

DIMINUTIVES AND AUGMENTATIVES IN TRANSLATION: AN EXPLORATORY SYSTEMIC- FUNCTIONAL STUDY OF DUBRAVKA UGREŠIĆ'S NOVEL *BABA YAGA LAID AN EGG*

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This paper reports on an exploratory cross-linguistic study of the semantic domain of diminution and augmentation. Drawing on Systemic-Functional Linguistics (SFL), it investigates how meanings of smallness and largeness—realised through morphological and lexical resources such as diminutives and augmentatives—operate in narrative discourse. The study focuses on Dubravka Ugrešić's *Baba Jaga je snijela jaje*, more specifically the first part of the novel, which is characterised by the narrator's extensive use of expressions of diminution to depict her mother's personality and behaviour. These include both the narrator's evaluative stance and her representation of her mother's own speech, in which diminutives and augmentatives serve as linguistic markers of frailty, both physical and psychological. We compiled a corpus of 200 sentences retrieved from Part I of the Croatian novel and its translations into Spanish, English, Italian, and Portuguese. Sentences were pasted onto a spreadsheet for manual alignment and identification of expressions of

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diminution and augmentation in the original and translated samples. First, we carried out a context-level analysis of the original and translated texts. Subsequently, we classified each instance into two categories: (i) diminutive/augmentative translated as diminutive/augmentative, and (ii) diminutive/augmentative translated as non-diminutive/non-augmentative. We then computed the frequency of each class for each language pair (source–target language). Finally, we analysed the occurrences in terms of typological and registerial constraints and examined the data to identify translation choices potentially ascribable to the translator’s interpretive understanding of the source text. Our findings reveal that each language draws on distinct lexicogrammatical resources to express diminutive and augmentative meanings, with translators’ decisions shaping the representation of character and affect. More broadly, the study demonstrates how an SFL-based approach can illuminate the interplay between linguistic system, translation practice, and meaning-making across typologically diverse languages.

1. INTRODUCTION

Systemic-Functional Theory (SFT) (Halliday and Matthiessen 2014) conceives of “semantic domains” as “semantic systems that are realized by grammatical systems operating in more than one place in the grammar” (Halliday and Matthiessen 2014: 666). These systems are responsible for construing meanings pertaining to how speakers represent the outer world and the inner world of their consciousness (ideational meanings) and to how they assess those worlds and negotiate those assessments with their interlocutors (interpersonal meanings). One such semantic system is diminution/augmentation, which can be realised by diverse grammatical systems operating at different levels in the rank scale: morpheme, word, group, or clause. Depending on the language, diminution and augmentation meanings will be realised more at one level than the others and, in some cases, multiple grammatical systems will be recruited to construe them.

As diminution/augmentation implicate both ideational and interpersonal meanings and their construal relies on the resources afforded by each language, a multilingual approach can be insightful for several disciplines in linguistic studies, such as language description and comparison, foreign and second language learning, and translation studies (Matthiessen et al. 2008).

This paper reports on an exploratory study on the semantic domain of diminution/augmentation. Drawing on SFT, it examines occurrences of diminutive and augmentative meanings retrieved from a parallel corpus of a novel in Croatian and its translations into English, Spanish, Italian, and Portuguese.

We selected the first part of Dubravka Ugrešić’s *Baba Jaga je snijela jaje*, which foregrounds two narrative levels. At one level, the narrator uses diminutive expressions to portray her mother’s personality and behaviour. At another, the mother’s own reported speech reveals her use of diminutives and augmentatives, which are associated with her frail physical and mental health.

We manually segmented the original novel into sentences and aligned them with their translation counterparts. We located all instances of diminution and augmentation meanings and explored the distinct grammatical environments in which those meanings were construed. Our results point to the different lexicogrammatical resources on which each language draws in order to construe diminutive meanings and the impact of language choices on the representation of the novel’s character.

This paper is organised as follows. After this Introduction, we present the main tenets of Systemic-Functional Theory and its approach to the semantic domain of diminution and augmentation. We briefly review studies on diminution and augmentation

from other theoretical perspectives, as well as studies comparing Croatian and other languages. Subsequently, we present the Aim of our study and its research questions. The Methodology section describes the corpus compiled and the steps followed in our analysis. We report on our main findings in the Results section, followed by the Conclusion and References we consulted.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. SYSTEMIC-FUNCTIONAL THEORY

Systemic-Functional Theory (SFT) (Halliday and Matthiessen 2014) models language as a system embedded in a more abstract system, which is Context, itself modelled at two levels of abstraction: Context of Culture and Context of Situation. By Context of Culture, we mean the socio-semiotic activities in which speakers engage and use language for a purpose. In the case of our corpus, novels are text types in which speakers recreate the socio-semiotic activities of the real world for the purposes of reflection and entertainment. Recreation operates at a level of second-order semiosis (fiction recreates reality), and the language used is fabricated speech in the sense that it emulates real-world language. By Context of Situation, we map a combination of variables with their respective features that define characteristics of the field (representation), tenor (interaction), and mode (textual organisation) of the particular language situation. In a fictional text, as is the case with our corpus, Context of Situation comprises two levels: the social act of narration, that is, the interaction established between the writer and readers, and the social acts that form the content of the narration, that is, the interaction between the narrator and characters and the characters with each other (Halliday 1976). A text is said to be instantiated within a Context of Situation, which, in turn, is instantiated within a Context of Culture.

Along with instantiation, a further dimension in SFT's modelling is stratification, that is, language is stratified into a cycle of strata, each stratum realising the higher one, from phonetics to phonology to lexicogrammar to semantics, extending ultimately to context.

SFT also models language metafunctionally, encompassing three strands of meanings: ideational (language construes our world), interpersonal (language expresses social relationships and speakers' attitudes and evaluations), and textual meaning (language organises meanings in connected and cohesive text). Figure 1 illustrates the dimensions of stratification and metafunction.

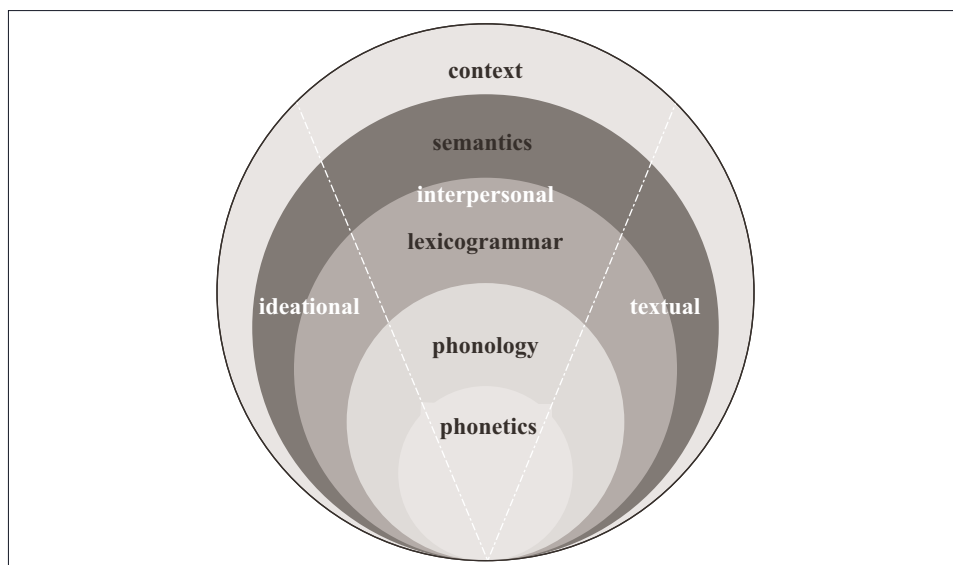


FIGURE 1. Dimensions of instantiation, stratification, and metafunction.

Source: The authors

If we adopt these three dimensions (instantiation, stratification, and metafunction) together with a rank analysis, we can map every language choice in relation to all its Context of Situation, Context of Culture, strata, and metafunctions in the system, as can be seen in an analysis of Example (1), one of the sentences in our corpus.

1. *Bio je to ogromaaaaan čovjek!*

In (1), the narrator in the novel reports an utterance by her mother, which illustrates how the old woman verbalises her view of the world and the people around her as alien and menacing to her. The sentence clearly shows how choices at the phonetic level, such as the lengthening of a vowel sound, here represented by the repetition of the letter *a* in *ogromaaaaan*, have an impact on phonology, lexicogrammar, and semantics, all of these strata ultimately working together to construe a particular meaning. *Ogromaaaaan čovjek* is a nominal group which construes both experiential meaning (a male person) and interpersonal meaning (somebody who is perceived as very tall and big from the speaker's perspective). Augmentation is construed through the choice of the epithet (realised by an adjective) *ogroman* and graphological emphasis to suggest phonetic lengthening, which further contributes to imply the speaker's apprehension. Example (1) is analysed at the rank level in Figure 2.

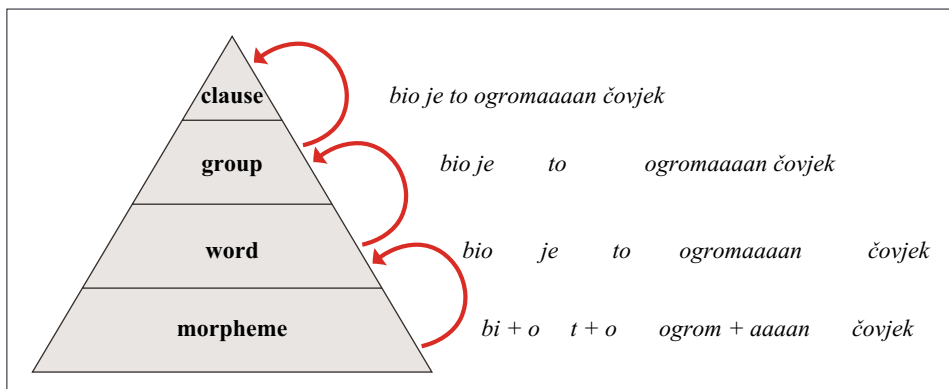


FIGURE 2. Analysis at rank level.

Source: The authors

The rank scale can be read either upwards or downwards. In Figure 2, we can see morphemes realising words, which, in turn, realise groups, each group functioning at the clause level. There are two nominal groups (*to* and *ogromaaaaan čovjek*) and a verbal group (*bio je*). Each group is realised by words and morphemes and realises a function in the clause, namely, Participant/Subject (*to*) and Participant/Complement (*ogromaaaaan čovjek*).

The clause is the unit of metafunctional analysis in SFT, and a full analysis of Example (1) is provided in Figure 3.

functional diversification			
↑ context ↑ semantics grammar ↑ delicacy ↓ lexis ↓	Field	Tenor	Mode
	low technicality	equal status between speaker and interlocutor; colloquial	written as spoken
	Ideational	Interpersonal	Textual
	Relational process “biti” Carrier “to” Attribute “ogromaaaaan čovjek”	Finite “je” Subject “to” Complement “ogromaaaaan čovjek”	Theme “Bio je” Rheme “to ogromaaaaan čovjek”
	ogromaaaaan čovjek		Reference “to” retrieves anaphoric referent animate:creature:human+male
	Denotation	Connotation	Lexical cohesion
	“čovjek” in taxonomy of things animate:creature:human+male +adult	“ogromaaaaan” appraisal affect	“čovjek” general noun

FIGURE 3. Analysis in terms of stratification, instantiation, metafunction, and delicacy.

Source: The authors

Metafunctional diversification applies to both grammar and lexis, which are modelled in SFT not as separate domains but as two poles of a continuum, in what the theory terms delicacy, as represented in Figure 4.



FIGURE 4. Illustrative examples of lexicogrammatical realisations of augmentation at different points along the lexis–grammar continuum.

Source: The authors

Hence, augmentation can be construed both lexically, through the choice of an epithet (in our example *ogromaaaaan*) and grammatically, through an agnate (though never fully synonymous) choice in the language system, such as *čovjek je premašio standardne mjere za visinu i težinu*, which construes excessiveness through a clause with a verbal group (*premašiti*) and a classifier realised by an adjective (*standardne*).

In the Systemic-Functional approach to translation (Halliday 2001; Matthiessen 2001), stratification and metafunction, together with rank and delicacy, prove insightful ways of examining how meaning is construed in source and target texts. Following SFT, translation can be located within a series of related contextualisations defined by the dimensions of systemic functional theory (referred to as “environments” by Matthiessen 2001), which range from the most global environment of language (in context) to the most local ones. Environments of translation can be used to map out the resources of the source language and of the target language [...] to locate translation equivalences and translation shifts (Matthiessen 2001 drawing on Catford 1965). Adopting a metafunctional perspective on the evaluation of translated texts, Halliday (2001: 16) posits translation equivalence as defined primarily in ideational (referred to as experiential) terms: “if a text does not match its source text experientially, it does not qualify as a translation.” Bearing on this assumption, Halliday (2001: 16) adds:

For precisely this reason, one of the commonest criticisms made of translated texts is that, while they are equivalent ideationally, they are not equivalent in respect of the other metafunctions—interpersonally or textually, or both.

Steiner (2001) goes a step further and proposes sources of properties of translated texts, which he defines as typology of the languages, register (text type), and the translator's understanding of the source text.

Our work seeks to examine how text equivalence is performed, bearing in mind typological and registerial constraints, as well as the translator's understanding of the source text. Our study pursued such an approach, drawing on an SFT-informed study of expressions of diminution and augmentation retrieved from a multilingual parallel corpus of Croatian, Spanish, English, Italian, and Portuguese.

2.2. DIMINUTION AND AUGMENTATION

Traditionally, diminution and augmentation have been studied as morphological features (prefixation, infixation, suffixation, and reduplication), privileging synthetic (morphological) rather than analytical (paraphrastic) forms. From an SFT perspective, diminution and augmentation are resources for expressing attitude prosodically distributed throughout the grammatical system. These resources implicate mostly interpersonal (evaluative) meanings, that is, the speaker assumes the right to represent something as it affects them personally. Lexically, they operate in distinct environments, illustrated by (2) and (3) in a nominal group, (4) in a verbal group, and (5) in an adverbial group.

- (2) *moj jastučić*
- (3) *Malene, slatke stare gospođe.*
- (4) *Ona se smanjila.*
- (5) *Glas joj je bio malko napuknut.*

Within the SFT approach, lexis as well as grammar can be approached metafunctionally, and so can diminution and augmentation. Ideationally, lexis construes entities in a taxonomy of things (denotation); interpersonally, it signals affect (connotation); and textually, it builds cohesion. In nominal groups, for instance, an experiential epithet indicates a quality seen as an objective property, e.g., *malene gospođe*, and diminutive inflection can also express the speaker's subjective attitude, e.g., *moja pidžamica*. In expressions of diminution and augmentation, there is always a subjective attitude, which may converge with an objective property or not. Example (6) illustrates the speaker's affect regarding her shoes rather than a reference to the shoe size.

- (6) *Moje papučice.*

Each language system tends to select resources in particular environments. In English, for instance, diminutives and augmentatives relative to entities in discourse are frequently realised in nominal groups having an epithet (adjective), e.g., *little towel*. Unlike English, Croatian tends to construe diminution at the word level, through morphemes added to a noun, e.g., *ručničić*. Nevertheless, both languages have grammatical resources to construe diminution at other levels, as shown by Examples (2) to (5) above.

Studies on diminutives are traditionally approached from a morphological perspective and centre on nominal inflections (Bakema and Geeraerts 2004). Semantic approaches to diminution, including verbal forms of diminution, are still incipient in language studies (Audring Leufkens and van Lier 2021). Some studies have explored diminutives in Croatian (Katunar 2013; Kocijan et al. 2016). One study to date (Sarić and Lanović 2014) has compared expressions of diminution in texts in Croatian (a highly inflected language) and their translation into languages with a rich morphology (Spanish, Italian, and Portuguese), as well as those with fewer morphological inflections (English). Besides that, there are few studies on Croatian from the perspective of systemic-functional grammar (Dinković and Borucinsky 2016) and, to the best of our knowledge, no systemic-functional analysis of diminution has been carried out in a multilingual, parallel corpus of original and translated texts including the Croatian language.

3. AIM

The aforementioned gap in the literature motivated us to carry out the present study aiming to answer the following research questions:

1. How do diminutive and augmentative meanings contribute to the overall theme of the text?
2. How equivalent are the source and target texts in terms of meanings pertaining to diminution and augmentation?
3. How does language typology impact the choices of diminution and augmentation in the translated texts?
4. How does register impact the choices of diminution and augmentation in the translated texts?
5. How can the translator's understanding of the source text be said to impact the target text?

4. METHODOLOGY

We compiled a corpus of 200 sentences retrieved from Part I of the Croatian novel *Baba Jaga je snijela jaje* and its translations into Spanish, English, Italian, and Portuguese. Sentences were pasted onto a spreadsheet for manual alignment and identification of expressions of diminution and augmentation in the original sample and its translations. Manual alignment and annotation were adopted because the identification and interpretation of diminutive and augmentative meanings in literary discourse depend heavily on contextual and pragmatic cues that cannot be reliably captured through automatic procedures.

First, we carried out a context-level analysis of the original and translated texts. Subsequently, we classified expressions of diminution and augmentation into two classes: (i) diminutive/augmentative translated as diminutive/augmentative, and (ii) diminutive/augmentative translated as non-diminutive/non-augmentative. We computed the frequency of each class for each language pair (source-target language). Finally, we analysed the diminutives and augmentatives in terms of typological and registerial constraints and examined them to detect language choices potentially ascribable to the translator's understanding.

Since the study examines diminutive and augmentative meanings across different contextual levels of discourse, the novel proved particularly suitable for analysis, as it contains numerous instances of such expressions both in the narrator's discourse and in reported speech. While the corpus is drawn from a single literary work, it provides a focused dataset for exploring how these meanings are realised and translated in narrative discourse.

5. RESULTS

Our first research question examined how diminution and augmentation meanings contribute to the overall theme of the novel. From the perspective of the Context of Culture, a novel is a text pertaining to the socio-semiotic activity of the recreation of human experience. Regarding the Context of Situation, at Level 1, or the social act of narration, the novel is a piece of verbal art whose primary aim is to entertain through storytelling. In this case, it is a text that was written to be read. In Part I of *Baba Jaga je snijela jaje*, the writer adopts the role of recounter and impersonates the narrator in the novel (a first-person narrator). Expressions of diminution are used by the narrator to depict the appearance of elderly women, as shown in Examples (7) and (8); to car-

icature their habits, as illustrated in (9), (10), and (11); and to portray their physical frailty, as evidenced in (12). Augmentative expressions are absent from this textual level and appear exclusively in reported speech.

- (7) *Bluzica se istanjila i posivjela od pranja.*
- (8) *staromodan šeširić na glavi*
- (9) *tapkaju [...] koračaju sitnim mišjim koracima*
- (10) *Mrmljaju nešto sebi u bradu.*
- (11) *Kreću se u maloj formaciji, tri kokice*
- (12) *kosti stare, postaju lagane i šuplje*

With regard to Level 2 or the social acts in the content of the narration, the main theme concerns the narrator's argument: as women age, they become invisible; they develop idiosyncrasies; they resort to familiar forms of language, such as children's language. At this level, the narrator both reflects on her mother's gradual loss of memory and language skills and reports her own interaction with her mother. Reported dialogues represent instances of constructed spoken language embedded in the written narrative. Expressions of diminution are used to convey terms of address/endearment from daughter to mother (13), report the mother's language strategies to cope with memory loss and apprehension of becoming old (14), and portray the mother's viewpoint (15, 16).

- (13) *mamina stana*
- (14) *moja pidžamica, moj ručničić, moj jastučić, moja bočica, moje papučice*
- (15) *zmija je narastala u zmijurinu, ptica u ptičurinu*
- (16) *Bio je to ogromaaaaan čovjek!*

Our second research question inquired about translation equivalents and to what extent the choices in the target texts construed diminutive/augmentative meanings identified in the source text.

For the purposes of the quantitative comparison, instances were grouped into two broad categories: (i) diminutive/augmentative rendered as a diminutive/augmentative in the target language, and (ii) diminutive/augmentative rendered as a non-diminutive/non-augmentative form. This distinction captures whether the meanings of diminution and augmentation are realised through explicit lexicogrammatical marking in the target language. However, such meanings may also be construed through other resources (e.g., evaluative adjectives, register shifts, or contextual cues). These possi-

bilities were considered in the qualitative contextual analysis but were not included in the quantitative categorisation.

Figure 5 shows the proportion of diminutive meanings in Croatian realised by diminutive meanings in the translated texts.

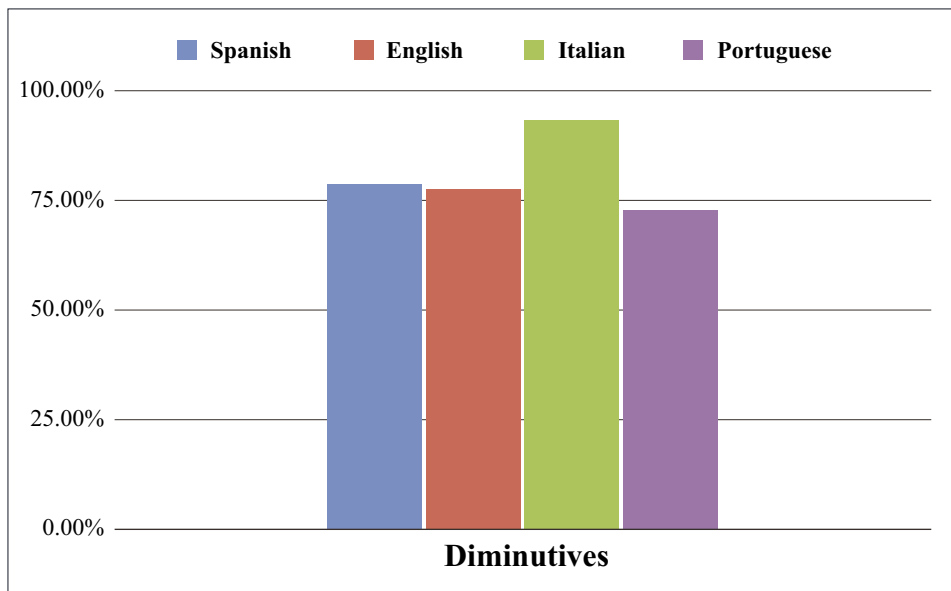


FIGURE 5. Frequency of instances of diminutives in the source text translated as diminutives in each target text.

Source: The authors

As Figure 5 shows, the Italian text was the text that realised the highest proportion of diminutive meanings (93.5 %), followed by the Spanish text (79.2 %), the English text (77.9 %), and the Portuguese text (72.7 %).

All expressions of augmentation in the Croatian original were realised as augmentation in Spanish, English, Italian, and Portuguese.

Regarding our third research question—how language typology impacts the choices of diminution and augmentation in the translated texts—as expected, Croatian, Spanish, Italian, and Portuguese make extensive use of morphological resources to construe most of meanings of diminution and augmentation with suffixes at the word level, whereas English tends to construe diminution and augmentation at the group level, with epithets (e.g., little, small, huge, big) in nominal groups. The reverse is also the case: diminution construed at the group level in Croatian and translated as diminution at the word and group levels. Table 1 illustrates both scenarios:

TABLE 1. Example of diminutives in the source text translated as diminutives in the target texts.

Croatian	Spanish	English	Italian	Portuguese
<i>bočica</i> bottle-DIM	<i>botellita</i> bottle-DIM	<i>little bottle</i> little bottle	<i>bottiglietta</i> bottle-DIM	<i>garrafinha</i> bottle-DIM
<i>malih ptica</i> small.GEN.PL bird.GEN.PL	<i>pequeños pájaros</i> small.PL bird.PL	<i>little birds</i> little bird.PL	<i>piccoli uccelli</i> small.PL bird.PL	<i>passarinhos</i> bird-DIM.PL
<i>Malene, slatke stare gospođe.</i> small.F.PL sweet.F.PL old.F.PL lady.PL	<i>Pequeñas y dulces señoras mayores.</i> small.PL and sweet. PL lady.PL old.PL	<i>Sweet little old ladies.</i> sweet little old lady.PL	<i>Piccole, dolci anziane signore.</i> small.F.PL sweet.F.PL elderly.F.PL lady.PL	<i>Doces velhinhas.</i> sweet old-DIM.PL

In some cases, the diminutive meaning is conveyed through lexical or contextual resources in the clause rather than through explicit diminutive morphology. Table 2 illustrates such cases.

TABLE 2. Example of diminution in the source text realised through lexical resources in the target texts.

Croatian	Spanish	English	Italian	Portuguese
<i>dvije majice boje mlade trave.</i> two shirt.PL colour young grass.GEN	<i>una de las dos blusas del color de la hierba fresca.</i> one of DEF.PL two blouse.PL of DEF colour of DEF grass fresh	<i>one of two blouses the colour of young grass.</i> one of two blouse.PL DEF colour of young grass	<i>due [maglie] color prato</i> two shirt. PL colour meadow	<i>duas blusas da cor da relva a nascer.</i> two blouse.PL of DEF colour of DEF grass INF sprout

The example in Table 2 shows a shift in the rendering of the phrase “boje mlade trave”. In Croatian, “mlade” (“young”) functions as an epithet within the nominal group, contributing an evaluative nuance associated with diminution by evoking

freshness, delicacy, and an early stage of growth. Rather than creating this nuance through diminutive morphology, the translations show lexical choices that foreground related semantic features. Spanish renders the phrase as “hierba fresca”, where the epithet “fresca” emphasises freshness as a quality of the grass. English retains the age-related attribute in “young grass”, maintaining the semantic focus on the early stage of growth. Portuguese (“relva a nascer”) reinterprets the meaning through a processual construction, highlighting the grass as emerging or being born. Although realised through different lexicogrammatical resources, these choices construe the evaluative meaning associated with youthfulness and freshness. This example illustrates how meanings related to diminution may be redistributed across different lexical and grammatical structures in translation. The Italian translation does not convey these meanings.

However, as Figure 5 indicates, not all meanings of diminution in Croatian are translated as diminutives in the target languages, despite the availability of linguistic resources to express them, as illustrated in Table 3.

TABLE 3. Example of diminutives in the source text not translated as diminutives in the target texts.

Croatian	Spanish	English	Italian	Portuguese
<i>neobičnu kapicu</i> unusual cap-DIM	<i>un gorro extraño</i> INDF.M.SG cap strange	<i>a peculiar cap</i> INDF peculiar cap	<i>un cappellino stravagante</i> INDF cap-DIM eccentric	<i>um toucado peculiar</i> INDF head-dress peculiar
<i>starinska dam-ska torbica</i> old-fashioned lady handbag-DIM	<i>un bolso de señora anticuado</i> INDF handbag of lady old-fashioned	<i>an old lady's handbag</i> INDF old lady.GEN handbag	<i>una borsetta da signora di foggia antiquata</i> INDF handbag-DIM of lady of style antiquated	<i>a bolsa duma velha senhora</i> INDF bag of.a old lady

Table 3 illustrates cases in which diminutive forms in the Croatian source text are not rendered as diminutives in the target languages. In “kapicu”, the Croatian diminutive suffix *-ica* introduces an attenuating and evaluative nuance that is not recreated morphologically in Spanish (“gorro extraño”), English (“a peculiar cap”), or Portuguese (“um toucado peculiar”). Instead, the translations shift the evaluative load to lexical modifiers such as *extraño* and *peculiar*, which characterise the object rather

than reproducing the diminutive form itself. A similar pattern can be observed in “torbica”, where diminution is not recreated in the translations (“bolso”, “handbag”, “bolsa”), which only render the description referring to age or style (e.g., “de señora anticuado”, “old lady’s”). The Italian translation uses an equivalent of diminutive suffixes, -ino (“capellino”) and -etta (“borsetta”). Also, the reference to the outdated (old) style, which in the original is directed to the handbag (“starinska”), is recreated only in Spanish (“anticuado”) and Italian (“di foggia antiquata”), whereas in English and Portuguese it refers to the lady (“old lady’s” and “duma velha senhora”, respectively).

Our fourth research question examined how register, that is, the type of text, impacted the choices of diminution and augmentation in the translated texts. Our analysis shows that translated texts successfully convey affect in the mother’s reported speech (written language emulating spoken interaction). Affect is construed mostly at the word level in Croatian and similarly in Spanish and Italian (see Table 4).

TABLE 4. Affect construed by diminutives realised at the word level (noun) in target texts.

Croatian	Spanish	Italian
<i>moj ručnićić</i>	<i>mi toallita</i>	<i>il mio asciugamanino</i>
1SG.POSS towel-DIM	1SG.POSS towel-DIM	DEF 1SG.POSS towel-DIM

In English, affect is construed mostly at the group level, typically through one or two epithets within a nominal group, as seen in Table 5:

TABLE 5. Affect construed by diminutives realised at the group level (epithet in a nominal group) in target texts.

Croatian	English
<i>moja pidžamica</i>	<i>my sweet pyjamas</i>
1SG.POSS pyjamas-DIM	1SG.POSS sweet pyjamas
<i>moj jastučić</i>	<i>that nice little pillow</i>
1SG.POSS pillow-DIM	DEM.DIST nice little pillow
<i>moje papučice</i>	<i>those comfy little slippers</i>
1SG.POSS slipper-DIM.PL	DEM.DIST.PL comfy little slipper.PL

In Portuguese, affect is construed both at the group level (epithet) and word level (nominal diminutive morpheme), as shown in Table 6.

TABLE 6. Affect construed by diminutives realised at the word level (noun) and group level (epithet in a nominal group) in the target text.

Croatian	Portuguese
<i>moja pidžamica</i> 1SG.POSS pyjamas-DIM	<i>o meu pijaminha macio</i> DEF 1SG.POSS pyjamas-DIM soft
<i>moj ručničić</i> 1SG.POSS towel-DIM	<i>minha toalha girinha</i> 1SG.POSS towel cute-DIM

As regards augmentation, all translated texts succeed in conveying fear and repulsion in the mother's reported speech (written language emulating spoken language). Fear and repulsion are construed at the word level in Croatian, Spanish, and Italian (Table 7). In the original in Croatian and in Italian, the choice of verb, *narastati* and *gonfiare*, respectively, further contributes to the meaning of augmentation.

TABLE 7. Affect construed by augmentatives realised at the word level (noun) in target texts.

Croatian	Spanish	Italian
<i>zmija je narastala u zmijurinu, ptica u ptičurinu.</i> snake AUX grow into snake-AUG bird into bird-AUG	<i>una víbora devenía en «viborona», un pájaro en «pajarote»</i> INDF viper become into viper-AUG INDF bird into bird-AUG	<i>il serpente si era gonfiato in un serpentone, l'uccello in un uccellaccio.</i> DEF snake REFL AUX swell into snake-AUG DEF bird into bird-AUG

Interestingly, as Table 8 shows, in English and Portuguese, fear and repulsion are construed at the group level with two epithets in a nominal group, one of which construes size and the other a negative quality that construes negative affect. Like Croatian, the choice of verbs *grow* and *crescer* respectively also contributes to construing augmentation.

TABLE 8. Affect construed by augmentatives realised at the group level (epithets in a nominal group) in target texts.

Croatian	English	Portuguese
<i>zmija je narastala u zmi-jurinu, ptica u ptičurinu.</i>	<i>a snake grew to be a big bad snake, a bird into a fat old bird.</i>	<i>uma serpente crescia até ser uma grande serpente má, um pássaro até ser um gordo pás-saro velho.</i>
snake AUX grow into snake-AUG bird into bird-AUG	INDF snake grow to be INDF big bad snake INDF bird into INDF fat old bird	INDF snake grow until be INDF big snake bad INDF bird until be INDF fat bird old

As Table 9 shows, all target texts use graphological repetition of the letter *a* to represent the lengthening of a vowel sound, thereby further contributing to the construal of augmentation and the frailty and old age of the narrator’s mother.

TABLE 9. Example of graphological resource to represent phonetic lengthening of sound in augmentation meaning.

Croatian	Spanish	English	Italian	Portuguese
<i>Bio je to ogro-maaaaan čovjek!</i>	<i>¡Era un hombre enooorme!</i>	<i>He was a huuuuuuge man!</i>	<i>Era un uomo enooooorme!</i>	<i>Era um homem enooooooooorme!</i>
AUX.PST DEM huge man	AUX.IPFV INDF man huge	3SG.M be.PST INDF huge man	AUX.IPFV INDF man huge	AUX.IPFV INDF man huge

Our final research question examined which translation choices might be attributed to the translator’s interpretive decisions rather than to typological or register-related constraints. In this respect, although Portuguese possesses linguistic resources for expressing diminutive meanings, the lower proportion of diminutives observed in the Portuguese translation (Figure 5) may reflect the translator’s interpretive choices. At the same time, this pattern may also relate to broader pragmatic conventions governing the use of diminutive forms in Portuguese literary discourse.

Since the meanings of diminution and augmentation are closely related to the central theme of the novel, their realisation in the translated texts is relevant to the construction of the narrative as verbal art. In this sense, variation across the translations—including the Portuguese version—contributes to shaping how affect and characterisation are conveyed in each target text.

6. CONCLUSION

This study is explicitly exploratory in nature. The corpus comprises 200 sentence-level translation pairs drawn from a single literary work and its translations into four languages and therefore does not aim to support broad generalisations about the use of diminutives or augmentatives in Croatian or the other languages analysed as linguistic systems. Rather, it identifies tendencies of meaning realisation within a specific translational and literary context, showing how interpersonal meanings are negotiated through micro-linguistic choices in translation.

Taken together, the findings show that meanings of diminution and augmentation play an important role in construing the interpersonal representation of ageing, fragility, and affect in the novel. From a systemic-functional perspective, these meanings are realised through different lexicogrammatical resources across languages, reflecting both typological tendencies and the interpretive choices involved in translation. While Croatian, Spanish, Italian, and Portuguese frequently construe diminution and augmentation through morphological resources at the word level, English tends to realise similar meanings through nominal group modification at the group level.

At the same time, the comparison of the translations suggests that translators may vary in the extent to which they reinterpret diminutive meanings present in the source text. Such variation highlights the role of translation as an interpretive practice in which linguistic resources, textual register and translator choices interact in shaping how interpersonal meanings are realised in the target texts.

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**DEMINUTIVI I AUGMENTATIVI U PRIJEVODU:
EKSPLORATIVNA STUDIJA U OKVIRU SISTEMSKE FUNKCIONALNE LINGVISTIKE
ROMANA DUBRAVKE UGREŠIĆ *BABA JAGA JE SNIJELA JAJE***

ADRIANA S. PAGANO
IRENA STANIĆ RAŠIN

SAŽETAK

Ovaj rad donosi prikaz eksplorativnoga međujezičnoga istraživanja semantičke domene deminucije i augmentacije. U teorijskome okviru sistemske funkcionalne lingvistike (SFL) ispituje se način na koji se značenja deminutivnosti i augmentativnosti, izražena morfološkim i leksičkim sredstvima poput umanjjenica i uvećanica, realiziraju u narativnome diskursu. Analiza se temelji na romanu Dubravke Ugrešić *Baba Jaga je snijela jaje*, tj. na njegovu prvome dijelu, u kojemu se pripovjedačica učestalo koristi deminutivnim izrazima kako bi oblikovala prikaz osobnosti i ponašanja svoje majke. Ti izrazi obuhvaćaju evaluativni stav pripovjedačice i njezin prikaz majčina govora, pri čemu umanjjenice i uvećanice funkcioniraju kao jezični pokazatelji fizičke i psihičke krhkosti majke. Sastavljen je korpus od 200 rečenica iz prvoga dijela hrvatskoga izvornika i njegovih prijevoda na španjolski, engleski, talijanski i portugalski jezik. Rečenice su unesene u proračunsku tablicu radi usklađenosti i identifikacije deminutiva i augmentativa u izvorniku i prijevodima. Najprije je provedena kontekstualna analiza izvornoga teksta i prevedenih tekstova. Zatim je svaka pojava razvrstana u dvije kategorije: (1) umanjjenica/uvećanica prevedena kao umanjjenica/uvećanica i (2) umanjjenica/uvećanica prevedena kao neumanjjenica/neuvećanica. Učestalost svake kategorije izračunata je za svaki jezični par (izvorni – ciljni jezik). U završnoj fazi provedena je analiza prema tipološkim i registarskim ograničenjima, uz razmatranje prevoditeljskih izbora koji se mogu pripisati prevoditeljevu interpretativnu razumijevanju izvornoga teksta. Rezultati upućuju na to da se pojedini jezici naslanjanju na različite leksičke i gramatičke resurse za izražavanje deminucije i augmentacije, pri čemu prevoditeljske odluke imaju značajnu ulogu u oblikovanju prikaza lika i afektivnosti. U širemu smislu, istraživanje pokazuje da pristup utemeljen na sistemskoj funkcionalnoj lingvistici omogućuje dublje razumijevanje međuodnosa jezičnoga sustava, prevoditeljske prakse i stvaranja značenja u tipološki različitim jezicima.

KLJUČNE RIJEČI:

augmentacija, deminucija, područje semantike, prevoditeljske studije, sistemska funkcionalna lingvistika, višejezična istraživanja