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## The Diminutive in Naim Frashëri's Poetry and Ismail Kadare's Works

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### Abstract

The works of Naim Frashëri and Ismail Kadare have had a great impact in the Albanian literature. We will not, however, discuss their literary value, but rather we will dwell on the linguistic impact and the gradual enrichment of the language by these authors. In this context, it is sometimes impossible to separate literature from language.

This paper aims at explaining some of the aspects of the usage of the diminutive by the above-mentioned writers in their works. Therefore, in Frashëri's poetry, we find it to be used for the purpose of derision or endearment of something or somebody, whereas in Kadare's works we see it used only for derision and contempt of a thing or a person.

The paper is divided into three parts, the first dealing with the usage of the diminutive by the authors, the second consists of examples of diminutive words, and the last section compares the words used by the former and latter of the authors in question.

**Key words:** *Naim Frashëri, Ismail Kadare, word-formation, suffixes, diminutive*

**Abstrakt**

Vepra e këtyre dy autorëve ka ndikim të jashtëzakonshëm në letërsinë shqipe. Natyrisht, punimi nuk do të flasë për vlerën letrare të tyre. Këtu do të flitet për prurjen gjuhësore dhe pasurimin shkallë-shkallë që i bëjnë gjuhës shkrimtarët. Në këtë nyjë ndonjëherë është pothuajse e pamundur të bëhet ndarja e letërsisë nga gjuha.

Punimi ynë mëton të hedhë pak dritë në aspektin e përdorimit të diminutivit në gjuhën e këtyre dy shkrimtarëve të zgjedhur. Kështu, në poezinë e Naimit e gjejmë të përdorur për qëllime të zvogëlimit apo përkëdheljes së diçkaje apo të dikujt, kurse te Kadareja, në shumicën e rasteve diminutivin e gjejmë të përdorur për qëllime përqeshjeje apo përbuzjeje të diçkaje apo të dikujt. Punimi do të ndahet në tri pjesë: në pjesën e parë do të shihet si e përdorin diminutivin shkrimtarët, në pjesën e dytë do të paraqiten fjalët diminutive dhe në fund do të krahasohen fjalët e njërit me fjalët e tjetrit.

**Fjalë çelës:** *Naimi, Kadare, fjalëformimi prapashitesat, diminutivi*

**Абстракт**

Делото на овие двајца автори има големо влијание во албанската книжевност. Се разбира, тука нема да се зборува за нивната книжевна вредност. Тука ќе се разгледа јазичниот придонес и постепеното збогатување кое писателите му го прават на јазикот. Во овој јазол понекогаш е речиси невозможно да се одвои книжевноста од јазикот.

Овој труд се обидува да фрли светлина врз аспектот на употребата на деминутивот во јазикот на двајцата одбрани писатели. Така, во поезијата на Наим се наоѓа употребен за цел на намалување или на галење на нешто или некого, додека кај Кадаре, во повеќето случаи деминутивот се наоѓа употребен за исмејување на нешто или некого. Трудот ќе се подели во три дела: во првиот дел ќе се разгледа како писателите го употребуваат деминутивот, во вториот дел ќе се претстават зборовите со деминутив и на крај меѓусебно ќе се споредат зборовите на двајцата писатели.

**Клучни зборови:** *Наим Фрашери, Исмаил Кадаре, зборообразување, суфикси, демунитив.*

## Introduction

Naim Frashëri and Ismail Kadare's works have become a study matter not only for literary critics and literature historians, but also for linguists of all eras.

The rise of the language of *Dangëllia* at the level of favors was Frashëri's open battle against the previous writers for not mixing the Albanian language with other languages:

„ *Shqip të flasim përherë*

*Fjesht` e e të papërzier....*, (Parajsa..45)

By creating new words, Kadare aims at opposing the globalization of languages. It seems as if he (un)consciously seeks to become the defender of the Albanian language against these modern “tectonic” movements. What concerns him most is the deterioration of the language, or, as he says, *its emaciation*.

The comparative approach of Kadare's and Frashëri's language may initially seem strange. This is first because of different periods and circumstances within which they wrote. This clearly reveals the aims of our study: it will attempt to offer a clear reflection of the comparison of the usage of the diminutive used by Kadare who is still active in his field and the great romanticist, Naim Frashëri who used the diminutive in his poetry a long time ago.

The first and last means of a writer is the word. He does not strive for changing or distorting it.

## Previous Studies

Albanian writers began enriching the Albanian language a very long time ago. If we were to pursue the idea that language makes a nation, we would not exaggerate to say that language in fact is created by poets and writers. We can thus recall the ancient literature writers such as Buzuku, Budi and Bogdani with friends; then there are the National Renaissance writers who gave an invaluable contribution for the advancement of the language.

Both, Frashëri and Kadare create new words with almost all prefixes and suffixes that exist in Albanian. Although they created at different times and in different genres, the results are the same: *creation of new words*. The former approaches this from the semantic derisive and diminutive aspect whereas the latter includes ironic meaning too.

In a very mere example, we can see that Naim Frashëri sees and feels love differently from Kadare. The former presents it as trivial and makes fun of it, whereas the latter expresses it as endeared and important.

According to Xhuvani and Çabej, there are approximately 300 suffixes that serve for making the diminutive, such as: *-ak, -al, -ar, -ec, -uq, ush, -ushë, -th, -z (ë)*, etc.. However, in modern Albanian, the most frequently used suffixes for this purpose are *-th* and *-(ë)z (ë)*. The *-th* suffix is added to masculine nouns whereas the *-(ë)z (ë)* to feminine ones. Both of these suffixes are especially used in poetical creations (*Fonetika dhe gramatika e gjuhës së sotme shqipe*, II, Tirana 1976, p.111). Apart from these, the diminutive in Albanian, though more rarely, is also made by using the suffixes such as *-ush, -ushe, -ak*, etc.

As can be noticed, generally in the Albanian language and particularly in Naim Frashëri's works, there are two main semantic fields of diminutive suffixes: diminution and endearment. However, this is not entirely true regarding Ismail Kadare. In his works, apart from the above-mentioned approaches, there is the element of derision and ignorance. We need to point out that some of the words change their meaning when certain suffixes are added to them. For example, *zëth* means a small device for peeking, a voice recorder; *apraph* (a voice recorder, Dictaphone which is something new and unknown for the time when the event is taking place), etc. This is why it is considered as a hostile mythological being that has emerged from underwater, as a legendary creature, etc.

We should also point out that with the help of these suffixes, the words used by the authors in question, switch from one grammatical category to another, as is the case with many suffixes in Albanian. For example, Naim Frashëri uses words such as *djalt* (boy), *gjakth* (blood), *kalëth* (horse), *mbretëth* (king), *bijëzë* (daughter), *bukëz* (bread), *buzëz* (lip), *derëz* (door), *ditëz* (day), etc., and Kadare uses words such as *flamurth* (flag), *gabimth* (mistake), *globth* (globe), *gjirth* (bay, breast, gulf), *kamionth* (truck), etc.

The scholar and researcher, Enver Hysa explains that for these new words formed with these suffixes, the root word does not usually undergo any changes in meaning, but it simply gets some additional semantic nuances in terms of emotional expression. In special cases, we can also notice some formations that have emerged based on the similarity of items and may have a different meaning from the root word, though they still belong to the same grammatical category.

Some of these suffixes used by the above-mentioned writers in order to express those nuances are as follows: *-th, -(ë)z, -ush, -ushë, -oshe, etc.*

## Present Study

Outlined below are the results of the authors' analysis on the different usage of the diminutive by Naim Frashëri and Ismail Kadare that differs in terms of the cultural aspect.

## Methodology

The data /material gathered was conducted through Naim's work "Lulet e verës", and some of Kadare's works such as "Spiritus", "Hija", and "Lulet e ftohta të marsit". These works are read with great attention in order to encounter or detect words formed with diminutive suffixes in Albanian language. The words detected were collected and were classified into groups afterwards. For instance, the group of words formed with the suffix -th are male names and the group of words with the suffix -z (ë) are the names of female tender.

## Research Questions

Research Question 1: What is the motive and reason of the usage of the diminutive in Naim Frashëri's poetry?

Research Question 2: What is the motive and reason of the usage of the diminutive in Ismail Kadare's works?

## Findings of the Present Study

Motives and reasons that make one or the other to use diminutives are different, almost contradictory, but not exceptional. Naim's language comes as raw semi processed directly from the language of the people and the motive is purely poetic and romantic-enriching the language. This is clearly proved by the ascent of common words of everyday language.

Although in Kadare's work we also find concrete and ordinary use, however, it appears to us a bit surreal maneuver by joining these suffixes with unusual words. Besides the motive of enriching the language, the intent must be mentioned to show stylistic dexterity of his language in particular, as well as the Albanian language in general. The different usage of the diminutive of these two writers is clearly shown below with examples:

### Words with -(ë)z(ë) in Frashëri's works

a) Nouns with -(ë)z(ë):

gojezë [compared to the noun gojë (mouth)]; bimëz [compared to the noun bimë (plant)]; fluturëz [compared to the noun flutur (butterfly)]; këngëz [compared to the noun këngë (song)]; qytezë [compared to the noun qytet (ton)]; vijëz [compared to the noun vijë (line)]; folezë [compared to the noun fole (nest)]; pushkëz [compared to the noun pushkë (rifle)]; gunëz [compared to the noun gunë (cloak)]; gropëz [compared to the noun gropë (hole)]; shkollëz [compared to the noun shkollë (school)]; herëz [compared to the adverb herë]

(time)]; zemërëz [compared to the noun zemër (heart)]; thembërz [compared to the noun thembër (heel)]; vashëz [compared to the noun vashë (girl)]; shkronjëz [compared to the noun shkronjë (letter)]; pasqyrëz [compared to the noun pasqyrë (mirror)]; cipëz [compared to the noun cipë (tegument)]; kodërz [compared to the noun kodër (hill)]; syzëzë [compared to the noun syzë (glasses)]; fjalëz [compared to the noun fjalë (word)]; kronjëz [compared to the noun kronjë (source)]; napëz [compared to the noun napë (cheesecloth)]; lundërzë [compared to the noun lundër (boat)]; qipallëz [compared to the noun qepallë (eyelid)]; klithmëz [compared to the noun klithmë (scream)]; hapëz [compared to the noun hap (step)]; vatërzë [compared to the noun vatër (hearth)]; ditëz [compared to the noun ditë (day)]; gjëzë [compared to the noun gjë (thing)]; nënëz [compared to the noun nënë (mother)]; punëz [compared to the noun punë (work)]; gjuhëz [compared to the noun gjuhë (tongue)]; dritëz [compared to the noun dritë (light)]; djalërizë [compared to the noun djalëri (boyhood)]; këtë [compared to the pronoun këtë (this)]; udhëz [compared to the noun udhë (road)]; bagëtizë [compared to the noun bagëti (cattle)]; rezë [compared to the noun re (cloud)]; pakëz [compared to the adverb pak (a little)]; plaqkëz [compared to the noun plaqkë (loot)]; dorëz [compared to the noun dorë (hand)]; këmbëz [compared to the noun këmbë (foot)]; foshnjëz [compared to the noun foshnjë (baby)]; jetëz [compared to the noun jetë (life)]; mëmëz [compared to the noun mëmë (mother)]; kafshëz [compared to the noun kafshë (animal)]; guguçezë [compared to the noun guguçe (turtledove)]; shtëpizë [compared to the noun shtëpi (house)]; faqezë [compared to the noun faqe (cheek)]; pendëz [compared to the noun pendë (feather)]; folezë [compared to the noun fole (nest)]; shpresëz [compared to the noun shpresë (hope)]; rezë [compared to the noun re (cloud)]; kokëzë [compared to the noun kokë (head)]; mendjesh [compared to the noun mendje (mind)]; kohëz [compared to the noun kohë (time)]; dritëz [compared to the noun dritë (light)]; udhëz [compared to the noun udhë (road)]; buzëz [compared to the noun buzë (lip)]; lulezë [compared to the noun lule (flower)].

b) Adjectives with -[ë]z[ë] in Frashëri's works:

i(e) varfërz [compared to the adjective i/e varfër (poor)]; i(e) drejtëz [compared to the adjective i/e drejtë (straight)];

c) Compound nouns -(ë)z: masditëz [mas+ ditë+ -ëz = compound noun (afternoon)]

d) Adverbs with -(ë)z: herëz [compared to the adverb herë (time)], ngadalzë [compared to the adverb ngadalë (slowly)];

e) Pronouns with -(ë)z(ë):

ajozë [compared to the pronoun ajo (she)]; këtëzë [compared to the pronoun këtë (this)]; atëzë [compared to the pronoun atë (it)].

### Words with –th in Frashëri's work

- a) Nouns with –th: vëllath [ compared to the noun vëlla (brother)]; shith [ compared to the noun shi (rain)]; zëth [compared to the noun zë (voice)]; djemth [compared to the noun djem (boys)], zogjëth [compared to the noun zog (bird)], gjith [compared to the noun gji (breast)], trëndafilth [compared to the noun trëndafil (rose)]; lumth [compared to the noun lum (river)]; plakth [compared to the noun plak (old man)]; florith [ compared to the noun flori (gold)]; lotth [compared to the noun lot (tear)]; vëndth [compared to the noun vend (place)]; gasth [ compared to the noun gas (gas)], djalëth [compared to the noun djalë (boy)], krahëth [ compared to the noun krah (arm/side)], shtratth [compared to the noun shtrat (bed)], zotth [ compared to the noun zot (God)], syth [compared to the noun sy (eye)], vajtimth [compared to the noun vajtim (mourning)];
- b) Adjectives with –th:  
i/e varfërth [compared to the adjective i/e varfër (poor)], i/e gjorth [compared to the adjective i/e gjorë (poor)]; tëzesthtë [compared to the adjective i/e zezë (black)] të vegjëlhith [ compared to the adjective të vegjël, (plural of small)];
- c) Adverbs with –th:  
atjeth [ compared to the adverb atje (there)]; tanith [compared to the adverb tani (now)].

### Words with –ush (e) in Frashëri's work

- a) Nouns with –ush(e) :  
plakushe [compared to the noun plakë (old woman)]; gjarpërushe [compared to the noun gjarpër (snake)];
- b) Adjectives with –ushe:  
vogëlushe [compared to the adjective i/e vogël (small/little)]; trimushe [compared to the adjective trim (brave)]; lariushe [compared to the adjective i/e larë (motley)]; bardhushe [ compared to the adjective i/e bardhë (white)].
- c) Verbs with –ush[ e]:  
ardhush [ compared to the verb vij/ ardhur (come/came)];

- d) Adverbs with –ush(e):  
gjerushe [compared to the adverb gjerë (wide/broad)].

### **Words with -oshe in Frashëri's work**

- a) Adjectives: bardhoshe [compared to the adjective i/e bardhë (white)]; bukuroshe [compared to the adjective bukur (beautiful)], vogëloshe [compared to the adjective i/e vogël-(small/little)];
- b) Përkëdheloshe [compared to the verb përkëdhel (fondle)].

### **Words with the suffix –(ë)z (ë) in Kadare's work**

- a) bisedëz [compared to the noun bisedë (discussion)]; dashurizë [compared to the noun dashuri (love)]; historizë [compared to the noun histori (history)]; letërz[compared to the noun letër (letter)]; mbretërizë [compared to the noun mbretëri (kingdom)].

### **Words with the suffix – th in Kadare's work**

- a) nouns with –th:

aprath [compared to the noun aparat (apparatus)]; flamurth [compared to the noun flamur (flag)]; gabimth [compared to the noun gabim (mistake)]; globth [compared to the noun glob (globe)]; gjirth [compared to the noun gjir (bay, gulf, breast)]; kamionth [compared to the noun kamion (truck)]; kartonth [compared to the noun karton (carton)]; kryqth [compared to the noun kryq (cross)]; planetth [compared to the noun planet (planet)]; rrypth [compared to the noun rryp (belt)]; sekretth [compared to the noun sekret (secret)]; shtegth [compared to the noun shteg (trail)]; shiritth [compared to the noun shirit (tape)]; zëth [compared to the noun zë (voice)];

- b) compound nouns:

arkëmorth [compared to the noun arkëmort (coffin)]; sarkofagth [compared to the noun sarkofag (sarcophagus)].

## Conclusion

The diminutive as a linguistic phenomenon appears in two of the most important writers of the periods to which they are entitled. Its word-formative suffixes are found in both writers and it speaks for historical and geographical continuity of this kind of word formation. Semantic and linguistic diverse functionality is the cause of their frequent use, especially in the poetry of Naim. Not being the most common suffixes used, they also have an important place in Kadare's work.

The use of diminutive with diminution, endearment, derision and ignorance purposes is within the nature of the language of Dangëllia and Naim Frashëri did not have any reason of avoiding it, especially when such suffixes strengthen the romantic and affective feelings of his language. After all, there was no other possibility, since Naim Frashëri had to call certain names by his own style, and therefore he called the girl – *vashëz*, the boy – *djalëth*, the rose – *trëndafilth*, etc.

Kadare's use of the diminutive is a bit different. It seems as if he does not worry much about its role, i.e. the diminution and endearment, though he does not avoid using it either. However, his goal is without violating any internal linguistic rule, to give other, secondary and even tertiary meanings to the root words only to prove the diversity of the language. He often needs the *-th* and *(ë)z(ë)* in order to express the smallness and irrelevance of things and people that pretend to be important. He mocks their smallness.

Based on such a comparison, even superficial, we have the feeling that Naim Frashëri cannot do without using the diminutive suffixes at large, even by adding them to pronouns, their short forms, adverbs, adjectives, etc. Kadare is a bit more avaricious when it comes to this issue. It seems as if these kinds of words come out from his atelier after they had been carefully and thoroughly analyzed and thought upon.

Our conclusion is simple: we have dealt with two writers who use the same means and tools and still give words different meaning and function. One sticks very closely to the source language, whereas the other one takes it further, beyond its natural limits by creating new semantic-stylistic elements, as is the nature of the Albanian language itself.

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