32. Affix pleonasm

Abstract

Affix pleonasm is a cross-linguistically widespread phenomenon both in inflection and derivation. This article reviews the terminological confusion that has arisen around this term, surveys pleonasm in language in general and, narrowing down the scope, focuses on occurrences of pleonastic affixation in derivation in the languages of Europe. Additionally, theoretical approaches to the motivations of pleonasm are critically discussed.

1. Introduction

While the concept of pleonasm in grammar has not escaped the interest of scholars of language, the terminological landscape surrounding it has been all but homogeneous. As a result, Malkiel's (1957: 84) complaint about the harmful absence of any terminological agreement on the phenomenon still applies to the current state of linguistic research.

The terminological proliferation seems to begin with the introduction of the German term *Übertreibung der Kongruenz* by Franz Nikolaus Finck (quoted in Glässer 1954: 429), followed by *Überkennzeichnung* (Horn 1939: 3–4), and the more widespread term 'hypercharacterization', which translates the German original *Hypercharakterisierung* coined by Eduard Schwyzer (1941) and has also been relabeled 'overcharacterization'. More recent coinages encompass 'double marking', 'exuberant marking', 'multiple exponence', 'affix repetition', and sometimes 'blending'. Focusing on affixation, Meyer-Lübke (1921, § 34) coined the label *Einreihung*, which Migliorini (1943: 451) rendered in Italian as *inquadramento suffissale.* The term 'affix pleonasm', which is adopted in this article, goes back to the German *Pleonasmus*, originally used in rhetorics and stilistics and later introduced into linguistics, most prominently, by Paul 1880 (*Pleonasmus von Bildungselementen*; see also the use of *Pleonasmus* with respect to the form *Prinzessin* in Oertel 1830 (s.v. *Prinzessinn*), *dérivation pléonastique* in Nyrop 1908: 36, and *pléonasme morphologique* in Niedermann 1953: 108).

As a matter of fact, these terms are not all strictly co-extensive and scholars of language have both used different labels to cover the same issue and covered only partly overlapping phenomena by recourse to the same terms (see a critique in Tovar 1942: 188). In order to make way through this confusion, the next section reviews which phenomena can be classified under the heading of affix pleonasm or similar labels, and which cannot.

2. The definitional scope of pleonasm

The ultimate etymon of pleonasm is the Ancient Greek πλεονασμός meaning 'superabundance, excess'. Thus, the etymology of pleonasm does not reveal in which ways the excess that it describes occurs.

The most systematic treatment of the topic has been provided by Lehmann (2005), who studies pleonasm at different levels of linguistic analysis and identifies hypercharacterization as "pleonasm at the level of grammar" (2005: 119). Prior to this, by reference to Paul (1920: 162), Haspelmath (1993: 297) defines affix pleonasm as "the semantically vacuous addition of a transparent affix to a word that is already characterized for the morphosyntactic property expressed by this affix". Focusing on cases such as *children*, evolved in Middle English as a compromise between the forms *child(e)r* and *childen*, Hock (1986: 189–190) treats affix pleonasm as a non-systematic process under the heading of blending — a position that Haspelmath (1993: 300) rejects by arguing that pleonasm does not necessarily result from a morphological compromise of two existing occurring forms: for example, Vulgar Latin *esse-re* 'to be' cannot be seen as the result of blending, because Latin does not attest any form *es-re* to combine with the infinitive *esse.* Admittedly, there are cases of affix pleonasm which match true affix blending, for example, in some varieties of German, *rundlicht* 'roundish' (synonymous to standard *rundlich*) shows the suffix *-licht*, which is a blend of the suffixes *-lich* and *-icht* (see Paul 1920: 162; Plank 1981: 77-79; Haspelmath 1993: 307, fn 12). Therefore, affix blending can be considered a hyponym of pleonasm.

Malkiel (1957: 79) provides the following both descriptive and explanatory definition of the phenomenon (that he terms *hypercharacterization*), in which the diachronic dimension is explicitly highlighted:

> "If a given linguistic formation develops in such a way as to allow, at a certain point, one of its distinctive features to stand out more sharply than at the immediately preceding stage, one may speak of hypercharacterization (or hyperdetermination) of that feature, in the diachronic perspective."

Another term which recurs in the literature is *overcharacterization*, described as "adding a suffix that is strictly speaking superfluous, and hence a pleonastic addition" (Booij 2007: 273).

All these definitions have in common that they do not reveal anything about how to constrain the conceptual scope, that is, the intension of the definition of pleonasm. In fact, phenomena running under the heading of pleonasm can be motivated pragmatically or phonologically: for example, the Spanish plural forms *pie-s-es* 'feet', *cafe-s-es* 'coffee-s', and Old Latin 3PL.PRS *da-n-unt* 'they give' (besides Classical *da-nt*) are prosodically motivated (Dressler, Dziubalska-Kołaczyk and Spina 2001: 123). But, then, is this not motivation

enough to discard the characterization of these forms as pleonastic? The most feasible way to solve this doubt is to exclude pragmatic and prosodic motivation from the definitional scope of pleonasm and to only account for both semantic and functional (i.e. morphosyntactic) motivation.

A further aspect relating to the definitional intension of pleonasm concerns the way in which pleonasm is realized. In general terms, the realization of semantic and functional properties can be explicit (or overt) and implicit (i.e. lexical). Based on the distinction between explicit vs. implicit characterization, the following types of pleonastic, that is, over-characterized, marking, can be derived:

(1) Implicit pleonastic marking is the combination of a lexeme implicitly carrying a semantic or functional value with one element which explicitly (morphologically or syntactically or both) codes the same value. For example, an explicit marker having a value *V* is combined with a lexeme which inherently contains *V*: a case in point is the historical addition of the overt feminine marker *-aa* to inherently feminine nouns in Hausa (Newman 1979), and also the Rhaeto-Romance NP *il sulegl* 'the sun' where the value uniqueness, which is inherent in the lexeme, is additionally realized by the definite article *il* (Malkiel 1957: 80).

(2) Explicit pleonastic marking is the addition of double or multiple explicit (morphological or syntactic or both) marking of a value *V* to a lexeme which does not code *V* inherently, for example, the Italian NP *tre cani* 'three dogs' with realization of the plural via both the numeral and the suffix *-i*, as well as the Spanish example *cafe-s-es* mentioned above. A further subtype of explicit pleonastic marking would be the realization of *V* via double or multiple explicit (morphological or syntactic or both) marking on an item which implicitly holds this value. While this option is virtually possible, no case of this type is known to me.

For the sake of completeness, the remaining part of this section briefly discusses what kinds of phenomena can be confused with, but do not count as pleonasm. Crucially, pleonasm must be kept apart from both affix replacement and general loanword integration devices. To the first type belong, e.g., Old Aragonese *alfayante* 'tailor', which resulted from the renewal of *alfayate* through suffixation with *-ante* (Malkiel 1957: 108). To the second type belong, for example, 'loanverb markers', such as the suffix *-oa* in Yaqui (Uto-Aztecan) which is added to verbs borrowed from Nahuatl and Spanish in order to facilitate accommodation: e.g., *mediar-oa* [mediate-LVM] 'to mediate' from Spanish *mediar* (Wohlgemuth 2009: 226). Both affix replacement and loanword integration are combined in the so-called *Interferenzsuffixe* (Kolb 1980; Müller 2005), such as the Old High German suffix *-isc* (used to form deonymic adjectives), for example, in *kanin-isc* 'dog-like' (Latin *caninus*) and *saffirin-isc* 'saphire-like' (Latin *sappirinus*). In fact, affix replacement is particularly common in loanwords, see, for example, the German demonym *Afrikaner* 'African' (from Latin *Africanus*), which is due to the replacement of the Latin suffix *-anus* with *-aner*.

Sometimes scholars also apply the heading 'interference suffix' (see Kolb 1980: 283; Müller 2005: 38) to cases of integration of borrowed lexemes into inflectional classes of the

recipient language, e.g., Latin *operāri* > Old High German *opferōn* 'to sacrifice'. Nevertheless, this must be seen as a separate procedure, as it is just the result of the application of productive inflectional rules (the infinitive marker *-ōn*) to the base of borrowed items in order to make them fit for syntax.

3. Pleonasm in language

In this section, I detail at which levels of language analysis and processing pleonasm can occur, before deepening the phenomenon of affix pleonasm in derivational morphology in Section 4.

At the level of discourse, some languages have pleonastic forms acting as discourse markers, for example, in Yiddish, the expletive *es* instructs the hearer that the subject does not represent an entity already evoked in the discourse: *es geyt epes in vald a yid* 'Some Jew seems to be walking in the woods; lit. it goes something in wood a Jew'(Prince 1993: 176); also Dominican Spanish *ello*, European Portuguese *ele*, and Balearic Catalan *ell* all function as markers that encode sentence pragmatics, e.g. Balearic Catalan *Ell no n'hi ha!* 'It does not exist; lit. It not (not) there exists!' (Hinzelin 2009: 17).

In the lexicon, pleonasm often occurs in form of pure addition of modifiers to lexemes which inherently encode the meaning expressed by the modifier, e.g., *dead corpse*, *briefly sketch*; Spanish *aniversario anual* 'annual aniversary'; French *conversation orale*; German *mündliches Gespräch* 'oral conversation'; or the additive use of a synonymous grammeme, e.g., Italian *ma però* '(lit.) but but'.

An originally lexical item can also be the source of syntactic pleonasm due to grammaticalization. This is famously the case of the French sentential negation *ne ... pas* (Rowlett 1998): initially, the noun *pas* 'step', from Latin *pass(um)*, served as a reinforcement in the clause *je ne vais* 'I do not go' → *je ne vais pas* 'I do not go any step'; later, *pas* was desemanticized and acquired the grammatical function of negation; from this time, the negation *pas* is a pleonastic addition to the negative adverb *ne*. Moreover, in the syntax, there is pleonasm in expletives such as the non-standard English 'excrescent *'s*', for example in *Does anyone see what's the tactic is?* This element reinforces or emphasizes the *WH* interrogative word, just as in (non-standard) *how's about*, *how's come*, *what's about* (Zwicky 2012).

As has been observed (Lehmann 2005: 137–138), pleonasm is very frequent in the expression of spatial relations. For example, in German, particle verbs license (pleonastic) 'directional PPs' (Olsen 1996; Okamoto 2002; Rehbein and Genabith 2006), such as in *Peter lief* [PP *durch den Wald*] *durch* 'Peter ran through the forest'. Similarly, Latin attests the pleonastic realization of spatial relations via the combined use of a preposition and a preverb, e.g., *ex urbe ef-fugere* 'to flee out of town' (Lehmann 2005: 138). Moreover, Latin has what has been called 'pleonastic reflexive', e.g., *suo sibi lautum sanguine tepido* [his:ABL.SG RFL bath:PTCP.PST.ACC.SG blood:ABL.SG warm:ABL.SG] 'bathed in his own warm blood': here, the reflexive *sibi* is a fossilized omissible expression of possession (Cennamo 1999: 117).

Frequently, pleonasm occurs in the realization of the values of comparative and superlative, producing syntactic (i.e. analytic) constructions which combine an adverb and an inflected form to express a single predicate, e.g., Middle English *more stronger* (Włodarczyk 2007: 196), French *le plus meilleur*, Spanish *el mas mejor* (Lehmann 2005: 139). In other languages, implicit pleonastic marking of the superlative value may occur by adding dedicated inflectional formatives to inherently marked lexemes, e.g., German (*das*) *bestmöglich-ste* (Lehmann 2005: 140), Late Latin *minimissimus* for *minimus* (Malkiel 1957: 86). Instead, in Modern Greek, we have explicit pleonastic realization of the superlative via double comparative suffixation, e.g., *o kali-ter-o-ter(os)* [good-COMP-COMP] 'bestest' (Karatsareas, p.c.). In south-eastern dialects of Lithuanian, the superlative may be realized, at once, by the simultaneous application of the inherited superlative suffix and a superlative prefix *nai-* borrowed from Slavonic, e.g., *nai-gardz-iaus-i obuoliai* 'the most delicious apples' (Grinaveckienė 1969: 222; Wiemer 2009: 353).

Possessive constructions are not immune to pleonasm either, as shown by the syntactic augment in Spanish *su casa + de él* [POSS house + of him] 'his house' (Malkiel 1957: 100), as well as the non-standard southern German 'dative + possessive adjective construction' of the type *dem Peter sein Buch* 'Peter's book'.

In syntax-dependent (i.e. contextual) inflection, we find the perhaps most common manifestation of pleonasm in grammar – viz. agreement. Agreement is the redundant realization of feature values by means of discontinuous affixes in order to facilitate understanding for the hearer (Corbett 2006: 274-275). Nowadays, the most common terms used to describe this phenomenon of morphological asymmetry are 'extended exponence' (Matthews 1972), 'multiple exponence' (Halle and Marantz 1993), and 'exuberant exponence' (Harris 2008). For example, in Batsbi (Northern Caucasian), class marking (contextually: gender-number agreement) can occur in numerous positions within a single verb form, such as in *tiši^{n} c'a daħ d-ex-d-o-d-anǒ* [old house(d/d).ABS PV CM-destroy-CM-PRS-CM-EVIDI] 'they are evidently tearing down the old house', via triple affixation with *-d-* (Harris 2009: 267–268).

A particular type of pleonasm is word-internal agreement (Stolz 2007), which has been claimed to result from a process of externalization of inflection (Haspelmath 1993). A well-described case is the realization of definiteness in Lithuanian adjectives. Here, the adjective stem is inflected for case, number, and gender, and this is followed by a suffixal definiteness formative which is again marked for the same features (Stolz 2010: 236), e.g., *bált-os-i-os* [white-NOM.PL.F-DEF-NOM.PL.F] 'white'.

Apart from agreement, the following morphosyntactic features (Corbett 2012) may be realized pleonastically, in the sense of reinforcement of single formatives:

(1) case, as exemplified by the genitive (singular) of the Latin pronouns *eius* (< **e(syo)(-s)*), *cuius*, *huius* (Malkiel 1957: 98), or, in German, of both common nouns, e.g., *Hasens* 'of the rabbit', and proper names, e.g., *Mariens* 'Mary's' (Paul 1920: 162);

(2) number, in particular the value of plural, as frequently attested in European languages, e.g., Portuguese *alvará-z-es* 'charters', *filhó-s-es* 'fried doughs' (Malkiel 1957: 98); Dutch *kind-er-en* 'children'; northern German *Junge-n-s* 'boys'; moreover, it is particularly recurrent in loanwords, e.g., English *spaghett-i-s*; Dutch *lied-er-en* 'songs'; Afrikaans *vrou-en-s* 'women' (Thomason 1988: 304). In Maltese, there are cases in which templatic morphology is combined with concatenative morphology, e.g., *truf-ijiet* [ends-PL] 'ends', where *truf* is the broken plural of *tarf* and the formative *-ijiet* realizes plural, too (Camilleri, p.c.). In southwestern dialects of Hungarian, we find cases in which the plural is doubly realized via the regular plural formative, *-Ek*, and the plural possessive prefix, *i-*, e.g., in *tehen-i-m-ek* 'my cows' (Imre 1972: 320);

(3) gender: some varieties of Italian spoken in Garfagnana give examples of Gillerón's 'linguistic therapeutics' (Gilliéron 1921: 11), that is, inflectional class shift of lexemes from a gender-opaque class to a class that marks a certain gender value more neatly, e.g., *fiumo* 'river' for standard Italian *fiume* (masculine): this is an instance of implicit pleonasm, because the inflectional class *libro libri* realizes the gender value masculine on a noun which is inherently masculine (Malkiel 1957: 81).

On the side of verbs, pleonastic realization of person is found, for example, in the Greek dialect spoken in the village of Ochthonia in Euboea, in forms such as *erx-és' tane-s* 'you were coming', which reshape the opaque 2SG medio-passive imperfect form **erxés'tane* by adding the 2SG (final) *-s* formative, yielding more paradigmatic transparency (Pantelidis 2010: 323).

A quite common case of pleonasm concerns the realization of the morpho-semantic feature of tense. MacKay (1979: 487) refers to pleonastic past tense suffixation in child language: for example, *smashted* is due to reanalysis of *smasht* as a present tense form and addition of the past tense formative *-ed* (further examples in Bowerman 1982: 327).

As concerns word-formation, pleonasm is attested in compounding, abbreviation, and derivation. Pleonastic compounds are not uncommon in the languages of Europe: Frisian (see article 135) has appositive compounds of the type *widdofrou* 'widdow; lit. widdow woman', *einfûgel* 'duck; lit. duck bird'; the Indo-Iranian language Tat forms phytonyms by combining the inherited *dor* 'tree' with specifying lexemes borrowed from Azeri (Turkic), e.g., *qovoq-dor* 'poplar', *balud-dor* 'oak tree' (see article 173). While these instances clearly count as implicit pleonasm due to the hyperonymic status of the head, synonym compounds, such as the German adverb *schlussendlich* 'end-finally', and the Mandarin Chinese adjective *duo-yu* 'excessive, extra; lit. extra-remaining' (Lehmann 2005: 146–148) are examples of explicit pleonasm.

Cases of pleonasm in abbreviation elaborations are quite frequent, too, e.g., English *PIN number* (*Private Identification Number*) and Austrian German *SPL Leiter* (*Studienprogrammleiter* 'director of the study program'), to mention just a few.

4. Types of affix pleonasm

In line with the scope of the present handbook, this section covers the specific type of affix pleonasm, that is, pleonastic derivational affixation, in the languages of Europe.

Affix pleonasm occurs either when "an affix that normally serves to add a particular unit of meaning gets attached to a root whose meaning already includes that unit" (Covington 1981: 33), e.g., *un-decipher* 'decipher', Spanish *des-escombrar* 'dig out' (Rainer 1993: 323), or when multiple derivational markers apply, e.g., German *Prinz-ess-in* 'princess'.

To my knowledge, at least the following parts of speech are attested as displaying affix pleonasm in derivation: (1) nouns, e.g., dialectal English *musician-er* for *musician* (Covington 1981: 35); (2) adjectives, e.g., dialectal English *ungodless* 'godless' (Covington 1981: 35), Latin *etern-alis* 'eternal' instead of *eternus*, in which the suffix *-al* explicitly realizes the feature [+adjective] (Stotz 2000: 336), or Middle High German *tugenthaft-ic* 'virtuous', in which the suffix *-ic* marks the adjectival status of *tugenthaft* more clearly (Plank 1981: 77); (3) verbs: in Yucatec Maya, the transitivizing suffix *-t* applies to loanverbs which, in the source language, are already transitive, e.g., *alcanzar-t-ik* [achieve-TRR-INCMPL] from Spanish *alcanzar* 'to reach' (Lehmann 2005: 141-146); (4) adverbs, e.g., (colloquial) Spanish *sinduda-mente* 'doubtlessly' (Rainer 1993: 607), English *thusly* besides *thus* (Covington 1981: 35).

As concerns the position of pleonastic affixes, they are mostly suffixes, but we find also interfixes, e.g., Italian *libr-ic(c)-ino* 'small book', prefixes, e.g., *re-continuation*, and, more rarely, infixes, e.g., *un-bloody-believable*, where the adjective *bloody* does not change the meaning of *unbelievable*, but serves the pragmatic function of intensifying the speaker's feeling of anger or irritation, etc.

In the following, instances of pleonasm are presented according to the semantic/functional values that they realize. Following the line of presentation adopted so far in a coherent way, I start with pleonasm in the realm of valence, which is commonly considered as being located between inflection and derivation. Starting with passive, which is primarily inflectional, we find that in some registers of Turkish, the passive formative *-il/-in* can apply twice in the presence of the abilitive suffix *-(y)Abil*, e.g., *gid-il-ebil-(in)-ir* [go-PASS-ABIL-PASS-AOR] 'it is possible to go' (Göksel, p.c.). Moving our way down from primarily inflectional towards primarily derivational categories, we find instances of affix pleonasm in the realization of causative. An intriguing case is found in the Romani variety of Selice (Slovakia), where in the perfective forms, two causative allomorphs can be used pleonastically, that is, without yielding a double-causative interpretation: for example, the aorist form *an-av-a-d'-a* [do-CAUS-CAUS-PFV-3SG.PFV] regularly means 'she had (sth) ordered; lit. s/he makes (so) make (so) bring (sth)' but can also mean 's/he ordered (sth)' (Elšík, p.c.).

In polysynthetic Adyghe (Northwest Caucasian), pleonasm can affect the expression of participant-internal possibility: for example, in *se məẑ̂ʷe-r qə-s-fe-ʔetə-ŝʷə-ʁ-ep* [1SG stone-ABS DIR-1SG.IO-BEN-raise-ABIL-PST-NEG] 'I could not raise the stone' possibility is realized by means both of the abilitive suffix *-ŝʷə* and (a modal use of) the benefactive applicative prefix *fe-* (Yury Lander, field notes).

A clearly derivational operation which is often accompanied by affix pleonasm is derivational gender marking, e.g., German *Hindin* 'female deer' for *Hinde* (Covington 1981: 35), *Diakonissin* 'deaconess' for *Diakonisse* (Malkiel 1957: 86).

Some few languages display pleonastic formation of agent nouns (see article 72), especially when they denote the agent's profession or rank. Pleonastic agentive suffixation occurs in German, e.g., *Vorfahr-er* 'ancestor' (Paul 1920a: 62); Old French *laman-eur* 'pilot' (Malkiel 1957: 107); Spanish VN compounds, by means of the agentive suffix *-ero*, e.g., *picapedr-ero* 'stonemason' for *picapiedras* (Rainer 1993: 268, 487). In Dutch, pleonastic affixation is also found in acronyms which are enriched with the suffix *-er*, resulting in denominal names, such as *UD-er* 'university teacher' (*Universitair Docent*) (Booij 2007: 273).

Processes of intensification such as diminution, augmentation, and iteration are particularly prone to affix pleonasm (Lehmann 2005: 145). Just as, in inflection, pleonastic marking of the plural seems to be the most frequent case of affix pleonasm, in derivation, the champion role is played by diminutive marking. This is richly attested in the languages of Europe: see in Polish child-directed speech *Monisieńko* [*Monika*:DIM:DIM.VOC] 'little Monika!' (Wierzbicka 2003: 53); eastern Yiddish *majlxl* 'little mouth', from Standard Yiddish *moil* 'mouth' + *xə* + *ḷ* (Jacobs 2005: 69; Herzog and Baviskar 2000: 120); in Lithuanian, *puod-as* 'pot' may be diminuted as *puod-uk-as* 'small pot; cup', but also as *puod-uk-ėl-is* 'small nice pot', via the diminutive suffixes *-uk* and *-ėl* (Gāters 1977: 60–61); in German (cf. article 132), forms such as *See-lein-chen* 'small lake', Austrian German *Schatz-i-lein* 'darling; lit. little treasure' are not uncommon; in Icelandic, there are combinations of prefixoids (*pínu-, smá-*) and suffixes (e.g., *-lingur*), e.g., *pínu-disk-lingur* or *smá-disk-lingur* 'tiny diskette', though these cases are far from common there (Indriðason, p.c.); in Greek, *manulitsa* 'mommy' is formed via *-ul(a)* + *-its(a)* suffixation of the base *man(a)* 'mother' (Karatsareas, p.c.); in Turkish, a sequence of the two diminutive suffixes, *-Acık/-İcik* and *-Cik*, is ungrammatical and would produce an ill-formed form such as **küçücükcük* (from {*küçük+icik+cik*}), but it works when a possessive suffix is added, e.g., *küçücükcüğüm* 'my little tiny one' (Göksel, p.c.). Interestingly, in Italian, while double diminutive suffixes can effect further denotative diminution, diminutivizing interfixes are denotationally meaningless, e.g., *libr-ino/-etto* (smaller than *libro* 'book') → *libre-ett-ino* (still smaller), but *libr-ic(c)-ino* (not smaller than *librino*) (Dressler and Merlini Barbaresi 1994: 540). Still, they seem to have connotative meaning, e.g., *topo* 'mouse' has two diminutives: *top-ino* and more attractive *top-ol-ino* (Dressler and Merlini Barbaresi 1994: 542).

Pleonastic derivational realization of augmentation can be exemplified with Italian *ultra-bell-issimo* 'most hyperbeautiful' (Lehmann 2005: 137–148). Spanish provides also instances of implicit pleonasm in the realization of iterative via *-ear*, e.g., *interroguear* 'to interrogate', *tergiversear* 'to twist', because *interrogar* and *tergiversar* already have an iterative meaning (Rainer 1993: 459). In Hungarian, pleonastic iterative forms are attested in lexicalized verbs, e.g., *lát-ogat-gat* 'to visit often', where the iterative suffix *-gat* attaches to the lexicalized verbal base *látogat* 'to visit', from *lát* 'to see' (Kiefer, p.c.).

A smaller chapter in the present survey of affix pleonasm is the derivation of abstract nouns: examples include Old French *tenebr-our* 'darkness' and *hontage* 'blemish', in which suffixation via *-our* and *-age*, respectively, aims to reinforce the membership of the nouns *ténèbre* and *honte* in the semantically determined group of abstract nouns (Nyrop 1908: 36; Malkiel 1957: 107; Meyer-Lübke 1966, 2: 25–26). In Ossetic, many adjectives can function both as adjectives and abstract nouns, e.g., *fəd* 'evil'. Here, the application of the abstract suffix *-ad* produces disambiguation of the abstract meaning, thus *fədd-ad* means 'evil' only in the sense of 'evilness' (Belyaev, p.c.).

In the domain of adjectives, we often find what Migliorini (1942: 451) called "cumulo dei suffissi nella formazione degli aggettivi [suffix cumulation in the formation of adjectives]", for example, Middle High German *narrehtic* 'foolish' and *tôrehtic* 'fatuous', with extension of the suffix *-eht* through the suffix *-ig* (originally used to form exocentric adjectives).

A recurrent area of incidence of pleonastic affixes is the integration of loanwords. Quite frequently, affixation exerts an adaptive role in loanword integration, and the trend towards indigenization can give rise to pleonasm. In Ossetic, for example, the adjective *nacionalon* is a synonym of *nacion* 'national', which is regularly formed from the noun *naci* 'nation', via suffixation with *-on*, an Ossetic adjectivizing suffix. Instead, the form *nacional-on* is clearly pleonastic, since there is not a root *nacional in Ossetic; it is probably calqued on Russian *nacional'-nyj*, which is itself an example of pleonastic suffixation in Russian (Belyaev, p.c.); see also Polish *globalny*, etc. (cf. article 93). In Maltese, suffixless loanwords from English can be integrated via suffix addition, for example the ethnic adjective *Ġerman-iż* from *German*, in analogy with *Franċiż* and *Inglíż*, borrowed from Italian *francese* and *inglese* (cf. article 183). In German, several adjectives borrowed from Latin or French are suffixed with *-isch*, without any semantic modification: e.g., *bestialisch* 'bestial', *musikalisch* 'musical'. Often, adjectives pertaining to the learnèd layer of vocabulary, mostly to technical terminology, display pleonasm, for example German *sphär-oid-isch* 'spherical', instead of *sphär-oid* (Hyrtl 1880: 262), and English *lactiferous* 'conveying milk', *nubiferous* 'bringing clouds', which show, in diachronic terms, an agglomeration of the Latin suffix *-ifer* and the English suffix *-ous*, which was probably fostered by the existence in Latin of an allomorph *-ferus* (although not attested for the two examples mentioned).

Apart from adjectives, affix pleonasm is not absent from the integration of borrowed nouns and verbs either: for example, Turkish speakers can add the agentive suffix *-cI* to borrowed nouns which already denote agents, e.g., *kasap* 'butcher' (from Albanian) → *kasap-çı* (Lewis 1967: 60); in Gagauz, the same suffix *-cI* can attach to loanwords that already denote an occupation, such as *başçıvan-cı* 'gardener': here, the indigenous *-cI* applies to the Persian loan *başçıvan*, consisting of the base *başçe* 'garden' and the Persian suffix *-van* (see article 188); in Old French, *bolengier* 'baker' results from Old Picardic *boulenc*, on the model of *fournier* (Malkiel 1957: 107); Finnish uses a complex marker *-eerata*, consisting both of the native Finnish infinitive suffix *-ta* and the borrowed suffix *-eera*, e.g., *sit-eera-ta* 'to quote'

from Swedish *citera* (Wohlgemuth 2009: 228). Pleonastically used deverbal derivational affixes can be themselves borrowed items, as is the case of the suffix *-avy*, borrowed from Slavonic languages in the Lithuanian dialect of Zietela, e.g., *dėn-avy-ti* 'to lay down' (vs. standard *dėti(s)*) or *griž-avy-ti-s* 'to return' (vs. standard *grižti*) (Wiemer 2009: 360).

5. Why affix pleonasm?

After having provided, without any claim to completeness, a survey of the types of derivational affix pleonasm occurring in the languages of Europe, this final section tries to overview how linguists have approached pleonasm and, in particular, its motivations from a theoretical viewpoint.

For this purpose, I turn to Haspelmath's definition of affix pleonasm, as reproduced in Section 2. In fact, this definition suggests that the morphosyntactic features of those word forms that we define as pleonastic, are already realized by primary affixes, to which the secondary (i.e., pleonastic) affixes are claimed to be a "semantically vacuous addition". While the existence of primary affixes is the theoretical foundation for acknowledging the secondary affixes as being *de facto* pleonastic, the status of both primary and secondary affixes needs to be discussed in more detail.

The issue at hand here is whether pleonasm qualifies as a complete or rather a transitory phenomenon in terms both of diachronic evolution and language acquisition. Clearly, in a diachronic perspective, pleonasm can refer to a transitory stage, as can be exemplified with the evolution of sentential negation in French from stage (1), Old French *jo(u) ne vais*, via stage (2), *je n(e) vais pas*, to stage (3), contemporary colloquial *j'vais pas* 'I don't go' (see Malkiel 1957: 90). However, in synchronic terms, one form can be definitive or more variants can be in competition with each other: for example, in contemporary French, both (2) and (3) are possible variants, though they reflect a difference in register.

In scenarios of early phases of language acquisition (Dressler 1997), Turkish children produce forms such as *manav-cı* 'greengrocer-cı' (Göksel, p.c.), English children have plurals such as *feets* or past-tense forms such as *camed* (Covington 1981: 35). These cases, in fact, represent an intermediary stage. Also in language contact, as we have seen in some of the cases reported, pleonasm can be considered, at least partly, the reflex of an intermediary stage: for example, German *verbal*, *nominal* have not been extended via *-isch* (*verbalisch*, *nominalisch*).

These facts lead us to raise the question of whether affix pleonasm exists at all. In other words, do pleonastic affixes have any psycholinguistic relevance in the grammars of the speakers or do they only exist in the heads of linguists? Dressler, Dziubalska-Kołaczyk and Spina (2001: 124) argue that 'hypercharacterization' (i.e., pleonasm) "is an imprecise concept that is only justified in a very superficial morphotactic or panchronic perspective", because synchronically, the secondary affixes are, in fact, the only markers which are relevant in terms both of productivity and generality.

Thus, if alone secondary (pleonastic) markers alone realize meanings and values, why are these markers there? What are the conditions under which their occurrence is necessary? While Dressler, Dziubalska-Kołaczyk and Spina (2001: 124) claim that pleonasm is only an apparent phenomenon, thus does not represent a violation of biuniqueness, other linguists consider it to be the source of allomorphy, of uneconomical and non-uniform coding and, thus, a violation of the Elsewhere Condition (Stump 1989; Haspelmath 1993: 299, 305, 306). In spite of this discord, all authors agree that pleonasm enhances transparency and increases neatness (e.g., Malkiel 1957: 81; Plank 1981: 79). Accordingly, apart from restoring prosodic normalcy, motivations for pleonasm include the replacement of affixes which are either unproductive or exceptional or difficult to parse, as well as their reinforcement (Plank 1985: 69; Thomason 1988: 300; Haspelmath 1993: 298; Dressler, Dziubalska-Kołaczyk and Spina 2001; Dressler 2004). Moreover, affix pleonasm serves systematization in language, as has been observed by Booij (2007: 273) with respect to loanword integration (see also Lehmann 2005: 130 on 'safety pleonasm').

In light of the evidence provided in this discussion, neither the pure diachronic nor the pure synchronic perspective helps us to properly understand the very dimension of pleonasm. Instead, it is reasonable to assume an approach in terms of gradual motivation, in order to be able to account for both idiolectal and sociolectal variation (see Fleischer and Barz 2012: 45). In this vein, Haspelmath (1993: 301) proposes a principle of conservatism, according to which innovative forms that are closer to the earlier, more familiar forms are generally preferable than forms that are totally innovative: thus, in Haspelmath's terms, *feets* is better than *foots* for it is more similar to the older form *feet*.

Looking forward to wider cross-linguistic studies providing novel evidence and possibly modifying current claims on the theoretical foundation of affix pleonasm (see Stolz 2007: 249 *contra* Ortmann 1999: 118), it is still certain that pleonasm concerns an "impressive gamut of categories [which is] matched by the variety of languages participating in [it] and, within the lifetime of each, by the number of evolutionary stages testifying to this peculiar encroachment on the norm" (Malkiel 1957: 82).

Abbreviations: 1 first person, 2 second person, 3 third person, ABIL abilitive, ABL ablative, ABS absolutive, ACC accusative, APPL applicative, AOR aorist, BEN benefactive, CAUS causative, CM class marker, COMP comparative, DEF definite, DIM diminutive, DIR directional, EVID evidential, F feminine, INCMPL imcompletive, IO indirect object, LVM loanverb marker, NEG negative, NOM nominative, PASS passive, PL plural, PFV perfective, PRS present, PST past, PTCT participle, PV preverb, RFL reflexive, SG singular, TRR transitivizer.

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