

## πίμπλημι and πίμπρημι : An Instance of Aggressive Reduplication in Greek

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The roots \*pleh<sub>1</sub> 'fill' and \*preh<sub>1</sub> 'blow; kindle, burn' form reduplicated athematic presents in Greek, πίμπλημι and πίμπρημι. These two form a pair or 'sub-class' (Beekes and van Beek 2012): both have a tendency to pair with preverbs (ἐν most commonly), and both have an unusual and unexpected nasal in the reduplicant in the present (that is, they are πίμπλημι and πίμπρημι, when we would expect pi-plē-mi and pi-prē-mi, which are unattested).

The source of this nasalization has long been a puzzle. Most scholars agree (either tacitly or explicitly) that the nasalization is secondary (Chantraine 1945, Beekes and van Beek 2012, i.a.) and probably carries no semantic significance, while others (Meiser 1993) consider the nasal to be somehow connected to that of the nasal-infix present formation. I take a phonological approach to this problem and argue that the nasal was generated via Aggressive Reduplication (Zuraw 2002), the product of which was then utilized to avoid a dispreferred C<sub>1</sub>iC<sub>1</sub> reduplicant shape.

The evidence for this lies in the unusual way these verbs pattern with preverbs. Their semantics lend themselves to combination with nasal-final preverbs (specifically ἐν-, but also occasionally συν-), and when these combinations do occur, the nasal in the reduplicant can and often does disappear: examples include ἐμπιπρώω (with thematization), ἐμπιπρῶν (ditto), and ἐμπιπρῶν, as well as ἐπίπληθι (in Homer) and ἐπίπλη. However, the unusual nasal is restored if there is an augment between the prefix and the reduplicant, such as in ἐνεπιμπλάμην or ἐνεπίμπρῳσαν. The loss of the nasal in conjunction with nasal-final preverbs contrasts with that of clearly nasal-infixed verbs such as τυγχάνω, which do not lose their nasal in combination with a nasal-final preverb (ἐντυγχάνω, for instance, never appears as \*ἐντυχάνω). This suggests that the appearance or disappearance of the nasal is phonologically and not morphologically motivated.

The essence of Aggressive Reduplication is that features may spread from one syllable to another sporadically (a common example is the non-etymological /r/ in the second syllable of dialectal English *sherbert*, from *sherbet*) (id.). A frequent form such as ἐμ-πί-πλημι could well condition speakers to believe that a nasal-final syllable belongs to the left of the root; the nasal would then spread to the second syllable in the absence of the preverb, creating πίμπλημι. This resulting form has the added benefit of dissimilating C<sub>1</sub> and C<sub>2</sub>, creating the more usual reduplicant shape C<sub>1</sub>iC<sub>2</sub>.

### References

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