

## IDEOPHONES IN BENGALI\*

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This paper defines ideophones as onomatopoeic words that evoke the idea of a perception mediated by different senses, the idea of a mental or physical sensation, or the idea of a state or a manner of action. The paper aims to call attention to the phonological, morphological, syntactic and semantic properties of Bengali ideophones which make them a distinct word-class in Bengali.

**Key words:** Bengali language, ideophones, morphological properties of ideophones, phonological properties of ideophones, syntactic properties of ideophones, semantic properties of ideophones

### Introduction

An analysis of a Bengali-English dictionary<sup>1</sup> and Bengali texts<sup>2</sup> revealed that, like many other Asian languages, Bengali is rich in ideophones. It is attested to especially by the number of ideophones in the dictionary, which can be assumed to include only such ideophones that are well-established in the language.<sup>3</sup> The texts, on the other hand, also include ideophones that cannot be found in the dictionary. This fact proves that ideophones constitute an open word-class in Bengali and can be created ad hoc. Of course, certain rules must be followed so that it is obvious to the recipient what idea the ideophones are supposed to

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<sup>1</sup> BISWAS, S. Samsad Bengali-English dictionary.

<sup>2</sup> The list of texts, labelled as “Analyzed texts”, can be found at the end of the present paper.

<sup>3</sup> The Appendix on pages 16 – 25 lists all the ideophones excerpted from the dictionary, together with the characteristics of the semantic concepts they denote. These characterizations are often quite long, so they are referred to only to a limited extent in this paper. Their detailed descriptions can be found in the Appendix.

evoke. In this respect, their phonological and morphological structure, as well as the context in which they occur, plays a significant role.

The term 'ideophones' is not common in Bengali. In the dictionary which lists them as distinct lexemes, they are marked by the classifier *inter.* (interjection), which is followed by a definition: "expressing" or "denoting"... I agree with Hanne-Ruth Thompson, who considers this characterization of ideophones "syntactically rather unsatisfactory" in her book *Bengali*.<sup>4</sup> Thompson refers to this word-class as onomatopoeia (in their "expanded sense of word-creations, sound-pictures or sensory words") and distinguishes them from interjections. In her opinion, Rabindranath Tagore's term *dhvanyātmak*, or "soul in the sound", is apt. However, this term is rather poetic and very general and does not point to the real properties and functions of ideophones.<sup>5</sup>

In linguistic literature there are diverse labels for this word-class. For example, Mark Dingemase gives a detailed list of them pointing out what they have resulted from.

Some labels identify ideophones with phenomena familiar to the investigators (onomatopoeia, adverbs, interjections); others characterise their semantic functions (expressive, descriptive, intensifier); yet others focus on morphosyntactic behaviour (indeclinable, radical); and finally, some focus on their mode of signification (echoism, Laubild, image).<sup>6</sup>

For the specific case of Bengali I am inclined to accept the definition which views ideophones as onomatopoeic words, which are meant to evoke in the recipient of a speech act the idea of a perception mediated by different senses, the idea of a mental or physical sensation, or the idea of a state or a manner of action. They express a certain semantic concept, and in dictionaries they are usually not assigned a particular lexical meaning (the only exception being onomatopoeia imitating real-life sounds, especially animal sounds), which could be easily matched with a lexeme in another language. In general, all ideophones can be referred to as onomatopoeia, because they are always onomatopoeic words, but they are of diverse character. They can be divided at least into two basic categories: those that imitate real-life sounds (aural ideophones), and the others. A more detailed analysis can further divide them into several subcategories, as will be shown below.

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<sup>4</sup> THOMPSON, H.-R. *Bengali*, p. 317.

<sup>5</sup> The dictionary lists the word as adj. (rhet.) giving "onomatopoeic" as the English equivalent.

<sup>6</sup> DINGEMASE, M. *The Meaning and Use of Ideophones in Siwu*, p. 21.

In order to evoke one of the mentioned ideas, ideophones possess a specific phonological and morphological structure. Most often they are disyllabic, composed of two identical or slightly modified syllables with specific phonemes. The choice of phonemes, be they consonants or vowels, and their combination influence the idea that the ideophone is supposed to evoke. This implies that the relationship between the formal and the content aspects of ideophones is not arbitrary. This concerns especially aural ideophones, which are meant to imitate extra-linguistic reality by means of language/sound the most accurately.

### **Morphological properties**

The morphological structure of ideophones mostly comprises two recurrent identical or partly identical components (syllables).<sup>7</sup> Ideophones are thus formally created following the same model as total or partial reduplication, as a result of which reduplication is generally considered one of their characteristic features. In Bengali, however, we often speak only of seeming reduplication because in most cases the non-reduplicated base (reduplicand), i.e. the non-reduplicated lexical unit denoting a semantic concept, does not occur independently. There are relatively few reduplicated ideophones,<sup>8</sup> most of them being aural ideophones. Compared to non-reduplicated ones, totally reduplicated ideophones acquire a new function: they evoke iterativeness and continuity.<sup>9</sup> For example, *thanthan* “a light clattering noise as of the concussion of a thin metallic object made repeatedly” – *than* “a light clattering noise as of the concussion of a thin metallic object”; *thakthak* “rapping noise as of a stick on the floor made repeatedly and quickly” – *thak* “rapping noise as of a stick on the floor”, etc. Total reduplication is much rarer in other than aural ideophones. Even in these cases, it expresses repetition or duration rather than suddenness: for example, *dapdap/dabdab* “blazing up repeatedly and rather tremulously” – *dap* “a sudden blaze”; *tiri;tiri;tiri;bir;* “repeated skipping, jumping” – *tiri*; “a sudden skip”; *phikphik* “giggling” – *phik* “sudden smile with a short catch of breath”, etc.

The writing of ideophones is not standardized. Individual (recurrent) components of an ideophone can be written either as one word (*kackac*, *kir̥kir̥*, *jharjhar*), using a hyphen (*kūi-kūi*, *kēt-kēt*, *gāk-gāk*) or separately. In the

<sup>7</sup> THOMPSON, H.-R., op. cit., p. 317, speaks of rhyming syllables.

<sup>8</sup> This claim of mine relies on how ideophones are classified in the dictionary, i.e. if the dictionary gives both the base with its independent meaning (semantic concept) and its reduplication with a different function.

<sup>9</sup> Seemingly reduplicated ideophones, however, also have the same function.

dictionary most ideophones are written as one word, using a hyphen is rather an exception, but for example, Thompson<sup>10</sup> writes the same ideophone either as one word or separately, as if it was the repetition of the same lexical unit (*khâkhâ, khâ khâ*).

The repetition of a closed syllable often results in the meeting of two consonants, which is not common with other word-classes. To make it clear that it is a closed syllable, i.e. the consonant at its end does not include an inherent ‘o’ sound in pronunciation, dictionaries often use a specific sign, ̣ (hasanta) (*kac̣, kac̣*).

## Basic types of structure

Strictly speaking, it is appropriate to distinguish between reduplicated and seemingly reduplicated ideophones in Bengali.

Reduplicated ideophones are created through reduplication of an independent base (reduplicand), which is mostly monosyllabic and consists of a closed syllable (C<sup>1</sup>VC<sup>2</sup>: *ʃhak*) or an open syllable (CV: *bô*). The reduplication of the base then results in a disyllabic reduplicated ideophone having the C<sup>1</sup>VC<sup>2</sup> + C<sup>1</sup>VC<sup>2</sup> (*ʃhakʃhak*) or the CV+CV (*bôbô*) structure.

A seemingly reduplicated disyllabic ideophone is formally identical with a disyllabic reduplicated ideophone, but neither of its syllables can be considered the base because it does not exist as an independent lexical unit. Despite this, it is composed of two clearly distinguishable components (monosyllabic or disyllabic), the second of which is an instance of total or partial repetition of the first one (*kilkil, jhupurjhupur, kilbil, kicirmicir*). In the following part outlining the formal structure of ideophones, I will use the term “component” in reference to both reduplicated and seemingly reduplicated ideophones.

## 1. Ideophones composed of two monosyllabic components – closed syllables

### 1.1. Repetition/reduplication of the same component

C<sup>1</sup>VC<sup>2</sup> + C<sup>1</sup>VC<sup>2</sup>  
(*kackac, kankan, gajgaj, caṭcaṭ*)

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<sup>10</sup> THOMPSON, H.-R., op.cit., pp. 318, 320.

This is the most common structure, which can be found both with seemingly reduplicated ideophones (*dhapdhap*, *chalchal*, *jhakjhak*) and totally reduplicated ideophones (*thakthak*, *dhakdhak*, *phōsphōs*).

There are also pair variants of ideophones with this structure which differ in the consonant in the C<sup>2</sup> position, which alternates between *p* and *b* (*gapgap*, *gabgab*; *capcap*, *cabcab*; *dapdap*, *dabdab*; *dhapdhap*, *dhabdhab*), *ś* and *s* (*niśpiś*, *nispis*; *maśmaś*, *masmas*; *miśmiś*, *mismis*) and *r* and *ṛ* (*thurthur*, *thurthur*). Variants denote the same semantic concept.

Particular attention must be paid to variants with alternating low and high vowels (*cakcak*, *cukcuk*).<sup>11</sup>

1.2. In the second component there is a change of the initial C<sup>1</sup> consonant to C<sup>3</sup> (echo)

C<sup>1</sup>VC<sup>2</sup>+ C<sup>3</sup>VC<sup>2</sup>

(*kicmic*, *kilbil*, *khacmac*, *gaṭmaṭ*, *cakmak*, *jhakmak*, *caṭpaṭ*, *caṛbar*, *canman*, *culbul*, *chaṭphaṭ*, *jhakmak*, *jaṭpaṭ*, *jhalmal*, *ṭagbag*, *ṭalmal*, *ḍagmag*, *taṛbar*, *thatmat*, *darṅbar*, *dharphaṛ*, *dharmaṛ*, *dhukpuk*, *rimjhim*, *runjhun*, *laṭpaṭ*, *harṅbar*)

It is always seeming partial reduplication. This type occurs as the only possible, or simultaneously with C<sup>1</sup>VC<sup>2</sup> + C<sup>1</sup>VC<sup>2</sup> with an identical meaning (*kickic*, *kicmic*; *kilkil*, *kilbil*; *kurkur*, *kuṛmur*; *khiṭkhit*, *khiṭmit*; *gaṭgaṭ*, *gaṭmaṭ*; *jhakjhak*, *jhakmak*; *cikcik*, *cikmik*; *dhukdhuk*, *dhukpuk*).

Exceptionally, there are three variants of an ideophone with an equal meaning (*cakmak*, *jhakmak*, *jhakjhak*).

1.3. In the second component there is a change of the V<sup>1</sup> vowel to V<sup>2</sup>

C<sup>1</sup>V<sup>1</sup>C<sup>2</sup> + C<sup>1</sup>V<sup>2</sup>C<sup>2</sup>

(*jhupjhāp*, *durḍār*, *dupḍāp*)

As can be seen, there is usually a change of the vowel ‘*u*’ into ‘*ā*’. In most cases this structure co-exists with the structure C<sup>1</sup>V<sup>1</sup>C<sup>2</sup> + C<sup>1</sup>V<sup>1</sup>C<sup>2</sup> (*jhupjhup*, *jhupjhāp*; *durḍur*, *durḍār*; *dupdup*, *dupḍāp*). A dictionary lists them as synonymous, expressing the same semantic concept.

<sup>11</sup> For more detail see p. 13.

1.4. *The vowel 'ā' is inserted between two identical components*

$C^1V^1C^2 + V^2 + C^1V^1C^2$   
(*khaṭākhaṭ, gumāgum, ṭakāṭak, ṭapāṭap, ṭhakāṭhak, dumādum, dhapādhap, paṭāpaṭ, śapāśap*)

This structure of an ideophone usually occurs simultaneously with the ideophone without the inserted 'ā'. According to the dictionary, ideophones with both structures have an equal meaning. Thompson writes that “[t]he additional a between the two rhyming syllables does not change the meaning but adds an iterative or continuous aspect to the expression: *koṭkoṭ* describes a painful throbbing, *koṭakoṭ* an ongoing throbbing pain”.<sup>12</sup> It must be, however, added that if the ideophone with the inserted 'ā' occurs in a pair with the ideophone without the inserted 'ā', both ideophones include an iterative or continuous aspect. It seems that the ideophone with the inserted 'ā' denotes (quick) succession rather than continuity. Such interpretation could also arise from the words of Thākūr, quoted by Thompson. In his work *Śabdatattva* (*Knowledge of words*) Thākūr strives to explain the subtle difference in the meaning of an ideophone with and without the inserted 'ā' as follows:

The fact that an a-kar is inserted in some onomatopoeia and the change it causes to the meaning of that word is difficult to explain to a foreigner in meaningful language: When we say *ṭhokathok* we mean that after giving one *ṭhok* (rap) there is, after collecting all our strength, another *ṭhok*. The a expresses the momentary pause of getting ready for the repeated action.<sup>13</sup>

Less frequent, or almost exceptional are the following structures:

1.5. *A consonant is inserted before the vowel in the second component*

$V^1C^1 + C^2V^1C^1$   
(*uśkhuś/uskhus*)

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<sup>12</sup> THOMPSON, *op.cit.*, p. 318.

<sup>13</sup> Quoted by THOMPSON, *op.cit.*, p. 318.

1.6. *The second component takes the suffix -am*

$C^1VC^2 + C^1VC^2VC^3$   
(*bakbakam*)

**2. Ideophones composed of two monosyllabic components – open syllables**

2.1. *Repetition/reduplication of the first component in the same form*

2.1.1. *The first component ends in a vowel*

CV + CV  
(*kā-kā, khākhā, gāgā, gūgū, gō-gō, cīcī, jhā-jhā, jhījhī, ta;ta;, tā-tā, toto, ṭha;ṭha;:,ṭhu;ṭhu;:, dhu-dhu, bōbō, bhō-bhō, riri/ri ri, śā-śā, śō-śō, huhu*)

The first component frequently ends in a nasal vowel. The same ideophones can have the form of recurrent identical components – closed syllables if there is a nasal vowel in the V position, which takes on the guttural consonant *k* (*gā-gā-gā-kā*) or it is changed to non-nasal vowel and takes on the nasal consonant *n* (*gūgū, gungun; jhījhī, jhinjhin*).

2.1.2. *There is a repetition of an open syllable ending in a vowel, which is preceded by a ligature involving the consonant ‘y’:*

CCV + CCV  
(*tyātyā, phyā-phyā*)

**3. Ideophones composed of two disyllabic components ending in a closed syllable**

3.1. *The second component is identical with the first one*

a) *The first component includes two identical V vowels:*

$C^1VC^2VC^3 + C^1VC^2VC^3$   
(*jhupurjhupur, jhamarjhamar, jhunur-jhunur, phuruk-phuruk, phurut-phurut*)

In the case of *phuṛuk-phuṛuk*, *phuṛut-phuṛut*, the latter ideophone is a variant of the former.

Sometimes there are structurally different expressions with an equal meaning:

$C^1VC^2V + C^1VC^2V$  (*jhunujhunu*),  $C^1VC^2 + C^1VC^2$  (*jhunjhun*) or  
 $C^1VC^2VC^3 + C^1VC^2VC^3$  (*jhunur-jhunur*) “musical jingling sound as of anklets of a dancer”.

b) In the first component there are two different vowels  $V^1$ ,  $V^2$

$C^1V^1C^2V^2C^3 + C^1V^1C^2V^2C^3$   
(*kaṭās-kaṭās*, *ghenar-ghenar*, *dharās-dharās*)

3.2. In the first component there are two different vowels, and in the second one there is  $V^1$  substituted by  $V^2$

$C^1V^1C^2V^2C^3 + C^1V^2C^2V^2C^3$   
(*kāṭurkuṭur*, *nadus-nudus*, *hapus-hupus*)

3.3. In the second component  $C^1$  from the first one changes into  $C^4$ :

$C^1VC^2VC^3 + C^4VC^2VC^3$   
(*kacarmacar*)

#### 4. Ideophones composed of two disyllabic components ending in an open syllable

4.1. Recurrent identical components

4.1.1. In the first component there are two identical vowels

$C^1VC^2V + C^1VC^2V$   
(*kuhukuhu*, *jhurujhuru*, *jhinijhini*, *jhirijhiri*, *jhunujhunu*, *ḍimiḍimi*,  
*tiṛi;tiṛi;*, *duruduru*, *putuputu*, *michimichi*, *runurunu*, *khicimici*)

4.1.2. In the first component there are two different vowels  $V^1$ ,  $V^2$

$C^1V^1C^2V^2 + C^1V^1C^2V^2$   
(*mari-mari*)



4.1.3. The first component ending in two vowels  $V^1, V^2$  is repeated

$CV^1V^2 + CV^1V^2$   
(*kūi-kūi, gheugheu, cūicūi, piupiu, bheubheu, miumiu*)

4.2. In the second component there is a change of the  $C^1$  consonant into  $C^3$  (echo)

$C^1VC^2V + C^3VC^2V$   
(*kīrimīri, jhikimiki, tīri;birī, rinijhini, rimijhimi, ruṇujhuṇu, runujhunu, hijibiji*)

4.3. In the second component the  $V^2$  vowel changes into  $V^3$ :

$C^1V^1C^2V^2 + C^1V^1CV^3$   
(*hākāhākī*)

4.4. In the second component there is a change of  $V^1$  into  $V^3$ :

$CV^1V^2 + CV^3V^2$   
(*gāṅgūi*)

4.5. The first component includes two vowels; in the second one the first component is preceded by the consonant  $C$ :

$V^1V^2 + CV^1V^2$   
(*āiṭāi*)

## 5. Repetition of components including two consonants in an intervocalic position:

5.1. Repetition of two identical components:

$VC^1C^2V + VC^1C^2V$   
(*āmtā-āmtā*)

## 6. Several specific cases<sup>14</sup>

6.1. Only the second, closed, syllable is repeated

6.1.1.

$C^1V + C^1VC^2 + C^1VC^2$   
(*babambam*)

6.1.2.

$C^1V^1 + C^2V^2C^3 + C^2V^2C^3$   
(*jhãgurgur*)

6.1.3. Only the second component is repeated, and the vowel ‘*ã*’ is inserted

$C^1V^1C^2 + C^3V^1C^2 + V^2 + C^3V^1C^2$   
(*tagbagãbag*)

6.2. Only the first two syllables of a trisyllabic base are repeated:

$C^1VC^2V + C^3V + C^1VC^2V$   
(*jhinikijhini* (besides *jhinijhini*))

### **Ideophones as a base in word formation**

Ideophones can serve as derivative bases when ideophonic verbs, adjectives, nouns and adverbs are derived using specific suffixes or by means of the auxiliary verb *karã*.

Ideophonic verbs most commonly occur in the form of the so-called conjunct verbs, which are created by combining ideophones with the auxiliary verb *karã* “to do” (*jhakjhak* “brightness, shining” > *jhakjhak karã* “to shine”), or rarely with the auxiliary verb *khãoyã* “to eat” (*thatmat* “embarrassment; stammering with perplexity” > *thatmat khãoyã* “to be embarrassed”). The ideophone bears the lexical meaning of the verb, and the auxiliary verb conveys grammatical categories.

Ideophonic verbs are also created by derivation from a respective ideophone using the suffix *-ãna*, which is commonly used in derivation of extended and

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<sup>14</sup> This is not an exhaustive list of structural types of ideophones. Sporadically, other structures can be found, for example,  $C^1V^1C^2V^2V^3 + C^1V^1C^2V^2V^3$  (*ghõyão-ghõyão*).

causative verbs. The ideophonic verbs created in this manner often are noncausative in meaning (*kankanāna* “to twing; to ache, to smart; to feel smarting pain; to shiver with cold”; *kalkalāna* “to murmur or babble or warble sweetly or repeatedly”; *cakcakāna* “to shine; to glisten”; *ṭalmalāna* “to become restless or agitated”; *biṛbiṛāna* “to mutter, to mumble”; *harbarāna* “to hurry overmuch in talking, walking, doing etc.; to fuss and hurry” and others). Verbs formed this way have a relatively frequent occurrence in the dictionary, but are not so common in the texts,<sup>15</sup> which give preference to a conjunct verb.

Ideophonic adverbs are created by combining a respective ideophone with the auxiliary verb *karā* “to do” in the form of a perfective participle *kariyā/kare* (*jhakjhak kare*).<sup>16</sup>

Ideophonic adjectives are created by derivation from a respective ideophone using the suffix *-e* (*karkare* “gritty” < *karkar* “sound of crushing or rubbing grits”).

Ideophonic nouns are created by derivation from a respective ideophone using the suffix *-āni* or *-i*, *-ak*, *-ā* (*karkar* > *karkarāni* “scratching or paining or burning sensation”; *dagdag* > *dagadagāni*, *dagadagi* “burning sensation, inflammation”; *jamjam* > *jamak* “pomp, grandeur”). By extending the meaning of words, denotations of things or objects can be formed: *jhumjhum* (milder form of *jhamjham*) “a loud jingling sound as of anklets” > *jhumjhumi* “rattle for children”; *bhaṭbhaṭ* “bursting of bubbles or emission of air, gas, etc.” > *bhaṭbhaṭi* – *n.* (facet.) “a motor-scooter, an auto-scooter, a scooter, an autocycle”; *jagjag* “sparkling or dazzling” > *jagjagā* – “a sparkling or dazzling tinfoil”, etc.

### **Phonological properties**

Ideophones often differ from other words in the vocabulary by their phonological properties. They contain phonemes that belong to the regular phonological inventory of Bengali, but since they are characterized by sound imitation and motivated sound symbolism, they combine sounds so that a desired onomatopoeic effect is achieved. It is, however, important that a given language community considers a certain combination of sounds as resembling the original extra-linguistic sensation. For example, ideophones which are meant to evoke the idea of a sound related to water often end in the consonant

<sup>15</sup> According to THOMPSON, op.cit., p. 46 “In many cases only the perfective participle of these verbs is in regular use.”

<sup>16</sup> This type of word formation is not typical with ideophones only. By means of the verb *karā* the so-called conjunct verbs are commonly formed from nouns (*guli karā* “to shoot”), and by means of *kare* adverbs from adjectives (*bhāla kare* “well”).

‘l’ (for example, *galgal* “the sound of quick pouring out or coming out of liquid mater”; *chalchal* “rippling noise; noise made by running water”). On the other hand, ideophones which evoke the idea of roaring, thundering, creaking, grinding and similar sounds often end in the consonant ‘r’ or ‘r’ (*gargar* “rumbling, rattling”; *ghenar-ghenar* “continuous rough and grating noise as of a spinning-jenny”; *carcar* “splitting”). Ideophones evoking thudding often end in the consonant ‘m’ (*gumgum*, *gumāgum* “repeated thudding noise”; *ḍimḍim* “the low sound of an instrument of percussion, thud”; *damdam* “repeated light thudding or banging noise”; *babambam*, *bambam*, *bam* “a peculiar sound made by striking one’s inflated cheeks with fingers”). Ideophones evoking jingling often include the consonant ‘jh’ (*jhamjham* “a loud jingling sound as of anklet”). The inter-consonantal vowel ‘u’ or ‘i’ signals a milder form of the evoked idea than the vowel ‘a’ between the same consonants (*cakcak* “licking liquids”, *cukcuk* “mild noise of licking or sipping liquids; noise of sucking or lispings”, *ḍhapḍhap/ḍhabḍhab* “repeated and quick thudding noise”, *ḍhipḍhip* “repeated mild thudding noise”). As can be seen from the examples, the combination of phonemes is decisive.

In ideophones specific consonants and vowels occur especially at the end of the first syllable and at the beginning of the second syllable, which as if echoes the first syllable.

A closed syllable begins with one of the following consonants: *k*, *kh*, *g*, *gh*, *c*, *ch*, *j*, *jh*, *ṭ*, *ṭh*, *ḍ*, *ḍh*, *t*, *th*, *d*, *dh*, *n*, *p*, *ph*, *b*, *bh*, *m*, *r*, *l*, *ś*, *s*, *h*. This group comprises almost all consonants, but some are more common than others, and some are quite rare (for example, *n*, *r*, *l*). A closed syllable never starts with *ñ*, *ṅ*, *ṛ*, *ṛh*, *ṣ*, *y*. Sometimes there is an interchange of *ś/s* (*śirsir*, *sirsir*; *śansan*, *sansan*) *k/g* (*karḱar*, *garḱar*), but the meaning is identical. This means that there are variants which are perfect synonyms. There are no consonant clusters in the word-initial position with the exception of the consonant ‘y’ in the second place.

Stricter are restrictions regarding syllable-final consonants. A closed syllable ends in one of the following consonants: *k*, *g*, *c*, *j*, *ṭ*, *r*, *t*, *d*, *n*, *p*, *b*, *m*, *r*, *l*, *s*, *ś*, *ś*. It never ends in an aspirate. In some cases there is an interchange of consonants also at the end of a syllable, but the meaning is preserved (perfect synonyms): the palatal consonant ‘j’ may interchange with the dental sibilant ‘s’ (*gijgij/gisgis*), the unvoiced bilabial consonant ‘p’ can interchange with the voiced bilabial ‘b’ (*gapgap/gabgab*, *capcap/cabcab*, *ḍhapḍhap/ḍhabḍhab*, *dapdap/dabdab*, *dhapdhap/dhabdhab*), there may also be an interchange of cerebral and dental sibilant *ś/s* (*ghuṣghuṣ/ghuṣghuṣ*), an interchange of a nasal ; with the unvoiced guttural consonant ‘k’ (*tīri*;/ *tīrik*), an interchange of the retroflex ‘r’ with the liquid ‘r’ (*thuṛthuṛ/thurthur*), an interchange of the palatal

‘ś’ with the dental ‘s’ (*niśpiś/nispis*, *miśmiś/mismis*),<sup>17</sup> an interchange of the guttural ‘k’ with the dental ‘t’ (*phuruk-phuruk/phurut-phurut*). In other cases, however, a different syllable-final consonant may signal a different meaning, for example, *gargar* evokes anger or angry muttering, or low roaring sound, while *gargaṛ* evokes rumbling. Of course, in this particular case both meanings are metaphorically interconnected.

### Segment co-occurrences

In Bengali there are certain rules as to which consonants can occur together in a monosyllabic base having the structure C<sup>1</sup>VC<sup>2</sup>, i.e. in the initial and final position of an ideophone. The following table gives an overview. The rows give initial consonants, and the columns final consonants (Table 1).

### Use of consonants in seeming partial reduplication

Even more limited is the inventory of consonants used in the C<sup>3</sup> position, i.e. at the beginning of the second syllable of an ideophone, which can be regarded as the echo of the first syllable. The word-initial consonant alternates with the following consonants: *k-m*, *b*; *kh-m*; *g-m*; *c-m*, *p*, *b*; *ch-ph*; *jh-m*, *p*; *t-b*, *m*; *ḍ-m*; *t-b*; *th-m*; *d-b*; *dh-ph*, *m*, *p*; *r-jh*; *l-p*; *h-b*, *t*, *m*. The following table offers an overview (Table 2).<sup>18</sup>

<sup>17</sup> It is evident especially in writing because both sibilants are pronounced as /sh/ in Bengali.

<sup>18</sup> The table only shows the interchange of consonants in ideophones listed in the Samsad dictionary and in the analyzed texts. As a result, this overview may not be complete.



	k	kh	g	gh	ñ	c	ch	j	jh	ñ	t	ṭh	ḍ	ḍh	ṛ	ṛh	ṇ	t	th	d	dh	n	p	ph	b	bh	m	n	y	r	l	ś	ṣ	s	h	
ph	+					+					+				+							+							+					+		
b	+						+									+						+				+										
bh	+										+					+						+													+	
m	+					+					+					+						+													+	
y																																				
r																						+														
l	+										+											+														
ś																						+														
ṣ																						+														
s																						+														
h																						+													+	

1. The first component of an ideophone does not have the structure C<sup>1</sup>VC<sup>1</sup>, i.e. there is never the same consonant at the end of a closed syllable as at its beginning. An exception is the consonant 'k' preceded by a nasal vowel.
2. C<sup>2</sup> is never an aspirate.
3. Voiced consonants are rare in the C<sup>2</sup> position; they occur only if there is a voiced consonant also in the C<sup>1</sup> position (the only exception being *tagbag*).
4. The table 1 shows that some consonants are perceived as more onomatopoeic than the others.

**Table 2**

	k	kh	g	gh	ñ	c	ch	j	jh	ñ	t	th	d	dh	r	rh	ñ	t	th	d	dh	n	p
k																							
kh																							
g																							
gh																							
ñ																							
c																							
ch																							
j																							
jh																							
ñ																							
t																							
th																							
d																							
dh																							
n																							
p																							



	k	kh	g	gh	ñ	c	ch	j	jh	ñ	ṭ	ṭh	ḍ	ḍh	ṛ	ṛh	ṇ	t	th	d	dh	n	p	ph	b	bh	m	n	y	r	l	ś	ṣ	s	h		
ph																																					
b																																					
bh																																					
m																																					
y																																					
r									+																												
l																								+													
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s																																					
h																			+							+		+									

1. The number of consonants that can assume the C<sup>3</sup> position is relative low. It includes consonants *jh*, *t*, *p*, *ph*, *b*, *m*, which are, moreover, not used equally. The most common are the bilabials ‘*m*’ (10 of the possible combinations in our texts), ‘*b*’ (6), ‘*p*’ (4), ‘*ph*’ (2), the palatal ‘*jh*’ (1) and the dental ‘*r*’ (1).<sup>19</sup>
2. The aspirate (bilabial ‘*ph*’) alternates only with other aspirates (palatal ‘*ch*’, dental ‘*dh*’).
3. There are no cerebrals in the position C<sup>3</sup>.
4. These consonants do not alternate: *gh*, *j*, *ṛh*, *ḍh*, *n*, *p*, *ph*, *b*, *bh*, *m*, *s*, *ś*, *ṣ*.

<sup>19</sup> The repertory of consonants in the C<sup>3</sup> position in seemingly reduplicated ideophones is to a large extent identical with the repertory of consonantal fixed segments (*t*, *m*, *ph*, *b*, *p*, *jh*, *j*) in proper reduplications, as described by Sameer ud Dowla Khan in his paper “Similarity Avoidance in Bengali Fixed-Segment Reduplication” (2006). However, there is a marked difference in the frequency of their occurrence. While in proper echo reduplications the consonant ‘*r*’ prevails, in ideophones it is the consonant ‘*m*’ and ‘*t*’ is quite rare.

There are a lot of ideophones which can have the structure both of seeming total and partial reduplication and express the same semantic concept (*kickic, kicmic; kirkir, kırır; kilkil, kilbil; khiḱkhiḱ, khiḱmiḱ; gaḱgaḱ, gaḱmaḱ; jhakjhak, jhakmak; dhukdhuk, dhukpuk* and others.)

In other cases, ideophones that appear to be seeming total or partial reduplication of the same component can convey two different semantic concepts (*jhaljhal* “the state of hanging loosely” – *jhalmal* “coruscation”; *ḱalḱal* “crystal clearness or slight movement of any liquid” – *ḱalmal* “restlessness or agitation, state of being on the verge of tumbling, shaking state; overflowing”; *caḱcaḱ* “stickiness” – *caḱpaḱ* “quickness, promptness”; *cancan* “smarting” – *canman* “vivacity or restlessness”; *dharphar* “restlessness or palpitation”; *dharmar* “sudden bustle, or flutter or hurry”, etc.).

### Syllable-final vowels

There is a wide range of vowels that are used at the end of a syllable. Typical is the use of nasalized vowels: *ã, õ, î, a; u; i*. This phonological feature is not to such an extent present in other words. Besides nasalized vowels, non-nasalized vowels *ā, u, i, o* are used.

Sometimes there is an interchange of a nasalized vowel with a non-nasalized vowel, which is followed by the nasal consonant ‘*n*’ (*gũgũ/gungun, jhĩjhĩ/jhinjhin*). In other cases, the nasalized vowel is followed by the guttural ‘*k*’ (*gã-gã/gãk-gãk*). The consonant ‘*k*’ in the C<sup>2</sup> position in a closed syllable is often used only in such cases.

There may be two vowels at the end of a syllable: *āi, āo, āu, ã, ãi, iu, eu, ěu*. Syllable-final vowels, especially two vowels at the end of a syllable, are used mainly in aural ideophones, for example, in animal sounds (*kā-kā* “caw; cawing”, *gãgã* “bellowing”, *gõ-gõ* “groaning”, *cĩ, cĩcĩ* “a low creeking sound of pain (as made by a small bird)”, *kẽukẽu* “the whining of a dog in distress”, *gheu, gheugheu* “barking”, *bheubheu* “a dog’s yelling bark, bow-bow”, *miumiu/myāo* “the cry of a cat, mew”), or in other sounds (*kũi-kũi* “the suppressed groaning sound of distress caused by hunger, cold, pain, etc.”, *śã, śã* “repeated fizzing or swishing or hissing sound”, *hāumāu* “a loud or uproarious complaint attended with wailing, hue and cry”, etc.). However, it does not mean that other ideophones do not have such a structure. For example, *khã-khã* “emptiness or loneliness”, *jhã-jhã* “severe heat”, *jhĩjhĩ* “pins and needles”, *tā-tā* “dryness, parchedness, extreme thirst”, *dāudāu* “burning fiercely”, *bõbõ* “whirring”, *dhu-dhu* “state of burning or flaming strongly; desolateness or

voidance; vast expanse; strong heat”, *riri* “anger, abhorrence, disgust” and others.

### **Vowels in a closed syllable (in an inter-consonantal position)**

The most common in this position is the vowel ‘*a*’, less frequently the vowels ‘*i*’ and ‘*u*’. Both of these vowels often appear in the same ideophone as ‘*a*’ (see below). Very rare is the vowel ‘*e*’ (*ghenghen, jeljel, tektek, phecphec*). In some specific cases the vowel ‘*ā*’ is used, particularly in the second syllable of an ideophone with disyllabic components, where it interchanges with ‘*a*’ (*kaṭās-kaṭās, dharās-dharās*), in an ideophone with monosyllabic components, where it interchanges with ‘*u*’ (*thusthās, durdār, dupdāp, bhutbhāt*), less frequently with ‘*a*’ (*dhapdhāp*), in an ideophone with monosyllabic components, where it follows a ligature including ‘*y*’ (*pyācpyāc, pyānpyān, phyālphyāl, bhyānbhyān, myārmyār*). Occasionally it also occurs in other ideophones, such as *thāsthās*.

In some cases the nasal ‘*ē*’ is used (*kēckēc, kēt-kēt, chēkchēk*), or ‘*ō*’ (*ghōghōt, chōkchōk, phōsphōs*), or ‘*ā̃*’ (*kyā̃k kyā̃k, gā̃k-gā̃k, pyā̃k pyā̃k*).

### **Interchange of the vowel ‘*a*’ in an inter-consonantal position**

Unlike the other above mentioned interchanges of consonants in the initial or final position, which do not affect the meaning of an ideophone, the interchange of the inter-consonantal vowel is accompanied by a slight modification of meaning. In each case the ideophone conveys the same semantic concept, but the ideophone with the vowel ‘*u*’, more rarely with ‘*i*’, evokes a milder form of the perceived extra-linguistic reality (*kirkir* – a milder form of *karkar*; *khuk, khukkhuk* – a milder form of *khak, khakkhak*; *cīrcīr* – a milder form of *carcar*; *thikthik* – a milder var. of *thakthak, thukthuk*, var. of *thikthik* and many others).

### **Syntactic properties**

In a sentence ideophones can function as proper ideophones, i.e. they can occur in their amorphous form, or they can assume the form of derived ideophonic verbs, adjectives, adverbs and nouns.

## 1. Ideophone

1.1. An ideophone can stand for an entire proposition. In this function it can also occur in its multiple (usually triple) form:

*tābur duyāre jaydhāk piṭite thāke – dum-dum, dum.*

“At the entrance to the tent he is pounding the war drum – *dum-dum, dum.*”

*bedanī prakānda ekjoṛā karatāl bājāy jhan-jhan-jhan.*

“Bedanī is playing a pair of big cymbals *jhan-jhan-jhan.*”

*gharīr kāṭār tāl parche –tik, tik, tik.*

“The hand of the clock is moving forward – *tik, tik, tik.*”

1.2. A proper ideophone can develop the subject of a sentence and thus appears in the role of a modifier/attribute (*jhirijhiri bṛṣṭi* “drizzly rain”, *hurhur jhar* “rambling storm”, *cīcī svar* “creaking voice”, *chalchal cokh* “tearful eyes”). In this function it often connects with the word “sound” (*āoyāj, śabda*) and specifies the kind of sound (*khuṭkhuṭ āoyāj, jhamājham āoyāj, gōgō āoyāj, chapchap śabda, ūū śabda* and others).

1.4. An ideophone can also be used predicatively (*pakṛṭ dhandhan* “the pocket /is/ absolutely empty”, *āṅkhi dhalḍhal* “the eyes /are/ large”).

1.5. An ideophone can develop a predicate as an adverb of manner. This function is usually assumed by an ideophone with the structure C<sup>1</sup>VC<sup>2</sup>+V<sup>2</sup>+C<sup>1</sup>VC<sup>2</sup> (*jhapājhap khāoyā* “to eat very quickly”; *jhapājhap dub deoyā* “to dive quickly one after another”; *jhamājham bṛṣṭi parā* “to rain noisily in torrents”).

1.6. An ideophone can also appear in the role of a subject, most frequently in Genitive constructions (*pātār jharjhar* “incessant falling of leaves”, *pākhīr kicirmicir* “tweeting of a bird”, *kārkhānār bhō* “a siren of a factory”).

## 2. Ideophonic word-classes

Ideophonic word-classes have the same functions as corresponding proper ideophones.

2.1. Ideophonic verbs assume the role of a predicate. Since ideophones convey a certain perception, sensation or manner of action or state to the recipient, the

verb is in the third person, and most frequently in present tense (simple, imperfective), rarely also in past tenses, never in future tenses.

2.2. Ideophonic adverbs as manner adverbs specify the manner in which an action, expressed by the verb, was executed.

2.3. In a sentence ideophonic adjectives have the function of a modifier/attribute (*cakcake churi* “glittering knife”, *khukkhuke kási* “cough attended with a hawking noise”, *ghutghuṭe andhakār* “deep darkness”), more rarely of a nominal predicate (*dehaṭā jharjhare lāgche* “the body is refreshed”).

Ideophonic adjectives may also connect with adjectives referring to particular colours (especially white and black, exceptionally other). They appear in the role of modifiers and are supposed to evoke their clarity or intensity to the recipient (*dhapdhape/dhabdhabe sādā* “brilliantly white”, *cakcake kālo* “glistening black”, *mismise kālo* “very dark black”, *kuckuce kālo* “glazily or brightly black”, *ḍagḍage halud/ lāl* “very deep or bright yellow/red”).

2.4. Ideophonic nouns are the subject or the object of a sentence.

Bengali ideophones are never negated and are rarely found in negated sentences, which Christa Kilian-Hatz justifies by the fact that “[t]he very function of ideophones is to simulate a sensation and not the absence of such a sensation”.<sup>20</sup>

### **Semantic properties**

The basic semantic property of ideophones is their expressivity.

As results from the definition of ideophones, they can denote a wide range of diverse semantic concepts. Based on what semantic concept they convey, ideophones can be divided into several basic groups:

1. ideophones evoking an idea acquired through sensory perception;
2. ideophones evoking the idea of a sensation;
3. ideophones evoking the idea of movement or state.

These basic groups can be further subcategorized:

1.
  - 1.1. ideophones related to sound;

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<sup>20</sup> KILIAN-HATZ, op.cit. p. 158.

- 1.1.1. ideophones imitating sounds made by living creatures (most often by animals, but also by people);
- 1.1.2. ideophones imitating sounds made by non-living entities (machines, devices, objects, natural elements);
- 1.2. ideophones related to visual perception (clarity, flashing, darkness, duskiness, pallor, etc.);
- 1.3. ideophones related to tactile perception (smoothness, softness, etc.);
- 2.
- 2.1. ideophones evoking psychic sensations (anger, embarrassment, etc.);
- 2.2. ideophones evoking physical sensations (burning, itching, heat, etc.);
- 3.
- 3.1. ideophones evoking an idea of a manner of movement (speed, suddenness, repetition, duration, etc.);
- 3.2. ideophones evoking an idea of a state.

These subcategories could be further subdivided, for example, to ideophones denoting sharp sounds, fine sounds, grinding, splashing, dabbling, etc. However, this would require a detailed analysis, which is beyond the scope of this paper.

Many ideophones are polysemous. They can denote different semantic concepts, both within a group, but also across the groups. “This polysemy can be reconstructed and explained in sense of metaphoric meaning extensions/change.”<sup>21</sup> Context plays a key role in identifying the particular meaning of polysemous ideophones. For example, the ideophone *durḍur*, *durḍār* denotes different semantic concepts related to hearing. It can denote the noise of heavy and hurried footsteps or of the rumbling of cloud; or rapid and audible palpitation of the heart (esp. caused by fright, etc.). The ideophone *ghenar-ghenar* denotes continuous rough and grating noise as of a spinning-jenny and metaphorically also continuous importunate solicitation. The ideophone *gargar* denotes semantic concepts related to sensations, aural and visual perception, namely anger or angry muttering or low roaring sound; or deep redness. The ideophone *ṭagbag*, *ṭagbagābag* may denote bubbling noise made by water or any other liquid when being boiled, noise made by hoofs of a horse when running or fretting and fuming state.

Some ideophones can be considered homonymous, for example, *cakcak*<sup>1</sup> “the noise of licking water and other liquids”, *cakcak*<sup>2</sup> “brightness or glaze or shine”; *ṭak*<sup>1</sup> “haste, quickness, promptness”, *ṭakāṭak*<sup>1</sup> “quick succession”; *ṭak*<sup>2</sup> “a light noise of rapping or drumming”; *ṭakāṭak*<sup>2</sup> “repetition of a very light sound or rapping or drumming”; *ṭap*<sup>1</sup> “the noise of falling of a drop of liquid”; *ṭapṭap*<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> KILIAN-HATZ, op.cit. p. 159.

“repetition of the noise of falling of a drop of liquid”; *tap*<sup>2</sup> “quickness or promptness”, *taptap*<sup>2</sup> “quick succession”.

## Conclusion

Ideophones are a common part of Bengali vocabulary. They constitute a distinctive word-class. They denote different semantic concepts related to perceptions, sensations, movement and state. They differ from other words by their onomatopoeic character, which is achieved by a specific morphological and phonological structure. In texts they can function as verbs, adverbs, adjectives and nouns. They serve as derivative bases in word formation.

Some ideophones have been created by the figurative extension of the meaning of another word-class, for example, the noun *khar* “hay; straw” has become a base for the ideophone *khar̥khar̥* “rustling noise as of treading dry leaves; a grating noise or sensation”. In other cases, on the contrary, an onomatopoeic word is both an ideophone and a noun, especially in the case of ideophones resembling animal sounds, for example, *ghenghen* 1) ideophone denoting whining or importunate solicitation, but also 2) n. whining, whimpering; a whine, a whimper; importunate solicitation. They are often polysemous, and their particular meaning depends on context.

## Appendix

A list of ideophones and semantic concepts that they denote<sup>22</sup>

*āitāi* “uneasy”

*agaṛam-bagaṛam/āgaṛam-bāgaṛam* “idle talk”

*āmtā-āmtā* “stuttering”

*uśkhuś/uskhus* “restlessness, fidgetiness”

*kacarmacar* “a sound as of munching; confused noise as of hot discussion or incessant prattling”

*kac* “a sound as made in cutting off or biting of something at one stroke”

*kackac* “the sound of hashing or munching or crunching”

*kaṭās* “the sound of biting off or cutting off (esp. suddenly) a portion of a hard thing at one stroke; a snapping sound; an imaginary sound made by an ant when it pricks”

<sup>22</sup> These ideophones have been excerpted from the dictionary. For comparison see, for example, THOMSON, H.-R. Bengali. A Comparative Grammar, pp. 674 – 676.

- kaṭās-kaṭās* “repetition of sound evoked by *kaṭās*”  
*kaṭmaṭ* “anger”  
*kankan* “a twinging or painful sensation; smarting; shivering with cold”  
*kap* “sound of gulping or swallowing”  
*kapkap* “repetition of the sound of gulping or swallowing or shutting quickly”  
*kapākap* “repetition of the sound evoked by *kapkap*”  
*karkaṛ* “rumbling”  
*karkar* “the sound of crushing or rubbing grits or of chewing hard and crisp things; the sound of scraping; scratching sensation; restlessness, pain; burning sensation”  
*kalkal* “repeated sweet murmur or babble or warble, (usu. coll.) rapid loud talk”  
*kā-kā* “caw caw”  
*kāṭurkuṭur* “the sound of cutting or scratching with teeth as by mice”  
*kēukēu* “the whining of a dog in distress”  
*kickic/kicmic* “presence of abundant grit, a grating noise caused as if by chewing grit”  
*kickic/kicmic/kicirmicir* “the tweeting or chirping noise of birds; loud prattling or buble”  
*kīrkīr* “grinding, gnashing”  
*kīrimīri/kīrmīr* “sound of grinding or gnashing one’s teeth”  
*kirkir* “a milder form of *karkar*”  
*kilki/kilbil* “movement in a swarm (of fish, esp. small ones, worms, etc.)”  
*kūi-kūi* “the suppressed groaning sound of distress caused by hunger, cold, pain, etc.”  
*kuc* “the sound of cutting off with one stroke of a very sharp implement; the sound of piercing suddenly with the pin-like pointed edge of an implement”  
*kuckuc*<sup>1</sup> “the repeated sound of *kuc*; the sound of chopping fine” (milder form of *kackac*)  
*kuckuc*<sup>2</sup> “glaze or brightness of the black colour”  
*kuṭkuṭ* “repeated inflammatory itching sensation”  
*kuṛkuṛ, kuṛmur* “the sound of chewing crisp things”  
*kulkul* milder form of *kalkal*  
*kuhukuhu* “the cooing of a cuckoo”  
*kēc* “a creaking noise or the sound of chopping”  
*kēc̣kēc̣* frequentative of *kēc*  
*kēṭ-kēṭ* “peevisishness”  
*kyāṅk* “the sound of kicking or striking or of excitement or pain or surly utterance”  
*kyāṅk kyāṅk* “grumble or rebuke (usu. repeatedly) in a surly manner; to whine”  
*khacmac* “fuss, carping”



- khaṭ* “the sound made by striking on or at something hard (as knocking the door or of striking or stamping the hoof on stony ground)”
- khaṭkhaṭ; khaṭākhaṭ* “repetition of this sound; thorough dryness”
- khaṛkhaṛ* “a rustling noise as of treading dry leaves; a grating noise or sensation”
- khã-khã* “emptiness or loneliness; suffering due to estrangement or bereavement; state of being extremely stricken or scorched with heat”
- khaskhas* “rustling”
- khalkhal* “the metallic noise of sweet laughter”
- khiṭimiṭi/khiṭkhiṭ/khiṭmiṭ* “displeasure or quarrel or discord on negligible account”
- khak* “the sound of a cough or a hawking sound”
- khakkhak* “the sound of coughing or hawking or laughing continuedly”
- khuk, khukkhuk* milder form of *khak, khakkhak*
- khicimici* “peevisness”
- khilkhil* “giggling”
- khunkhun* “the sound made by striking on bell-metal”
- gajgaj* “low grumbling (usu. to one’s own self) in anger, discontent, dissatisfaction, etc.”
- gaṭgaṭ/gaṭmaṭ* “the sound of walking or marching firmly and arrogantly”
- garṅar* “a rumbling sound (as of thunder), a rattling sound (as of a running hackney-carriage), a continuous rattle”
- gurṅur* milder form of *garṅar*
- gadgad* “choked or overwhelmed with excessive emotion”
- gangan* “the blazing state”
- gapgap/gabgab* “the sound of eating rapidly or voraciously in large morsels”
- gamgam* “the state of being resounded with deep or grave sound; the state of being filled (esp. solemnly)”
- gargar* “sign of anger or angry muttering; low roaring sound; deep redness”
- galgal* “the sound of quick pouring out or coming out of liquid matter”
- gãṅã/gãṅ-gãṅ*, “the belowing sound as of angry bull”
- gãṅgũ* “imaginary sound of indirect unwillingness”
- gijgij/gisgis* “a state of crowding or swarming; overcrowding”
- gũṅũ/gunṅun* “humming or lilting; whispering; complaining in an undertone”
- gujguj* “muttering”
- gurṅur* “rumbling”
- gum* “a thudding noise”
- gumgum/gumāgum* “repeated thudding noise”
- gõ-gõ* “a groaning sound”

- ghaṭghaṭ* “the sound of moving a pestle in a mortar”  
*gharḡhar* “a rattling sound as of a wheeled car moving or of the breathing of a bronchial patient”  
*gharḡhar* “a rattling sound as of a tyreless wheeled vehicle moving on a stony way”  
*ghinghin* “a feeling of loathing or detestation”  
*ghuṭghuṭ* “deep blackness or darkness”  
*ghurghur* “continuous prying movement or act of prying”  
*ghuṣghuṣ/ghuṣghuṣ* “secrecy or whispering”  
*gheu/gheugheu* “barking”  
*ghenghen* “whining; importunate solicitation”  
*ghenar-ghenar* “continuous rough and grating noise as of a spinning-jenny; continuous importunate solicitation”  
*ghōtghōt* “the grunting of the boar; angry grumbling”  
*cakcak*<sup>1</sup> “the noise of licking water and other liquids”  
*cakcak*<sup>2</sup> “brightness or glaze or shine”  
*cakmak/jhakmak/jhakjhak* “sparkling or glistening state”  
*caṭcaṭ*<sup>1</sup> “smacking, slapping sound”  
*caṭcaṭ*<sup>2</sup> “adhesiveness, stickiness”  
*caṭpaṭ* “quickness, promptness”  
*carcar* “itching, pricking”  
*cīrcīr* milder form of *carcar*  
*carbar* “sound as of bursting of grains of corn when singed or fried; rapid movement or prattling”  
*cancan* “smarting”  
*canman* “vivacity or restlessness”  
*capcap/cabcab* “drenched or slushy state”  
*carcar* “the sound of splitting; extreme dryness or parchedness; quickness”  
*cī, cīcī* “a low creaking sound of pain (as made by a small bird)”  
*cikcik/cikmik* “glitter or sparkle”  
*cīrbīr* “continuous itching and irritation; rapid and almost inaudible speech”  
*cincin* “very mild inflammation, mild pain”  
*cūicūi* “a mild singing sound caused by boiling; an uneasy feeling caused by extreme hunger or contraction”  
*cukcuk* “mild noise of licking or sipping liquids; noise of sucking or lipping”  
*culbul* “restlessness”  
*chaṭphaṭ* “restlessness, anxiety, etc.”  
*chanchan* “physical indisposition”  
*chap* “splashing noise”  
*chapchap* “repeated or continuous splashing noise”

- chamcham* “an uncanny or eerie sensation”  
*chalchal* “rippling noise; noise made by running water”  
*chêk* “the sound of anything falling into hot oil or fat”  
*chêkchêk* “frequentative of *chêk*; a little temperature”  
*chôkchôk* “the watering state of the mouth in greed”  
*jagjag* “sparkling or dazzling”  
*jabjab* “the state of being drenched or moist thoroughly”  
*jamjam* “splendour, pomp, richness, crowded or overcrowded state”  
*juljul* “winking repeatedly and sparkingly as with small eyes”  
*jeljel* “dullness of colour”  
*jaljal* “shining or glaring or blazing or sparkling”  
*jhakjhak/jhakmak* “sparkling or glistening”  
*jhatpat* “flapping or the noise of flapping”  
*jhan* “clattering of weapons or striking a thin metal plate; the chink of coins”  
*jhanjhan* “repeated or continuous clattering or chinking; a strong dizzy sensation”  
*jhap* “the sound of diving or falling into water or air suddenly; a sudden splashing sound; quickness”  
*jhapjhap* “the repeated or continuous sound of diving or falling into water or air or of sudden splashing; incessant profusion; quickness”  
*jarjhar* “the state or sound of rapid and profuse falling in small drops or minute particles; state of being neat and clean or brightened up; state of being refreshed or freed from morbidity”  
*jhupurjhupur* milder var. of *jhapjhap* and *jhupjhup*  
*jhupjhup, jhupjhāp* “repeated noise of diving or falling into water ... (see *jhap*)”  
*jhamarjhamar* “a very loud jingling noise as of anklets”  
*jhamjham* “a loud jingling sound as of anklets; a loud pattering sound as of rain falling in torrents”  
*jhumjhum* milder form of *jhamjham*  
*jhurjhur* milder than *jarjhar*  
*jhurujhuru* milder and sweeter var. of *jarjhar*  
*jhaljhal* “the state of hanging loosely”  
*jhalma* “corruscation”  
*jhāgurgur* “the noise of beating a drum”  
*jhā-jhā* “severe heat; burning sensation; silence, hush; great swiftness”  
*jhījhi* “a dizzy or buzzing or twinging”  
*jhikimiki/jhikmik* “sparkling or glittering or twinkling”  
*jhinijhini/jhinikijhini* “a sweet and musical jingling sound (as of a dancer’s anklets)”  
*jhimjhim* “a dizzy or fainting sensation”

- jhirjhir/jhirijhiri* “the sound of wind or breeze blowing gently or of drizzling rain”
- jhilmil/jhilimili* “fine corruscation or sparkle”
- jhunujhunu/jhunjhun/ jhunur-jhunur* “musical jingling sound as of anklets of a dancer”
- jhurjhur* “rapid drizzle”
- ta*; “twang as of a bowstring”
- ta;ta*; “repeated twangs”
- tak<sup>1</sup>* “haste, quickness, promptness”
- tak<sup>2</sup>* “a light noise of rapping or drumming”
- takātak<sup>1</sup>* “great quickness or promptness”
- taktak<sup>2</sup>* “the ticking sound of a clock; the sound made by a carter in order to speed up the horse, gee gee”
- takātak<sup>2</sup>* “a very light sound or rapping or drumming repeatedly”
- tagbag/tagbagābag* “bubbling noise made by water or any other liquid when being boiled; noise made by or as by hoofs of a horse when running; fretting and fuming state”
- tantan* “severe irritation or pain caused by tightness or tension or strain or overfulness or sharpness”
- tap<sup>1</sup>* “the noise of falling of a drop of liquid”
- tap<sup>2</sup>* “quickness or promptness”
- taptap<sup>1</sup>* “repetition of the noise of falling of a drop of liquid”
- taptap<sup>2</sup>* “quick succession”
- tapātap* “quick succession”
- tal<sup>1</sup>tal* “crystal clearness or slight movement of any liquid”
- talmal* “restlessness or agitation, state of being on the verge of tumbling; shaking state; overflowing”
- tastas* “the noise of repeated fall of liquid drops; state of being overfull; state of being flushed with cold”
- tā-tā* “dryness, parchedness, extreme thirst”
- tiktik* “ticking or tick-tack as of a clock”
- tin<sup>1</sup>tin* “extreme thinness”
- tiptip* “the noise made by the fall of very small drops (smaller and milder than *taptap*); the noise of drizzling; burning or flaming faintly; subdued palpitation caused by fear”
- tim<sup>1</sup>tim* “dimness of light or glory; hardly perceptible existence”
- tuk<sup>1</sup>tuk* milder and more beautiful var. of *taktak<sup>2</sup>*
- tektek* “the state of being outspoken and stinging; act of bragging or boasting”
- to<sup>1</sup>to* “continuous or frequent wandering without any aim”

- tyã* “cry or scream of an infant (esp. a new-born one); cry of pang”  
*tyãtyã* “repeated cry of an infant”  
*thak* “a rapping noise as of a stick on the floor”  
*tha*; “a light noise caused by the concussion of a metallic object against a hard thing”  
*tha;tha*; “a light noise caused by the concussion of a metallic object against a hard thing made repeatedly or continuously”  
*thu;thu*; milder or lighter form of *tha;tha*;  
*than* “a light clattering noise as of the concussion of a thin metallic object”  
*thanthan* “a light clattering noise as of the concussion of a thin metallic object made repeatedly; nothingness or vacuity or emptiness”  
*thã*<sup>1</sup> “the noise as of slapping strongly”  
*thãthã* “the noise as of slapping strongly made repeatedly and quickly”  
*thās* “the sound of or as of slapping violently”  
*thāsthās* “quick repetition of the sound of slapping violently; this noise made repeatedly in quick succession”  
*thukthuk* milder form of *thakthak*  
*thus* milder or lighter var. of *thās*  
*thusthās* “repeated noise of *thus* and *thās* alternatingly; act of beating or acting mildly and violently in alternation”  
*dagdag* “deepness or brightness”  
*dagmag* “brimming, overflowing”  
*digdig* “extreme leanness”  
*dimidi/dimdim* “the low sound of an instrument of percussion, thud”  
*dhak* “the noise of swallowing or gulping any liquid; the noise of heavy movement of any liquid within a container”  
*dhakdhak* “repetition of these noises; the noise of swallowing or gulping repeatedly and quickly”  
*dhan* “a metallic sound as of a bell ringing or an empty vessel sounding”  
*dhandhan* “repetition of a metallic sound as of a bell ringing or an empty vessel sounding, ding-dong; thorough emptiness”  
*dhapdhap/ dhabdhab* “repeated and quick thudding noise; the dull noise of striking repeatedly a soft and empty swelling or a flatulent belly”  
*dhalḍhal* “excessive looseness; loveliness; wideness or largeness”  
*ḍhip* “a mild thudding noise as of a heavy body falling soft”  
*ḍhipḍhip* “repeated mild thudding noise; palpitation or throbbing esp. in fear”  
*ḍhulḍhul* “drowsiness”  
*taktak* “tidiness, transparency; brightness or freshness”  
*tarbar* “excessive hurry or rapidity”

- tartar* “quick climbing or the quick running of a stream”  
*tīri*; *tīrik* “a sudden skip”  
*tīri*; *tīri*; *tīri*; *bīri*; “repeated skipping, jumping”  
*tīrbīr* “restlessness, rapidity”  
*tultul* “(delightful) softness; over-softness”  
*thai-thai* “vast expanse”  
*thakthak* “clayeyness or splashed state; stickiness; a raw wound exposed to view (often filled with morbid matter); compact sliminess”  
*thikthik* milder var. of *thakthak*  
*thukthuk* var. of *thikthik*  
*thatmat* “embarrassment; stammering with perplexity”  
*thap* “a thudding noise”  
*thapthap* “repeated thudding noise”  
*thamtham* “dreadful depth, silence and darkness; swollenness with morbid humour or passion or glumness; filled with rain or overcast with cloud; filled with dreadful uncertainty”  
*tharthar* “violent trembling or shaking”  
*thalthal* “lax fleshiness or flabbiness”  
*thasthas* “moistness or wetness and looseness”  
*thurthur*/*thurthur* “constant trembling or inability to stand steady owing to decrepitude or weakness; decrepitude; unsteady”  
*dagdag* “burning sensation; inflammation or extensive openness of a wound”  
*darbar* “the noise of a horse’s trot”  
*dap* “a sudden blaze”  
*dapdap*/*dabdad* “blazing up repeatedly and rather tremulously throbbing inflammation”  
*dam* “light thudding or banging noise”  
*damdam* “repeated light thudding or banging noise”  
*daldal* “excessive softness”  
*dāudāu* “burning fiercely”  
*durdur*/*durdār* “noise of heavy and hurried footsteps or of the rumbling of cloud; rapid and audible palpitation of the heart (esp. caused by fright, etc.)”  
*dup* “a thudding noise”  
*dupdāp*/*dupdup* “repeated thudding noise or romping”  
*dum* “banging or booming or thudding noise”  
*dumdum*/*dumādum* “repeated banging or booming or thudding noise”  
*durdur*/*duruduru* “palpitation of the heart caused esp. by fear; trembling”  
*duldul* “dangling”  
*dhak* “sudden blaze or glow (as of fire); sudden throb”  
*dhakdhak* “state of blazing or glowing by flashes or repeatedly; throbbing or palpitation”

- dharphar* “restlessness or palpitation”  
*dharṃmar* “sudden bustle or flutter or hurry”  
*dharās* “heavy thudding noise as of a fall, thud; a loud banging noise as of opening or closing a door violently, bang; a sudden impetuous throb”  
*dharās-dharās* “repeated thuds or bangs or impetuous throb”  
*dhapdhap/dhabdhab* “brilliant whiteness or tidiness”  
*dhã* “suddenness or quickness or noisy abruptness”  
*dhikdhik* “smouldering”  
*dhupdhup/dhapdhāp* lighter variants of *dhapdhap*  
*dhapādhap* “a succession of thudding or thumping noise as of heavy bodies falling one after another”  
*dhu-dhu* “state of burning or flaming strongly; desolateness or voidance; vast expanse; strong heat; etc.”  
*dhukdhuk/dhukpuk* “the sound of palpitation or throbbing”  
*dhumdhum* “grand”  
*nadus-nudus* “podgy, plump”  
*niśpiś/nispis* “restlessness, irritation, itching”  
*paṭ* “crackling noise (as caused by salt in fire); noise of bursting, splitting, snapping or combustion; suddenness; quickness”  
*paṭpaṭ, paṭāpaṭ* “making *paṭ* noise repeatedly: in quick (and often sudden) succession”  
*paṛpaṛ* “the noise of roughly tearing cloth etc.”  
*piupiu* “the note or cooing of the nightingale”  
*piṭpiṭ* “twitching as of the eye, flickering as of a lamp, peevishness, fastidiousness or mania for cleanliness”  
*pilpil* “a swarming crowd”  
*putuputu* “excessive carefulness or attention or fondling”  
*pyāk pyāk* “the cry of the duck: quack! quack!”  
*pyācpyāc* “the noise caused by going along or wading through a slimy or miry place; slimminess, miriness”  
*pyānpyān* “the noise of complaining or imploring whimperingly or whiningly”  
*phacphac* “disgusting and useless prattling”  
*phaṭ* “a popping sound; suddenness”  
*phaṭāphaṭ, phaṭphaṭ* “repeated popping sounds; quick repetition”  
*pharphar* “buzzing or fluttering of wings (as of insects); ostensibly bustling or fussing; voluble or wordy display of one’s importance”  
*pharphar* “fluttering noise as made by the repeated and rapid movement of a thin article in air; rapid and repeated bustle of a small article or its restlessness or bustling”  
*phik* “sudden smile with a short catch of breath”

- phikphik* “giggling”  
*phisphis* “whispering”  
*phutphuṭ* “clearness, transparency, brightness, tidiness”  
*phuruk/phurut* “sudden flying away”  
*phuruk-phuruk/phurut-phurut* “repeated flying for short spells; repeated bubbling noise caused by smoking a hookah”  
*phurphur* “gentle blowing of the wind; fluttering of light things (such as hair, cloth, etc.) in the wind”  
*phēcphēc* “disgustful talkativeness or remonstrance”  
*phōs* “a sudden deep sigh of suppressed grief etc.; a hiss of a snake; a sudden angry growl”  
*phōsphōs* “repeated deep sighs of suppressed grief etc.; repeated hissing; repeated angry growls”  
*phyā-phyā* “continuous prattling; continuous useless solicitation; continuous useless search”  
*phyālphyāl* “bewildered gaze; vacant look”  
*bakbak* “intolerable prattling; overmuch talking”  
*bakbakam* “cooing of the pigeon or any similar noise”  
*banban* “a swift whirling motion”  
*babambam/bambam/bam* “a peculiar sound made by striking one’s inflated cheeks with fingers”  
*bijbij* “repugnant crowding as of worms; muttering”  
*birbir* “muttering, mumbling”  
*bōbō* “whirring”  
*bhak* “the noise of sudden emission of smoke, smell, etc., or ejection of phlegm”  
*bhakbhak* “repeated *bhak* sound”  
*bhaṭbhaṭ* “repeated noise of forceful bursting of bubbles or emission of air, gas, etc.”  
*bhaṛbhaṛ* “the noise of rapid emission of something loose; the noise of rapid effervescence”  
*bhanbhan* “a humming or buzzing sound (as of bees, flies, etc.)”  
*bharbhar* “thorough diffusion”  
*basbhas* “noise of repeated emission of air”  
*bhuṭbhāṭ* “grumbling noise in the abdomen”  
*bhur̥bhur̥* “noise of effervescence”  
*bhurbhur* “diffusion with fragrance or perfume”  
*bheubheu* “noise of loud blubbering; a dog’s yelling bark, bow-wow”  
*bhō* “noise of the movement of wind, of running apace, of whistle, etc.”  
*bhō-bhō* “dizziness; emptiness; great swiftness, whiz; buzzing noise; repetition of *bhō* sound”



- bhyābhyā* “buzzing noise (of flies, mosquitoes, etc.); noise of continuous complaint”
- makmak* “the croaking noise of the frog”
- mac* “a sharp snapping noise”
- macmac*, “repeated snapping noise”
- maṭ* “a snapping noise as caused by the splitting or twisting of anything hard”
- maṭmaṭ* “repeated *maṭ* sound”
- maṛmaṛ*, *muṛmuṛ* “noise of crashing of a hard substance”
- mari-mari* “profound admiration, etc.”
- maśmaś/masmas* “the sound caused by twisting of tanned hide as of boots”
- miu* “the cry of a cat, mew”
- miumi* “repeated mewling”
- michimichi* “uselessness”
- miṭmiṭ* “dim, flickering or almost dying state (as of a light); blinking (as of eyes)”
- minmin* “mumbling or speaking faintly or hesitatingly; faintness; weakness; timidity”
- miśmiś/mismis* “inky blackness or darkness”
- mucmuc* softer variant of *macmac*
- myāo* var. of *miu*
- myārmyār* “lack of brightness, dullness”
- rinjhini/rinjin* “a jingling sound”
- rimjhim/rimjihimi* “a pattering sound as of rain falling”
- riri* “a physical sensation of anger, abhorrence, disgust”
- runujhunu/runurunu/runjhun/runrun* “sweet jingling sound as of the bells of a dancer’s anklets”
- laklak* “lolling; dangling or brandishing; flashing”
- laṭpaṭ* “flapping loosely”
- liklik* “great slenderness or thinness”
- śanśan/sansan* “the noise caused by the speedy flight of the wind, arrow, etc.”
- śapāt* “the noise of a quick and forceful stroke as of a whip; the swishing noise”
- śapāśap* “the noise of gulping any thin food greedily and quickly”
- śā, śāi* “a fizzing or swishing or hissing sound”
- śā-śā, śāi- śāi* “repetition of the sound *śā, śāi*”
- śirśir/sirśir* “a tingling or thrilling or uncanny sensation”
- śō* “a swishing or whirring or whizzing sound”
- śō-śō* “repeated or continuous whizzing sound”
- sapsap* “wetness”
- sursur* “a tickling or titillating sensation”
- haṛbar* “great rapidity in talking, moving, doing etc.”

- harḥar* “slipperiness; rapidity; rattling noise; rumbling noise”  
*hākāhāki* “shouting”  
*hapus-hupus* “noisy eating”  
*hurhur* milder var. of *harḥar*  
*hanhan* “walking or moving at a great speed”  
*halhal* “overmuch looseness or slackness”  
*hāmāu* “a loud or uproarious complaint attended with wailing, hue and cry”  
*hijibiji* “illegible”  
*hirhir* “rapid and violent dragging along or falling down; the noise of such dragging or falling”  
*his* “hissing or fizzing sound”  
*hishis* “repeated or continued hissing or fizzing sound”  
*huhu* “the noise made by a strong wind or by a powerful flame of fire; the state of affliction, dejection”

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