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THE USE OF DIMINUTIVES IN EVERYDAY COMMUNICATION

Abstract

The main goal of this paper is to analyse diminutives within spoken corpora with respect to morphology and pragmatics. We analyse the formation process of diminutives, as well as their pragmatic functions within the discourse.

The corpus being used for this research has been collected manually and contains transcripts of everyday communication among students (about 250,000 tokens), as well as transcripts of TV talk shows on politics (about 173,000 tokens). For the purpose of the extraction of diminutives we have created a simple script in Python.

Additionally, we are interested in exploring whether there is a difference in the use of diminutives within two different spheres of discourse – political discourse and everyday communication among students.

Keywords: diminutives, morphopragmatics, pragmatic functions, corpus analysis, spoken discourse

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1. INTRODUCTION

The term *diminutive* is usually defined as a category which denotes smallness and affection. However, diminutives have many different pragmatic functions within the discourse (cf. e.g. Savickiene & Dressler, 2007). In addition to expressing affection and endearment, diminutives are used with pejorative and augmentative meanings. Pragmatic meanings are usually interpreted as an extension of the basic semantic meaning, i.e. *smallness*, along with its connotations related to emotions. On the contrary, others view pragmatic meanings as fundamental (cf. Dressler & Merlini Barbaresi, 1994; Jurafsky, 1996).

Since diminutives are widely used in Serbian, our goal was to analyse the spoken corpus in order to find the answers to the following questions:

- a) Are there differences in the use of noun diminutives in the different sub-corpora of spoken language?
- b) What are the pragmatic meanings of diminutives within the corpus?
- c) What are the most frequent suffixes?

For the purpose of this research, we have used manually collected transcripts of spoken discourse related to two different spheres of discourse: students' communication and political talk shows.

2. DIMINUTIVES IN SERBIAN

Serbian is an inflection-rich Indo-European language. Some authors (cf. Grickat, 1995) claim that different parts of speech in Serbian can be diminutized. Grickat (1995) claims that noun diminutization (e.g. „satić”, *small watch*) refers to space dimension, adjective diminutization refers to qualitative dimension (e.g. „slankast”, *a bit salty*), and verb diminutization (e.g. „leškariti”, *lying down a bit*) refers to time and qualitative dimension. However, our focus within this

paper will be noun diminutives. Therefore, we present here Serbian noun morphology related to the formation of diminutives.

In Serbian, nouns are traditionally classified with regard to masculine, feminine and neuter gender. Nominal diminutives are formed with suffixes, which can be divided to those forming masculine, feminine and neuter gender nouns.

Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
– (ič/ar/er/elj/ulj/et)ak: “plam-ičak” <i>little flame</i> “šum-arak” <i>grove</i> “put-eljak” <i>path</i> “smot-uljak” <i>roll</i> “cvet-ak” <i>little flower</i>	-(č)ica: “trav-čica” <i>little blade of grass</i> “trav-ica” <i>little grass</i> -ca: “reč-ca” <i>particle</i>	-(an/aš/en/eš)ce: “tel-ašce” <i>little body</i> “tel-ence” <i>little calf</i> “ogledal-ce” <i>small mirror</i> -če: “čaj-če” <i>tea-AFFECTION</i>
-(č)ić: “kamen-čić” <i>pebble</i>	-ka: “trav-ka” <i>blade of grass</i>	
-ac: “brat-ac” <i>little brother</i>		

Table 1. Diminutive suffixes with examples

Usually, diminutive suffixes preserve grammatical features of nouns. However, feminine, masculine and neuter nouns sometimes take the same diminutive suffixes. For instance, “šuma” *forest* is feminine in Serbian. Common feminine diminutive suffix is *-ica*. However, in addition to f. “šum-ica” *little forest*, we can form a diminutive with the suffix *-arak*, and thus form a masculine noun. In the dictionary (Николић, 2011), the noun m. “šum-arak” *little forest* is defined as *little, usually lower, young and thick forest*. Within the same dictionary, the noun f. “šum-ica” *little forest* is defined as *little, young forest*. Additionally, the diminutive noun m. “brež-uljak” *little hill*, is derived from the neuter noun “breg” *hill*.

A great majority of diminutives ending in *-ak* and *-če* have their forms in *-ić*, *-čić* or *-ica* if feminine (Đurić, 2004, p. 151). Đurić (2004, p. 151) claims that those diminutives in *-ak* and *-če* have *hypocoristic, emotional or poetic meaning*, if not lexicalized, while those in *-ić*, *-čić* or

-*ica* primarily refer to the physical meaning of smallness, developing additional, secondary, pragmatic meanings. Within our paper, we will explore the meanings of diminutives found in our corpus.

Nominal diminutives can also be derived from verbal stems. For instance, the diminutive “smot-uljak” from the transitive perfective verb “smotati” *to fold*, means *something small and folded*. It should be noted that even though the verb “smotati” *to fold* does not contain diminutive meaning, the noun “smotuljak”, referring to the object of folding, always has a diminutive meaning. There are different levels of productivity for different diminutive suffixes. In this paper we do not investigate levels of productivity of diminutive suffixes in Serbian, since we are focused here primarily on the usage of diminutives and their frequency in conversations. The productivity of diminutive suffixes is a very important and interesting subject to investigate and it will be tackled in our future work.

3. CORPUS AND METHOD

The spoken corpus we used has been collected manually. It consists of about 423,000 tokens: the part of private everyday conversations (students and young people) transcripts contains about 25,000 tokens, and the part of public conversations (TV talk shows) transcripts contains about 173,000 tokens (Knjižar, 2019).

Given the fact that the corpus is unannotated, we devised a simple python script for extracting diminutives based on regular expressions. First, we defined regular expressions for all the suffixes that exist in grammar books (cf. e.g. Stanojčić & Popović, 2004). The expression in (A) matches neuter diminutives, (B) matches feminine and (C) matches masculine diminutives.

- A. `re.match('(.*(en|(a|e)š)ce(ta|tu)?$)|(.*(če(ta|tu)?$)|(.*(čad(i|ima)?$))$)`
- B. `re.match('(.*(ic(a|ma|e|i|o|u)$)|(.*(^[aeiou]k(a|i|e|o|u|.ma))$)`
- C. `re.match('(.*(ić(a|u|em|om|i|ima|e)?|(.*(^[aeiou]c(ima|i)|.*ak$|.*^[aeiou]k(a|u|kom)$|.*^[aeiou]c(ima|i)|.*ak$|.*^[aeiou]k(a|u|kom)$)`

Second, given that regular expressions find a great number of tokens which are not diminutives (e.g. “priče” *stories*, “juče” *yesterday*, “kolače” *cookies*), we used an electronic dictionary of about 2000 diminutives (Vitas & Krstev, 2012; Krstev, 2008), to find matches. We created a simple stemmer in order to normalize the results (see examples 4–7 for neuter diminutives), before the comparison to the dictionary is executed.

- D. `norm = series_diminutives.str.replace("ence(ta|tu)?$", "ence", regex=True)`
- E. `norm = series_diminutives.str.replace("ešce(ta|tu)?$", "ešce", regex=True)`
- F. `norm = series_diminutives.str.replace("ce(ta|tu)?$", "ce", regex=True)`
- G. `norm = series_diminutives.str.replace("če(ta|tu)?$", "če", regex=True)`

Finally, we manually checked all the results in order to find diminutives that exist in our corpus, but do not exist within the dictionary. Additionally, we manually checked whether diminutives were lexicalized or not, and removed the lexicalized from the list (see Table 2).

4. RESULTS

We have found about one hundred and fifteen diminutive tokens in our corpus (~ 0.0002% of all tokens). The following graph shows the frequency distribution of diminutive suffixes. First, we will analyse examples from the perspective of morphology, and second, from the perspective of pragmatics.

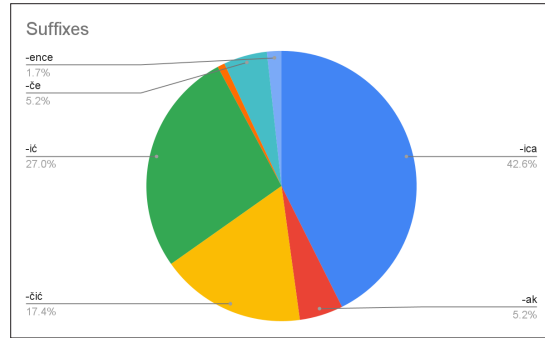


Figure 1. The distribution of diminutive suffixes within the corpus

The following is the list of diminutives found within the corpora, their absolute and relative frequencies, as well as the type of corpus they appeared.

lemma	a_frequency	r_frequency	suffix	corpus
šamarčić	1	0.0006%	-čić	political
staklić	1	0.0006%	-ić	political
šefić	1	0.0006%	-ić	political
nesposobnjaković	1	0.0006%	-ić	political
detaljčić	1	0.0006%	-čić	political
papirić	2	0.0005%	-ić	colloquial
gradić	1	0.0002%	-ić	colloquial
dečkić	1	0.0002%	-ić	colloquial
mužić	1	0.0002%	-ić	colloquial
vetrić	1	0.0002%	-ić	colloquial
ćevapčić	2	0.0005%	-čić	colloquial
vinjačić	1	0.0002%	-ić	colloquial
konjačić	1	0.0002%	-ić	colloquial
parkić	1	0.0002%	-ić	colloquial

stočić	15	0.0035%	-čić	colloquial
draguljčić	1	0.0002%	-čić	colloquial
štapić	3	0.0007%	-ić	colloquial
komadić	1	0.0002%	-ić	colloquial
stikerčić	1	0.0002%	-ić	colloquial
evrić	3	0.0007%	-ić	colloquial
mišić	1	0.0002%	-ić	colloquial
đavolak	2	0.0005%	-ak	colloquial
sokić	2	0.0005%	-ić	colloquial
osmejak	1	0.0002%	-ak	colloquial
mesečak	1	0.0002%	-ak	colloquial
kamičak	2	0.0005%	-ak	colloquial
ormarić	1	0.0002%	-ić	colloquial
prstić	1	0.0002%	-ić	colloquial
lančić	2	0.0005%	-ić	colloquial
testić	1	0.0002%	-ić	colloquial
parčić	1	0.0002%	-ić	colloquial
mrvice	2	0.0005%	-ica	colloquial
pčelica	1	0.0002%	-ica	colloquial
tetkica	1	0.0002%	-ica	colloquial
čašica	3	0.0007%	-ica	colloquial
kućica	2	0.0005%	-ica	colloquial
kesica	1	0.0002%	-ica	colloquial
dušica	1	0.0002%	-ica	colloquial
dečica	2	0.0005%	-ica	colloquial
kiflica	2	0.0005%	-ica	colloquial
detence	2	0.0005%	-ence	colloquial

letvica	1	0.0002%	-ica	colloquial
gitarica	2	0.0005%	-ica	colloquial
batica	1	0.0002%	-ica	colloquial
pljačkica	1	0.0002%	-ica	colloquial
tačkica	4	0.0009%	-ica	colloquial
krmenadlica	1	0.0002%	-ica	colloquial
pundica	1	0.0002%	-ica	colloquial
bubica	1	0.0002%	-ica	colloquial
voćkica	1	0.0002%	-ica	colloquial
cipelica	2	0.0005%	-ica	colloquial
štiklica	1	0.0002%	-ica	colloquial
klupče	1	0.0002%	-če	colloquial
torbica	1	0.0002%	-ica	colloquial
resica	2	0.0005%	-ica	colloquial
nogica	2	0.0005%	-ica	colloquial
zvezdica	2	0.0005%	-ica	colloquial
vežbica	3	0.0007%	-ica	colloquial
sličica	1	0.0002%	-ica	colloquial
knjižica	1	0.0002%	-ica	colloquial
jarče	2	0.0005%	-če	colloquial
klinkica	1	0.0002%	-ica	colloquial
restoranče	1	0.0002%	-če	colloquial
tenkić	2	0.0005%	-ić	colloquial
spravica	1	0.0002%	-ica	colloquial
prozorče	1	0.0002%	-če	colloquial
mukica	1	0.0002%	-ica	colloquial
prvenče	1	0.0002%	-če	colloquial

grudvica	1	0.0002%	-ica	colloquial
čikica	2	0.0005%	-ica	colloquial
brdašce	1	0.0002%	-ašce	colloquial

Table 2. Diminutives, their absolute frequency and type of corpus they appeared in

4.1. MASCULINE DIMINUTIVES

Masculine noun diminutive forms we have found in our corpus ended in *-ak* and *-(č)ić*. 5.2% of all diminutive types ended in *-ak*, while 44.4% of all diminutive types ended in *-(č)ić*. Even though traditional grammar recognizes suffix *-ac* as a masculine diminutive suffix, we have not found diminutives formed with *-ac* within the corpus. As Jovanović (2004) notes, it seems that the suffix *-(a)c* ceased to be used for the formation of diminutives and its current use seems to be limited to literature and otherwise marked context.

Here, we provide examples found in the corpus.

- (1) Bio sam pravi mali **đavol-ak**.

I was a real little **devil-DIM**.

When the speaker says he was a little devil in Serbian, the hearer usually perceives him as being mischievous, naughty, but in a likeable, funny, playful way. The usual connotation for the use of this diminutive form is child-related behaviour. Hence, the negative connotation of being a “devil” is not present. Here, the diminutive form of the noun “đavo” intensifies the *cuteness* of being a little devil and at the same time diminishes the unpleasantness and intensity of the qualification of being a devil.

- (2) Pa može negde, neka kafana ili nek ili ne znam tako neki **restoran-čić**, videćemo,...

Well, yes, we can go somewhere, to a tavern or some or I don't know some **restaurant-DIM**, we'll see...

Here, the diminutive form of the noun “restaurant” is being used in order to denote that it can be *something similar to the restaurant*, but something which is less formal than a restaurant. The speaker refers, in other words, to some cosy place where food and drinks are served, and where guests can drop by without a previous plan and reservations, in an informal way, and thus they perceive such a place as more comfortable.

- (3) ... i uvek imate mali osmej-ak...
... and you always have that little **smile-DIM**...

A *little smile-DIM* denotes here a compliment for a hearer. The diminutive form of the noun “osmeh” *smile* added an additional meaning of agreeable quality, warmth, cuteness and affection. Moreover, a speaker in this example uses an adjective “little” to describe the “smile-DIM” which strongly suggests that “smile-DIM” is not felt as a smile that is not broad, but rather as a smile that is nice, cute, agreeable.

- (4) Brisač, **erkić**.
Wiper blade, **die-DIM**.

We have also found an interesting example where the noun diminutive suffix is added to the verb stem of the verb “crći” *to die* (4) to express the fact that something stopped working. Here, it seems to have the function of softening the negative statement and a bit of humorous effect, as well. It also seems to establish a friendly context for the interaction.

4.2. FEMININE DIMINUTIVES

42.6% of all diminutive types were those ending in *-ica*. Traditional grammar recognizes the diminutive suffix *-ka*, in addition to *-ica*. However, those examples seem to be mostly lexicalized and we have not found them within the corpus. Đurić (2004), for instance, mentions “snajka” *daughter-in-law* as a diminutive, even though it is a highly lexicalized diminutive and most speakers of the Serbian language probably would not perceive it as a diminutive.

- (5) Oćete vinjač-ić jedan, **rakij-icu**? vinjač-ić?
Would you like a shot of vinjak-DIM, of **rakija-DIM**? Of
vinjak-DIM?

Using diminutive forms in the context of offering drinks and beverages is very usual in Serbian. Here, the diminutive forms unveil levels of intimacy and informality between speakers, which is the most usual pragmatic effect of the use of diminutive forms of nouns denoting beverages or even food in this context.

- (6) Što me vi navučete svaki put... ali pola **čaš-ice**, pola **čaš-ice**
(smeh)
Oh, you lure me into this every time... but, please, half of a
glass-DIM, half of a **glass-DIM** (laughs)

Speaker answers to the offer to have a drink with a diminutive form of the noun “čaša” *glass*. However, this is a highly lexicalized diminutive form with the meaning of a small glass that is commonly used for spirits. Repetition is a means of intensification (cf. Martin & White, 2005, p. 144). Here, the speaker emphasises that he only wants the half of the glass repeating the noun phrase *pola čašice*.

4.3. NEUTER DIMINUTIVES

Within the corpus, we have found two diminutive suffixes: *-će* (5.2% of all diminutive types) and *-(en)ce* (1.7% of all diminutive types), *-(aš)ce* (0.9% of all diminutive types)

- (7) Kad sam raspoložena odem tamo... Na ono **brd-ašce**.
When I am in a good mood I go there... To this **hill-DIM**.

Here, the meaning seems to be related to affection, the positive feelings of the speaker related to this place, the little hill. We may also conclude that the speaker is a female person (*raspoložen-a* – adj, nominative case, feminine – “in a good mood”). It would be interesting to explore how the sex of the speaker, as well as the sex of the recipient affect the use of diminutives in the Serbian language. Makri-Tsilipakou

(2003) found that men use diminutives more extensively than women within the Greek language.

- (8) Imali smo organizaciju da idemo negde u neko **restoran-če** kao.

We've been thinking about going to **a restaurant-DIM** or so.

In (8), a diminutive “restoranče” *restaurant* has a modal function as well – it means that they thought about going to a restaurant *or so*. The use of “kao”- *or so* (cf. Половина и Панић Церовски, 2013; Panić, 2010) immediately after the noun “restoranče”, thus relating to it, intensifies the meaning of an unspecified type of the service where food and drinks are served. It does not necessarily mean that the restaurant is small, but that it can be anything similar to, but less formal than, a restaurant. The same situation is presented in the example (2), where the other diminutive suffix (-*čić*) is used, but with the same scope of additional meaning.

5. THE USAGE OF DIMINUTIVES

Within this section, we will present and analyse examples from the corpus. We are interested in pragmatic functions that diminutives have within different types of discourse in our corpus: informal, private conversations and public, and thus more formal conversations.

5.1. THE POLITICAL DISCOURSE

The total number of diminutive tokens we have found within political discourse is 5 (0,00003% of all tokens within the corpus of political discourse).

- (9) ... a recimo, jedan sitan, mali, **detaljčić**, ako... ovaj... se izveze jedna fabrika vrednosti od 30 miliona evra,...
... and for example, one tiny, little, **detail-DIM**, if.. am.. one factory, 30 million euros worth, is being exported...

In the example (9), the speaker doesn't mean that the detail is small. Quite the opposite, this detail seems to be very important, it is related to the exportation of a factory that is worth 30 million euros. It seems that the speaker uses the diminutive form here in order to obtain a humorous effect and to highlight the importance of the detail, i.e. the contrary meaning of the lexeme "detaljčić" *detail-DIM*. It is interesting to note that, in this example, the motive noun *detail* already brings the humorous effect, especially with adjectives "sitan" *tiny* and "mali" *little* before the noun. Using the diminutive here emphasises the humorous effect, with a bit of irony or cynicism.

(10) da budete kafe-kuvarica treba da poznajete nekog šefa tamo, šef-ića u nekoj stranci, da vas zaposli.

If you want to work in a catering service, you need to know some manager there, **manager-DIM** in a political party.

In (10) we observe the repetition of the noun "šef" *manager*, with the second one being a diminutive form of the motive noun. Using the diminutive seems to be related to emphasising the pejorative meaning and the disapproving tone towards the subject matter of the whole utterance (cf. Martin & White, 2005). In fact, the use of this diminutive form suggests small significance of that position viewed from the perspective of political importance, but at the same time, reflects that the importance of it is construed through the fact that being on this position, someone is given the power to decide on ordinary people's job position.

(11) A šta bi značio ovaj mali, kako bih to nazvala, šamar-čić kako vi to sad hoćete da podignete svoj rejting u stranci ili svoju poziciju u stranci?

And what would be the meaning of this little (slap in the face), what would I call it, a **tiny slap-DIM** in the face, how do you wish to increase your rating within the political party?

The example in (11) does not indicate a tiny slap-DIM in the face at all. On the contrary, using the diminutive form emphasises the negative attitude the speaker has towards the proposition. The

speaker is a TV anchor and her guest is a politician. Even though we do not observe the whole context in (11), and we do not know who slapped who, and what was the reason, we do observe this negative attitude.

The diminutives in (9) and (11) could be changed to augmentatives as well. Dressler and Merlini Barbaressi (2001) use similar examples in Italian as evidence that the meaning of diminutives cannot be constructed on the basis of semantic feature [small]. Rather, it is based on the pragmatic feature [fictive], and its more specific meaning [non-serious].

5.2. THE CONVERSATIONS AMONG STUDENTS

The total number of diminutive tokens we have found in this part of the corpus is 108.

- (12) Oćete **vinjać-ić** jedan, **rakij-icu?** **vinjać-ić?**
Would you like a **brandy-DIM**, **schnapps-DIM?** **Brandy-DIM?**

In (12) a speaker is asking his friends what they would like to drink. He is using diminutive forms of drink names to denote cordiality, affection and endearment.

- (13) Pa da, šta sada, oni imaju to od 4 do 6, medialunas i **čaj-ić**.
Yes, so what, they have it from 4 to 6, medialunas and **tea-DIM**.

Similarly, in the example (13), a speaker explains habitual actions in Argentina and uses a diminutive form “čajić” tea-DIM. Diminutive form here denotes affection.

- (14) Petsto pedeset? [...] ali... nekako [...] mislim da je to **pljačkica**.
Five hundred fifty? [...] but.. somehow [...] I think it is a **robbery-DIM**.

The speaker explains that the specified amount of money is a lot of money, and thus it is *a kind of robbery*, although not a real robbery. The example in (14) thus has a pragmatic function of a hedge.

- (15) Nekad imam neku malu izložbicu ja, moju autorsku...
Sometimes, I have a small exhibition-DIM me, my own...

A speaker in (15) mitigates the force of an utterance with a diminutive “izložbica” *small exhibition*. The use of diminutive form in this case seems to be a sign of unpretentiousness, humbleness, absence of arrogance.

As we have seen in examples (1), (3), (9) and (11), an adjective “mali” *little* is used along with a diminutive form. In conversation, it does not represent a pleonasm. It suggests that when speakers use diminutive forms, their primary meaning is not related to smallness, but to the hypocoristic, pejorative meaning, mitigating the force of an utterance, or other pragmatic meanings.

6. CONCLUDING REMARKS

Both within political discourse and within private, student conversations, diminutives seem to have a role in expressing the communicative effect of humour and they are often used to express irony as well.

By the means of irony and cynicism, diminutives in the political discourse section of our corpus expressed most frequently pejorative meaning, disapproval and negative attitude. However, within the conversations among students, we have found cases of diminutives denoting hospitality, affection and endearment (examples 12 and 13), hedges (14), as well as examples when diminutives were used to mitigate the force of an utterance (15), to ease the situation (4), conveying at the same time humorous effects. According to the fact that the private, student conversations in our corpus were friendly interactions without strong opposing or disputes between interactants, unlike political TV talk shows, the use of diminutive forms to convey

negative attitude, or open disapproval is less present in that part of the corpus. In other words, the effects and connotations of the use of diminutive forms have shown the tendency to be different depending on the type of the conversation, the relations between participants and their perceived role, as well as the topics that were discussed. With respect to morphology, concerning the derivation process of diminutives, our research has shown that the most frequent suffixes were *-ica* for feminine gender, *-ić* for masculine nouns, and *-će* for neuter diminutives, where 42.6% of all diminutive types were those ending in *-ica*.

Finally, it would be interesting to explore the productivity of those suffixes as well as to explore the semantic and pragmatic meanings of diminutives on other corpora. In addition, it would be important to examine in what way the sex of the speaker, as well as the sex of the recipient affect the use of diminutives in the Serbian language.

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L'USAGE DES DIMINUTIFS DANS LA COMMUNICATION QUOTIDIENNE

Résumé

Le présent article vise à analyser les diminutifs dans les corpus de la langue parlée, depuis les perspectives morphologique et pragmatique. Nous analysons le processus de la formation des diminutifs, ainsi que leur fonction pragmatique au sein du discours.

Le corpus utilisé pour la présente recherche a été collecté manuellement et contient les transcriptions de la communication quotidienne des étudiants (environ 250 000 tokens), ainsi que les transcriptions des émissions de débat télévisées sur la politique (environ 173 000 tokens). Afin d'en extraire des diminutifs, nous avons créé un script simple en Python.

Nous avons davantage exploré s'il existe une différence dans l'usage des diminutifs dans ces deux sphères distinctes, à savoir le discours politique et la communication quotidienne des étudiants.

Dans le discours politique ainsi que dans le discours privé – la conversation estudiantine –, les diminutifs semblent avoir le rôle d'exprimer l'effet communicatif de l'humour ; ils sont fréquemment utilisés pour exprimer aussi de l'ironie.

Par le biais de l'ironie et du cynisme, les diminutifs dans la section politique de notre corpus ont exprimé le plus fréquemment la signification péjorative, la désapprobation et l'attitude négative. En revanche, dans le cadre de la communication parmi les étudiants, nous avons trouvé les cas des diminutifs dénotant l'hospitalité, l'affection, la sympathie, l'enclosure (*hedges*), ainsi que les exemples dans lesquels les diminutifs étaient utilisés pour atténuer la force de l'élocution et pour détendre la situation, tout en transmettant l'effet humoristique. Vu que les conversations privées, estudiantines, de notre corpus étaient des interactions amicales sans forts désaccords ou disputes entre les participants – contrairement aux émissions de débat télévisées sur la politique –, l'usage des formes diminutives pour transmettre l'attitude négative ou la désapprobation ouverte est moins présent dans cette partie du corpus. Autrement dit, les effets et les connotations de l'usage des formes diminutives ont montré la tendance d'être différents, en fonction du type de la conversation, des relations entre les participants et de la perception de leurs rôles respectifs, ainsi que des sujets des discussions.

Dans le domaine de la morphologie, en ce qui concerne le processus de la dérivation des diminutifs, notre recherche a démontré que les suffixes les plus

fréquents étaient *-ica* pour le genre féminin, *-ić* pour les noms masculins, ainsi que *-če* pour les diminutifs neutres ; dans l'ensemble, 41,6 % de tous les diminutifs terminaient en *-ica*.

Enfin, ce serait intéressant d'explorer la productivité de ces suffixes, ainsi que les significations sémantique et pragmatique des diminutifs dans les autres corpus. En outre, ce serait important d'examiner de quelle manière le sexe du locuteur, ainsi que celui de l'interlocuteur affectent l'usage des diminutifs dans la langue serbe.

Mots-clés: diminutifs, morphopragmatique, fonctions pragmatique, analyse de corpus, langue parlée