LV Shuxiang stated in *A Summary of Chinese Grammar*, “the radical can also used separately”. For example:

1.1 洋洋 “Yang Yang”

“Yang”(洋) in Chinese means great. “Yang yang”(洋洋) has been used four times in *The Book of Songs*, all in the same form of radical reduplicative, the meaning of which can be divided into two categories.

One of the meanings refers to “the greatness”. For example:

He shui yang yang, bei liu huo huo. (河水洋洋，北流活活)

The river's broad and deep.
 Its billows northward leap.

(as cited in *The Song of Wei, Beauty*, as emphasized as underlined)

Here “yang yang” (洋洋) means “broad and deep”, as stated in *The Book of Mao*.

Another example is

Wang wu yang yang, xiao sun you qing. (万舞洋洋, 孝孙有庆)

Many dances all complete,

The filial descendant will be blessed.

(as cited in *The Poem of Lu, The Palace of Mi*, as emphasized as underlined)

Here “yang yang” (洋洋) means “many”, as stated in *The Book of Mao*.

We can see that, “yang” (洋) as a simple word contains the meaning of greatness or plenty. When it is used as the radical reduplicative, the original meanings are kept, but it also enhance the meaning of greatness or plenty, to show the broadness of rivers and the great number of dancers more vividly.

1.2 忡忡 “Chong Chong”

“Chong” (忡) means “worry or anxiety”. As stated in *Shuowen*, “Chong” (忡) refers to “worry”. For instance,

Wei jian jun zi, you xin chong chong. (未见君子, 忧心忡忡)

While I do not see my lord,

My sorrowful heart is agitated.

(as cited in *The Book of Songs, Zhaonan, Caochong*, as emphasized as underlined)

Here “chong” (忡) means “sorrow”. Repeated using of it is aimed to emphasize on the heroin’s missing and worry about her husband more vividly. In this way, the effect has been increased intensively.

In *The Book of Songs*, there are also many other reduplicative to show sorrow, such as “can can” (惨惨), “qiao qiao” (悄悄), “chuo chuo” (惓惓), “yu yu” (愈愈), all of which depict the hero’s sorrow in different ways. There are also other reduplicative with other meanings, such as “ai ai” (哀哀), “cao cao” (草草), “hao hao” (好好), “jiao jiao” (皎皎), “xi xi” (晰晰) etc.

2. REDUPLICATIVE IN RHYME

Reduplicative in rhyme refers to, as YANG Bojun stated, “a word repeated with the same rhyme”. This kind of word can not be analyzed separately. We have to take them as a group. Reduplicative can be divided into two categories:

2.1 The Separate Syllable Contains a Meaning, which Changed Completely When they are Formed a Reduplicative.

2.1.1 央央 “Yang Yang”

As stated in *Shuowen*, “yang” (央) means “the center”. We can see that, it can also be used as verbs, meaning asking or wishing.

Long qi yang yang, he ling yang yang. (龙旗阳阳, 和铃央央)

The flags of dragons were rattling,

The rings accompanied went ting-a-ling.

(as cited in *The Song of Zhou, Zaijian*, as emphasized as underlined)

Here “yang yang” (央央) is used to describe the sound. It has nothing to do with the original meaning of “center or asking”.

2.1.2 许许 “Xu Xu”

As stated in *Shuowen*, “xu” (许) means “appreciating”.

Fa mu xu xu, li jiu you xu. (伐木许许, 酹酒有奠)

Xu-xu they go, as they fell the trees.

I have strained off my spirits, till they are fine.

(as cited in *Xiaoya, Famu*, as emphasized as underlined)

Here “xu xu” (许许) is used to modify the sound of chopping the wood. The meaning of it has nothing to do with the original meaning.

2.2 The Single Syllable has no Meaning. But it can be Meaningful when it is Repeated.

Yang zhi shui, bai shi lin lin. (扬之水, 白石粼粼)

The water clear and bright,

Flows over the pebbles white.

(as cited in *The Song of Tang, The Water Clear and White*, as emphasized as underlined)

As stated in *Shuowen*, “lin” (粼) means “the water flows over the pebbles”. As stated in *The Book of Mao*, “lin lin” (粼粼) means “the clearness of water”.

We can see that, the meaning of certain syllables can be completely changed when they are repeatedly used. Some of the syllables are not meaningful until they are used repeatedly. As LV Shuxiang stated in *A Summary of Chinese Grammar*, these words can not be used without repeating. These words are mainly used to modify the sounds, which contains no meaning separately.

3. USING BOTH REDUPLICATIVE IN RHYME AND IN RADICAL

In *The Book of Songs*, many sentences of poems contain four syllables. When using reduplicative, due to the restrictions of syllable numbers, the structure can be divided into AA and BB. In this way, AA and BB fall in the category of paralleled compound word, all containing a meaning, which are similar to the original meaning. In *The Book of Songs*, they can be used as repeating the reduplicative in rhyme, repeating the reduplicative in radical or repeating the reduplicative both in rhyme and radical.

3.1 AABB: Repeating the Reduplicative in Radical

For example:

Zi zi sun sun, wu ti yin zhi. (子子孙孙, 勿替引之)

May your sons and your grandsons,
Never fail to perpetuate these services!
(as cited in *The Song of Chu*, as emphasized as underlined)

Here “zi zi”(子子) means sons and daughters. “Sun sun”(孙孙) means the grandsons. “Zi zi”(子子) and “sun sun”(孙孙) mean the descendent. Here by using the reduplicative in radical, we can feel the prosperity of the family.

Mu mu huang huang, yi jun yi wang. (穆穆皇皇，宜君宜王)

Of reverent virtue and admirable character.
Fit to be rulers of States, fit to be king.
(as cited in *Daya, Jiale*, as emphasized as underlined)

“Mu mu”(穆穆) means “the greatness of appearance or language”. “Huang huang”(皇皇) means the beauty and prosperity. Both of the words contain the meaning of beauty and greatness. They are the radical reduplicative of words with similar meanings.

3.2 AABB: Reduplicative in Rhyme

Yong yong ang ang, ru gui ru zhang, ling wen ling wang. (颀颀印印，如圭如璋，令闻令望)

Imposing like a jade,
People all looking up to.
(as cited in *Daya, Juan'e*, as emphasized as underlined)

“Yong yong”(颀颀) means the good looking. “Ang ang”(印印) means imposing. The two words together are a rhyme reduplicative compound word, meaning the imposing looking. Though the two words have their own meanings, they can not form a word singly. The meaning can only be reached when they are together.

Jing jing ye ye, ru ting ru lei. (兢兢业业，如霆如雷)

I am full of terror and feel the peril.
Like the clap of thunder or the roll.
(as cited in *Daya, The Cloud*, as emphasized as underlined)

“Jing jing”(兢兢) means carefulness. “Ye ye”(业业) shows the feeling of terror. Both contain the meaning of horror and carefulness. They fall in to the category of rhyme reduplicative.

3.3 AABB: Repeating the Reduplicative both in Rhyme and Radical

Mian mian yi yi, bu ce bu ke, zhuo zheng xu guo. (绵绵翼翼，不测不克，濯征徐国)

The army is in a remarkable order.
They can defeat anything with their force,
They are certain to win the battle.
(as cited in *Daya, Dangzhishi*, as emphasized as underlined)

“Mian mian”(绵绵) shows a state of quietness, is a reduplicative in rhyme. “Yi yi”(翼翼) refers to respect, is

a reduplicative in radical. They only appear once in *The Book of Songs*, in the form of AABB by repeating the reduplicative both in rhyme and radical.

Ji ji pian pian, mou ji zen ren. (缉缉翩翩，谋欲谮人)

With babbling mouths you go about.
Scheming and wishing to slander others.
(as cited in *Xiaoya, Xiangbo*, as emphasized as underlined)

“Ji ji”(缉缉) imitates the sound of talking. “Pian pian”(翩翩) shows the people coming and going in a hurry. Ji has no concrete meaning since it is a word to modify the sound. The meaning only appears when it is repeatedly used. It is a typical reduplicative in rhyme. Pian has a concrete meaning, but it can also be repeated radically. In this way, Jiji and Pianpian form a reduplicative both in rhyme and radical in the format of AABB.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, we are analyzing the structural types in *The Book of Songs* from the aspects of the reduplicative in rhyme, the reduplicative in radical and the reduplicative both in rhyme and radical. In this way, we can better understand the meaning of *The Book of Songs*, so as to improve practical teaching as well as help with language corpus and theories.

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