



MORPHOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES IN THE USE OF THE DIMINUTIVE FORMS IN LITERARY TEXTS (IN THE EXAMPLE OF “IVANHOE” NOVEL BY WALTER SCOTT)

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ABSTRACT

This article discusses morphological differences, peculiarities in the use of the diminutive forms in literary texts. Walter Scott's novel Ivanhoe is one of the historical novel which concerns the life of Sir Wilfred of Ivanhoe, a fictional Saxon knight. In this research paper the use of diminutive forms is analyzed. The use of diminutives in literature is a fairly well-studied topic at the intersection of linguistics, stylistics, and literary studies.

Introduction. In artistic texts, diminutive forms serve as an important means of expressing subjective assessment, emotionality, and stylistic marking. Morphological differences in the use of diminutive forms in literary texts are related to the specific word-formation devices used, how they are combined with different parts of speech, and what shades of meaning they convey. An analysis of Ivanhoe's novel by Walter Scott reveals specific morphological features of the functioning of diminutives in the English language at the beginning of the 19th century.

Literature review. The study of diminutives in literature is associated with the work of researchers such as [Schneider, 2003], [Wolfgang Dressler, Lavinia Merlini Barbaresi, 1994], [Laurie Bauer, 1983] and [Pavol Štekauer, 1998]. Contemporary research [Polak, 2023], Saeed, Tahirov, and others) considers diminutives as a morpho-pragmatic device that performs important stylistic functions in literary texts, including the expression of emotion, evaluativeness, and characterization.

Research methodology. The research materials comprised examples from formal settings, literary texts (“Ivanhoe”), fiction literatures and fragments from scientific articles. The primary research methods include discourse analysis, historical method, sociolinguistic analysis and the classification method.

Main body. It's worth noting the limited morphological means of expressing diminutiveness. Unlike the Karakalpak language, where the system of diminutive suffixes is highly productive, English has only a few word-formation patterns, the most common of which are the suffixes *-let* and *-ling*.

The suffix **-let** primarily conveys the semantics of diminutiveness with poetic elements. Thus, in descriptions of natural landscapes and characters' appearances, forms such as *streamlet*, *brooklet*, *ringle*, and *leaflet* are used, for example: “The **streamlet** glided gently...”, “Her hair fell in soft **ringle**ts...” and “Thou art a false **varlet**”. “A faint **rivulet** crossed the

path"...(rivulet= river+let). In these contexts, the diminutive not only indicates the small size of an object but also serves an aesthetic function, contributing to the creation of a picturesque, detailed image. Thus, the morpheme *-let* demonstrates a close connection with the descriptive and figurative functions of literary text.

The suffix **-ling**, on the other hand, is characterized by a more pronounced evaluative focus. In the example "*A mere **stripling**, unpractised in arms*" this form not only marks the character's age but also carries a connotation of condescension or disdain. When combined with contextual modifiers (for example, "***prating stripling***" in the sentence "*This **prating stripling** shall not beard men of our quality*"), the diminutive intensifies the negative evaluation, contributing to the formation of social-role oppositions (experience vs. inexperience, status vs. subordination).

The suffix **-et** (**-ette**) functions as miniaturization of architecture. For example: *A small **turret** rose above the gate*...(turret= tower+et).

In Ivanhoe's novel, diminutiveness is realized primarily through lexical and analytical means. The frequent expressions "maiden" and "fair maid" serve as emotional and stylistic evaluations, shaping chivalric discourse. Analytical constructions with "little" (e.g., "*every little failing*," "*little is left to us*") express subjective evaluation and irony. Furthermore, the adjectives "fair" and "lovely" act as evaluative diminutives, enhancing the expressiveness and idealization of the characters.

Another way of diminutive formation is analytical diminutives with the help of "little". For example: "*They passed a **little hut** in the forest*..." In this sentence, (little+hut) diminutiveness is expressed analytically, not morphologically, diminutive implies neutral indication of size and lack of a clearly expressed emotional assessment. In the example of, "*A **little band** of outlaws gathered*..." and "*The knight was followed by a **little page***"...this structure conveys quantitative characteristic, creating the effect of limited power, which is important for plot tension and the second sentence functions as indication of age and status.

In Walter Scott's novel Ivanhoe, diminutiveness is realized primarily at the lexical and pragmatic levels. For example, the address "***Silence, maiden***" (*Silence **maiden**; thy tongue outruns thy direction*) and the phrase "***fair maid***" (*To thyself, **fair maid** to thy own charms be ascribed*) demonstrate the use of poeticized forms that serve the function of emotional evaluation and stylization of chivalric speech. Analytical devices such as "***little is left to us***" (***Little is left to us** but the air we breathe...*), ***maiden of beauty*** (Mark yonder ***maid of beauty*** well) express not so much diminutiveness as evaluative meaning, conveying a sense of loss and social injustice. Furthermore, diminutiveness is manifested at the pragmatic level through emotional appeals ("***my father!**—**oh, my father!***"), enhancing the expressiveness of the characters' speech.

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Diminutives can perform both positive and negative emotional roles depending on context. Emotionally evaluative diminutives serve the purpose of reducing formality, expressing tenderness, sympathy, or, conversely, disdain. They soften speech, make it more intimate, help achieve pragmatic goals (consolation, persuasion), and convey the speaker's subjective attitude toward the subject. For example: "**Poor child!** *She knows not her danger*"..., *poor child* is functional equivalent of the diminutive, means expression of sympathy, empathy and emotional involvement of the speaker. "*The **poor girl** trembled with fear*" means emotional assessment. "**Sweet maiden**, *fear nothing*"... This is evaluative construction, conveying endearment, stylization of gallant, chivalrous speech. "*A **tiny chamber** was prepared...*" The above sentence serves as an analytical diminutive.

Discussion. An analysis of diminutive forms in Ivanhoe's novel revealed that diminutiveness in this work is realized primarily at the lexical and pragmatic levels, while morphological means of expressing diminutiveness are extremely limited.

The study revealed that the text is virtually devoid of typical English suffixed diminutives with -ie/-y formants (e.g., daddy, auntie), a fact conditioned by the stylistic features of the work. Walter Scott deliberately avoids colloquial and familiar forms, striving to create an archaic, elevated, and stylized artistic discourse reminiscent of the medieval era.

Conclusion. Thus, it can be concluded that diminutiveness in the novel Ivanhoe is predominantly semantic-pragmatic in nature and is realized through a combination of lexical, evaluative and contextual means, which reflects the specificity of the artistic style of the work and the historical and cultural characteristics of the era depicted..

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