

# THE COMPARATIVE CLASSIFICATION OF DIMINUTIVE SUFFIXES IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK

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The affectionate or familiar diminutive is a term used by linguists to describe the practice of shortening words to end with 'ie', less frequently 'o'. The affectionate diminutive is widespread in English and Uzbek. In ordinary talk, diminutive is an [adjective](#) meaning 'very small'.

In English in the study of grammar, the technical [adjective](#) or [noun](#) 'a diminutive' [denotes](#) a word or a [suffix](#) used to characterize something as small, often with other [connotations](#) such as affection.

English forms diminutive [nouns](#) by the addition of [suffixes](#), and one [prefix](#), 'mini-' (usually with a hyphen): otherwise the notion of 'smallness' is communicated by [adjectives](#). For example, 'duckling' is formed from 'duck' + the diminutive suffix '-ling' and means a young (not yet adult) duck, as a 'gosling' is an immature goose; similarly, a piglet is a young pig; and in Scotland, a female child may often be called, as a mark of fondness, "my wee lassie". It is not often realized that the affectionate 'darling' means 'little dear', being formed from 'dear' + '-ling'. [Forenames](#) are commonly shortened, and sometimes lengthened, to make affectionate [pet-names](#), as in Jimmie.

In English there are 9 types of suffixes (-kin, -les, -ling, -sy, -cy, -ie, -y, -ey, -o). But in Uzbek we can see 24 types of suffixes (-loq, -jon, -hon, -oy, -niso, -gina, (-kina, -qina), -cha, -choq, -chak, -chiq, -bibi, -boy, -bek, -toy, -poshsha, -sho, -mirza, -qul, -gul, -bonu, -beka, -bekach, -im (for the first person singular) I maxc and the suffix -si). In English these suffixes can be used with nouns as *son+y* and adjectives *sweet+ie*. But in Uzbek these suffixes can be used with nouns, adjectives, numbers, adverbs and verbs like *bolakay*, *bo'talog'im*, *qizcha*, *qizaloq*, *qo'zichoq*, *kuchukcha*, *aunt+y*, *aunt+ie* and others.

*Sweet bird! I could not wish for thine!*

*Or if it were, in winged guise,*

*A visitant from paradise.*

*Farhod o'z metiniga qarab dedi:*

*– Ey, mening asirim! Mashqqat kunlarimda ko'makchim! Men seni ko'p-ko' koyidim.*

Some common diminutive [suffixes](#) in English are:

The suffixes -kin or -kins (of Dutch origin), in such words as the [motherese](#) babykins, and the nursery lambkin and mannykin (often addressed to a baby boy in Scotland - not to be confused with [mannikin or mannequin](#)).

Other more regular 'adult' words in the vocabulary of English include cannikin ("A small can or drinking vessel", [OED](#)); catkin, the flower of certain trees like the hazel, which by their soft fur resemble a cat, or cat's tail; and napkin, a little 'nape' (obsolete word for 'tablecloth').

In English the suffix -o as *kidd-o*, *buddy-o*, *daddy-o*, in Uzbek and in Russian - *ishka*, -*chik*, -*ka*, for example, *Asalishka*, *asalka*, *Boburchik*, *Akmalchik*, *Azizchik*, *Bahramchik*, *ponchik*).

The suffix -et and its variants -ette (from French), -etto and -etti (Italian), -it (t) a and -ito (Spanish). This [suffix](#) has formed many nouns, for example diskette ('a small [disc/k](#) [for computer memory storage]); spaghetti ('small strings' - *spaghi* in Italian - there can, in Italian, be a double diminutive '*spaghetтини*'); fajita (a small strip of steak - *faja* 'belt, strip, sash' in Spanish); pipette, originally a small flute; cigarette ('a small cigar, seen as inferior because made of cheap tobacco wrapped in paper rather than 'proper' leaves wrapped in leaf'); and señorita (a 'small' or junior, i.e. young, unmarried, woman - Spanish *señora* is equivalent to Mrs) may be among those familiar to students.

Others include clarinet (a diminutive of French *clarine*, a kind of bell - related to [Middle English](#) 'clarion', originally 'a war trumpet'); both [palette and pallet](#); courgette (a small *courge* - French, 'a gourd'); falsetto; kitchenette; and both marionette and puppet.

Words such as suffragette and usherette illustrate how the '-ette' diminutive is often used to belittle women and lay them open to contempt or derision. When this suffix was added to nouns ending in '-l[-]', it became '-et[te]', as in 'bracelet' (French 'little arm') and 'roulette' ('small wheel'), and in English evolved into an independent suffix '-let', as in 'armlet', 'booklet', [eyelet and islet](#), 'leaflet', 'tablet' and the more modern 'applet'. and 'notelet'.

There is also a rarer suffix -ot or -otte used in English mostly for names like Charlotte, Lancelot and [Margot](#), as well as surviving in such foreign names as Diderot and Peugeot, and also a few [common nouns](#) like harlot and culottes and the less common [bibelot](#).

The suffixes -ie or -y, often following a double [consonant](#). This is common in domestic, often nursery words like Mummy, Daddy, dearie, doggy and willy (for penis), and is often applied to [pet-names](#) like [Andie, Dandy and Sandy](#); [Katie/y, Molly and Betty](#); Sammy, [Paddy, Bertie](#) and [Jimmy](#).

Derivatives of the [Latin](#) diminutive suffix -illus ('-illa' in the [feminine](#)); '-illo' and '-ello' in Italian and Spanish; '-elle' in French ('-eau' in the [masculine](#)): armadillo 'small armoured [person]'; 'bacillus' ('a little rod' (Latin *baculus*) after the shape of the type species); [caudillo](#); cigarillo; flotilla (diminutive of Spanish *flota*, 'a fleet'); [guerilla](#); peccadillo ('a little sin' (Spanish *pecado*, Latin *peccatum*); both [pastel and pastille](#); scintilla, vanilla (diminutive of archaic Spanish *vaina* (in Latin, 'sheath')).

Less directly obvious as diminutives, maybe, are bureau (diminutive of *bure* 'coarse woollen cloth' with which writing desks were originally covered); castle (diminutive of Latin *castra* 'fort'); pencil (diminutive of Latin *penis*, 'tail'); and quarrel (diminutive of Latin [verb](#) *queror* 'to complain'); codicil ('a little [addition to a] *codex*, or volume of laws'; a subsequent change); morsel (diminutive formed from French [verb](#) *mordre* 'to bite', 'to chew'); organelle ('a little organ; a functional sub-unit within a cell'); quadrille (a little *cuadro* (Spanish, from Latin *quadrum*), applied variously to a team of four

riders and a square dance for four couples, etc); and [cello](#), shortening of violoncello, diminutive of *violene* (Italian) 'double-bass viol'.

The Italian (and to a lesser extent Spanish) diminutives *-ino*, *-ina* ([feminine](#)), *-ine* and *-ini* are found in Italian words like zucchini (diminutive of *zucca*, 'pumpkin' or 'gourd'); pastini (small pasta); bambino (diminutive of Italian *bambo* 'silly', and thus infant child); maraschino (diminutive of *marasca*, variety of cherry); neutrino ('a small neutron'); tambourine (French, 'little drum') and figurine.

But yet thou art my flesh, my blood, my daughter.

– Voy, cho'zilib qolgan bo'ylaringdan buving o'rgilsin.

...For a Lalland face he feared none,

My gallant braw John Highlandman.

Soddadilim, senda suyib, ishonganding ularga.

The suffix '-ine' is more usually a termination forming [adjectives](#), or [abstract nouns](#), with the general sense of 'of' or 'to do with', etc, and more particularly in geology with the sense of 'sharing the characteristics of' or 'derived from' or 'originating from' a particular rock or mineral. Sometimes '-ine' is merely a feminine ending.

The comparative classification of diminutive suffixes should be more investigated. We hope that our first step on investigating the diminutive suffixes in English and Uzbek will contribute to the development of languages.

### References

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