



# /sir-sir/: The Pragmatic and Cultural Functions of Reduplicated Expressions in Moroccan Arabic (Darija)

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## Abstract

## Original Research Article

The study examines the pragmatic and cultural functions of reduplicated expressions in Moroccan Arabic (Darija), highlighting their role as both linguistic devices and cultural artifacts. Drawing on a mixed corpus of spontaneous speech, media discourse, and oral heritage texts, the analysis categorizes reduplicated forms into six functional domains: commands, affirmation, temporal markers, emotional expressions, playful rhythms, and soothing directives. These forms intensify meaning, dramatize interaction, and embed rhythm into everyday communication, thereby sustaining continuity with Morocco’s oral traditions such as malhoun poetry, chants, and children’s rhymes. The findings demonstrate that repetition in Darija is not ornamental but integral to sociolinguistic identity, serving as a marker of expressiveness, immediacy, and cultural cohesion. By linking everyday speech to oral heritage, reduplicated expressions emerge as vehicles of cultural transmission across generations, reinforcing Moroccan identity through rhythm, orality, and shared communicative practices.

**Keywords:** Moroccan Arabic (Darija), Reduplication, Pragmatic functions, Oral traditions, Sociolinguistic identity, Repetition of rhythm, Cultural transmission, Expressive communication.

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## 1. Introduction

In contemporary Moroccan Arabic, henceforth Darija, reduplicated expressions often emerge from popular culture and collective practices, carrying both rhythmic force and social resonance. A striking example is the chant sir-sir (“go-go”), first popularized by the supporters of Wydad Football Club—undeniably the most prestigious football club in Morocco—as a means of urging their players forward. When the same coach moved to manage the National

Football Team, this expression quickly transcended its local origins, becoming a unifying cheer among all Moroccan fans during the 2022 World Cup in Qatar, where Morocco achieved an unprecedented fourth-place finish after remarkable victories over Canada, Belgium, Spain, and Portugal. The trajectory of sir-sir and other reduplicated expressions illustrates how reduplication in Darija functions not only as a linguistic device but also as a vehicle of communal motivation, identity and pride.



Repetition is one of the most striking features of Darija, shaping its rhythm, expressiveness, and everyday communicative style. Words and phrases doubled in sound—such as *safi-safi* (“enough”), *deghya-deghya* (“quickly”), or *wakha-wakha* (“alright”)—are not mere playful echoes. They serve pragmatic functions: urging action, emphasizing agreement, marking time, or conveying emotion. This phenomenon reflects the oral and performative character of Darija, where speech often carries the cadence of song, chant, or proverb.

Expressions like *sir-sir*, *wakha-wakha*, *bhal-bhal*, *shed-shed* are instances of reduplication. Reduplication is the linguistic term for repeating a word (or part of it) to create a new meaning, nuance, or pragmatic effect. It is a well-established phenomenon across languages, including Arabic dialects, and is distinct from simple “duplication”, which is not a standard linguistic term. Duplication suggests accidental repetition (like a copy-paste error). Reduplication is the technical term in linguistics for intentional, patterned repetition. In typology and morphology, reduplication can be full (entire word repeated: *sir-sir*) or partial (part of the word repeated: *bs-bs*, *hm-hm*). These tend to be onomatopoeic, mimetic, or expressive registers, where only part of the phonological unit is echoed.

In Darija examples, we are dealing with full reduplications. Darija employs full reduplication (e.g. *sir-sir*, *wakha-wakha*) as a pragmatic resource for emphasis, iteration, and categorical equivalence. These reduplicated expressions function pragmatically rather than morphologically—shaping tone, emphasis, and interpersonal dynamics. Reduplication in Darija often overlaps with orality and performativity, reinforcing rhythm and memorability in speech. They can be framed as part of pragmatic reduplication strategies in Darija, distinct from morphological reduplication in Standard Arabic (e.g. *tikrar* forms). Many of these reduplications are indexical: they do not just repeat a word; they dramatize its force (e.g. *aji-aji* vs. *single aji*).

By examining these repeated forms, we uncover how language encodes social interaction:

repetition intensifies meaning, dramatizes speech, and creates a shared rhythm between speakers. It also connects everyday talk to Morocco’s broader oral traditions, from *malhoun* poetry to marketplace banter. In this way, reduplicated expressions are more than colloquial quirks—they are windows into the sociolinguistic identity of Darija, revealing how sound, culture, and communication intertwine.

## 2. Materials & Method

### 2.1 Corpus & Data Collection

The analysis of reduplicated expressions in Darija was based on a mixed corpus combining naturally occurring speech and documented oral traditions. The bulk of data were collected from:

- Spontaneous interactions: everyday conversations in marketplaces, family settings, and university contexts.
- Media sources: television programs, radio broadcasts, and social media clips where reduplicated forms are frequently employed.
- Oral heritage texts: transcriptions from *Malhoun* poetry, street chants, and children’s rhymes, which provide continuity between colloquial and artistic registers.
- Lexicography and scholarly references: existing descriptions of Darija (e.g., Caubet 1993; Ennaji 2005; Holes 2004) were consulted to triangulate pragmatic functions and cultural resonance.

### 2.2 Sampling Criteria

Expressions were selected according to the following criteria:

- Form: lexical items exhibiting full reduplication (e.g. *sir-sir*, *deghya-deghya*, *safi-safi*).
- Function: pragmatic use in interaction (commands, affirmation, temporal marking, emotional expression, playfulness, soothing).
- Frequency: recurrent presence across different contexts and speakers.
- Cultural salience: expressions recognized by speakers as part of Moroccan oral identity.

### 2.3 Analytical Framework

The study employed a pragmatic-functional approach informed by sociolinguistic and discourse analysis:

-Pragmatic coding: each expression was categorized according to its communicative function (directive, affirmational, temporal, emotional, playful, and soothing).

-Contextual analysis: utterances were examined within their conversational setting to identify speaker stance, interactional rhythm, and cultural resonance.

-Comparative linkage: reduplicated forms were compared with patterns in oral traditions (poetry, chants, rhymes) to highlight continuity between everyday speech and cultural performance.

-Sociolinguistic framing: repetition was interpreted as both a linguistic intensifier and a cultural marker of Moroccan identity, drawing on frameworks of orality and identity transmission (Miller 2017; Owens 2006).

### 2.4 Methodological Rationale

The choice of a mixed corpus and pragmatic-functional analysis reflects the dual nature of reduplicated expressions: they are simultaneously linguistic devices and cultural artifacts. By situating them in both everyday interaction and oral heritage, the methodology ensures that their pragmatic functions are understood not in isolation but as part of Morocco’s broader sociolinguistic ecology.

### 2.5 Categories, Corpus Sources, and Analytic Criteria

Category of Reduplicated Expression	Representative Examples	Corpus Sources	Analytic Criteria
Commands & Directives	sir-sir aji-aji shuf-shuf we-we	Marketplace, family interactions, street	Frequency of directive use; intensity of repetition; interactional uptake (compliance, resistance)
Affirmation & Agreement	wakha-wakha bhal-bhal kif-kif	Everyday conversations, dispute resolution contexts, media dialogues	Reinforcement of consensus; pragmatic function in settling disputes; equivalence marking
Temporal & Rhythmic Markers	tem-tem merra-merra degnya-degnya	Spontaneous speech, radio talk shows, oral narratives	Temporal immediacy; pace dramatization; rhythm alignment with oral performance
Emotional & Expressive Forms	rebbi-rebbi way-way hay-hay	Prayer invocations, exclamations in daily speech, social media clips	Emotional intensity; dramatization of stance; cultural resonance with invocations and astonishment

Playful & Onomatopoeic Rhythms	wiq-wiq deqqa-deqqa <i>thi-thi</i>	Children’s games, street chants, malhoun poetry refrains	Musicality of repetition; blurred boundary between language & rhythm; oral heritage continuity
Soothing & Stopping Expressions	safi-safi baraka-baraka haddi-haddi	Parent-child interactions, conflict resolution, domestic speech	Pragmatic calming function; mitigation of conflict: cultural transmission in early childhood

### 3. The Role of Repetition in Darija

#### 3.1 Repetition as a Linguistic Device

Repetition is a universal linguistic strategy, but in Darija, it acquires a distinctive prominence. Doubling words or syllables—safi-safi, deghya-deghya, wakha-wakha—creates a rhythmic pattern that is both memorable and expressive. Linguistically, this reduplication functions as a device of intensification: it strengthens the semantic force of the utterance, whether by amplifying the urgency, reinforcing agreement, or dramatizing emotion.

Repetition is a cross-linguistic strategy that surfaces in diverse languages across the globe. In Darija, reduplication is especially salient. Such doubling creates rhythm and memorability, anchoring speech in oral performance traditions. Universally, reduplication serves as intensification, heightening urgency or emotional resonance. In English, forms like “bye-bye” or “go-go” echo the same pragmatic function. In Bahasa Indonesia, reduplication pluralizes nouns, showing its grammatical versatility. In Swahili, repetition conveys emphasis, aligning with African oral aesthetics. In Japanese, expressions like “doki-doki” dramatize inner states through sound symbolism. Darija reduplication thus participates in a global repertoire of expressive strategies. Its prominence reflects both universal linguistic tendencies and Morocco’s vibrant oral culture.

Other Romance language examples will enrich our comparative framing. Here are some

illustrative reduplicated forms: in French, “vite-vite” (quickly-quickly) urging speed; “doucement-doucement” (gently-gently) reinforcing carefulness; “oui-oui” (yes-yes) emphatic agreement similar to Darija’s “wakha-wakha”. In Spanish, “corre-corre” (run-run) intensifying urgency; “poquito a poquito” (little by little) rhythmic encouragement of gradual progress; “si-si” (yes-yes) emphatic affirmation, echoing repetition in everyday speech. In Italian, “piano-piano” (slowly-slowly) stressing caution or gradualness; “andiamo-andiamo” (let’s go-let’s go) motivating action; “si-si” (yes-yes) emphatic agreement, reinforcing certainty.

These examples show how reduplication in Romance languages, much like Darija, functions as a pragmatic intensifier—heightening urgency, reinforcing affirmation, or dramatizing emotion. The universality of this strategy underscores its deep roots in human communication, while each language adapts it to its own cultural rhythms.

#### 3.2 Pragmatic Functions in Everyday Speech

In daily interaction, repetition is not ornamental but pragmatic. Speakers employ it to:

- Command or direct action (sir-sir, “go on”).
- Express affirmation or equality (bhal-bhal “the same”).
- Mark temporal immediacy or frequency (tem-tem “right away”; merra-merra “sometimes”).

-Convey emotional intensity (rebbi-rebbi “oh God”; way-way “wow/astonishment”).

The repeated form thus acts as a discourse tool, shaping the flow of conversation and signaling the speaker’s stance.

In Darija, reduplicated expressions are not ornamental flourishes but pragmatic tools that shape the dynamics of interaction. Their repetition intensifies meaning, dramatizes stance, and ensures that speech resonates with immediacy. Commands such as (sir-sir “go on”) or ‘aji-aji “come closer”) exemplify how reduplication heightens directive force, making the utterance harder to ignore and more urgent in tone. Affirmational forms like (wakha-wakha “alright, okay”) or (bhal-bhal “the same”) reinforce consensus, often functioning as conversational closure devices that settle disputes or underline agreement. Temporal markers such as (tem-tem “right away”) or (merra-merra “sometimes”) dramatize pace and frequency, aligning speech with the rhythm of lived experience. Emotional expressions like (rebbi-rebbi “oh God”) or (way-way “astonishment”) dramatize effect, transforming ordinary utterances into performative exclamations. Playful reduplications (wiq-wiq “squeak-squeak”) or (deqqa-deqqa “knock-knock”) blur the line between language and rhythm, animating children’s games and everyday banter. Finally, soothing forms such as (safi-safi “enough” or haddi-haddi “calm down”) mitigate conflict and reassure interlocutors, showing how repetition can soften interactional tension. Taken together, these functions demonstrate that reduplication in Darija is a versatile discourse strategy: it commands, affirms, situates, dramatizes, entertains, and soothes, embedding rhythm into the pragmatics of daily communication.

### 3.3 Connection to Oral Traditions and Cultural Rhythm

This reliance on repetition resonates with Morocco’s broader oral heritage. From Malhoun

poetry to marketplace chants, rhythm and reiteration are central to performance and persuasion. Everyday speech mirrors these traditions: the cadence of repeated expressions bridges colloquial talk with artistic forms, embedding cultural rhythm into ordinary communication. In this sense, repetition is not only a pragmatic resource but also a cultural marker, sustaining continuity between spoken language and Morocco’s oral identity.

The pragmatic vitality of reduplicated expressions in Darija cannot be separated from Morocco’s broader oral heritage. Repetition has long been a hallmark of oral performance, from the refrains of Malhoun poetry to the chants of street vendors and the rhymes of children’s games. In these traditions, doubling words or syllables sustains attention, heightens emotion, and fosters communal participation. Everyday speech mirrors this aesthetic: when a parent soothes a child with “haddi-haddi” or a vendor calls out “aji-aji”, the cadence echoes the performative rhythm of oral art forms. Reduplication thus bridges colloquial talk with cultural performance, embedding Morocco’s oral identity into routine exchanges. It also serves as a vehicle of cultural transmission: children learn these expressions early, internalizing not only their pragmatic functions but also the rhythm of Moroccan speech. As they grow, they carry these forms into adulthood, ensuring continuity of expressive traditions across generations. In this sense, reduplicated expressions are living artifacts of Morocco’s oral culture—windows into a collective identity that values rhythm, immediacy, and emotional resonance. They dramatize speech, sustain cultural cohesion, and affirm the expressive vitality of Darija as both a linguistic system and a cultural rhythm.

### 4. Categories of Reduplicated Expressions in Darija

Repetition in Darija is not random; it follows pragmatic patterns that can be grouped into functional categories. Each category highlights how reduplicated forms shape communication, from directing behavior to dramatizing emotion.

#### 4.1 Commands & Directives

Expressions used to urge immediate action or movement:

- sir-sir (“go on, move”)
- shed-shed (“hold on, grab”)
- hak-hak (“take, here you go”)
- aji-aji (“come closer”)
- shuf-shuf (“look, pay attention”)
- berra-berra (“go away, step aside”)

These forms are common in marketplaces, family talk, or playful interaction with children. The repetition intensifies the directive, making it harder to ignore.

#### 4.2 Affirmation & Agreement

Used to confirm, emphasize, or express equivalence

- wakha-wakha (“alright, okay”)
- bhal-bhal (“the same, equal”)
- kif-kif (“same thing”)
- iwa-iwa (“so then, indeed”)
- hahuwa-hahuwa (“here it is, indeed”)

These forms reinforce consensus in conversation, often used to settle disputes or underline sameness.

#### 4.3 Temporal & Rhythmic Markers

They are expressions that mark immediacy, frequency, or speed:

- tem-tem (“right away, instantly”)
- merra-merra (“sometimes, occasionally”)
- deghya-deghya (“quickly, in haste”)

These reduplications situate actions in time, reflecting the oral tendency to dramatize pace and rhythm.

#### 4.4 Emotional & Expressive Forms

These are used to convey strong feelings, exclamations, or invocations:

- rebbi-rebbi (“oh God, divine appeal”)
- way-way (“wow, astonishment or shock”)
- hay-hay (“hey, warning alert”)
- mmi-mmi (“mother, affectionate call”)

These forms dramatize emotions, often in moments of surprise, prayer, or intimate address.

#### 4.5 Playful or Onomatopoeic Rhythms

Expressions with musical or rhythmic qualities, sometimes without fixed meaning:

- wik-wik (“playful sound, often in games”)
- deqqa-deqqa (“beat, rhythm, knock”)
- lawah-lawah (“chant-like, rhythmic”)
- sank-sank (“onomatopoeic, playful counting or rhythm”)
- balik-balik (“playful warning, rhythmic repetition”)

These forms blur the line between language and music, echoing oral traditions of chant, lullabies, and street play.

#### 4.6 Soothing & Stopping Expressions

They are used to calm, reassure, or halt an action:

- safi-safi (“enough, stop”)
- baraka-baraka (“that’s enough, stop it”)
- haddi-haddi (“calm down, it’s okay”)

These reduplications are pragmatic tools for conflict resolution or soothing children, reflecting the interpersonal function of repetition.

By classifying reduplicated expressions into these categories, we see how repetition in Darija is multifunctional: it directs, affirms, dramatizes, entertains, and soothes. This diversity

underscores the oral vitality of Darija, where rhythm and reiteration are inseparable from meaning.

## 5. Sociolinguistic Significance

### 5.1 Repetition as Intensification & Identity

The use of reduplicated expressions in Darija is not a superficial stylistic ornament but a powerful intensifier that dramatizes speech and marks identity. By repeating words, speakers intensify meaning by dramatizing speech—*sir-sir* insists on persistence, *wakha-wakha* reinforces agreement, and *rebbi-rebbi* dramatizes invocation, thus creating a distinctive rhythm that sets Darija apart from other varieties of Arabic and embeds cultural pride in everyday talk. This repetition reflects a collective communicative style, one that values expressiveness, immediacy, and shared understanding. In this way, reduplication becomes a sociolinguistic signature of Moroccan identity; it functions as both a pragmatic device and a cultural emblem, signaling belonging and cultural familiarity.

### 5.2 Everyday Interaction & Oral Performance

In daily life, reduplicated expressions animate conversations across homes, markets, schools, and public spaces. Commands like *sir-sir* and *hak-hak* are practical tools for directing action, while affirmations such as *wakha-wakha* or *bhal-bhal* reinforce consensus. Emotional forms like *way-way* or *rebbi-rebbi* dramatize feelings, turning ordinary talk into performance. A parent urging a child with *aji-aji*, a vendor calling attention with *shuf-shuf*, or friends affirming consensus with *bhal-bhal* all rely on repetition to shape interaction. These forms transform ordinary exchanges into miniature performances, where rhythm and reiteration sustain attention and dramatize stance. The repetition creates a cadence that listeners recognize and respond to, embedding oral rhythm into routine exchanges. Everyday speech thus mirrors oral performance traditions: repetition creates cadence, dramatizes

emotion, and fosters participation. The pragmatic force of reduplication lies in its ability to make speech memorable and engaging, turning routine communication into a shared oral event.

### 5.3 Continuity with Oral Heritage

These categories resonate with Morocco's broader oral traditions. The rhythmic doubling of sounds parallels the refrains of Malhoun poetry, where refrains sustain rhythm and emotional intensity; the chants of street vendors, in which repetition attracts listeners and dramatizes persuasion; and the playful rhymes of children's games, where doubling syllables creates playful rhythm and mnemonic ease. In each case, repetition sustains attention, heightens emotion, and fosters communal participation by bridging artistic performance with mundane interaction, ensuring that cultural rhythm permeates all levels of communication. Thus reduplicated expressions are not isolated colloquialisms but living echoes of Morocco's oral heritage, bridging everyday speech with artistic and cultural performance.

### 5.4 Cultural Cohesion & Transmission

Reduplicated expressions also function as vehicles of cultural cohesion and transmission. Persisting across generations and learned early in childhood—whether through soothing directives like *haddi-haddi* or playful chants like *wiq-wiq*—they become part of the linguistic repertoire that binds generations. Their rhythmic cadence fosters shared recognition, reinforcing communal bonds and cultural familiarity. In conflict resolution, forms like *safi-safi* or *Baraka-baraka* mitigate tension, embedding cultural strategies of harmony into speech. In group settings, chants like *yellah-yellah* energize collective action, dramatizing solidarity. Through repetition, Darija sustains cohesion: it transmits oral rhythm across generations, reinforces identity in everyday interaction, and affirms the expressive vitality of Moroccan culture.

## 6. Cultural Continuity & Identity

### 6.1 Repetition as a Cultural Marker

Reduplicated expressions in Darija are more than pragmatic tools; they are cultural markers that embody the oral identity of the community. Their rhythmic cadence reflects a collective way of speaking that is not incidental but constitutive of a way that is instantly recognizable, reinforcing a sense of belonging among speakers. Expressions such as *sir-sir*, *wakha-wakha*, or *safi-safi* are cultural signatures that index belonging and familiarity. The act of repeating words dramatizes speech, embedding rhythm into communication and signaling participation in a shared oral tradition. In this way, reduplication becomes a semiotic emblem of Moroccan identity, reinforcing cohesion through sound and rhythm while distinguishing Darija from other varieties of Arabic.

### 6.2 Transmission across Generations

Reduplicated expressions are learned early in childhood—whether through playful chants (*wiq-wiq*, *deqqa-deqqa*), soothing reassurances (*haddi-haddi*), or parental directives (*aji-aji*), embedding repetition into the earliest stages of language acquisition. These forms are carried into adulthood, where they continue to animate everyday speech in marketplaces, schools, and family interactions. Because reduplication is both pragmatic and rhythmic, it is easily memorized and reproduced, ensuring continuity across generations. The transmission of these expressions thus sustains Morocco's oral rhythm, embedding cultural values of immediacy, expressiveness, and communal resonance into the linguistic habits of successive cohorts.

### 6.3 Linking Everyday Speech to Oral Heritage

The categories of reduplicated expressions echo Morocco's broader oral traditions, creating a continuum between colloquial language and cultural performance. The traditions of Malhoun

poetry, the rhythmic calls of street vendors, and the chants of communal gatherings all rely on repetition to sustain attention and dramatize emotion. Everyday speech mirrors these artistic forms: when speakers repeats *tem-tem* to mark immediacy or *rebbi-rebbi* to dramatize invocation, they reproduce the cadence of oral heritage in mundane contexts. This linkage underscores how repetition sustains Morocco's identity, blurring the boundary between colloquial talk and cultural performance. Reduplication thus acts as a bridge, ensuring that oral traditions remain embedded in daily communication.

### 6.4 Identity & Expressive Vitality

By dramatizing speech and embedding rhythm into communication, reduplicated forms affirm the expressive vitality of Darija. They highlight the community's preference for immediacy, emotional resonance, and rhythmic interaction, turning ordinary exchanges into performances of identity. Expressions such as *way-way*, *yellah-yellah* dramatize emotion and energize collective action, while forms like *wakha-wakha* or *bhal-bhal* reinforce consensus and solidarity. In each case, repetition transforms language into a marker of belonging, affirming Moroccan identity as one rooted in orality and collective rhythm. The expressive vitality of Darija lies in this ability to fuse pragmatic function with cultural resonance, making reduplication both a linguistic intensifier and a cultural affirmation.

## 7. Grammatical Analysis of Reduplicated Expressions as Verb-Like Forms

While reduplicated expressions in Darija are primarily described in terms of their pragmatic and cultural functions, they also exhibit striking grammatical behavior that aligns them with verbal forms. Their morphology, syntactic distribution, and aspectual force reveal that reduplication in Darija often operates as a verb-like intensifier, shaping the dynamics of action and interaction.

### 7.1 Morphological Structure

Many expressions like sir-sir (go-go), aji-aji (come-come), shuf-shuf (look-look) are derived from imperative verb stems. The reduplication does not alter the verb’s morphology but amplifies its directive force. In some cases, reduplication involves only the initial syllable or root consonant, e.g. sh-shuf, producing a clipped but recognizable verbal command. This partial reduplication highlights immediacy and urgency. The doubling of verb forms creates a prosodic unit that resembles a chant or refrain, aligning verbal morphology with oral performance.

### 7.2 Syntactic Distribution

Reduplicated verb forms often function as independent clauses, requiring no subject or complement (sir-sir!). Their repetition suffices to convey directive force; they are, then, standalone imperatives. They can also appear within larger utterances, serving as emphatic reinforcement (wakha, sir-sir leqahwa daba) “okay, go-go to the café now”. They are here embedded in discourse. Reduplication marks repeated or continuous action, functioning similarly to aspectual markers. For instance, merra-merra “sometimes”

parallels iterative adverbs, while deghya-deghya “quickly” dramatizes pace.

### 7.3 Aspectual & Modal Functions

Doubling an imperative verb hak-hak “take-take” strengthens the illocutionary act, making compliance more likely; they have here the function of intensification of verbal force. Moreover, reduplication signals repeated or ongoing action, akin to verbal aspect. The form tem-tem “right away” dramatizes immediacy, while shed-shed “hold-hold” conveys sustained effort. Some reduplicated verbs carry modal overtones, softening or dramatizing the command. The form haddi-haddi “calm down” functions as a mitigated directive, blending imperative with soothing modality. In this table, the grammatical feature of some reduplicated expressions is related to its verb-like function. This schema highlights how reduplicated expressions in Darija behave grammatically like verbs, not just pragmatically like verbs, not just pragmatically. They intensify imperatives, mark aspect (iterative/durative), and carry modal force (soothing, emphatic). The rhythmic dimension further blurs the line between grammar and performance, embedding oral aesthetics into everyday speech.

Grammatical Feature	Reduplicated Example	Verb-Like Function	Aspectual/Modal Nuance
Imperative force	sir-sir “go-go”	Directive verb intensification	Urgency, insistency
Iterative aspect	merra-merra “sometimes”	Repetition of action/event	Iterativity, frequency
Durative aspect	shed-shed “hold-hold”	Sustained verbal action	Continuity, persistence
Modal soothing	haddi-haddi “calm down”	Directive softened by repetition	Mitigation, calming modality

Emphatic affirmation	wakha-wakha “okay-okay”	Agreement framed as verbal closure	Certainty, consensus
Performative rhythm	deqqa-deqqa “knock-knock”	Blending repetition with cadence	Playfulness, oral rhythm

#### 7.4 Distinction from Morphological Reduplication in Standard Arabic

Unlike Standard Arabic, where reduplication (*tikrar*) is a morphological process tied to derivation, reduplicated expressions in Darija are both pragmatic and prosodic. They do not create new lexical entries but rather intensify existing verbal forms. This distinction highlights the oral-performative nature of Darija reduplication: it is less about morphology and more about discourse rhythm and interactional stance.

In sum, reduplicated expressions in Darija are not only pragmatic devices but also verb-like forms that dramatize imperatives, mark aspectual nuances, and embed rhythm into communication. Their grammatical behavior underscores how repetition transforms verbs into imperative tools, bridging everyday directives with Morocco’s oral heritage.

#### 8. Conclusion

Taken together, these reduplicated expressions illustrate how Darija sustains a living tradition of orality. Their rhythmic repetition not only intensifies meaning in everyday interaction but also echoes the cadences of song, chant, and Malhoun poetry. By categorizing them into functions—commands, affirmation, temporal markers, emotional outbursts, and playful rhythms—we see how language becomes a vehicle of identity, grounding speakers in shared cultural practices. Far from being trivial colloquialisms, such forms embody continuity: they transmit oral heritage across generations, reinforce communal bonds, and affirm the expressive vitality of Darija as a marker of Moroccan sociolinguistic identity.

The study of reduplicated expressions in Darija reveals that repetition is far more than a stylistic flourish; it is a pragmatic intensifier, a cultural marker, and a vehicle of identity. As shown in Section 3, reduplication in everyday speech functions across multiple domains—commands, affirmation, temporal marking, emotional expression, playfulness, and soothing—each embedding rhythm into communication and dramatizing interaction. These pragmatic functions highlight the versatility of repetition as a discourse strategy, one that transforms ordinary utterances into memorable, performative acts.

Building on this, Section 5 demonstrated how repetition operates as a sociolinguistic signature of Moroccan identity. By intensifying meaning and dramatizing stance, reduplicate forms distinguish Darija from other varieties of Arabic and affirm a collective communicative style rooted in immediacy and expressiveness. In everyday interaction, repetition animates speech, turning routine exchanges into oral performances that mirror Morocco’s broader traditions of chant, poetry, Malhoun, and communal rhythm. This continuity underscores the cultural depth of reduplication: it is not only a pragmatic resource but also a living echo of Morocco’s oral heritage.

Section 6 further emphasized the cultural cohesion and transmission sustained by reduplicated expressions. Learned in childhood and carried into adulthood, these forms ensure continuity across generations, embedding oral rhythm into linguistic habits and reinforcing communal bonds. Their cadence links colloquial talk with artistic performance, blurring the boundary between everyday speech and cultural heritage. In doing so, repetition affirms Moroccan identity as one grounded in orality, rhythm, and expressive vitality.

Taken together, these findings demonstrate that reduplicated expressions in Darija are multifunctional artifacts of language and culture. They intensify meaning, dramatize emotion, and sustain rhythm in daily communication, while simultaneously transmitting oral heritage and reinforcing sociolinguistic identity. Far from being trivial colloquialism, they embody continuity: bridging generations, linking everyday speech to oral traditions, and affirming the expressive vitality of Darija. In this way, repetition emerges as both a universal linguistic strategy and a distinctly Moroccan practice—one that situates Darija within the global repertoire of reduplication while highlighting its unique role in sustaining Morocco’s oral identity.

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## Appendix

### Taxonomy of Common Reduplicated Expressions in Moroccan Arabic (Darija)

Example	Pragmatic Function	Effect in Discourse
<i>sir-sir</i> (“go-go”)	Iteration / Continuity	Urges persistence, emphasizes ongoing action
<i>waxa-waxa</i> (“ok-ok”)	Agreement / Softening	Signals casual acceptance, reduces face-threat
<i>bhal-bhal</i> (“same-same”)	Equivalence / Categorization	Marks similarity, generalizes across items
<i>shed-shed</i> (“pull-pull”)	Intensification / Habituality	Highlights repeated effort, dramatizes action
<i>shwiya-shwiya</i> (“little-little”)	Graduality / Politeness	Softens directive, frames action as incremental
<i>hakka-hakka</i> (“like this-like this”)	Demonstration / Instruction	Reinforces clarity, shows exactness in action

<i>baraka-baraka</i> (“enough-enough”)	Termination / Emphasis	Strongly closes an activity, signals boundary
<i>aji-aji</i> (“come-come”)	Directive / Urgency	Invites immediate attention or movement, heightens insistence
<i>shuf-shuf</i> (“look-look”)	Attention-getting / Emphasis	Directs gaze, foregrounds importance of what is shown
<i>we-we</i> (interjection)	Emotional expression / Playfulness	Mimics sound of crying or complaint, dramatizes affect
<i>kif-kif</i> (“same-same”)	Equivalence / Categorization	Marks sameness, neutralizes difference in comparison
<i>zem-zem</i> , (“silent-silent”)	Instruction / Control	Urges quietness, enforces restraint in interaction
<i>merra-merra</i> , (“sometimes”)	Iteration / Frequency	Highlights recurrence, frames habitual or repeated events
<i>deghya-deghya</i> (“quick-quick”)	Urgency / Acceleration	Pushes for speed, dramatizes haste in action
<i>rebbi-rebbi</i> , (“God-God”)	Invocation / Intensification	Appeals to divine witness, dramatizes sincerity or desperation
<i>way-way</i> , (“wao-wao”)	Emotional expression / Complaint	Mimics wailing, dramatizes suffering or protest
<i>yellah-yellah</i> (“move-move”)	Directive / Encouragement	Urges action, energizes group participation
<i>wik-wik</i> , (onomatopoeic)	Warning / Alarm	Mimics sound of whistle or alert, dramatizes caution
<i>safi-safi</i> , (“enough-enough”)	Closure / Boundary-setting	Strongly terminates discourse, signals finality
<i>deqqa-deqqa</i> , (“knock-knock” / “beat-beat”)	Iteration / Precision	Highlights repeated small actions, dramatizes rhythm or detail
<i>hadi-hadi</i> (“this-this”)	Demonstration / Clarification	Reinforces pointing, specifies exact referent in discourse
<i>hak-hak</i> (“take-take”)	Giving / Urging	Reinforces handing over, dramatizes immediacy of transfer
<i>nari-nari</i> (“oh my-oh my”)	Exclamation / Emotional intensity	Expresses shock, surprise, or admiration; dramatizes affect
<i>wili-wili</i> (“woe-woe”)	Complaint / Lament	Signals distress or protest, dramatizes suffering in discourse
<i>mmi-mmi</i> (“mom-mom”)	Vocative, surprise, disbelief	Intensifies emotional address; conveys urgency, shock, or heightened involvement
<i>wah-wah</i> (“wow-wow”)	Emotional expression / Playfulness	Dramatizes amazement, adds affective coloring

<i>hai-hai</i> (“come on-come on”)	Vocative, astonishment	Marks sudden reaction; dramatizes astonishment and draws attention
<i>bba-bba</i> (“dad-dad”)	Vocative, surprise, disbelief	Similar to <i>mmi-mmi</i> ; emphasizes emotional appeal and signals unexpectedness
<i>iwa-iwa</i> (“well-well”)	Discourse marker / Transition	Frames shift in topic, dramatizes conversational pivot or acceptance
<i>winek-winek</i> (“cutie-cutie”)	Vocative, pampering baby	Creates intimacy and tenderness; reinforces affectionate bonding
<i>tem-tem</i> (“immediately”)	Temporal intensifier, insistence	Urges rapid action; dramatizes immediacy and reinforces directive force
<i>daba-daba</i> (“now-now”)	Urgency / Directive	Pushes immediate action, dramatizes temporal insistence
<i>ness-ness</i> (“half-half”)	Quantifier, approximation, hedging	Softens precision; conveys moderation, compromise, or playful approximation
<i>ven-ven</i> (“come-come”)	Directive / Invitation	Urges arrival, dramatizes insistence or welcoming tone