

Diminutive in Selected Poems of Al-Mutanabbi

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Abstract :

Diminutive is a term used in morphology to refer to an affix with the general meaning of ' little ', used literally or metaphorically ' as the term of endearment ' or it can also be a word or an ending of a word that shows that somebody or something is small.

This paper aims to highlight the ' diminutive ' term, forms and meanings in classical Arabic by deciding the morphological patterns of Arabic diminutive words, their meanings and inflections- as far as the changes of their grammatical classes or parts of speech are concerned-in eighteen selected poems of Al-Mutanabbi. The models of the present paper are Wright (1971),Haywood & Nahmad(1993),and Schneider (2013).

This paper falls into five sections : the first is the introduction of the paper , the second is the definition of the term " diminutive " , the third is devoted to the diminutive in classical standard Arabic , the fourth is the practical analysis of the diminutive in selected poems of Al-Mutanabbi , and the fifth involves the conclusions .

الخلاصة :

يُستعمل مصطلح التصغير في علم الصرف ليشير الى الاضافة التي تحمل المعنى العام " القلة " و تُستعمل حرفيا او مجازيا للتودد و التحبب و كذلك ممكن ان تكون كلمة او نهاية كلمة توضح ان شخص ما او شيء ما صغير. تهدف هذه الدراسة الى تسليط الضوء على مفهوم التصغير و اشكاله و معانيه في اللغة العربية القديمة من خلال اقرار النماذج و الانماط الصرفية للكلمات العربية المصغرة و معانيها و تصاريفها فيما يتعلق بالتغيرات التي تطرأ على اشكالها النحوية (أقسام الكلام) في ثمانية عشر قصيدة مختارة للمتنبى. تعتمد هذه الدراسة كنماذج كل من : رايت (1971) Wright و هيوود و نحمد (1993) Haywood & Nahmad و شنايدر(2013) Schneider. تقع الدراسة الحالية في خمسة اقسام : يمثل القسم الأول مقدمة الدراسة. يُعرّف القسم الثاني مفهوم التصغير. كُرس القسم الثالث لمفهوم التصغير في اللغة العربية القديمة. يعرض القسم الرابع التحليل التطبيقي للتصغير في قصائد مختارة للمتنبى . يشتمل القسم الخامس الى أستنتاجات الدراسة .

1. Introduction :

Diminutive is a morphological term which deals with some words that may be changed to diminutive forms for some purposes such as ' contempt, smallness and endearment ' . As far as the changes of the grammatical classes of some words after affixations are concerned, morphology is divided into 'inflectional' and 'derivational'.The problem of this study starts from the absence of the inflectional/derivational distinction in Arabic morphology. Thus, it is difficult to decide whether Arabic diminutives are derivational or inflectional. The present paper hypothesizes that Arabic diminutives are inflectional because the word takes the same grammatical class (i.e. part of speech) of the root as will be investigated in the selected poems below.This paper is limited to : A- morphological diminutive, not syntactic diminutive (i.e. diminutive which comes as a result of the root plus affixation to show the meaning of smallness, unlike the syntactic one which follows other process to show the meaning of smallness like ' little house' and 'little chat'). B- the morphology and use of the diminutive in classical Arabic. C- the investigations of the previous hypotheses in eighteen quotations of the selected poems of Al-Mutanabbi. By adopting Wright's(1971),Haywood & Nahmad's (1993) and Schneider's (2013) as models , this paper aims to lead the foreign learner/reader to the forms and usages of diminutives in Arabic poetry and to prove these constructions as inflectional, not derivational.

2. The Term 'Diminutive' :

Crystal (2003 : 139) defines diminutive as " a term used in morphology to refer to an affix with the general meaning of ' little ' , used literally or metaphorically ' as the term of endearment ' . ". It can also be defined as " a word or an ending of a word that shows that somebody or something is small. In other words it is a short informal form of a word, especially a name like ' Nick ' is a common diminutive of ' Nickolas ' " (Hornby, 2005 : 426) .Moreover, Trask (1993 : 82) denotes that the term ' diminutive ' in one sense is " a derivational affix which may be added to a word to express a notion of small size, often additionally (or even instead) a notion of warmth or affection". This definition may delude the reader that diminutive is totally derivational; Haspelmath (2002:95) refutes this idea by providing that diminutive suffixes sometimes do not affect the word class and other properties of the words to which they are attached (i.e they may be inflectional).For the sake of the coming analyses, it is necessary here to mention Schneider's viewpoint (2013: 137) that there some prototypical diminutives are nouns derived from nouns by attaching a suffix which function as the diminutive marker . He adds (ibid. : 138) that a noun plus a diminutive affix equals a diminutive noun (N.+ affix dim. = N. dim.(Small N.)) , in this case the suffix does not change the word class of the base, the meaning of the base is merely modified by adding the semantic component SMALL.

3. Diminutive in Classical Standard Arabic :

The diminutive can be formed from any noun and can be translated into Arabic as اسم التصغير (Haywood & Nahmad , 1993 : 341) .Wright (1 , 1971 : 166) translates the diminutive into Arabic as التصغير or الأسم المصغر . Arabic language grammarians tell that this process of word-formation (i.e. diminutive infixation) is specifically related to nouns and it may be to some extent formed from pronouns (i.e. demonstrative or relative) , prepositions and a verb of surprise and wonder (Babati, 1992 : 343) : e.g. (رَجُلٌ 'man' – رُجَيْلٌ / a noun); (ذَا 'this' / ذَا a demonstrative pronoun); (الَّذِي 'that'/الَّذِي a relative pronoun); (قَبْلُ 'before'– قُبَيْلٌ a little before/ preposition)(Wright , ibid.); (مَا أَحْسَنُهُ 'how handsome he is' – مَا أَحْسَنُهُ / verb of wonder)(Haywood & Nahmad, ibid.: 343). The diminutive cannot be formed from nouns which have already the measure of diminutive as جُمَيْلٌ a kind of small bird and كُمَيْتٌ a bay horse (Wright , ibid. : 167). To investigate whether diminutive words are inflectional or derivational, the best two ways can be revealed by highlighting the morphology and the use of these diminutives.

A- The Morphology of Diminutive in Arabic :

Arabic language presents a system of consonantal roots most of which are trilateral, but there are others much smaller in number, which consist of two or more consonants. Therefore, the formation of any diminutive form is wholly governed by whether it is derived from a trilateral root or not .As will be illustrated below, most Arab linguists agree that diminutive forms are formed according to three basic patterns. The first pattern is (fu'ayl)for the trilateral root, as in: 'jabal' (a mountain) which is formed as 'jubayl' (a small mountain). The second pattern is (fu'aylel) for the quadrilateral root as in: 'aqrab' (a scorpion) which becomes "uqayrib' (a small scorpion). As for the third pattern, it is (fu'ay'il) and it is used with quinqueliteral roots as in: "usfur' (a sparrow) whose diminutive form is "usayfeer' (a small sparrow) :

A- Three consonants in the nouns(i.e. trilateral) , the diminutive is (fu'ayl)

(Haywood & Nahmad, 1993 : 341; Wright 1 , 1971 : 166) :

1. بحر [Bahir] 'sea' becomes بحيرة [Buhayra] 'lake' .

2. كلب [Kalb]'dog' becomes كليب [Kulayb] ' little dog'.

3. باب [Bab]'door' becomes بويب [Buwayb] 'small door'.

4. ظل [Dhil]'shadow' becomes ظليل [Dhullayl] 'little shadow'.

-Feminine ending words like : قلعة [Qal'a]'fort' becomes قَلْبِعة [Qulay'a] ' little fort' , and شجرة [Shajaratu]'tree' becomes شُجيرة [Shujayratu]'small tree' .

-Non-feminine ending words like : شمس [Shams]'sun' becomes شُمَيْسة [Shumaysatu] 'little sun' and دار [Dar]'house' becomes دَويرة [Dwayratu] ' little house'.

B- Four consonants in nouns (i.e. quadrilateral) , the diminutive is (fu'aylil) (

Haywood & Nahmad, 1993 : 342) :

5. عقرب [Aqrab]'scorpion' becomes عُقَيْرِب [Auqayrib] 'little scorpion'.

6. مُسَلِم 'Muslim' becomes مُسَلِيم [Musaylim]'little Muslim'.

C- Five consonants (i.e. quinqueliteral) and more in the nouns , the last must be removed to form the diminutive from the first four (Haywood & Nahmad, ibid.; Wright,ibid.:167):

7. عُنْدَلِيْب [Andaleeb]'nightingale' becomes عُنَيْدِل [Aunaydil] 'little nightingale'.

8. سَفْرَجِل [Safarjil]'quince' becomes سُفَيْرِيْج [Sufayrij]'small quince'.

9. اِمْبِرَاطُوْر [Emprator]'Emperor' becomes اَبِيْطَر [Aubaytir] 'little Emperor'. (it is important to remind the reader that the sounds ' alif an waw ' in امبراطور are vowels and the other five are consonants) .

10. If the fifth consonant is ' nun ' (نون) as in زَعْفَرَان [Za'faran]'saffron' becomes زُعَيْرَان [Zu'ayfiran] 'small saffron'.

Instead of the pattern (fu'aylil)(B- above), Wright (1,1971:167) agrees with Babati (1992 : 343) that words of the quadriliteral and quinqueliteral roots take the forms (fu'ay'il) or (fu'ay'eel) .This paper adopts the latter opinion too and neglects the pattern (fu'aylil). The study of the previous roots and their inflections shows that word-formation in Arabic takes place internally, i.e. infixation and modification of the root. Thus, as far as Schneider's pattern (2013 :138) is concerned , the diminutive marker is an Infix (i.e. N. + Infix dim. = N. dim. = Small N.).

B- The Use of Diminutive in Arabic :

In addition to the main purpose of diminutive (i.e. 'Smallness'), Haywood and Nahmad (1993 : 343) mention other purposes and positions of Arabic diminutive as follows

A- In a proper names :

11. حَسَن (Hassan) becomes حُسَيْن (Hussein) .

12. اَبِيْد (Abid) becomes اُبَيْد (Ubaid) .

B- With a special meaning :

15- بَحْر [Bahar]'sea' becomes بُحَيْرَة [Buhayratu]'lake' .

16- كِتَاب [Kitab]'book' becomes كُتَيْب [Kutayib]'booklet or small book'.

17- كَلْب [Kalb]'dog' becomes كَلْبِيْب [Kulayb]'puppy or little dog' .

C- For endearment :

18- اِبْن [Ibn]'son' becomes بُنْي [Bunay] ' dear son' regularly used by a father to his son .

19- اَخ [Akh]'brother' becomes اُخْي [Aukhay] 'dear brother'.

20- اَب [Ab]'father' becomes اَبِي [Aubay] 'dear father'.

D- To express contempt :

21- رَجُل [Rajul]'man' becomes رُجَيْل [Rujayl] 'little man'.

E- For enhancement (للتعظيم) [Ta'dheem] as in Wright (1, 1971 : 166) :

23- دَاهِيَة [Dahiya]'misfortune' becomes دُوَيْهِيَة [Duayhiyatu](a great misfortune).

24- سَنَة [Sanatu]'year' becomes سُنَيْة [Sunayatu]'a terrible year' (ibid.) .

25- خَيْر [Khayyir]'good man' becomes خَيْرِيْب [Khuyayir]'the very best man'.

26- صَدِيْق [Sadeeq]'friend' becomes صُدَيْقِيْق [Sudayiq]'a special friend' .

4. Diminutive in Selected Poems of Al-Mutanabbi :

All the following poems in Arabic are taken from " Diwan Al-Mutanabbi "(1983), the target diminutive words are transliterated to English for the purpose of analysis. The following analyses include the survey of the morphological changes and the meanings of the diminutives. Since Schneider (2013: 139) illuminates that :

"In the most general terms, in-depth studies of each

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diminutive marker have to include three parts, namely to specify the properties of the marker, the properties of the input, i.e. the base form, and the properties of the output, i.e. the diminutive."

the following texts will be subject to the rule [Base(input) + Infix(Diminutive Marker) = Diminutive Noun(Output)], to examine whether there will be some changes in the grammatical classes or not(i.e. derivational or inflectional).

1- " أفي كلِّ يومٍ تحت ضبني شُويعرٌ ضعيفٌ يفاويني قصيرٌ يطاولٌ " (Al-Mutanabbi, 1983 : 377)

" Must Poetasters ever up my flanks crawl
Challenged by weaklings , worthless midgets " (Mumayiz , 1977 : 41)
" Every day under my armpit a little poet
A weakling heartens me, short in stretch " (Wormhoudt, 2002 : 359)

After infixation as a word-formation process, the quadrilateral noun [شاعر - Sha'ir] ' poet ' takes the morphological pattern " fu'ay'il " in Arabic to make the diminutive form [شويعر – Shway'ir] ' poetaster or little poet '. It also shows the function of smallness and contempt. As the two forms of the noun (i.e. root and diminutive forms) have no change in the grammatical classes, diminutive here is inflectional, not derivational.

2- " أذمّ إلى هذا الزمان أهيلُهُ فأعلمهم فدمٌ وأحزمهم وغدٌ " (Al-Mutanabbi, 1983 : 198)

" I denounce little folk in these times
Their wise men fools, their will weakness " (Wormhoudt, 2002 : 191)

As diminutive form in Arabic, the trilateral noun [أهل – Ahil] ' folk ' will be subject to infixation and it follows the morphological pattern " fu'ayl " to be [أهيل – Auheil] ' little folk '. It is used to show the meaning of smallness and contempt. Since there is no change in the grammatical classes, then the diminutive form is inflectional rather than derivational.

3- " أولى اللئام كُوَيْفِيرٍ بمعذرةٍ في كلِّ لومٍ وبعض العذر تَفْنِيدٌ " (Al-Mutanabbi, 1983 : 508)

" Wretched Kafur is the most deserving of the base to be excused
in regard to every baseness – and sometimes excusing is a reproach- " (Arberry, 1967: 144)

" Little Kafur first in vile excuses
In every fault excuses are to blame " (Wormhoudt, 2002 : 463)

The word [كافر – Kafur] is a quinqueliteral proper noun in Arabic. As a result of infixation, [كويفير – Kuwaifir] is the diminutive form according to the morphological pattern " fu'ay'eel " . This form is used to express contempt . Both the root and diminutive forms are nouns, this shows no change in the root when it is formed to diminutive (i.e. inflectional).

4- " وَ نام الخُوَيْدِمُ عن ليلنا وقد نام قبْلُ عمي لا كرى " (Al-Mutanabbi, 1983 : 511)

" The lackey slept oblivious of our night ; and he had before that slept in blindness , not slumber " (Arberry , 1967 : 120)
" The little slave slept in our night
Before he slept blindly, no slumber" (Wormhoudt, 2002 : 471)

Morphologically, the word [خادم – Khadim] 'lackey or little slave' is a quadrilateral noun. The diminutive form is [خويدم – Khwaydim] , its morphological pattern in Arabic is " fu'ay'il ". To show contempt meaning, the root and the diminutive forms of this noun seem inflectional rather than derivational.

5- " أخذت بمدحه فرأيتُ لهواً مقالِي للأحْمِيقِ يا حلِيمُ " (Al-Mutanabbi, 1983 : 377)

" I hated to praise him, I saw my words
Delighted fools O as well as the wise !" (Wormhoudt, 2002 : 459)

In this text the quadrilateral noun [أحق – Ahmaq] ' fool ' will be influenced by the infix according to the morphological pattern " fu'ay'il ", then the diminutive form is [أحيق – Auhaymiq] ' little fool ' . This form is used to show the meaning of contempt. The root and diminutive forms have no change in grammatical classes, morphologically they are inflected.

" فتى ألف جزء رأيه في زمانه أقل جزئياً بعضه الرأي أجمع " -6
(Al-Mutanabbi, 1983 : 31)

" A man with a thousand ideas for his age
The least bit of any is mind for all the others" (Wormhoudt, 2002 : 35)

The word [جزء – Juz'a] ' part ', a three consonant noun (i.e. trilateral). The diminutive form [جزيء – little part] results from the infixation of the root according to the morphological pattern " fu'ayl " . It reveals the meanings of smallness and contempt. As there is no change in the grammatical classes, the diminutive form is inflected of the root.

" أذا الغصن أم ذا الدّعص أم أنت فتنةٌ ودياً الذي قبلته البرق أم تغر " -7
(Al-Mutanabbi, 1983 : 62)

" A bough on a sand hill, or a maiden, you
And what I kissed, lightning or those teeth?" (Wormhoudt, 2002 : 67)

The second line has a demonstrative pronoun [ذا – Ha(tha)] " this ". This root morphologically has three consonants and its form syntactically is a pronoun. Resulting of the morphological pattern " fu'ayl ", the diminutive form of this pronoun is [ذياً - Theyya] (Wright 1 , 1971 : 167). It also refers to the smallness of a woman's lips and can be used for endearment as well. Both root and diminutive forms are pronouns , one is inflected of another.

" ظلت بين أصحابي أكفكفه وظلّ يسفح بين الغدر والعذر " -8
(Al-Mutanabbi, 1983 : 336)

" I tried to stop it among my dear friends
But it flowed between excuse and censure " (Wormhoudt, 2002 : 319)

By the same manner, the quinqueliteral noun [أصحاب –Asshab] ' friends' is plural in Arabic. As far as the morphological pattern " fu'ay'il" and infixation of this root are concerned, the diminutive form is [أصحاب – Aussayhab] ' little or dear friends ' . It gives the meanings of little number and endearment. The two forms are inflectional.

" أرادت كلاب أن تفوز بدولة لمن تركت رعي الشّويّهات والإبل " -9
(Al-Mutanabbi, 1983 : 520)

" Kilab intended to seize a government
To whom did they leave lambs and colts?" (Wormhoudt, 2002 : 491)

The word [شياه – Shiah] ' lambs' is a quadrilateral noun. Infixation and the morphological pattern " fu'ay'il " alter this root to [شويّهات – Shuwayhat] ' little lambs'. This diminutive form is used for little number and contempt. The diminutive form is inflected, not derived of the root.

" إذا عدلوا فيها أحببت بآية حبيبتى قلبي فؤادي هيا جمل " -10
(Al-Mutanabbi, 1983 : 44)

" If they blame me for her, I reply sighing
My little darling heart, my soul, O my beauty! " (Wormhoudt, 2002 : 47)

The quinqueliteral root [حبيبة – Habibata] ' darling ' can be used as diminutive . The diminutive form [حبيبة – Hubaybata] ' little darling ' is resulted of the infixation and the morphological pattern " fu'ay'il " . This form highlights the meaning of endearment. Without changing the grammatical classes, the diminutive form is inflected of the root.

" أيا ما أحسبها مقلّة ولولا الملاحه لم أعجب " -11

(Al-Mutanabbi, 1983 : 223)

" O how should I prettify her eye
If only beauty were not surprising " (Wormhoudt, 2002 : 217)

Regardless of Haywood & Nahmad's saying (1993 : 343) that this expression [ما أحسن – Ma Ahssan] ' how beautiful' is " a rare usage with the verb of wonder", Arabic native speakers and specialists regard [أحسن – Ahssan] as a superlative adjective. In addition, it has a quadriliteral root. The diminutive form is [أحيسن – Auhayssin] as far as infixation process and the morphological pattern " fu'ay'il " are concerned. There are no changes in the grammatical classes of the root and the diminutive forms, thus it is inflectional diminutive form.

12- " وأفجع من فقدنا من وجدنا فَبَيْلُ الْفَقْدِ مَفْقُودَ الْمَثَالِ "

(Al-Mutanabbi, 1983 : 268)

" The most grievous loss we suffer is when we lose one whom,
before losing, we find without any like." (Arberry, 1967: 60)

" Our most painful losses come before

We know a loss whose pattern we lost " (Wormhoudt, 2002 : 259)

In a lamentation to Saif al-Dawla's mother , Al-Mutanabbi used the preposition or adverb [فَبَيْلُ – qubbayl] in Arabic to show the nearer time. The root [قَبِل – qablu] ' before' is a trilateral one that can be subject to infixation and the pattern " fu'ayl" for the diminutive purpose. The non-change of the grammatical classes shows that the diminutive form is inflected, not derived of the root.

13- " أَحَادٌ أَمْ سِدَاسٌ فِي أَحَادٍ لَيْبَتُنَا الْمَنُوطَةُ بِالْتَنَاءِ "

(Al-Mutanabbi, 1983 : 85)

" Is it single or is it six of them in one

Our little night suspended till the trump?" (Wormhoudt, 2002 : 87)

The Arabic noun [لَيْلَة – Layla] 'night' is quadriliteral. Infixation causes to double the second letter as [لَيْلَة – Luyayla], this diminutive noun is formed like the morphological pattern " fu'ay'il ". Smallness and enhancement of that night call the poet to use the diminutive form. The diminutive is clearly inflected of the root.

14- " وَكُلُّ أَنَاسٍ سَوْفَ تَدْخُلُ بَيْنَهُمْ دُوَيْهِيَّةٌ تَصْفِرُ مِنْهَا الْأَنَامِلُ "

The researcher could not find any translation for these lines into English. Likewise, the noun [دَاهِيَة – Dahia] 'misfortune' is quinqueliteral in Arabic. The diminutive form [دُوَيْهِيَة – Duwayhiyah] 'great misfortune' results of the infixation and the pattern " fu'ay'il ", it is used for enhancement . The root and the diminutive forms are nouns, thus the last is inflected of the earlier.

15- " وَفَارَقْتُ مِصْرًا وَالْأَسْوَدُ عَيْنُهُ حَذَارَ مَسِيرِي تَسْتَهْلُ بِأَدْمَعٍ "

The translation of these lines into English could not be found in the available translation of the whole collection " The Diwan of Al-Mutanabbi" which is translated by Wormhoudt (2002).The root [أَسْوَد – Asswad] ' ebony ' is quadriliteral. The diminutive [أَسْوَدُ – Aussaywid] ' little ebony ' is used here to express contempt. Infixation formulates this diminutive as the morphological pattern " fu'ay'il " in Arabic which is inflected of the root.

16- " أَتَرَى الْقِيَادَةَ فِي سَوَاكُ تَكْسِبًا يَا بَنَ الْأَعْيَرِ وَهِيَ فِيكَ تَكْرُمٌ "

(Al-Mutanabbi, 1983 : 572)

" Don't you see guidance earned still

O son of little one-eye, your only desire " (Wormhoudt, 2002 : 227)

The root here [أَعْوَر – A'war] ' one-eyed ' is quadriliteral. After mutation or infixation, the diminutive form [أَعْيَرُ – Au'ayir] ' little one-eyed ' has to follow the morphological pattern " fu'ay'il " in Arabic. Without changing the grammatical classes, the diminutive form is inflected of the root to show contempt.

17- " قَطَعْتَ دُبْيَاكَ الْخُمَارَ بِسِكْرَةٍ وَأَدْرَتِ مِنْ خَمْرِ الْفِرَاقِ كَوْسًا "

(Al-Mutanabbi, 1983 : 58)

" You cut off a bit drunkenness by pain

To pass around the wine of parting's goblet" (Wormhoudt, 2002: 63)

In the first line of this quotation, the demonstrative pronoun [هـا (tha) – Ha] ' this' is the Trilateral root from which the diminutive [ثَيَا – Theyya] is inflected. It is formulated according the Arabic morphological pattern " fu'ayl " with infixation to express endearment.

" أهذا اللذّي بنت وردان بنته هما الطالبان الرزق من شرّ مطلب " -18

(Wormhoudt, 2002 : 466)

" O tiny pair, lady Wardan and daughter

Earning their living in the worst of trade " (Wormhoudt, 2002 : 467)

In the same manner , the relative pronoun [الذي – Al-lathi] ' who ' is quinqueliteral. As far as the grammatical forms are concerned, the inflected form [اللذّي – Al-latheyya] is a relative pronoun like the root, but diminutive. Besides, the diminutive here reveals the functions of smallness and contempt. It is necessary here to refer that there are many other words in the Diwan of al-Mutanabbi which originally include the meaning of smallness , these words are regarded as non-diminutive as Wright (1,1971 : 167) classifies . These words are : [سُهيل - Suhhayl; بُسَيْطَة – Bussayta; اللَّجِين – Al-lujayn; كُمَيْت – Kumayt; قُشَيْر – Qushayr; سُكَيْنَة – Suqayna ; سُليمان - Sulayman) .

5. Conclusions :

The investigation of the selected poems of Al-Mutanabbi shows that : diminutive forms in Arabic are mostly nouns that are inflected, not derived from other nouns because there are no changes in the roots or the grammatical classes to which they are attached . As an internal word-formation process, Arabic diminutives are subject to infixation of the root (i.e. N. + Infix dim. = N. dim. = Small N.) as far as Schneider's rule is concerned. Diminutive in classical Arabic follows some inflections as (fu'ayl and fu'ay'il or fu'ay'eel) when the words are made of three, four or five consonants respectively. When the words are composed of five consonants or more , the last consonant must be removed to form the diminutive from the first four. With simple counting, this paper highlights that diminutives are used to express : contempt (10 times), endearment (5 times), enhancement (twice), and in proper nouns and for special meaning (once). Contempt is the main purpose of diminutive in Arabic.

- The Summary of Diminutives in the Selected Poems

Text No.	Root	Number of Consonants	Diminutive	Morpholog-ical Pattern	Formation Process	Function
	شاعر [Sha'ir] - Poet (N.)	Quadrilateral	شويعر [Shway'ir] (N.dim.)	fu'ay'il	Infixation	Contempt
	أهل [Ahil]- Family(N.)	Trilateral	أهيل [Auheil] (N.dim.)	fu'ayl	Infixation	Smallness / Contempt
	كافور Kafur(N.)	Quinquelitera l	كوايفير [Kwaifir] (N.dim.)	fu'ay'eel	Infixation	Proper/Contemp t
	خادم [Khadim]- Lackey(N.)	Quadrilateral	خويدم [Khwaydi m] (N.dim.)	fu'ay'il	Infixation	Contempt
	احمق [Ahmaq]- Fool(N.)	Quadrilateral	احميقي [Auhaymiq] (N.dim.)	fu'ay'il	Infixation	Contempt
	جزء [Juz'a]- Part(N.)	Trilateral	جزيء [Juzzy'a] (N.dim.)	fu'ayl	Infixation	Smallness/ Contempt

Diminutive in Selected Poems of Al-Mutanabbi

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هذا or ذَا [Ha(tha)]- This(Pron.)	Triliteral	ذِيَا [Theyyah] (Pron.dim.)	fu'ayl	Infixation	Endearment
اصحاب [Asshab]- Friends(N.)	Quinquelitera l	اصحاب [Ausayhab] (N.dim.)	fu'ay'il	Infixation	Little Number/ Endearment
شياه [Shiah]- Lambs(N.)	Quadriliteral	شويها [Shuwayha t] (N.dim.)	fu'ay'il	Infixation	Contempt / Little Number
حبيبة [Habibat]- Lover(N.)	Quinquelitera l	حبيبة [Hubaybat a](N.dim.)	fu'ay'il	Infixation	Endearment
احسن [Ahsan]- Beautiful	Quadriliteral	احيسن [Auhayssin]	fu'ay'il	Infixation	Endearment
قبل [qablu]- Before(Prep .)	Triliteral	قبيل [qubbayl] (prep.dim.)	fu'ayl	Infixation	Special Meaning/ Nearer Time
ليلة [Layla]- Night(N.)	Quadriliteral	لييلة [Luyayla] (N.dim.)	fu'ay'il	Infixation	Enhancement
داهية [Dahia]- Misfortune(N.)	Quinquelitera l	دويهي [Dwayhiya h] (N.dim.)	fu'ay'il	Infixation	Feminine/ Enhancement
اسود [Asswad]- Black(N.)	Quadriliteral	اسويد [Aussaywid] (N.dim.)	fu'ay'il	Infixation	Contempt
اعور [A'war]- One- eyed(N.)	Quadriliteral	اعير [Au'ayir](N .dim.)	fu'ay'il	Infixation	Contempt
هذا or ذَا [Ha(tha)] This(Pron.)	Triliteral	ذِيَا [Theyya] (Pron.dim)	fu'ayl	Infixation	Endearment
الذي [Allathi]- That(Pron.)	Quinquelitera l	الذي [Allatheyya] (Pron.dim.)	fu'ay'il	Infixation	Smallness/ Contempt

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