



A Comparative Study of Diminutive Forms in English and Kurdish

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Abstract

Knowing a language means knowing the morphemes of that language, which are the elemental units that constitute words of that language. Diminutives occur throughout the world's languages, more often in order to represent typically smallness, slightness, affection intimacy, endearment and even derogation. Diminutives are mainly formed by attaching suffixes to a base. It is hypothesized that speakers and users are dissimilar in using their diminutives in their daily chit-chats owing to their age, gender, culture, and occupation. Accordingly, they face difficulty in forming diminutives since they are under the impact of various borrowing suffixes found in English. Thus, one expects that this study will be rather beneficial for their users depending on specific interplay of linguistic and situational factors found in given contexts of both languages. This paper deals with the diminutive forms in English and Kurdish as far as form, morphological process and parts of speech are concerned. It also sheds some light on the meanings of these forms in both languages when necessary. It has been observed that the two languages are similar to some extent concerning the class forms and meanings of such forms since both are related to Indo-European languages. Basically, both languages use suffixation and prefixation in the process of noun formation. However, we (as native speakers) expect that Kurdish diminutive suffixes are greater in number if compared to English.

KeyWords: English, Kurdish, diminutive, affixation, languages.

1. Introduction

Every language is charming in its own way. That charm is recognized through particular features typical of that particular language. A means by which a language can be considered 'cute' is the usage of diminutive forms found in that language. Most often, they are formed morphologically by means of adding a derivational morpheme, yet analytical forms are also possible in English. One has to say that diminutivization is not done randomly, since there should be some motivated factors that may be helpful for such a purpose:

1. Generally speaking, the diminutivized word may be a noun or an adjective since the diminutives are modifiers in meaning. For example, 'kiŷ-ola', a small girl. Here the diminutive morpheme acts as a basic indicator that means a small girl.
2. The social agreement is a great factor in creating a diminutive form though the noun is suitable as far as its physical meaning is concerned. The availability of a social link is of great importance concerning the diminutives.
3. The meaning of a noun does deserve such a phenomenon since some nouns or names originally have their holiness or prestige such as God's name, additionally, nouns that express the meaning of 'generalities' in Kurdish such as 'hamu', all, 'sarjam', total, and 'gishtyan', they all. It is noticeable that all of them have the same meaning, i.e. 'total'.



4. Finally , the meaning of the diminutivized form should agree with ‘ logic’ , i.e. without opposing the reality such as the words , ‘ bichkola ’, means small one while the word ‘gawrola’ is incorrect because of the language constraints ,Saied (2013 : 34-36) .

Diminutives are bound morphemes from Latin words describing small samples of the thing denoted by a corresponding word. Diminutives are often rather affective, i.e., they express the feeling with which the person or thing described is regarded, Zandvoort (1962: 302). This paper attempts to analyse the formation and function of diminutives in English and Kurdish. English diminutive forms can be expressed not only by affixes but also by words like *small*, *little*, and *tiny*. Kurdish, as compared to English, shows greater flexibility in the formation of diminutives and of higher frequency of occurrence. Although the prototypical function of diminutives is to indicate smallness, they are also used extensively to express endearment and affection. Diminutives are found in many languages, though each language has its own way of realizing and expressing them. For example in Kurdish , the diminutives like , ‘tirshoka’ from , ‘tirsh’ means sour and ‘ biralala’ from ‘bira’ means ‘brother’ . (Saied, 2013)

Diminutives are a distinguishing feature of spoken languages .Stageberg (1971 : 102) states that English has a limited number of diminutive suffixes and has regarded them as morphemes which convey a meaning of smallness , endearment or both such as , ‘ doggie’ , and ‘ Jenney’ . The diminutive forms are used in morphology to express the attaching of a derivational suffix mainly to a noun which produces a new noun form showing the general meaning of ‘little’ whether literally or metaphorically as a term of endearment(Crystal, 1992 : 104). For instance, ‘kitchenette’ is a small kitchen, ‘booklet ‘is a small book. Fattah (1978: 81) on his part states that ‘diminutives provide another example of the fuzziness of inflection-derivation distinction. Here the question arises as to whether these affixes are derivational or inflectional .He also adds that they are all instances of what is apparently derivational morphology behaving like inflections. Furthermore, he adds that ck (Central Kurdish) has a set of productive diminutive formation processes , one of which , -oka , is particularly active (e.g. dank-oka ‘a bit’ , qitf k-oka, ‘ very small’ , hand-oka ‘a bit’) . In their wide applicability and the fact that they induce no category change, i. e. since they are attached to nouns to produce nouns, they resemble inflectional suffixes. Though they are regarded derivational since they create new forms out of the old ones .Thus, diminutives pose a difficulty for the traditional distinction, (ibid, 1978). Furthermore, Trask (1993:82) states that diminutive as follows: Diminutive is a derivational affix that may be attached to a word for conveying the smallness, often. Katamba (1993: 21) also regards it as another process of word-formation. .Diminutiveness as a linguistic phenomenon proves to be an interesting topic for investigation , meanwhile social factors such as age and gender may also contribute to the frequency of diminutive usage, though there is little research on them .The diminutive suffixes have different types of features such as morphological , semantic and stylistic features .However , this study aims to investigate the morphological distribution of diminutive and non-diminutive suffixes in English and Kurdish .

But in accordance with Schneider’s suggestions (2003 : 1) , the following problems have made some difficulties in dealing with morphological analysis :

- 1 .diminutive is a term of traditional grammar as such taken for granted , i.e. it is usually not clearly defined and is often used in a sense relevant only to Latin and other related languages but not to other languages, such as English ,
2. the focus of analysis has been neglected ,
3. and finally diminutives have not , as a rule , been studied from a pragmatic aspect .

Diminutives are usually and mostly found in English and Kurdish nouns and less frequently in adjectives, verbs, and adverbs, therefore; the major focus of this paper will be diminutivized nouns. The grammatical systems of both languages contain different suffixes



that can be combined with certain types of base noun forms while the number of diminutive suffixes and their applicability are very limited in English, (Bratus 1969, and Wierzbicka 2003). According to Wierzbicka this lack of diminutives in English indicates that the Anglo-Saxon culture does not encourage “unrestrained” linguistic demonstrations of affection, endearment and other emotions through the diminutivization of nouns (2003: 51 and 55). It is worth mentioning that some diminutive suffixes have homophones that can be a source of confusion and disturbance ; particularly (-ette; -y , -ie ; and -ling) as it is stated by Stageberg (1971 : 102).

Schneider (2003) , however , claims that English has more diminutives than is commonly acknowledged , mentioning that in addition to the ‘ -y /-ie’ diminutive suffix, English is an analytic language that uses adjectives such as ‘ *little* ’ to convey smallness and emotion.

That is to say , in English, referents of small size are indicated either by noun phrases containing an adjective with diminutive meaning (such as *small* , *little* and *tiny*) , or by diminutives , in which the small size is conveyed by a diminutive affix . This study focuses on a morphological comparison of the use of diminutives in both languages .Diminutives are an important means of expressing attitudes and emotions in both languages ; yet few studies have examined their use and function in addition to their formation

2. Literature Review

Reviewing and evaluating the studies which have previously been done concerning the diminutive affixes in English and Kurdish seem very little although some Kurdish linguists have dealt with them differently. In fact, none has studied them directly and scientifically, i. e. no scientific analysis is done. Here, we try to give a short survey of some of them concerning their ideas and studies of Kurdish and English diminutive affixes:

2.1 English Diminutive Suffixes

Linguists have different views concerning diminutive suffixes as Schneider (2003: 76-77) has stated that “it is a common myth that English has no diminutives, but he explains such a case by referring to ‘prototypical diminutives’”. Furthermore , Schneider (2003) provides an overview of differing opinions on this matter , i.e. various authors list different numbers of diminutive suffixes and treat them according to different criteria , e.g. their origin , productivity , and function , i.e. there is no agreement in the literature regarding which suffixes of English are diminutive suffixes and how many diminutive suffixes exist in English :

- Wierzbicka (1985) claims that ‘-ie’ is the only diminutive suffix of English.
- Dressler / Melina Barbaresi (1994) , who largely concentrate on -ie /-y , - ette , - let , they also mention the -s suffix.
- Quirk et al. (1985) name only three suffixes , i.e. -ette , -let , and -ling , meanwhile they regard the suffixes , -y/-ie ,and -s as ‘ familiarity markers ’ .
- Zandvoort (1969) mentions -y/-ie , -ette , -let , -ling , -et , and -kin suffixes .
- Marchland (1969) provides a detailed description of ten different suffixes .

In fact, one can find out that diminutives do exist differently in most languages around the world though it is rare to find a book on English morphology that does not touch upon diminutives. (Schneider ,2003) states that the enormous size of the suffix inventory suggests that English is a rich language in diminutives, however , this size results from the very heterogeneous composition of the inventory .

2.2 Linguists Views on Kurdish Diminutive Suffixes

In fact most Kurdish linguists (grammarians) have already dealt with or talked about diminutive suffixes differently. Here is a list of the authors who have mentioned some diminutive suffixes in their books:



Wahhabi (1929 : 59) ; Ameen , (1958 : 10-11) ; Sadiq (1975 : 121- 2) ; Fakery and Mukeryany (1982 : 17 – 20) ; Marf (1979 : 119 – 121) , and Marf (1987 : 49 – 55) .

Bakir (2005) states that Wahhabi (1929), Ameen (1958), are really ‘leaders in this respect’ , while others like Marf (1987) has repeated the same number of the diminutive suffixes and only added another suffix . Sadiq (1975), in his classification of diminutives has forgotten two important suffixes, (-o) and (-u). Furthermore , Wahbi (1929: 59) , Ameen (1958) , and Marf (1987) have regarded (chawilke) , ‘ glasses’ and (engustile) , ‘fingering’ as two diminutive forms , though they are two different things . All Kurdish grammarians have not considered the morpheme (- e) as an important diminutive suffix and has several uses. Furthermore, they forget talking about the idea of ‘double diminutive’, (ibid 2005). Frankly speaking, in their books, they have collected, mentioned the diminutives very simply, briefly and studied them in a narrowly framed understanding. They , morphologically speaking ,did not pay attention to those suffixes , i.e. even without classifying them and showing their types , they have not stated and pointed out the role and function of such morphemes attentively and broadly . Consequently ,weakness features and outstanding defects are found here and there .however ,We have to be grateful and evaluate their jobs as a historical step . (Muirawaly (2007 : 46-47) also adds and states that the ‘ diminutized noun is used mostly for loving or hating someone’ :

1. Whenever a relative or a friend uses diminutives , he expresses love , respect or to make friends with the addressee , while a stranger may express contempt , making fun of or disresp 2. There are exceptions in Kurdish diminutivization system, i.e. proper names like / tara: , dara: , hero: , bamo: , halo: a:ko: , and ya:rə / ending with these vowel sounds , / a: , o: and /ə/ cannot be diminutivized .Furthermore , he adds and states that Kurdish has its own method of creating diminutive forms , for example : ‘gandz’ , (young) , and the diminutive form is ‘ gandz + oka ’ = gandzoka , means ‘ a small young one ’ ; gund , ‘village ‘ , gund + oka = gungoka , ‘ a small village ’ .

But most Kurdish linguists have mentioned the role of the suffix , ‘-o: ‘ in diminutive formation process including Bakir (2005 : 2 -3) when he gives examples like (shero: , nazo: , narmo: , mesho: , fato: , qado: , and hurfjo:) . Muhammad (2016 : 63) also adds that the suffix , ‘ –o: ‘ is found within Kurdish diminutive suffixes such as ‘ jamo: ’ . The researcher himself (as a native speaker) adds and states that the suffix , ‘ –o: ‘ is very active and productive in proper names such as : (taro: , daro:, fato: , qalo: , jibo: , salo: , nazo: , etc.)

Both Saied (2013 : 53-54) and Abdulla , (2007 : 62) have classified the Kurdish diminutive suffixes into :

1. Simple diminutive suffixes are:

- ka and its allomorphs , / -oka , -ka , - a , - u: , - aka , -k , -ak , - ok , -u:k /
- la and its allomorphs , / -lā , -ala , -la , aḷa , -o:l , -o:l̥ , - o:la , -o:lā , -yla , u:la , -aḷ /
- / -tʃa / and its allomorphs, / - yʒa , - yeʒa , -yʃa /

2. Compound diminutive suffixes are formed from the combination and unification of two simple morphemes such as:

- / -tʃka / and its allomorphs , / -tʃk , - shk , - o:tʃka , -ʒo:lā / which are formed from the unification of / - tʃa / and / -ka / .
- / -ylka / and its allomorphs / , -ylka , - u: lka , - o:lka / which are formed from the unification of / - la / , and / -ka / ,
- and / -kala / which formed from putting / - ka / , and / -la / , it is to be mentioned that this group is only used with adjectives , (Ibid: 2013 and 2007).

It is clear that these morphemes whether simple or compound can be attached to new bases and will create new words that express the diminutive meaning only such as , ‘wurd’



, (small) , and ‘ wurdeela ’ is a diminutive of wurd , ‘ nerm ’ , (soft) , and ‘ nermola ’ is a diminutive of nerm , ‘ nasik ’ , (tender) ,and ‘ naskola’ is a diminutive of nasik ,etc. Being under the effect of their dialects, geographical areas, education, and their classes have made Kurdish linguists or grammarians deal with Kurdish diminutive suffixes differently.

3 .Diminutive Forms in English

Diminutives are found in numerous languages of the world; however , each has its particular method of recognizing and performing such shapes .The diminutive shapes imply some significant processes of word-formation , meanwhile they convey a vast range of meaning including smallness .Different new words will enrich languages and may be listed in dictionaries. The English grammatical systems contain different suffixes which can be combined with certain types of base noun forms , however ,the number of diminutive suffixes and their applicability are very limited in English , this is on one hand . On the other hand, Kurdish displays a great variety of diminutive suffixes that can be attached to almost all types of nouns. But English diminutive suffixes mentioned in Quirk et al (1985 : 1549 and 1584) are among word-formation affixes and familiarity markers which can be attached only to certain noun types .Consider the following table :

Diminutive Suffixes	Examples	
-ette -let -ling -y , - ie	Base form	Diminutive form
	-kitchen, dinner	-kitchenette , dinerette
	-book , pig	-booklet, piglet
	-prince , duck	-Princeling, duckling
	-dad , chap	-daddy , chapie

Most linguists have distinguished four main processes of word-formation : prefixation , suffixation , compounding and conversion , (Zandvoort , 1972 : 298 ; Katamba , 1993 : 3). Consequently, a large number of nouns in English are created by attaching a free morpheme to a derivational suffix.

It is noticeable that these suffixes can be attached only to certain types of nouns , therefore , the addition of a diminutive suffix to a base may lead to some grammatical change concerning the change of the base from one word class to another such as : ‘ treeless’ where ‘less’ converts a noun into an adjective (Katamba, 1993: 48).But Peprik, J. (2006 : 116-117) has realized diminutives slightly distinctive . Diminutives are not always communicative since their basic meanings are notional and they indicate things which are smaller in size or in another semantic feature .The notion , ‘rather small’ is often linked with a positive (ameliorating) connotation . Simultaneously, diminutives may not refer to anything small; and yet are ameliorative since they express the positive personal relationship of the speaker to the person or to a thing in addition to diminutives with a negative connotation.

In this sense, the diminutive suffixes do not influence the word class and the other belongings of the words to which they are attached.

Marchand (1969 : 269) , Zandvoort (1972 : :98) and others state that English displays a group of diminutive suffixes including : -een , -erel (rel) , -et , -ette , -ie (-I , -y) , -kin (-ikin , -kins) , -ling and -let ,however ,but Stageberg(1971: 102) has minimized the number to six because of the fact that the first two are not really in actual use now a days. Sinclair (2002 :188) also states that the diminutive suffixes can combine with any nouns or names so as to give a more affectionate or familiar form ,particularly by children and adults .Moreover , Wierzbicka (1991 : 2) also adds that the productive diminutive derivation hardly exists , in spite of the existence of some isolated baby forms such as : hardies , doggie , birdie and girlie , but not *mannie , *auntie and *unclie ,etc.



Now let's introduce the suffixes found in English in some details:

1. -een

This suffix originally comes from the Anglo-Irish language use with diminutive and individualizing force. It is only found in a few words which have been coined (Marchand, 1969: 269). Consider the following examples:

Buck	buckeen
Girl	girleen
Squire	squireen
Jack	jackeen

It is obvious that this suffix is affixed mainly to nouns.

2. -erel ; rel

This suffix normally comes from French loan words (ibid: 281). It does exist in some nouns, mostly referring to animals, for instance:

Cock	cockrel
Kest	kestrel
Mack	mackerel

3. -et

This suffix is also of a French base and it occurs in words like the following:

cabin	cabinet
circle	circlet
eagle	eaglet
pock	pocket
coron	coronet

It is mostly used with common nouns; moreover, it is partly diminutive and partly individualizing (Zandvoort, 1972: 304).

4. -ette

Marchand (1969:289) states that this suffix represents the French suffix -ette, as in the loan 'mountainette', 'bannerette', and it became productive in the 19th century with words such as: balconette, leaderette, novelette, stationette, etc. Stageberg (1971: 129) has also stated that this suffix can be added to a masculine form or to a base morpheme to form diminutive forms such as:

sermon	sermonette
room	roomette
statue	statuette

It seems that this suffix forms pure diminutives denoting things, in modern words like 'kitchenette', furthermore, in those examples that denote persons, the suffix expresses femininity: hence undergraduette, 'female undergraduate'.

5. -ie, -y

Zandvoort (1972: 303) states that this suffix has a Scottish spelling and it is only used to form pet names of persons or animals from monosyllabic proper names and class-nouns such as: Johnny, Annie, piggie, and doggie. He also adds that it is occasionally attached to adjectives implying affection, intimacy and endearment. Thus; it is widely limited to familiar contexts. Consider the following instances again for illustration:

Robert	Bobbie
Catherine	Kitty



bird	birdie
sweet	sweetie
dark	darkie
Tom	Tommy
Lizz	Lizzie
Will	Willie

Obviously, these examples indicate that this suffix is mainly attached to masculine, feminine personal proper nouns, common nouns and adjectives as well.

6. -kin , -ikin , -kins

Marchand, 1969: 321, and Zandvoort, 1972: 303) state that this suffix is used with both proper and common nouns. It is also a suffix with diminutive or endearing force, but today it is used only as amusing and entertaining formative with a depreciative color such as:

Simon	Simkin
Thomson	Tomkin
cat	catkin
lamb	lambkin
pilch	pilchkin

7. -ling

Marchand , 1969 : 327-329) regards this suffix as the extended form of the suffix (-ing) ; particularly with stems ending with an ' l' . It is extensively used with different kinds of words denoting young animals like 'catling, wolfling , duckling , fledgeling and gosling' in addition to young plants ' sapling , and seedling' (Zandvoort , 1972 : 304) . Furthermore, it is attached to word classes denoting persons such as nursling , suckling , i.e. nouns , adjectives , and verbs. This occurs only when it expresses a mildly contempt flavor as in lordling , princeling , hireling , weakling ,darling , nestling and underling (Quirk ,and Baum , 1973 : 437,. It also expresses contemptuous flavor : 'lordling' ; 'princeling' ; 'weakling' (from adj.) ; 'underling' (from prep./ adv.) ,while wordling expresses disapproval, but not smallness or insignificance, Zandvoort (1972 :304) .

Sapir (1921 : 83) sums up the function of this suffix as follows: " It conveys fairly concrete idea (roughly those of 'little'), though the correction is not stressed " .

8. -let

Zandvoort , 1972 : 303-304) states that this suffix is mostly attached to nouns indicating things rather than persons such as 'leaflet , streamlet , eyelet flatlet , ringlet , and booklet' . He also adds that (-let) may denote persons usually have a derogatory meaning: kinglet, princelet and etc. This French suffix is more frequently added to names of things than names of persons.

9. -ock

This is the native English suffix found in such word: hillock, bullock, mullock, pillock, bittock, etc. This suffix comes from the Anglo-Saxon origin.

10. -ule

This suffix is from Latin origin as in globule,

The previous survey of the English diminutive suffixes has seemingly stated that almost all of them are often combined mainly with nouns except for ' -ling , -ie' where the



former can be fixed to adjectives and verbs while the latter to adjectives and nouns. It is also observed that the 'ie', and '-et' are referred to as being highly productive, whereas the others are rarely if ever attached to new nouns.

On the other hand, in some other words like 'cabinet' and 'toilet', the basic meaning of the diminutive suffix has faded away to little or insignificant, Stageberg (1971: 102). Furthermore, he adds that a handful of other suffixes have come into English as borrowing words. They are actually diminutive suffixes in their parent language, but non-morphemic in English. These borrowing words include words like: capsule, cookie, citadel, quatet, cononel, falsetto, mosquito, morsel, muscle, particle, puppet, scalpel, etc.

4. English Diminutive Prefixes

English simultaneously uses some diminutive prefixes that refer to the notion of smallness in size, status, and relative smallness, however, they are mostly borrowing words from Latin, French, Greek, etc. Now, we try to shed some light on these prefixes:

1. Demi –

This prefix is found only in a few words which are more or less in general use. It has the meaning of 'half' as a half: of less than a full size or 'partly' in particular and it is normally attached to nouns to indicate smallness in size (Marchand, 1969: 157). It comes into English from French such as demi-god, demi-lion, demi-robe, demi-toilet, and demi-devil. He also adds that this prefix is found in many words to indicate smallness in size, meaning half or partly in particular, and it is normally attached to nouns such as: demi-season, demi-bath, demi-monde, etc.

2. Hemi –

It is basically a Greek prefix attached to nouns to indicate the meaning of 'half' especially a lateral of such as: 'hemi sphere. Hornby (1970: 400).

3. Micro –

This prefix has been in use in scientific word-formation chiefly since the 19th century. It is co-relative with 'macro-' in terms of anatomy, botany, and zoology. Marchand (1969:175-176). It is normally added to names of instruments to express smallness as in the following examples: microbe, microwave, microorganism, microbiology, micro-phonograph, microscope, etc.

4. Mini-

Bauer (1983:218) states that this prefix joins freely with nouns to shape new nouns. It has several meanings, but they all seem to be limited to noun bases such as smaller, less important, little or briefer than is normal. Quirk, and Baum (1973: 433), and Quirk et al (1985: 1542). Consider the following examples: minibus, miniskirt, minimarket, minidress, minikilt, minipill, miniwar, and minicomputer. Additionally, it is very productive, and is often used for humorous coinage.

5. Mono

This prefix is of Greek origin and it has the meaning of single as in: mono-phone, monotonous, monocle, monogram. Furthermore, it not only attached to nouns, but with adjectives as well, as in: monolingual, monogamous, etc. Hornby (1974:547). It forms mainly scientific words as in: mono-phase, etc. (Marchand, 1969: 178).

6. Semi-

This prefix is originally from Latin and it implies the meaning of 'half, or 'half in quantity or value Marchand (1969:192). It is used as a prefix with adjectives and substantives so as to form new counterparts. Words which are formed in this way often convey the idea that something is partially equal or is equal to one half of something else as in: semitone, semicircle, semi-annual, semi-circular, semi-mild, etc.



7. Sub-

This prefix is added to both nouns and adjectives so as to mean people or things which are inferior to 'lesser' to smaller or less powerful than whatever is referred to or described by the original nouns and adjectives. Marchand (1969:194). Consider these instances : subsonic , subtitle , subcommittee , subnormal , sub -lingua , sub-audible , sub-editor , etc.

8. Under-

Quirk et al (1985 : 1542) state that this prefix is widely used with various word classes such as nouns , verbs and adjectives so as to express the meanings of inferior to , less than , lower than , and too little. Consider the following examples : under-cut , underweight , underbid , underpayment , underpaid , under-provision , undercharge , under-privileged , under-sell , under-done , etc.

9. Uni-

Hornby (1974 : 1017) states that this prefix mainly means 'one' and in such a sense it may be similar to 'mono-'. Additionally, it can be combined with nouns and adjectives equally such as: unidirectional, unicycle, and unilateral.

10. Vice-

This prefix is chiefly used with words denoting the holder of an office , i.e. attached to nouns to convey the meaning of being secondary , deputy , or being lower in the rank and status (Marchand , 1969 : 207 ; Quirk and Baum , (1973 : 435) . Notice the following examples: vice-captain, vice-chairman, vice-admiral and, etc.

It seems clear that the above mentioned prefixes can be attached to nouns , specifically common nouns to convey the meaning of smallness , yet , 'mono- , semi - , sub - , and uni - ' can combine with adjectives as well . Furthermore , the prefix ' under-' can be used with verbs in addition to nouns and adjectives . Prefixes are different from suffixes since they cannot combine with personal proper nouns. Marchand (1969: 133) reveals that most prefixes are combined with English words without formal changes. Furthermore, prefixes are different from suffixes because they are improbable to join with personal proper nouns.

5. Diminutive Forms in Kurdish

Diminutives are the characteristics of spoken language and they mainly focus on pragmatics since it is a social phenomenon .Morphologically speaking diminutivization is a process of producing new lexical items .Kurdish has a simple system of diminutive forms which can easily be distinguished from non-distinguishing ones ,for instance , 'froka' ,air-plane 'bizinoka' , small goat or 'goatee' .Miraudeli , (2007 : 46-47) states that the term 'diminutives' refer to a word which is diminutivized mostly for 'love' or to someone for expressing hatred such as 'korpa+ -la = korpala , means 'baby' ; 'pisheela or pisha' which refers to 'cat' as an endearment or scorning .Additionally , it mostly refers to people's name like / na:zda:r/ , the dim. form is ' naza' , (darling) or (narmeen) , the dim.form is 'nama', (soft) . Diminutives are defined as the forms (mostly nouns) that are derived from other forms such as nouns to express many meanings , including smallness , familiarity , endearment and contempt .The present study concentrates on the use of diminutives in English and Kurdish and it is expected that some points of similarity and difference will be highlighted in them .

Some linguists distinguish four major processes of word formation : prefixation , suffixation , compounding and conversion (Zandvoort ,1972: 298 , and Katamba , 1993 : 41). Consequently, a large number of nouns in English and Kurdish is produced by the combination of a free morpheme and a derivational suffix .Consider the following examples : duckling , birdie ,roomette and ' bizinoka' , (a small goat) ; ' sher' ,(a lion) , ' shero ' is a diminutivized name ,etc. The core of diminutives can mainly be on the speaker and addressee



.Such social event holds an important place within the domain of socio-pragmatic studies .Additionally, the diminutive is a process of producing new lexical items which are mostly concerned with the noun -formation process.

5.1 Kurdish Diminutive Suffixes

Most Kurdish linguists or grammarians have mentioned the existence of different number and type of affixes in various Kurdish dialects including diminutive affixes .The diminutive forms have no exception in attaching them to free bases such as a noun (common nouns and proper names) that is to say male and female names form diminutive forms . The impact of social factors on language use is very important ,(Schneider 2003) .Moreover , there are other social factors , such as region, social class , and education ,i.e. macro-factors and the micro –social factors ,including power, distance ,and other situational factors and cultural factors that may contribute to speaker's variation in diminutive use .

Consider the following examples:

Azad	azo ,azadok , azodoke	
Qadir	qadirok ,qadiroke , qado	
Fatime	Fate, fatok , fatoke , fato	Nawkhosh (2005 :2)

Consequently, a great number of nouns in Kurdish are produced by mixing a free morpheme and a derivational diminutive suffix. Here, one has to add that not only nouns can be diminutivized in Kurdish but adjectives, in addition to verb roots. They will form new nouns that make Kurdish language rich the following pages will be a careful survey of the diminutive suffixes found in Kurdish .Fakhri and Mukeryani(1982: 17) , Abdulla (2007 :63-66) , and Saied(2013: 53-54) have stated that some Kurdish diminutive suffixes are the following ones:

/ -la , - ĩa, -o:ĩa - o:la , u:la , - yla , -o:ka , -tfa , - tka , - u:lka , - ylka , -o:l, o:ĩ , - al , - u:, - uk and -u / . It is necessary to state that the diminutive process of word-formation is a productive method of forming new words to dictionaries of one's language. Now, it looks rather practical to undertake these diminutive suffixes as far as possible:

1. / -la /

This suffix is added to nouns to make diminutivized nouns such as , ' bira' , brother , and the diminutive form is ' bira +la' = birala , means a small brother . and ' meru' , 'an ant' , the diminutive form is ' meru + la' = merula which means a small ant , qadir , ' qala' , , ' khula' , (Marf, 1979 : 119).

2. /- ĩa /

This suffix is added to nouns to make diminutivized nouns such as ,goza , ' porous jar' , the diminutive form is ' gozaĩa ' , dizə , dim. 'dizəĩə ,dizəĩokə , ' water jar' . Bakir(2005 : 3) and McCarus (, 1967 : 53) . Both are different because /-la/ in number one is light, while the one in number two is dark,/- ĩa / as explained in the given examples .

3. /- o:ĩa /

This suffix is attached to nouns to make the diminutivized nouns such as, berx, lamb, dim. berxo:ĩa , /meshik/ , brain , dim. /meshko:ĩa/ .narm, soft, dim. narmo:ĩa .Marf(1979 : 119) , Bakir (2005 : 3) .

4. / -o:la /

This suffix is used to form diminutive nouns such as: barx, lamb, dim. form is : barxoĩa , ' a small lamb ' ; bichu:k , 'small , or little ' , dim. bickoĩa, someone small . Bakir (2005 : 3) , and Fakhri and Mukeryani (1982 : 18) .



5. /-u:la /

This suffix is used to form diminutive nouns such as, dan, grain, dim form is danu:le , boiled wheat , mesh ,(a fly) ,dim. form is ‘ meshula’. Marf (1979:119) and Bakir (2005: 3).

6. /-uĭla /

This suffix is used to form diminutive nouns such as, zang , ‘bell’ , dim. form ,zanguĭla, ‘a small bell’ . Fakhri and Mukeryani(1982 : 18) .

7. /-yla /

This suffix is used to form diminutive nouns such as, /ka:r/, ‘kid ‘ ,dim. form ka:ryla, a kid which is under 3 months, wurd , very small , dim form is wurdyla, ‘ small children that have delicate faces’, ‘ gird’, hill, the diminutive form is, ‘ girdyla ,‘ a small hill’ Ameen (1958 : 120).

8. /-o:ka/

This suffix is used to form diminutives from nouns and adjectives such as: bizin, ‘goat ‘ , dim. form is ‘ bizino:ka’ , a small goat ; mar , ‘sheep’ , dim. form is ‘ maro:ka’ , a small sheep ‘ ; kapir , ‘ bower or hut made of leafy branches’, dim. form is ‘ kapero:ka ‘ , a small hut ; ; shet , mad , dim.form is ‘ sheto:ka’. This suffix is very productive in forming diminutives in common nouns, adjectives and even proper names like, ali, ‘Ali’. The dim. form is ‘ alo:ka’ . Fakhri and Mukeryani(1982 : 19)

9. /-cha /

This suffix is used to form mainly diminutive nouns such as: ‘darya’, (sea), the dim. form is ‘ daryacha’ , a small sea ; bax , garden , the diminutive form is ‘ baxcha’ , a small garden , Fakhri and Mukeryani (1982 : 19) and Abdulla (2007 : 51)

10. /-ulka /

This suffix is used to form diminutive nouns such as, ‘jam’, (bowl or glass) the dim. form is ‘ jamulka’ , a small bowl for drinking, Fakhri and Mukeryani(1982 : 19) .

11. /-ylka /

This suffix is used to form diminutive nouns such as, /pər /, ‘a page or a side’, and the diminutive form is ‘pərawylka ‘ , a small book or a booklet ‘. Fakhri and Mukeryani (1982:19).

12. /-uĭ /

This suffix is used to form diminutive forms from proper names such as, ‘majol’ from ‘Majeed’. Fakhri and Mukeryani (1982: 20)

13. /-o:ĭ /

This suffix is used to form diminutive forms from personal nouns such as ‘askol ‘from the word ‘ask’, (deer). Fakhri and Mukeryani (1982: 20)

14. /-o:k /

This suffix is used to form diminutive forms from common nouns such as, ‘ sar’ , (head), the diminutive form is ‘ sarok’ , a small head , Fakhri and Mukeryani (1982 : 20)

15. /-o: /

This suffix is used to form diminutive forms from personal nouns such as: shero: rasho:, and kurdo : . It also forms diminutives from adjective such as ‘pees ‘ (dirty) , the diminutive form is ‘ piso ‘ and ‘zer’ , (gold) , the dim. is ‘ zero:’ . Marf (1979 : 120 , and 1992 : 83) ,Fakhri and Mukeryani (1982 : 20) , Saied (2013 : 49)

16. /-chka/

This suffix is used to form diminutive nouns such as , ‘gwe’ , (ear) , the diminutive form is , ‘gwechka’ , a small ear ‘ ; ‘re’ , road , the diminutive form is , ‘rechka’ , a small road . (Fakhri and Mukeryani(1982 : 19) .

Additionally, some diminutive suffixes can be attached to adjectives to form diminutive nouns such as:

1. /- o:k/

This suffix is used to form diminutive forms from adjectives such as, ‘rash’, black, and the diminutive form is ‘rashok’, pees’, dirty, and the diminutive form is ‘peesok’. Ameen (1958: 13-14), Saied (2013: 49)

2. /- o:ka/

This suffix is used to form diminutives from adjectives such as ‘ tirsh’ , sour and the diminutive form is ‘ tirshoka’ ; ‘ pees’ , (dirty) and the dim. form is ‘ peesoka’ ; geĭ , (idiot) , the dim.form is geĭoka , Marf(1992: 83) and Fakhri and Mukeryani (1982 : 84) .

3. /-ka/

This suffix is very productive in forming the diminutive forms not only from adjectives but nouns as well such as , ‘ mizr’ , (tart), and the diminutive form is ‘ mizroka’; ‘ khir ’ , (round), and the diminutive form is ‘khiroka’ . Saied (2013: 49), Ameen (1958: 121)

The suffix / -o:k / can also form diminutive nouns such as ‘ bər) , (front) , and the diminutive form is / bəro:k/ , etc. Wahby and Edmonds (1966: 11)

In addition to nouns and adjectives , we can sometimes add the diminutive suffix , / -o:k / to the verb root (stem) so as to form diminutivized nouns such as :

xiz , (slippery) ,while the diminutive form will be /xizo:k/, (slippery place) ; /lərz / , (shiver) and the diminutive form will be / lerzo:k / , (to be shaky) ; / miʒ/ , ‘ suck ’ while the diminutive form is / miʒo:k / , (to be a sucker) , etc. It seems that Marf (1992 : 85) has stated that the diminutive morpheme , / -ok / can be attached either to the root of the verb or the base such as : /garo:k , nazo:k / ,etc.



Figure 1: Map of Kurdistan¹

¹.<http://zagrosphoto.com/?level=picture&id=1752>



6. Some Similarities and Differences between Diminutive Systems in English and Kurdish

The following similarities and differences between English as an isolating or analytic language and Kurdish as agglutinating language are noted:-

1. In both languages, diminutives are mainly formed by derivational suffixes, however; Kurdish is richer in having a considerable number of such affixes.
2. In both languages, the diminutives are mostly formed by adding affixes to a base morpheme or to proper names and common nouns.
3. In English, the neutral meaning is modified by using 'adjectives' (e.g. little, small, tiny, wee, etc.)
4. A diminutive implies that something is small in size or years such as, duck, duckling; or it may be a term of endearment (e.g. frog- froggy). Furthermore, diminutives can be made by adding a suffix such as, book – booklet. They can also be expressed by a prefix such as, skirt – mini-skirt.
5. Diminutives and augmentatives frequently bear other nuances of meaning for example, diminutives often convey affection or endearment, but augmentatives sometimes have 'pejorative' overtone.

7. Conclusion

The following points are concluded:

1. Diminutives have long been claimed to be nearly non-existent in the English language, formed through constructions with analytic markers such as small, little, deer, and tiny.
2. Diminutives are still considered a puzzle since they pose problems such as:
 - a.) Diminutives are generally regarded as a universal category found in all languages.
 - b.) At the same time, some languages, for instance, English is said to have no diminutives.
 - c.) Many researchers maintain that diminutives denote smallness, others argue that they denote smallness and have affective or evaluative connotation, while, others claim that diminutives express affective or evaluative meaning alone.
 - d.) It is considered paradoxical that diminutives have not, as a rule, been studied.
3. The number of English diminutive suffixes and their applicability are very limited if compared with Kurdish since it displays a great variety of suffixes which can be combined with almost all types of nouns in addition to other major parts of speech, i.e. Kurdish shows greater flexibility in the formation of diminutives and higher frequency of occurrence.
4. Diminutives in both languages are primarily informal phenomenon which seems to have the greatest frequency in daily oral communication.
5. The conclusion is drawn from the differences observed is that they reveal different underlying cultural intimacy and informality in Kurdish.
6. It is worth pointing out that the production of diminutives as a derivational process occurs extensively in Kurdish.
7. In English, morphological features of diminutives may be expressed by 'adjectives' like small, little, tiny and, some diminutive suffixes can also convey smallness in size; moreover, they often express a certain degree of intimacy, endearment, and affection, though Kurdish does not refer to such uses of adjectives as far as we have knowledge.
8. Diminutives in both languages mainly serve to establish or reaffirm a solidary framework for the interaction.
9. Diminutives in both languages reveal different underlying cultural norms and values: a preference for distance and formality in English, versus a tendency for intimacy and informality in Kurdish.



10. The Germanic language of English has been considered ‘diminutive-poor’, while Kurdish is the opposite.
11. Both English and Kurdish almost use the same morphological processes.
12. The diminutive is a morphological category that allows the speaker to express positive feelings such as: affection, endearment, or negative feelings like contempt, disrespect, irony, or even mockery.
13. It is said that the English language has less diminutives, or they are used less than in Kurdish.

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پوخته

ئهم توي ژينه وه ههولدا ئه كه بۆ شیکردنه وه و خویندنی شیوه کانی بچووکردنه وه له زمانه کانی ئینگلیزی و کوردیدا که په یوه سته به شیوه و کرداری ووشه له کهل به شه کانی ئاخوتن وه له هه مان کاتدا هه ندیک رۆشنایی ده خاته سه مه به ستی جیایی ئهم شیوانه له هه ردوو زماندا وه ئهم لیکولینه وه جهخت ده کات که هه ردوو زمان لیکده چن له به شه کانی ئاخوتن و مه به ست وه جیاوازن به شیوه یه کی فراوان له کرداری په یوه نیدار به ووشه وه زمانه ئینگلیزی پاشگره کان به بنچینه داده ئیت له ده ربړینی شیوه کانی بچووکردنه وه وه له هه مان کاتدا هه ندیک ئاولناو به کار دینیت بۆ هه مان مه به ست به لام زمانه کوردی پشگر و پاشگر به شیوه یه کی فروانتر به کار دینیت له کهل ناوی مروف، ناوی گشتی وه هه ندیک ئاولنا و. وه له راستی دا ، شیوه کانی بچووکردنه وه له زۆریه ی زمانه کانی جیهان دا هه به به لام به شیوه یه کی جیاواز وه ئهم دیارده کۆمه لایه تییه به زۆر له زمانه ی قسه کردندا به رچاو ده که ویت نه ک زمانه نووسین.

ملخص

یدرس هذا البحث اشكال التصغير في اللغتين الانكليزية والكردية من حيث الشكل والعملية الصرفية واقسام الكلام كما تلقي الدراسة بعض الضوء على المعاني المختلفة لهذه الاشكال في اللغتين. وتؤكد الدراسة بان اللغتين متشابهتين الى حد ما من حيث اقسام الكلام والمعنى ولكنهما مختلفان اختلافا كبيرا من حيث العملية الصرفية. فالانكليزية تعتبر اللواحق اساسا ثم اللواحق في التعبير عن صيغ التصغير اضافة في استعمال بعض الصفات لنفس الهدف. بينما تعتمد اللغة الكردية عند التعبير عن صيغ التصغير على اللواحق والسابق بشكل اوسع. وتلحق هذه اللواحق للاسماء العلم الشخصي والاسماء العامة ثم قليلا من الصات. حقا ان صيغ التصغير عملية صرفية تتواجد في كثير من اللغات العالمية وباشكال مختلفة. وتبرز هذه الظاهرة الاجتماعية في لغة التخاطب اكثر مما في لغة الكتابة.