Reduplication as a trigger of intersubjectivity:
Mandarin Chinese ideophones and reduplication in the CHILDES corpora

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Given that previous studies suggest that the L1 acquisition of verbs and other relational items is facilitated in Mandarin Chinese when compared to that of non-relational items (Tardif 1996; Lee & Naigles 2005; Tardif 2006; Imai et al. 2006; Ogura et al. 2006), and the fact that reduplication is pervasive in Mandarin (Lǐ & Ponsford 2018), this study explores the role that reduplication and ideophones play in early childhood communication, which thus far has been understudied.

Using *childesr* (Sanchez et al. 2018), an R package mirroring the CHILDES database (MacWhinney 2000), it is possible to approach this research topic from both qualitative and quantitative perspectives. As an example, we show how caregivers use reduplication forms to induce children's reactions, and children construe sensory descriptions with reduplicative constructions when they are given a task such as describing an apple, even though other competing alternatives are readily available. This pragmatic use of reduplication can trigger intersubjectivity, which aids in communication, especially since the child repeats the adult's reduplication.

However, whether or not such reduplicated ideophonized constructions are used does depend on the age of the target child and the item in question: ideophonic construal and reduplication are influenced by frequency effects and their depictive function (Dingemanse 2012), and are item-based, like most of L1 acquisition (Tomasello 2003; MacWhinney & O'Grady 2015).

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