

THE INVESTIGATION OF DIMINUTIVES IN WORLD LINGUISTICS

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Annotation: This article examines the study of diminutive units in world linguistics. The formation of diminutive units from a morphological point of view with the help of affixes is also emphasized.

Key words: Diminutive units, morphology, affixation, lexeme, semantics.

The category of diminutiveness or lesserness belongs to the number of complex and insufficiently studied issues of linguistics. Traditionally, the structural-semantic aspect of the study was developed, which was limited to morphology and the framework of one language. The category of diminutiveness also became the object of research in the field of lexical semantics (Yu.D. Apresyan, A. Vezhbitskaya) and intercultural communication (S.G. Ter-Minasova) [8;26].

In recent years, there has been an understanding of diminutivity as a complex semantic category that can be studied from the point of view of ontolinguistics (Е.Ю.Протасова, 2001), pragmatics (S.V. Shedogubova, 2004), theory and practice of translation [7;174-179.]

The category of diminutivity is associated with the quantitative characteristics of objects, properties, phenomena and expresses the subjective-evaluative value of a small volume: *домик, оконце*. It is necessary to distinguish between proper diminutive forms and “false” diminutives when affixation or leads to the creation of a new concept: *крыша-крышка, козырь-козырек* or serves as a source of metaphorization: *спинка (стула), мышка (компьютера), жучок (подслушивающее устройство)*.

According to the National Corpus of the Russian Language, the diminutive has morphosemantic word-formation features. In the Russian Language there are 22 diminutive suffixes of subject and proper nouns, of which 14 are productive (**-к, -иц, -очк, -ушк, -ишк, -ец...**). This fact is also noted by foreign linguists: The Russian language is exceptionally rich in diminutive forms; it seems that they are encountered in speech at every step [4].

A specific feature of the Russian language is the possibility of forming diminutives from adjectives (**suffixes –еньк, оньк, -ехонк**) and even verbs as occasional authorial usages: *Жратеньки хочу! (В.Шушкин)*.

In Russian you can find examples of all the semantic features of diminutives: small size (*деревенька, попугайчик*), weak intensity of the feature (*сероватенький*) or process (*ветерок*). Diminutive suffixes can denote a diminution of an object of a special type, f.e: *ручки, носик, сумочка, иляпка*.

In these examples, the diminutive derivatives not only denote a smaller object, but also acquire the additional meaning of “X, belonging to (characteristic of) a child or woman”. Another example of a fairly systematic shift in the meaning of the diminutive is the names of animals: *крокодилчик*, *бегемотик*, which denote not just a small animal, but its cubs. The meaning “young” is also characteristic of the names of plants and their parts: *деревце*, *цветочек*, *листик*.

In other words, the idea of diminutiveness is often linked to the general idea of “childishness” and “youth”. As we can see, diminutiveness in the Russian language is a lexical-grammatical category that covers different classes of words [8;26].

As literature analysis shows, many works in both domestic and foreign linguistics are devoted to the study of diminutives. The category of diminutiveness is the object of research in more than 50 languages. However, it should be noted that it cannot be classified as a linguistic universal, since it cannot be identified in all languages.

It has been proven that English cannot be called a morphologically “pure” language and cannot be classified as an analytical or synthetic type. It can only be stated that the English language contains elements of analyticism and synthetism, but analyticism is expressed more strongly. The proof of this is the specificity of word formation of the language being studied. Foreign linguists such as Otto Esperson and Anna Vezhbitskaya, about the insignificant number of diminutives in the English language and question the productivity of its morphological paradigm [1;2]. Moreover, researchers call English diminutives “Isolated baby forms”, thereby emphasizing the fact that these lexemes are limited to the speech of small children or are typical of conversations between adults and them. Diminutivity in the English language was studied by A.A.Buryakovskaya, S.Sh.Isakova, L.Yu.Reznichenko, V.I.Shakhovsky, K.Schneider and others [2-5,10-11].

In general, lexical diminutives are such linguistic signs that are formed in a synthetic way, namely: by adding an affix to the word base or by truncation. The following are among the productive suffixes that form diminutive forms of nouns.

1. The suffix of Scottish-Dutch origin **-ie (-y, -ey)**: *bully*, *baddy* from *bad*, *auntie* from *aunt*, *meanie* from *mean*, *Annie* from *Anne*. This suffix gives an emotional meaning to the word without changing its subject-logical meaning.
2. The Old English suffix **-ling**, which gives the word a derogatory meaning: *manling*(*little man*) from *man* (*person*); *weakling* from *weak*, *changeling* from *change*
3. The Dutch diminutive suffix **-kin**: *boykin* (*little boy*) from *boy*, *manikin* (*little man, dwarf*) from *man*. This suffix in the plural form is attached to proper names to obtain a diminutive meaning: *Marykins* from *Mary*.

4. French suffix **-et**: *bratchet* (little child) from *brat*; *grommet* (beginner surfer, skater, snowboarder) from obsolete French *gromette*.
5. The suffix **-ette** of French origin is used to denote female persons, mainly with an expressive connotation of endearment, and sometimes with the meaning of condescending irony: *marionette* (puppet) from French *marionette* (derived from *Marion*, a diminutive of the proper name *Marie*); *usherette* from *usher* (ticket-taker).

The following can be classified as non-productive diminutive suffixes:

1. **-er**: *fosterer* (foster child) from *foster* (to raise someone else's child); *bonker* (crazy) from *bonk* (to hit).
2. Suffixes **-rel/-erel**, borrowed from Latin: *cockerel* from *cock* (a rooster).
3. The diminutive suffix **-o** is characteristic of both American and Australian English: *kiddo* from *kid*; *preggo* from *pregnant*.

These provisions allow us to conclude that the limited number of synthetic methods of word formation in English is associated with its analytical structure. Nevertheless, the analysis of the productivity of structural types showed that suffix diminutives prevail over prefix and abbreviated ones. The suffixes considered are not the same in terms of productivity in the modern period. For example, the suffixes **-ie** (-y, -ey), **-ling**, **-kin**, **-et**, **-ette**, **-let** are more productive, the suffixes **-er**, **-rel**, **-o**, **-ard**, **-ster** give few formations. In the semantics of derivative lexemes formed with the help of diminutive affixes, along with the main meaning of "small size/child" there are evaluative elements that help to express one's positive or negative attitude towards a person [9;43].

Considering the expression of the category of diminutiveness in the Spanish language, it is necessary to note that the Spanish language is synthetic, and, therefore, has a wide range of possibilities for the explication of the category of diminutiveness at the morphological linguistic level. In particular, in the Spanish language the category of diminutiveness at the morphological linguistic level is expressed with the greatest intensity due to affixation. Thus, in modern Spanish-language Internet discourse, the most common affixes are the following: **-ito /-ita**, **-iño/-iñ** (**-ín(o/a)**), **-ico/-ica**, **-ete/-eta**, **-illo/ -illa**, **-uco /-uca**, **-ejo/a**, **mini-**, **micro-**. In the analyzed Internet publications, the most frequently used suffix is **-ito / -ita and its variants -cito / -cita, -ecito/ecita**. The use of this suffix is most frequently observed in nouns, adjectives, and adverbs. Lexical units formed with the help of this suffix revise the semes of diminutiveness and endearment. For example: *Este es Pastrani un #perrete muy dulce que llegó con su mami y hermanos y los ojitos cerrados y malitos, tanto que ha perdido uno de ellos. Con su único ojito solo ve las cosas buenas del #mundo* (Это Пастрани, очень милый щеночек, который приехал к нам со своей мамой и братьями).

*Его глазки были закрыты, а потом он стал видеть только одним из них. Своим единственным глазиком он видит только хорошие вещи в этом мире); 2) **Solito en casa** ¿Alguien quiere acompañarme? (**Одинешенька** дома, кто-нибудь хочет составить мне компанию?).*

Thus, at the morphological linguistic level of the Spanish language, the most frequent means of expressing the category of diminutiveness are means of affixation[12; 94-96]. Also, one of the features of the Spanish language is the territorial distribution of diminutive affixes and the possibility of using the same affix in different meanings, depending on the territory [6;52].

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