



SOCIOLINGUISTIC FEATURES OF DIMINUTIVES IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK

Mukhtorova Diyorakhon Odilkhon qizi

Master student of CSPU. Uzbekistan, Tashkent, Chirchik. diera2790@gmail.com

Abstract: *This article investigates sociolinguistic features of diminutives in English and Uzbek languages. The study focuses on emotional, pragmatic, and gender-related functions of diminutives in literary discourse and everyday communication. Comparative analysis demonstrates that diminutives reflect cultural values, social hierarchy, politeness, and interpersonal intimacy in both languages.*

Keywords: *diminutives, sociolinguistics, pragmatics, English discourse, Uzbek discourse, gender, literary language.*

INTRODUCTION

Diminutives are important linguistic forms that express smallness, affection, familiarity, politeness, and emotional attitudes. Sociolinguistic studies show that diminutives are closely connected with cultural traditions and communication styles. English language mainly forms diminutives through lexical constructions such as little, tiny, dear, and suffixes like -y or -ie. Uzbek language, however, possesses a rich system of diminutive suffixes including -cha, -gina, -jon, and -voy. Diminutives are actively used in literary discourse, especially in stories, fairy tales, and family communication. They often reveal emotional closeness between speakers and reflect social relations within society.

Methods. This research applies a comparative qualitative method based on discourse analysis. Examples were selected from English and Uzbek literary texts, fairy tales, and conversational speech. In English discourse, examples from Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and Oscar Wilde's fairy tales were examined. For instance, expressions such as "little Alice" and "dear little child" demonstrate affection and emotional closeness. In Uzbek discourse, examples from G'afur G'ulom's *Shum bola* and Uzbek folk tales were analyzed. Expressions such as "bolaginam," "qizalog'im," and "toychoqcha" illustrate the rich emotional and cultural functions of Uzbek diminutives.

Results. The analysis demonstrates that both English and Uzbek languages actively use diminutives in emotional and interpersonal communication. In English discourse, diminutives are often associated with children and female characters. Expressions such as "little girl," "sweetie," and "dearie" emphasize innocence, tenderness, and care. For example, in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* the phrase "poor little Alice" creates sympathy and emotional intimacy. Similarly, Oscar Wilde's fairy tales contain affectionate diminutives that emphasize kindness and vulnerability.



Uzbek diminutives are structurally richer and emotionally stronger. Forms such as “bolajon,” “qizalog‘im,” and “ukaginam” express affection together with respect and sincerity. In Uzbek family discourse, diminutives are widely used toward both children and adults. The findings also reveal gender-specific tendencies. English discourse more frequently associates female characters with affectionate diminutives, while Uzbek discourse uses diminutives more equally for male and female referents within family interaction.

Discussion. The comparative analysis highlights important sociolinguistic distinctions. English diminutives are usually lexical and context-dependent, whereas Uzbek diminutives rely heavily on productive suffixation. Uzbek diminutives therefore carry more emotional nuance and cultural symbolism. Another important distinction concerns gender representation. English literary discourse sometimes portrays women and girls as weak or delicate through diminutive forms. Uzbek discourse, however, generally uses diminutives as markers of emotional warmth, politeness, and respect regardless of gender. The study also demonstrates that diminutives perform pragmatic functions such as softening requests, expressing solidarity, and strengthening interpersonal relationships. Consequently, diminutives serve not only grammatical but also social and cultural purposes.

Conclusion. Diminutives in English and Uzbek languages possess significant sociolinguistic value. Both languages employ diminutives to express affection, intimacy, and emotional closeness. However, Uzbek language demonstrates richer morphological diversity and broader sociocultural usage. The analysis confirms that diminutives reflect cultural traditions, gender representation, and interpersonal communication patterns. Therefore, sociolinguistic investigation of diminutives contributes to a deeper understanding of language, society, and culture.

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