

The conceptual category of the diminutive in English and Romanian – existence, recurrence, status in contemporary language

Irina VRABIE¹

The diminutive is a morphological linguistic category which allows the speaker to express positive feelings such as affection, endearment, or negative feelings like contempt, disdain, irony or even mockery. Apart from the expression of a variety of human feelings and their emotive charge, diminutive suffixes are also used to indicate the offspring of animals. This paper attempts to study and mention the status of the most productive and widely used diminutives in English, Romanian and Spanish, indicating their functions and semantic values in the discourse. It remains to be observed if there is any semantic or morphological connection between the intuitive preference of a certain diminutive suffix in comparison with other equivalent particles in the other studied languages, in which language registers and by what social groups they are used.

Keywords: diminutive, diminutive's status, linguistic category, functions, language registers, Romanian, English

¹“Dunărea de Jos” University of Galați, irina.vrabie23@yahoo.ro