

Diminutives in English and Hadhrami Arabic

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Abstract

This study aims at investigating diminutive forms in both English and Hadhrami Arabic through showing the ways these diminutives are formed morphologically; the parts of speech they incorporate and through shedding lights on the use of these forms and the meanings, they impart in Both English and Hadhrami Arabic. The study shows that whereas diminutives in English are formed analytically (through the addition of an analytic marker preceding the noun) and synthetically (through the addition of a derivational affix), diminutives in Hadhrami Arabic are formed nonconcatinatively through the modification of the vowels of the root in accordance with certain patterns. It also shows that only nouns and in a few cases certain adjectives in English are diminuted. However, it has been found that in HA nouns, adjectives, some verbs, some adverbs of place, demonstrative pronouns and some conjunctions can be diminuted. Regarding the use of these diminutives, the study shows that they are used to connote either pejorative meanings or meanings indicating smallness, affection and endearment in both English and Hadhrami Arabic.

1. Introduction:

Many linguists define diminutives as expressions denoting smallness in comparison with neutral words and usually indicating positive connotation. In fact, defining diminutive expressions is a very complicated issue. Schneider (2003) states that there are three problems associated with diminutive definition. First, diminutives are generally considered as a universal category existing in every language but some languages such as English are said to have no diminutives. Secondly, some linguists state that diminutives denote smallness, whereas other linguists argue that they denote smallness and have affective and evaluative meanings. Thirdly, diminutive are paradoxical as one diminutive can express appreciative and depreciative connotations.

2. Diminutives in English:

Comparing English with Italian, German and Russian in which diminutive formation is highly productive, Jespersen (1968) states that English has few infrequently- used diminutive suffixes. Other linguists express even extremer opinion claiming that English has no diminutives at all. However, as in other languages, diminutives in English are formed analytically (through the addition of an analytic marker preceding the noun) and synthetically (through the addition of a derivational affix).

2.1 Analytic Diminutives in English:

English is an analytic language, which combines inflectional morphemes sparingly. It indicates grammatical relations primarily through word

order and function words (Brinton & Arnovick, 2006). When English forms diminutives, it preferentially forms them analytically. It compensates for diminutive suffixes lexically by adding analytic markers such as *little*, *tiny* or *small* before nouns (Naciscione, 2010). In this way the basic concept of diminution exists in English as in the other languages of the world, even if some linguists such as Wierzbicka (2003) argues that English has no diminutives.

Analytic diminutives are more frequent in English than diminutive suffixes. They can convey various expressive meanings. English uses the analytic markers *little*, *small*, *thin*, *pitty wee*, *diminutive*, *tiny/ slight a bit of*, *by the skin of* and other adjectives in the semantic field SMALL to convey emotion and smallness.

When adjectives such as *poky*, *pretty* or *unfortunate* are put before the analytic markers, they add additional emotional implications to the constructions such as in *the poor little thing* or they may convey a pejorative meaning as in *that miserable little monster* (referring to a young, disobedient child). The base noun has an effect on the emotional meaning and the stylistic effect of the diminutive construction. The level of emotional expressiveness conveyed through the construction is determined by the choice of the analytic diminutive marker. The analytic and synthetic diminutives can co-occur, creating constructions such as *little doggie* or *teensy-weensy mousie* to add further meaning to diminutive constructions.

The two English diminutive markers *little* and *small* differ from each other. While *small* refers

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only to 'smallness', *little* is more 'subjective' and 'flexible'. It expresses more emotional meanings than *small*, for example, in *little dog* and *small dog*, the latter example conveys a physical size rather than conveying a sense of 'dearness' or 'littleness'. *Small* can also convey a pejorative meaning as it is the case when it is referred to *Great Dane* as '*small dog*' (Schneider, 2003). The diminutive meaning can be intensified by using words such as 'very', 'extremely', etc., in connection with the diminutive expressions as in *extremely small*, *very little*, *very tiny*.

2.2 Synthetic Diminutives in English:

The inventory of the English diminutive suffixes is not so clear. There are differences among linguists regarding the reality and number of these suffixes. Wierzbicka (1985) claims that English has only one diminutive suffix (*-ie*) and Quirk, et al (1985) identify only three English diminutive suffixes (*-ette*, *-let* and *-ling*).

Other linguists claim much bigger inventory of diminutive suffixes in English. For example, Charleston (1960) refers to an inventory including 34 diminutive suffixes and Rotzoll (1910) mention 50 English diminutive suffixes. Schneider (2003) defines 14 diminutive suffixes in contemporary English. Schneider (ibid) classifies these suffixes as follows:

- a- Diminutive suffixes which are the most productive diminutive suffixes in English today (*-ie*, *-ette*, and *-let*).
- b- Originally Germanic suffixes (*-kin* and *-ling*)
- c- Originally Irish suffix (*-een*).

Kitchen / *kitchenette*, Piano / *pianette*, Balcony / *balconette*
Snack / *snackette*, Sardine / *sardinette*

3.-let

According to Schneider (ibid) this suffix is used for diminutivisation of object nouns to form diminutives represent entities which are smaller than prototypical members of a particular category (e.g. *droplet*). It is also used for diminutivisation of animal nouns adding the

book / *booklet*, leaf / *leaflet*, play / *playlet*, ring / *ringlet*, frog / *froglet*
owl / *owlet*, front / *frontlet*

4. – ling / -ing

This suffix is often replaced by other diminutive suffixes in contemporary English as it is now considered old-fashioned and comical. It is attached to nouns referring to humans, animals, and plants (Valerie, 2001). The diminutives referring to animals and plants mean "young one" of the category denoted by the base word" (e.g. *catling*, *seedling*). The diminutives referring

d- Suffixes "referred to as 'familiarity markers", they are expressive, affective or evaluative, as they all denote an attitude but not smallness (*-s*, *-er*, *-o*, *-a*, and *-le*).

e-Suffixes rarely mentioned in the literature (*-poo*, *-pop*, and *-peg*).

These suffixes will be described briefly below"

1.-ie

This suffix occurs in two other forms *-ey* and *-y*. It is often used with fairy- tales characters or parent-child interaction. It is sometimes added to adjectives implying affection, intimacy and endearment (Zandvoort: 1972). Quirk & Greenbaum (1973) state that it is largely restricted to familiar contexts.

aunt / *auntie*, *Charles* / *Charlie*, *Charly*, *pig* / *piggy*, *Mom* / *momy*, *Gran* / *granny*, *Sweet* / *sweetie*, *John*: *Johnny*, *Ann*: *Annie*, *Robert*: *Bobbie Catherine*: *Kitty*

2.-ette

This diminutive productive suffix has been borrowed from French (Zandvoort, 1972; Stageberg, 1971). It is used for diminutivization of object nouns, which refer to architecture, interior design, furnishings, and furniture (e.g. *balconette*, *kitchenette*) indicating that the feature is small (Valerie, 2001). Furthermore, it is used with nouns referring to genre names (e.g. *novellette*, *letterette*) denoting 'a short specimen of the respective category' or 'a specimen not meeting the qualitative criteria of the respective genre (Schneider, 2003).

component [+young], therefore, it produces diminutives referring to non-adult members of a particular species (e.g. *froglet*). When it is used with personal nouns referring to an adult person (e.g. *kinglet*, *wifelet*, *starlet*), it implies negative depreciative meaning of contempt.

to adult humans gain negative connotations of being 'petty, unimportant' (e.g. *princeling*) (Schneider, 2003).

duck / *duckling*, wolf / *wolfing*, seed / *seedling*, fledge / *fledging*

5.-kin

This suffix originates in Duch. It denotes parent-child interaction or adult communication. Valerie (2001) states that this suffix carries the meaning

of "small" and "charming" (*babykin*). It can also be used in ironic contexts for diminutivisation of first names (Schneider, 2003).

Lamb / lambkin , Jen / Jenkins , Katy / katiekin

6.-een

This suffix originates in the Irish language. It is not commonly used in English except when the English speaker want to speak with a special Irish flavour.

girl / *girleen* (English :girlie) , house / *houseen* (English: housey) , pet / *peteen* (English: petey).

English has also five more diminutive suffixes – s, -er, -o and -le. However, these suffixes are arguably not diminutive in the narrow sense of the word. They are referred to as expressive, effective or evaluative suffixes because they express attitudes and they do not denote smallness (ibid).

7. -s

This diminutive suffix can be attached directly to the base noun (e.g. *Debs, Moms*) which retains singular reference. Schneider (ibid) uses the term ‘nursery -s’ since such formations occur mostly in caretaker speech (e.g. *milkie*). Diminutives of this type refer to persons and are used as nicknames or terms of endearment, as this suffix can be added to first names (*Lyds*), kinship terms (*Moms*), animal names used metaphorically (*ducks*), and adjectives denoting a property (*fats*).

8.-er

It adds an affective component to the base words (e.g. *football – footer*). It is associated with the meaning ‘rough and tough’ and is used mostly by males (ibid).

9. -o

This suffix is often used to derive forms competing with derivations from the same base words in which the suffix *-ie* is used” (e.g. *kiddo* vs. *kiddie*). All of these forms refer to persons, but diminutives with *-ie* convey a positive attitude, whereas diminutives with *-o* denote a negative one. It can be used to derive diminutives from male names (e.g. *Stevio*) (ibid).

10 -a

It is attached to “short names in which the first syllable is retained as an open syllable closed by an /z/” (e.g. *Sharon – Shaz – Shazza*). It can be used to derive diminutives either from male or female names (e.g. *Teresa* or *Terence – Tezza*) (ibid).

11 -le

It has survived only in regional varieties to form terms of address from male first names (short names or diminutives with other suffixes), e.g.

Robert – Bob – Bobbles.

English has certain diminutive suffixes that can be found only in literary texts such as : *-poo*, *-pop*, and *-peg*. According to Schneider (ibid) these diminutive share three formal features. First, they have the same voiceless plosive sounds in the onset, second, they are preceded by /i/ and third, they are almost followed by {s}.

12-poo

Diminutives of this type are mostly first names used as terms of endearment or nicknames (*Katiepoo*).

13.-pop

Diminutives of this type are “derived from first names and used as terms of address in casual conversation between persons with a close relationship” (*Rosiepops*).

14. -peg

Diminutives of this type are considered to be “nursery words” (*Daddypegs*), but they can be used pejoratively or ironically in other context

3. Diminutivization in Classical Arabic and Arabic Dialects:

According to Fayez (1991), who reviews the famous Arabic linguist *Sibawaih*'s analysis of Arabic diminutives, diminutivization is a highly productive process in classical Arabic. It indicates smallness in size (*kitab* “book” *kuttayyib* “a small book”) or in quantity (*waraqat* “papers” > *wurrayqqaat* “a few papers”). Diminutive forms in classical Arabic can also be used to express shortness of distance (*fawq* “over” > *fuwayq* “a little bit over”) or of time (*qabl* “before” > *qubayl* “shortly before”). Diminutives are also used for expressing connotative meanings, such as endearment (*bint* “girl” > *bunayyah* “dear daughter”), mercy or sympathy (*miskin* “poor” > *musaykin*, “contempt,”; *sayif* “sword” > *suyayf* “not much of a sword”), and even enhancement (*malik* “king” > *mulayk* “a great king”).

Some researchers investigated diminutivisation in Arabic dialects such as Johnstone (1973) who described the patterns according to which diminutives are derived in Modern South Arabian languages spoken in south of Oman, Mahrah and Soqatra Island. Nakshbandi (1996) compared the uses and structures of diminutives in Classical Arabic with those of Urban Hijazi Arabic. He found out that diminutives are rarely used in Urban Hijazi Arabic and are used for a limited set of connotative meanings. He attributed the rarity of diminutives in this dialect to the possibility of expressing diminution

through other structures, such as adjectives and periphrastic forms. Watson (2006) argued that in San'ani (the dialect of San'a), and in some other Arabic dialects, there is a class of verbs that have as part of either their denotations or connotations a diminutive sense. Esherteh (2017) explored the pragmatic functions of diminutives used in Palestinian Arabic. He found out that diminutives are used both as a positive politeness strategy, to show solidarity, affection and endearment and to establish a friendly context for the interaction, and as a negative politeness strategy aimed at minimizing imposition and softening negative statements.

4. The Morphology of Diminutives in Hadhrami Arabic:

Word formation in Arabic and all Semitic languages involves interdigitation of a

consonantal root with a vocalic pattern (Watson, 2006). As in Standard Arabic, the word formation of diminutives in Hadhrami Arabic (henceforth HA) takes place internally, i.e. infixing and modification of the root rather than stringing together morphemes (Katamba, 1993). This process is called nonconcatinative morphology or root-and-pattern morphology. The root is a set of consonants arranged in a specific sequence; it identifies the general realm of the word's meaning. The pattern is a template of characters surrounding the slots of the root.

Nouns, adjectives, certain verbs, adverbs, pronouns and conjunctions can be diminuted in HA. All types of nouns, proper and common, are liable to diminutivisation. The proper noun (particularly masculine names of person) are diminuted according to the pattern fɛijəl.

Table 1: Diminutive first Names in HA

Masculine First Name		Diminutive Form of the First Name	
sɛi:d	سعید	sɛijəd	سعید
ʔmər	عمر	ʔmijər	عمیر
ʔəbd / ʔəbdəla:h	عبد / عبدالله	ʔbijəd	عبيد
rəbi:ʕ	ربيع	rɔbijəʕ	ربيع
sələh	صالح	slijəh	صليح
χəmi:s	خميس	χmijəs	خميس
ʕəwdʔ	عوض	ʕwijədʔ	عويض

The standard Arabic equivalent pattern is (fu:ɛijəl). In the standard Arabic pattern the vowel u: is inserted between the first two consonants since consonant clusters are not allowed. HA allows consonant clusters,

consequently the vowel u: is dropped. Another diminutive pattern used with proper nouns, particularly pet names, is the pattern (fəʕɛu:-li) in which the second consonant of the proper noun is reduplicated and the suffix - i is added.

Table 2: Diminutive First Names (Pet Names) in HA

Masculine First Name		Diminutive Form of the First Name	
səʕi:d	سعید	səʕɛu:di	سعودي
ʔəomər	عمر	ʔəmmu:ri	عموري
ʔəbd / ʔəbdəla:h	عبد / عبدالله	ʔəbbu:di	عبودي
sələh	صالح	səllu:hi	صلوحي

Some proper nouns that denote place in HA are diminuted according to the pattern fɛil as shown in the following table:

Table 3: Diminutive Names of Place in HA

Root of the Place name		Diminutive Form		Gloss
dʒi:b	جيب	dʒweib	جويب	village name, literally means "small pocket"
ħndʒrəh	حجرة	ħdʒeireh	حجيره	village name, literally means "small room"
ʃəher	شحر	ʃhier	شحير	town name, literally means "small coast"
ʔərʔəh	غرفة	ʔreifeh	غريفه	Village name, literally means "small room"

HA common nouns whose roots consist of two consonants are diminuted through adding the diphthong / ei / and reduplicating the last

consonant. The vowel of the root is deleted to form an initial syllabic cluster.

Table 4: Diminutives of HA Common Nouns Consisting of Two consonants

Noun	Gloss	Diminutive Form	Gloss
bør	بر Wheat	breir	برير little amount of wheat
røz	رز Rice	rzeiz	رزيز little amount of rice
møχ	مخ Brain	mχeiχ	مخيخ small brain
χæt'	خط Letter	χt'eit'	خطيط' small letter

Common nouns with trilateral root in HA are diminuted according to the pattern fʕeil. The standard Arabic equivalent pattern is (fu:ʕeil).

Table 5: Diminutive Forms of HA Trilateral Common Nouns

Root	Gloss	Diminutive Form	Gloss
bħr	بحر sea	bħeir	بحير small sea
dʕaris	ضرس tooth	dʕeis	ضريس small tooth
dʒeld	جلد skin	dʒleid	جليد small skin
wələd	ولد boy	wleid	وليد small boy
gəlb	قلب heart	gleib	قليب small heart
sʕəwt	صوت voice	sweit	صويت little sound
kəlb	كلب dog	kleib	كليب small dog
kəbʃ	كبيش he goat	kbeif	كبيش small he sheep
zəgr	زقر boy	zgeir	زقير small boy
gəmər	قمر moon	gmeir	قمير small moon

HA Common nouns with quadrilateral roots are diminuted according to the pattern fʕeiʕel whose standard Arabic equivalent is fu:ʕiʕel.

Table 6: Diminutive forms of HA Quadrilateral Common Nouns

Root	Gloss	Diminutive Form	Gloss
bøndøg	بنديق rifle	bneideg	بنيديق small rifle
børgøʕ	برقع veil	breigeʕ	بريقع small veil
ħørməh	حرمه woman	ħreimeh	حريمه small woman
løgməh	لقمه mouthful	lgeimeh	لقيمه small mouthful
msmə:r	مسمار nail	mseima:r	مسيمار small nail

It is worth mentioning that the singular diminutive noun forms are default inflected with the plural suffix –æt regardless of whether the singular non-diminutive form is inflected for plurality with the default marker –æt regularly or with the irregularly inflected singular form (broken plural). In other words, the noun *kitæb* 'a book' for example is broken plural inflected as *kətøb* 'books' and the noun *mata:r*, 'an airport' is sound feminine inflected as *mataræt* 'airports'

while their diminutive forms –*koteijəb* and *motijer*- are both default inflected as *kotajbæt* and *mətajræt* respectively. This fact is also found in Standard Arabic (Alshboul, et al, 2013).

As in Standard Arabic, adjectives in HA have the same forms of nouns, therefore they are diminuted according to the same pattern fʕijəl used for diminuting nouns particularly first names.

Table 7: Diminutive Adjectives in HA

Root	Gloss	Diminutive Form	Gloss
s'əbi:r	صغير	s'əijər	صغِير
rəki:k	رقيق	rkijək	رقيك
rəhi:m	رحيم	rhi:jəm	رحيم
rəxi:s	رخيص	rəxi:jəs	رخيص
gəli:l	قليل	gəlijəl	قليل

Demonstrative pronouns in HA are also diminuted as shown in the following table:

Table 8: Diminutive Demonstrative Pronouns in HA

Root	Gloss	Diminutive Form
ðə	ذا	ðijə
ðvlə	ذولا	ðvlijə
ða:k	ذاك	ðija:k
ðvla:k	ذولاك	ðvlijə:k

The HA adverbs of place *hnə* "here" and *hna:k* "there" are also diminuted into *hni:jə* and *hni:ja:k* respectively. Some HA subordinate conjunctions of time such as *gəbel* "before" and *bəfəd* "after" are also diminuted respectively into *gəbeil* "before a very short time" and *bəfəd* "immediately after". Finally, certain verbs in HA are also diminuted through duplication of the whole verb root as in *dəb / dəbdəb* "move" and *məs' / məs'məs* "suck".

5. The Use of Diminutives in HA:

In addition to denoting positive emotions, diminution or smallness, diminutives in HA can

also express sarcasm, irony, or contempt and negative connotation. The real connotation can be deduced from the context and the situation in which they are used.

5.1 The Use of Diminutive Proper Nouns in HA:

HA diminutive proper nouns derived according to the pattern *fəijəl* (table 1) have mostly a pejorative meaning. They are used as first names or sure names for members of certain social classes in the Hadhrami society. Rodionov (2006:182) describes the Hadhrami stratification saying:

With all local peculiarities, Arab social hierarchy has as its core a stratum of fully-fledged tribesmen with spiritual arbitrators (of the Prophet's offspring and/or hereditary scholars) above and the underprivileged without long genealogies and tribal affiliation below.

While the children of the decedents of the Prophet (*Sadeh*), the tribesmen (*gbail*) and religious scholars (*masheikh*) in the Hadhrami society are named as *səfi:d*, *ʔəsmər ʔəbdələ:h* etc., the children of the underprivileged (*dhaaf*), who have neither long genealogies nor tribal affiliation, are given the same names but in their diminutive forms as *səijəd*, *ʔmijər*, *ʔbijəd* to confirm their low position in the society. Though this phenomenon has faded in the contemporary Hadhrami society due to the spread of education and Islamic awareness, we still find middle-aged and old persons whose names and occasionally surnames are diminutive

proper nouns such as (bin) *səijəd*, (bin) *ʔmijər*, (bin) *ʔwijəd*, etc.

According to Hagg (2016) pet names are diminutives termed as hypocoristics. HA pet names are formed according to the pattern *fəʔu:li* (see table 2). They are mainly used to address and refer to children. These diminutives combine the two elements of small size and affection. Actually, speakers who use such forms express good feelings toward children by showing endearment and sympathy, as well as to highlight the fact that the addressee/referent is a child. In the Hadhrami society, these uses are limited to persons who are closely related to the

children such as their parents, relatives and friends. However, they are used pejoratively in HA, when they are used by persons who are neither relatives nor friends of the children addressed or referred to. In such context they connote that the child referent is indulged and to some extent lacking manly characteristics. These diminutive forms (pet names) will have the same bad connotation when used to address or refer to a person who is no longer a child. Due to this bad connotation, Bedouins and tribal men in the rural areas of Hadhramout never use them when addressing or referring to their children and they even do not allow others to address or refer to them or to their children using these forms. Recently, these diminutive forms (pet names) are gaining ground among the educated communities and inhabitants of the urban areas of Hadhramout. They are used by wives for addressing their husbands and children to show their affection and tenderness.

The diminutive proper nouns of places in HA (see table 3) denote just the small size of these places for example *ŷāher* is the name of a large city in Hadhramout its diminutive form is *ŷhier* which is the name of a nearby small town. Similarly, *ḵərḶāh* is the name of a town in the Valley of Hadhramout while its diminutive form *ḵreifeh* is the name of a small village in the coastal area of Hadhramout.

5.2 The Use of Diminutive Common Nouns and Adjectives in HA:

The diminutive proper nouns (see tables 4,5,6,) and adjectives (see table 7) are used in HA to denote small sizes as in these examples

zəgr 'boy' - *zgeir* 'small child'
kəlb 'dog' - *kleib* 'small dog'
d'əris 'tooth' - *d'reis* 'small teeth'

They are also used as pejorative terms revealing the speaker's underestimation of person or thing these terms refer to.

1- *mə hu: ʃæfer ðələ ʃweiʃer*
 Neg. he poet only DIM. Poet
 'He is not a poet, he is just a small unknown poet.'

Affection and endearment are also expressed through diminutive nouns and adjectives in HA as in this example:

2- *hələ b- wleidi w bniyət-i*
 welcome with- DIM.boy-my and daughter DIM -my
 "Welcome my dear son and daughter."

Hadhrami people use the diminutive nouns and adjectives to refer to their sons and belongings in an attempt to underestimate these belongings in

the eyes of the others so as to protect them from those people's envy, jealousy and evil eyes.

3- *m-ʃi ʔləθ bniyət*
 have-1SG. three Girls. DIM
 'I have only three small daughters'

4- *ʔəʃtəreit dweir-eh*
 Buy-PAS 1SG House DIM-FEM
 'I bought a small house.'

Diminutive forms of nouns in HA may function as pragmatic hedges weakening the illocutionary force of certain utterances such as requests, offers and commands. The diminutive in this case acts as a negative politeness marker minimizing imposition on the hearer (see example 8). This use in HA is extended to indicate the speaker's downplaying of his achievement, characteristics or the help he or she offered so as to show modesty and lack of self-praise (see example 9).

5- *ʃel 1-i ðijə ʃneitəh ʔəllə:h yson-ək*
 take for me this DIM bag DIM Allah protect-you
 'Carry this bag for me, may Allah protect you'.

6- *ʃtit'-eh lgeimeh rəz*
 give.1p.past- him mouthful.DIM rice
 'I gave him little rice'.

It is worth mentioning that the use of diminutive nouns and adjectives is less common among Hadhrami males than among females due to the tribal culture of the Hadhrami society, which regards diminution as a female linguistic feature. This may be the reason, behind the fact that Hadhrami men use diminutives rarely and carefully when they talk with others who are not their relatives or close friends.

5.3 The Use of Diminutive Demonstrative pronouns

Diminutive demonstrative pronouns in HA are used to denote the speaker's affection and endearment (example 7), small size (example 8) and speaker's sympathy (example 9).

7- *wələd-i ðijə*
 boy- POSS. This DIM.
 'This is my dear son'.

8- *mə-mʃi ʔələ ðijə ʔəlʃədi*
 NFG.have except .this, DIM money
 'I have only this small amount of money.'

9- *səʃed ðija:k ʔəlləb*
 help. that DIM begger
 'Help that poor begger'

5.4 The Use of Diminutive Adverbs and conjunctions in HA

The HA diminutive forms of the adverbs of place *hə* "here" / *hniyə* and *hə:k* "there" / *hniyə:k* are used to denote shortness of distance and the

diminutive forms of the HA subordinate conjunctions of time gəbel "before"/ gəbeil and bəʕed "after"/ bəʕeid connote near or immediate present, past and future.

- 10- trəh-əh hniʒə
 put -it here DIM
 'Put it just here (in this near place)'
 11- mətərət gəbeil ʔəlfədʒer
 rain PAS before DIM dawn
 'It rained just before the dawn'

5.5 The Use of Diminutive Verbs in HA

- 12- ʔəlteflel ʔelməri:d məs'məs fi deid ʔəm-əh
 Baby ill suck DIM in breast mother-his
 'The ill baby sucked weakly and continuously his mother's breast'.

In her study of the diminutive verbs in the San'ani Dialect, Watson (ibid) refers to a diminutive verb form with the template (t)CayCaC. Such forms exist in HA too. They connote mental and physical states with pejorative overtones of pretence meaning 'to act as if/pretend to be and used in jocular or otherwise non-serious situations. For example the HA verb krom غرم means "became mad" and its diminutive form tkeirəm تغيرم means "pretended to be mad or behaved as if he had been mad". Similarly, the HA verb mrid' مرض means "became ill" while its diminutive form tmeird' تميرض means "pretended to be ill".

6. Conclusion

Diminutives in English are formed analytically and synthetically. Analytically, they are formed through adding an analytic marker such as *little*, *tiny*, *small*, etc. before the noun. Synthetically, diminutives in English are formed through the addition of a derivational affix to the noun and in a few cases to adjectives. Analytic diminutives, which are more frequent in English than synthetic diminutives, can convey various expressive meanings. They convey emotion and smallness. Contemporary English has three productive diminutive suffixes (*-ie*, *-ette*, and *-let*), two diminutive suffixes of Germanic origin (*-kin*, *-ling*), and an originally Irish diminutive suffix (*-een*). Some of these suffixes denote smallness others indicate affection and endearment. Some of them imply a negative depreciative meaning and contempt. English has also suffixes called

Verbs diminuted in HA usually denote actions performed by children and weak or ill persons such as dəb "move" which is made dəbdəb "move slowly and weakly", məs "suck", məs'məs "suck continuously and weakly". The denotative meaning of such verbs often indicates the lightness or unimportance of the action of the verb (Dressler and Merlini 1994 as cited in Watson, 2006). They also have the denotative meaning of segmentation into a number of smaller actions (Watson, 2006).

familiarity markers which are expressive or evaluative denoting attitudes rather than smallness such as *-s*, *-er*, *-o*, *-a*, and *-le*. Some English diminutive suffixes are found only in literature such as *-poo*, *-pop*, and *-peg*. As far as HA is concerned, noun and adjectives are diminuted, in addition to certain verbs; adverbs of place, conjunction of time and demonstrative pronouns. Diminutives in HA are formed nonconcatenatively according to certain patterns. Diminutive proper nouns in HA have a pejorative meaning. Diminutive common nouns and adjectives are used to denote small size, affection and endearment. They are also used as pragmatic hedges and as a way of avoiding evil's eyes especially when they are used to indicate personal properties. However, they may also connote depreciation and contempt. HA diminutive demonstrative pronouns denote smallness, affection, endearment and sympathy. HA diminutive adverbs of place are used to indicate shortness of distance and the diminutive forms of the HA subordinate conjunctions of time connote near or immediate present, past and future. HA diminutive verbs have a denotative meaning implying lightness or unimportance of the action of the verb. They also have the denotative meaning of segmentation into a number of smaller actions. HA has also diminutive verbal forms that connote mental and physical states with pejorative overtones of pretence meaning.

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التصغير في اللغة الإنجليزية واللهجة الحضرية

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الملخص

يستهدف هذا البحث دراسة ظاهرة التصغير في اللغة الإنجليزية واللهجة العربية الحضرية ، وذلك من خلال دراسة الآلية الصرفية التي يتم بها التصغير وتحديد أجزاء الكلام التي يمكن تصغيرها ومعرفة استخدامات التصغير والمعاني التي يمكن أن يدل عليها. وأظهر البحث أن التصغير في اللغة الإنجليزية يتم بطريقتين: الطريقة الأولى هي أن توضع أمام الكلمة المراد تصغيرها كلمة أخرى توحى بالتصغير مثل كلمة (صغير) أو كلمة (قليل) والطريقة الثانية أن تضاف لاحقة إلى الكلمة المراد تصغيرها. وقد تبين أن الأسماء وقليلاً من الصفات هي التي يمكن تصغيرها في اللغة الإنجليزية في حين أظهر البحث أن التصغير في اللهجة العربية الحضرية يتم بطريقة مختلفة تماماً عن اللغة الإنجليزية، فالتصغير في هذه اللهجة يتم بتغيير صوائت جذر الكلمة وفق أوزان معينة. وعلى خلاف الإنجليزية أظهر البحث أن الأسماء والصفات وبعض الأفعال وضامير الإشارة وبعض الظروف المكانية يمكن تصغيرها في هذه اللهجة. أما فيما يتعلق باستخدامات هذه الكلمات المصغرة في اللغتين فقد لوحظ أنها متعددة كتنقليل حجم المصغر، أو تحقير شأنه ، أو التحبيب والتودد إليه، أو للدلالة على قرب المكان أو الزمان.