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## DIFFERENCES IN DIMINUTIVE MEANING BETWEEN POLISH *MALY* AND RUSSIAN *МАЛЕНЬКИЙ*<sup>1</sup>

The present paper descriptively analyzes how the diminutive meaning of the adjectives belonging to the semantic field of SIZE in Polish and Russian, specifically *mały* and *маленький* respectively, has changed differently in each language, although both words come from the PS word *\*malъ*. The aim of this article is to show, through dictionary entries and translation equivalents, that because the Russian standard adjective is effectively a diminutive with an *-еньк-* diminutive suffix (< *малый*), it typically conveys a stronger sense of ‘littleness’ than the Polish adjective *mały*, which typically conveys the meaning of ‘smallness’ than emotive meaning. Because of this, the semantic-pragmatic meanings of the derived/underived diminutive forms diverge. The differences between these adjectives plays an important role in the process of understanding the relationship between diminutive constructions in East and West Slavic languages, which is especially relevant to translators.

### 1. Introduction

It is an established fact that Polish and Russian, as part of the Slavic family of languages, prefer to form diminutives synthetically rather than analytically; that is, diminutives are formed with the addition of various types of diminutive affixes to the base noun, adjective, adverb, and in some cases, the verb. This preference has produced a broad range of research on Slavic diminutives. The emotive nature of Russian diminutives in particular have been addressed notably by Bratus (1969) and Volek (1987), while Wierzbicka (1984; 1996; 2007) has devoted much research to cross-linguistic studies of Polish and Russian diminutives. Scholars agree that Slavic languages, Polish and Russian in particular, express a broad range of diminutive meanings and nuances. As

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Bratus notes, a “diversity of diminutive suffixes is characteristic of Russian [and] diminutives with one and the same suffix may very often have various shades of meaning – positive or negative – depending on the lexical meaning of the original word, on the context, situation and intonation” (6-7). Corbett (2012) also points out that “diminutives frequently convey expressive meaning, such as endearment” (146) and gives Russian as an example. Thus, diminutives in their synthetic forms have established systems of nuances and cultural implications in Polish and Russian.

Diminutives formed with analytic markers, or adjectives in the word field SMALL<sup>2</sup>, have been overshadowed by synthetic diminutive suffixes and thus received little scholarly attention in Slavic languages. Analytically-formed diminutives, however, can express various nuances and emotive connotations in Polish and Russian. With this paper, I aim to fill in the gap in the literature by cross-linguistically comparing the Polish adjective *mały* and the Russian adjective *маленький* which roughly correspond to English *little* and *small*. The two adjectives appear remarkably similar because they are both languages’ standard adjective to convey smallness of size and occasionally emotion (e.g. when preceding a synthetic diminutive). I chose to compare these two markers specifically because they are the ‘standard’ adjectives; they are the unmarked forms which, as I will show later in this paper, are used most often to denote SIZE. A preliminary examination of the development and the possible derivatives of these two adjectives suggest that the Polish adjective *mały* conveys more ‘smallness of size’ than emotive connotations compared with the Russian adjective *маленький* because *маленький* is a derived form from *малый* with an endearing diminutive affix *-en’k*. As Wierzbicka (1996) aptly notes, “in Russian, *malen’kij* – formally a diminutive – has a special relationship with diminutive adjectives such as *belen’kij* (‘white’ + Dim)” (16). The fact that Russian *маленький* is a diminutive limits the possibilities for other diminutive derivations and suggests that *маленький* is an adjective that can convey a broad range of possible nuances and levels of emotive connotations. Polish, on the other hand, can create several expressive derived diminutive forms from *mały*, many of which are ‘translation equivalents’ of Russian *маленький*. Other adjectives in the word field SMALL also appear as ‘translation equivalents’ in the parallel corpus and dictionary entries (e.g. Polish *niewielki* and *nieduży* meaning ‘not big/ small’; Russian *небольшой* ‘not big/small’ and *крошечный* ‘tiny.DIM’), but will only receive brief consideration since they express additional nuances of size in the semantic field that lies outside the scope of this paper.

The differences between Polish *mały* and its derivative forms and Russian *маленький* and its underived form *малый* bring forth the main research questions of this paper: How different in emotive connotations and ‘smallness of size’ are the two adjectives and their derived/underived forms? What are the ‘transla-

<sup>2</sup> Here and elsewhere I use small capitals (as in SMALL or SIZE) to refer to semantically similar groups of lexical items or to semantic fields.

tion equivalents' given in dictionaries and parallel corpora and what does this contribute to the adjectives' meanings and emotional connotations? As Hubler (1998) writes, expressivity is "related to a person's self-expression, the self comprising her/his emotions, no matter whether they relate to inner dispositions or to evaluative attitudes, no matter whether they relate to inner dispositions or to evaluative attitudes [...] there are means available through which such emotions can be expressed" (1). Thus, the research questions link the specific adjective in its diminutive construction with the emotion it conveys. Through a corpus linguistics, semantic-pragmatic and translation approach, I show that the Russian 'standard' adjective for 'little/small' does, indeed, tend to evoke a stronger diminutive and emotional meaning than its Polish 'standard' equivalent while also expressing 'smallness of size'. In other words, Russian *маленький* has, more or less, been used to cover the same range of meanings as Polish *mały* and its diminutive forms combined. Polish, as I will discuss, has a more structured arrangement of derived forms meaning 'little/small'.

## 2. Sources of Evidence and Methodology

The data for the present study have been drawn from a variety of sources. I have first resorted to Russian-Polish and Russian-Polish dictionaries – both print and online versions – to gather data on what lexicographers consider the 'equivalent' form of each adjective. Although Stark (2011) notes that "smaller bilingual dictionaries are, however, often criticized for providing a single translation equivalent which can be misleading" (18), I find that the use of only one equivalent can be significant because the equivalent used in these dictionaries may provide the word that is most likely considered closest in meaning. Likewise, machine translations such as Google Translate "may be useful in the sense that they give readers a general understanding of a text written in a foreign language" (Van Rensburg, Snyman and Lotz 2012: 522); or, as in the case for this study, machine translators provide a general translation of a word from another language. In addition, I have briefly made an internet domain search of Russian and Polish websites to gather data about frequency of adjective use.

In the second half of the paper I turned to the online *Polish-Russian Parallel Corpus* in order to examine post-1945 fiction translations from Polish to Russian. In this section, I used corpus linguistics methodology, which as Curzan (2012) points out, "aims to assess the extent to which patterns of language use are found in a given body of texts (spoken or written) and to analyze the contextual factors that influence language variation in the texts" (11). Finding these patterns of language provides useful information to studies in the linguistic subfields of morphology, syntax, discourse and semantics-pragmatics (cf. Curzan 2012:11). This approach shows "the contrasts between two languages that are made visible by looking at translation pairs" (Santos 2004:23). Examining translation has been

established as an important aspect at understanding cross-linguistic descriptive semantic-pragmatic meaning beyond simply machine-based analysis, which may be illustrated by the following excerpt (Teubert 2002:191).

The core issue of translation is meaning. For each semantic unit of the source text, there has to be an equivalent in the target text. Therefore cross-linguistic lexicography in quest of meaning must pay close attention to the practice of translators. It is they who invent the translation equivalents for lexical expressions. [...] Translators deal in texts, and they undertake to paraphrase a text in a different language so that the paraphrase will mean almost the same as the original text. In order to carry out their task, they have to understand the text. This means that they interpret the text. [...] Only human beings can do it.

It must be mentioned, however, that the *Polish-Russian Parallel Corpus* is relatively small in size (of post-1945 fiction) and thus is not as broad in scope as could be desired. To fill in the corpus with further examples and data, I examined in addition several well-known yet randomly selected novels that have been translated into various languages from various genres (e.g. mystery and fantasy) and their translations. These are the Polish novels by Lem (*Pokój na ziemi*, 1987), Libera (*Madame*, 1998) and Sapkowski (*Krew elfów*, 1994) and a Russian novel by Akunin (*Пелагия и белый бульдог*, 2000).

### 3. A First Approach: Evidence from Dictionaries and Internet Domain Searches

Historically, the Polish adjective *mały* and Russian adjective маленький (< *малый*) that refer to SIZE come from the same proto-Slavic word *\*malъ* meaning “having a small size, small/little” (Malmor 2009:256, my translation). The variant used has changed differently in each language, as is shown in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Relationship between Polish and Russian

proto-slavic <i>*malъ</i>	
Russian	Polish
<i>малый</i>	<i>mały</i> – standard
<i>маленький</i> – standard	<i>malutki, maleńki, malusi</i>
<i>малюсенький</i> [ <i>maljusen'kij</i> ]	<i>malusieńki</i>

The Polish language has kept the original word through its underived variant *mały*, which is used often and can create many expressive diminutive forms to convey emotive connotations. Stankiewicz (1964) writes that “from an



towards one extreme of the spectrum ('too small') and *малюсенький* to the other extreme of the spectrum ('tiny' + emotion), while *маленький* covers the broad middle between the two.

These differences create not only a different level of emotion between the Polish and Russian 'standard' adjectives, but a different understanding of what range of emotion these adjectives express. Although *mały* and *маленький* are the 'standard' forms, the Russian variant looks and sounds similar to Polish *maleńki*, a diminutive form of the Polish standard and contains a diminutive affix that is normally used to create diminutive variants of adjectives. In fact, as the section below will show, *маленький* is often translated as the emotive *maleńki* or *malutki* forms, though the translation is not consistent because contextual factors play a role in the translator's choice of adjective. Because of this difference between the Polish and Russian adjectives, we cannot say that *маленький* and *mały* 'small/little' have the same diminutive meaning or correspond with each other.

The difference between these Polish and Russian adjectives is further demonstrated in Polish-Russian and Russian-Polish dictionaries. Although the accuracy of the online dictionary *Babylon* is more questionable than the other online translators because of the entries retrieved appear in the wrong case (e.g. plural *малые*), online translations can show broad generalizations as to why the Russian adjective *маленький* would be translated as Polish *mały*. For example, although Russian *маленький* is a diminutive, it no longer conveys to the same degree the strong diminutive meaning that other adjectives with the same diminutive affix would (e.g. *милюсенький* 'dear.DIM' or *слабенький* 'weak.DIM'). Thus, it would be odd to choose Polish *maleńki* over *mały* on the spur of the moment unless the context strongly emphasized an affective meaning. The machine translation from Polish to Russian, however, does not offer much clarification in regards to diminutive meaning. In this case, the dictionaries give the translation equivalents *малый* or *небольшой*, which focus on 'smallness of size' rather than emotion, more often than *маленький*. From this we can see further evidence that despite *mały* and *маленький* are the typical form in their respective languages when referring to something small or little, the two are not exact 'equivalents'.

To narrow in further, Figure 2 suggests that *mały* conveys a greater meaning of smallness and less of diminutive meaning than *маленький*. Turning from the online dictionaries to the print dictionary by PWN (2006) and the online PONS.eu, the entries show that *маленький* has stronger emotional nuances than *малый*, since the translation equivalents of *маленький* include the diminutive forms *malutki* and *maleńki*, while the translation of Polish *mały* into Russian generally focus on the 'smallness of size' meaning that is conveyed by *малый*, *небольшой* and on occasion *маленький*. That is, out of context, the evidence suggests that the Polish adjective conveys a stronger nuance of 'smallness of size' than emotion. In contrast, the Russian adjective conveys a stronger sense of emotion and diminutive meaning than 'smallness of size', which can be conveyed by the

adjective *малый* ‘(too) small’. In a sense, the diminutive meaning of Russian *маленький* covers Polish *mały* and *malutki/maleńki* to certain extents.

Figure 2: Polish-Russian and Russian-Polish Dictionary Entries

	Translation of <i>маленький</i>	Translation of <i>малый</i>	Translation of <i>mały</i>	Translation of <i>malutki</i> and <i>maleńki</i>
<b>PWN (2006)</b>	mały / malutki	mały	1. маленький 2. ( <i>small; not the physical dimensions, mainly about abstract meanings</i> ) малый 3. ( <i>short in duration</i> ) небольшой	маленький
<b>Google Translate</b>	mały (niewielki, drobny given as additional options)	mały (niewielki, drobny given as additional options)	небольшой (малый, маленький, мелкий given as additional options)	крошечный
<b>PONS.eu</b>	1. mały / maleńki 2. drobny	mały / niewielki	малый	маленький / крошечный
<b>translatica.pl</b>	mały	mały	маленький	маленький
<b>Babylon</b>	mały	małe	малые	мало

Other adjectives of SMALL appear in the dictionaries’ entries as well, specifically *крошечный* ‘tiny’ for Polish *malutki* and/or *maleńki* (again showing diminutive meaning); Russian *небольшой* ‘not big / small’ for Polish *mały*; Polish *drobny* ‘tiny’ for Russian *маленький*; and, Polish *niewielki* ‘not big / small’ for Russian *малый*. I will not spend much time on these adjectives except to point out the PWN’s print entries for them and thus show the rather fuzzy area that these adjectives belong to. Russian *небольшой* is translated as Polish *niewielki* / *nieduży* and vice-versa; Polish *drobny* (*niewielki*) is translated as Russian *мелкий* ‘tiny’ and vice-versa. In the PWN dictionary, then, these adjectives do not translate into *mały* or *маленький* and have different nuances and are mutually exclusive of each other.

Despite the much generalized suggestions that can be made from out-of-context dictionary entries, the meanings of the adjectives are more complex than can be quickly provided by a dictionary. I use these generalizations to begin a corpus study of each analytic diminutive in the next section.

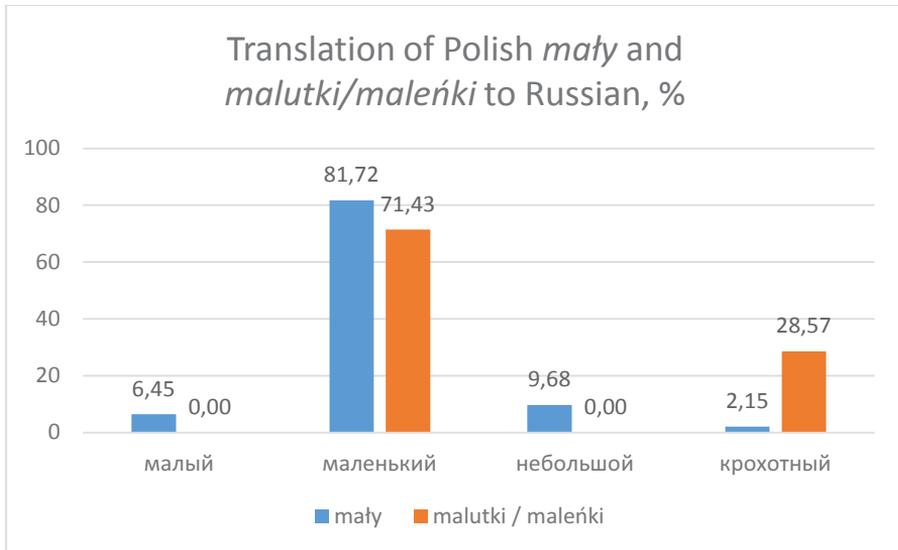
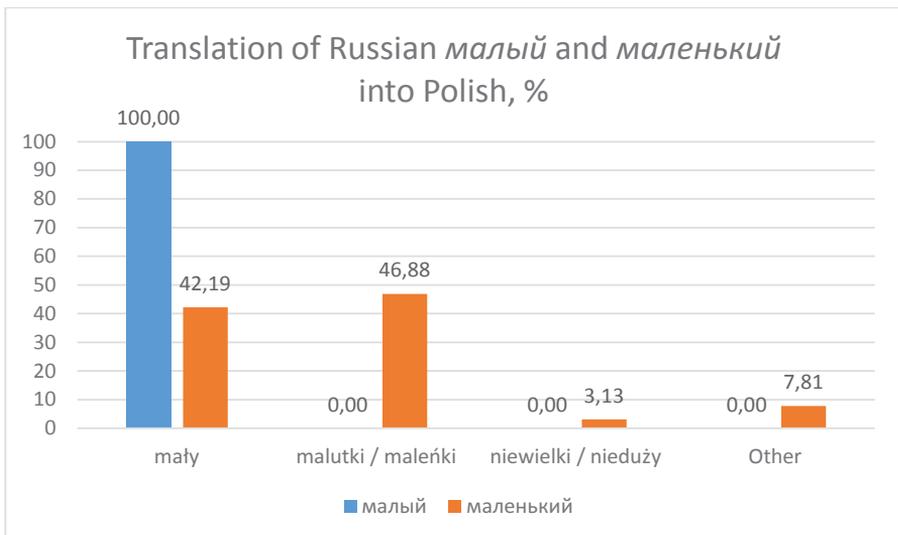
#### 4. A Second Approach: Translations between Polish and Russian

The ‘translation equivalents’ of Polish *mały* and Russian *маленький* in the parallel corpus, in addition to the ‘translation equivalents’ found in dictionary entries, further demonstrate the relatively ‘fuzzy’ semantic and emotive boundaries between the two adjectives.<sup>4</sup> However, a few points remain consistently clear, as I will show below in a broad overview. First, *mały* and *маленький* are the ‘translation equivalents’ for a larger range of adjectives, while the other diminutive derivatives (or underived form in Russian) are more restricted in meaning. Some direct links can be stated. For example, *малый* always means *mały*, never the derivative forms, while *маленький* can take on the meanings from *mały* (focus on size) all the way to *drobniutki* (focus on emotion). Thus, although the boundaries may be rather murky because of the different structure between Polish and Russian, there are some meanings that can be established from the corpus. In Figure 3 below, where the percentages of each adjective used (in all genders and cases) in the corpus and selected books (post-1945) are compared with their ‘translation equivalent’, we find the frequency of these forms and the ‘additional’ diminutive forms (e.g. *небольшой*, *niewielki*) added into the discussion.

As the Polish-Russian dictionaries (especially in PWN’s dictionary) and domain searches suggested, the underived and ‘standard’ adjective, *mały*, was translated as *маленький* most often at 81.7% of the time, while the other adjectives were found infrequently, specifically *небольшой* (9.7%), *малый* (6.5%), and *крохотный* (2.2%). This shows the strong semantic link between *mały* and *маленький* from a Polish translator’s perspective and yet does not entirely remove the ‘smallness of size’ meaning by translating into *малый* and *небольшой*. The translations of the diminutive forms *malutki* and *maleńki*, however, suggest that they convey first a level of emotion as expressed through Russian *маленький* because they were not translated as *малый* or *небольшой*. The diminutive forms also seem to express a little physical size smaller than *mały*, as demonstrated through the translation equivalent of *крохотный*, which is usually considered to be the equivalent of Polish *drobny* ‘tiny’.

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<sup>4</sup> Occasionally in translations the adjective was omitted and a diminutive affix was used instead, which shows the emotive and meaning of ‘small in size’ connection between the adjective and diminutive affix (e.g. *takiego malego kotka* → *такого котеночка*; *как дитя малое* → *jak dzieciak*), and on occasion the adjective was changed for another word, in many cases adding a diminutive affix as well (e.g. *male schodki* → *узенькая лестничка*). Since the purpose was to observe the relationship between the adjectives meaning ‘small/little’, these types of translations were excluded from the study. However, they show that the translators’ conceptualizations of the adjective differ and also show the established fact that diminutive affixes are the preferred way to create diminutives in the Polish and Russian languages.

Figure 3. Polish-Russian Translations<sup>5</sup>Figure 4. Russian-Polish Translations<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> This chart was compiled out of a total of 119 hits.

<sup>6</sup> This chart was compiled out of a total of 74 hits.

When we turn to the Russian-Polish translations in Figure 4, the *mały-маленький* pair does not appear as clear-cut because *маленький* is spread out as *mały* (42%), *malutki/maleńki* (47%), *niewielki/nieduży* (3%) and ‘other’ (*drobny* and *drobniutki*) at 8%. Only a small 5% difference exists between *mały* and *malutki/maleńki*, with *маленький* being translated as a diminutive derivative a slight percentage more frequently than *mały*. From these results, it appears that the meaning of *маленький* is conflicted between the meaning of SMALL that is a part of its ‘standard’ meaning and between the emotional connotations that are conveyed through the diminutive affix *-en’k-*.

#### 4.1. Translations from Polish to Russian

As I showed in Figure 3 above, the evidence strongly suggests that the translators considered *маленький* the main ‘translation equivalent’ of *mały* because of a very high translation frequency. Likewise, *маленький* was also considered the main ‘translation equivalent’ of the derivatives *malutki* and *maleńki*, though slightly less often (10% percent less than the former). Figure 3 above also shows the influence of ‘secondary’ adjectives, specifically since *malutki* and *maleńki* were translated as *крохотный* occasionally, and *mały* was translated as *небольшой* a small percentage of the time. However, in this paper I will not discuss these ‘secondary’ adjectives because I aim to trace the use of derivatives from PS *\*maľь*. Below, I discuss the translation of *mały* in 4.1.1, and *malutki/maleńki* in 4.1.2. I only examine translations from Polish to Russian in order to provide a more in-depth look at the translation in one direction; however, when relevant, I include brief mentions of translations into Polish.

##### 4.1.1. Translations of *mały* to Russian

I will first begin with the most obvious pair: *mały-маленький*. The original word *mały* and its translation *маленький* range from low expressivity to high expressivity in their respective contexts. I argue that the level of emotion does not always rest on the diminutive construction (whether an animate or inanimate object); rather, the immediate context and words surrounding the diminutive construction also can be a crucial factor in determining the expressive meaning. Yet, despite the context, *mały* tends to indicate smallness of size, which in some cases can add to the undercurrent of emotion simply because in many circumstances we feel more affectionate or endearing towards things that are small or young. The choice of *маленький* as the ‘translation equivalent’ thus indicates that the respective translators felt that *маленький* was the best option to express the range of emotion but mostly ‘smallness of size’, as the translation usually expresses a very similar level of emotion as the original.

Although the main meaning of *mały* in the original Polish is ‘smallness of size’, that smallness does contribute to a higher level of emotional meaning that are expressed through emotive words such as *love*. For example, (1a, emphasis



The first reason (as a comparative marker) seems a frequent use of the underived adjective (e.g. the *Малый театр* / *Большой театр* in Moscow). This keeps the sense of ‘(too) small’ as compared to something larger of the object’s kind. The only emotional meaning could arise from some affection, perhaps, felt for the size of the smaller object; or, perhaps, the noun which the adjective modifies (as in 1e). In (1d), however, the comparison is between the small and big *Rathaus* is the purpose of the use of *mały* and its ‘translation equivalent’ *малый*.<sup>7</sup>

(1d) wpatrywaliśmy się w daleki horyzont poprzecinany wieżami św. Katarzyny, **małego** i dużego Rathausu, kopułą synagogi i zębatego konturem św. Trójcy, [Hanemann, Chwin Stefan] → заслонив глаза от солнца, мы всматривались в далекий горизонт, перерезанный башнями костела Святой Екатерины, **малой** и большой ратуши, куполом синагоги и зубчатым контуром костела Святой Троицы,

(1e) Most łączył **male** i duże getto. [Pokolenie, Czeszko Bohdan] → Мост соединял большое гетто с **малым**.

The second reason is perhaps the most frequent, with many place names are preceded with the adjective *mały* in order to emphasize the size of the particular area. These can be found throughout Poland (e.g. *Gmina Mały Płock*, *Beskid Mały*). Hotels also seem to follow this construction, with hotels and restaurants throughout Poland named *Mały Kraków*, *Mały Młyn* and *Restauracja Mały Belgrad* for example. In the parallel corpus, the example that came up was *Mały Rocznik Statystyczny* ‘Small Statistical Yearbook’. It is shown in context in (1f) below. The translation also easily follows the Russian patterns for naming places and objects (e.g. the Russian bank *Малый Петербург* or the hotel *Малый 3\**). Again, like in the first reason, the use of the adjective is to convey ‘smallness of size’.

(1f) Stacho siedzi nad „**Małym** Rocznikiem Statystycznym” z trzydziestego szóstego roku i nie może zmusić się do szukania potrzebnych danych w kolumnach drobniutkich cyferek. [Pokolenie, Czeszko Bohdan] → Стах сидит над «**Малым** статистическим ежегодником» тридцать шестого года и не может себя заставить искать необходимые данные в колонках мелко напечатанных цифр.

<sup>7</sup> This also appears in translations from Russian to Polish, such as in the following: Большие и малые голландцы, вместе с голубыми дельфскими изразцами, вдруг ожили в моем сознании. [Русский апокалипсис. Опыт художественной эсхатологии, Ерофеев Виктор] → Duzi i mali Holendrzy, wraz z niebieskim fajansem z Delf, nagle ożyli w mojej świadomości.

The third reason expresses some emotion through a negative evaluation. A word that appeared in the one of the texts in the parallel corpus was the word *ghetto*, which generally has very strong negative connotations largely due to the fact that it deals with the Nazi occupation of Poland. Yet, it also appears earlier in the text in (1e) to mention that the big and small ghettos were linked by a bridge. In the example in (1g) below, the ‘small/little’ ghetto does not get thrown into the uprising. In the sentence by itself, the adjective (in the original and translation) seems to convey ‘smallness of size’ but also is part of the emotional undercurrent of the sentence.

(1g) **Małe** getto nie zostało rzucone w ogień powstania. [Pokolenie, Czeszko Bohdan] → **Малое** гетто не примкнуло к восстанию.

The last reason can be closely tied with the previous ones in that it emphasizes, once again, a small size. In (1h), this is shown by the ‘small/little dock’ which, in context, seems to imply that the dock should have been bigger and is rather small for a dock. This is an example where we encounter the fact that *mały* is the ‘standard’ adjective for SMALL and the level of emotive meaning is bound to the context. However, the word does not mean *drobny* ‘tiny’, and the translator keeps the meaning ‘standard’.

(1h) A kiedy dopływalіśmy już do przystani koło elewatorów, gdy na nabrzeżu pojawiały się już żelazne rusztowania **małego** doku [Hanemann, Chwin Stefan] → А когда мы уже приближались к пристани около элеваторов, когда на набережной уже показывались железные конструкции **малого** дока

In conclusion to the adjective *mały*, it can be viewed that the Russian form *малый* does not emphasize affection or positive emotional connotations. Neither does *малый* modify synthetic diminutive nouns as we saw in the original Polish and the Russian ‘translation equivalents’ in the *mały-маленький* pair above. The ‘secondary’ diminutives that I have not discussed deserve a brief mention, for *mały* was translated as *небольшой* 10% of the time and usually related to contexts where the object appears to be most often a factual statement of ‘not-big’ size, as in the following: “Na szyi **mała** plamka. [Hanemann, Chwin Stefan] → На шее **небольшое** пятнышко”. Likewise, the rare ‘translation equivalent’ of *krochotniy* for *mały* seems to stretch the boundaries of *mały* semantically (and perhaps emotionally), while demonstrating a weak semantic link between the two adjectives. However, instances of *крохотный* occurred, such as in the following where the subject’s eyes are *mały* but translated as *крохотный*: “- Jest taka anegdotka – powiedział Stacho patrząc Jasiowi prosto w brązowe, **małe** oczki. [Pokolenie, Czeszko Bohdan] → — Есть такой анекдот, — сказал Стах, глядя Ясю в **крохотные** бронзовые глазки.” Unlike *небольшой*, which was more often the ‘translation equivalent’ of *mały* than its derivatives, the adjective

*крохотный* was more often the ‘translation equivalent’ of the derivatives, and shows up more often where the adjectives *maleńki* or *malutki* are used. This will be briefly mentioned in the next section.

#### 4.1.2. *Translations of maleńki and malutki to Russian*

In the corpus, the ‘translation equivalents’ of the derived forms from *mały* was most often *маленький* (though sometimes *крохотный* was used). This is not surprising, for both *maleńki-маленький* and *malutki-маленький* pairs are formally diminutives, with perhaps a closer emotive connection between the former through the use of the *-enk-* diminutive affix. The Polish derivatives were never translated as the Russian double diminutive *молосенький* (which indicates that it has a closer relationship with Polish *malusieńki*, a word that never appeared in the corpus). Neither were the derivatives translated as *небольшой* or *малый*, which would have emphasized size (‘not-big’) over emotional connotations and the smaller (perhaps ‘tiny’) size of the derivations in comparison with *mały*. Arguably, then, the Russian adjective *маленький* conveys both the connotations of *mały* and *maleńki/malutki*, as it is presented as a ‘translation equivalent’ for both.

Because *маленький* is the ‘standard’ adjective of SIZE in Russian, its role as the ‘translation equivalent’ of the diminutives *maleńki* and *malutki* occasionally seems inadequate and lacking the tender or ‘tiny-in-size’ meaning of the Polish diminutives. Yet, since translators did choose *маленький* as the ‘translation equivalent’ suggests that – at least in their interpretation – that *маленький* can convey similar size and emotional meanings when in the right context from a Polish perspective.<sup>8</sup> For example, in (2a) and (2b), the base noun that the adjective modifies is a synthetic diminutive, which causes the construction to convey a deeper level of emotive meaning but also to show that an object that is *malutki* is smaller than one that is *mały*.

- (2a) Tylko rzucony kamień przewrócił się wolno, nim znieruchomiał, a **maleńka** chmurka zbitego piasku spadła na szarawą skałę. [Lem, Stanisław] →  
Только брошенный мною камень медленно перевернулся, прежде чем

<sup>8</sup> When looking at texts translated from Russian to Polish, some contexts where *маленький* is used and translated as *malutki* or *malenki* shows the endearing nature of *маленький*. For example, in Akunin’s novel, a beloved, small and young pet dog is called *маленький*, as in the following: **Маленький** Закусай, раскинув лапы, мирно сопел подле пустой миски, а вот его родитель куда-то запропастился. → **Malutki** Chapaj, rozłożywszy łapki, spokojnie sapał przy pustej misce, rodziciel jego natomiast gdzieś się zapodział. Or, in a yet more emotive context in dialogue, *malen’kij* is used again with strong emotive words and exclamation marks to convey strong emotion: — Мой **маленький!** Мой любимый! Как на войну собирала. [Жизнь с идиотом, Ерофеев Виктор] → — Mój **maleńki!** Mój kochany!. Wyprowadziła jak na wojnę. In these examples it is not difficult why the derived forms are presented as ‘translation equivalents’. This, however, is not as apparent when examining translations from Polish to Russian.

замереть, а **маленькое** облачко поднявшегося песка опало на черную поверхность.

- (2b) Z **maleńkiego** punktu migającego gdzieś w otchłani kosmosu tajemniczym, bladoniebieskim blaskiem stała się tarczą słoneczną widzianą z perspektywy pobliskiej planet. [Libera, Antoni] → Из **маленькой** точки, мерцающей где-то в бездне Вселенной таинственным бледно-голубым светом, она превратилась в солнечный диск, наблюдаемый с перспективы ближайшей планеты.

Arguably, (2a) conveys a stronger positive affectionate meaning ('tiny little cloud') than (2b), which in context indicates that the *punkt* ('point') that is modified is exceedingly small and tiny. In the latter, the 'translation equivalent' of *maleńki* is stretching its semantic boundary. It is relevant here to mention that some instances of *maleńki* were translated as *крохотный* 'tiny', such as in (2c), where *крохотный* is able to convey the small size of the inscription, though perhaps not quite as able to convey any emotional undercurrents in the text. Interestingly, the adjective *крошечный* (identified in Figure 2 by Google Translate as the 'translation equivalent' of *malutki/maleńki*), the diminutive form of *крохотный*, is not chosen as the 'translation equivalent'; furthermore, it does not appear as a 'translation equivalent' at all in the corpus.

- (2c) Wieczne pióro pana Kohla, leżące na blacie stołu w głębi salonu, pióro ze złotą nakrętką, na której świecił **malutki** napis „Dresden”, swoją lśniącą nieruchomością udawało spokój, ale i ono płynęło w gniazdo żaru razem ze złożonym lustrem, mahoniową szafą i bordowymi portierami. [Hanemann, Chwin Stefan] → Вечное перо господина Коля, лежащее на столе в глубине гостиной, перо с золотым колпачком, на котором сверкала **крохотная** надпись «Дрезден», своей блестящей неподвижностью изображало спокойствие, но и оно плыло в огнедышащий зев вместе с зеркалом в позолоченной раме, шкафом красного дерева и бордовыми портьерами.

From this we see that the Polish derivatives lie somewhere between the meaning of 'tiny' in *крохотный* (but do not exactly mean tiny because the more typical word for 'tiny' is *drobny* in Polish) and a standard yet emotive *maleńki* that conveys the emotion expressed, as stated earlier, through the *-enk-* diminutive affix that remains common among adjectives to convey tenderness, endearment and affection. *Malutki* and *maleńki* are not quite *drobny* 'tiny', but neither are they the 'standard' forms for 'small', although they are used frequently since Polish is a language that regularly uses synthetic diminutives.

The data does strongly suggest that the *-en'k-* diminutive affix in *maleńki* perhaps is the main cause of the divide between the adjectives for SMALL between Polish and Russian. Wierzbicka's observation that *maleńki* is, indeed, formally

a diminutive with close ties to other diminutive adjectives aptly pinpoints the problem. It is not surprising, then, that Polish adjectives that are diminutive adjectives are often translated as *маленький*, as was indicated by the ‘translation equivalents’ in the dictionary entries in the previous section. These adjectives share a lot in common: *malutki* and *maleńki* can be considered the ‘standard’ diminutive forms since there are many other forms (e.g. *malusi*, *maluchny*) that are used significantly less frequently in fiction and *маленький* is the ‘standard’ form for SMALL in general.

## 5. Conclusions and suggestions for further research

The findings in this paper have shown the specific and often fuzzy nuances in emotional meaning between the adjectives meaning ‘small/little’ in Polish and Russian. The closest ‘translation equivalent’ that could be nearly concretely described is *малый*, which was always translated as *mały* in the corpus and most of the time in the bilingual dictionaries (but not the other way around) because *малый* lies on one extreme of the continuum. Other derivative forms are not nearly as clear, with forms like *маленький* ranging from *mały* and *malutki/maleńki* at the highest frequency of translation, but also ranging into *niewielki/nieduży* and others (e.g. *drobniutki*). Polish *mały*, on the other hand, ranged from *маленький* at the highest frequency to *небольшой* and *малый*.

I briefly return to the research questions asked at the beginning of this paper. How different in emotion and ‘smallness of size’ are the two adjectives and their derived/underived forms? The answer is that we can safely say that the two adjectives and their derivatives (specifically Polish *mały* and its derivatives, and Russian *маленький* and its underived form) are very different when we apply a macroscopic lens to the fact that *маленький* is more of an ‘umbrella’ adjective to convey the meanings of *small* and/or *little* depending on context, leaving the underived form on the left extreme and the double diminutive form *малюсенький* on the other extreme. Polish, on the other hand, presents us with a much more linear progression with ‘standard’ *mały* followed by the first-degree diminutive, and then the second-degree diminutive, and so on, with some (but not much) overlap. Generally, we can say that the emotive force rests on Russian *маленький*, while derivatives gain a steady level of emotive meaning as they progress down with the addition of diminutive suffixes.

The second research question asked was the following: what are the ‘translation equivalents’ given in dictionaries and parallel corpora and what does this contribute to our perception of the adjectives’ meanings? The answer from the data presented strongly indicates that because of the difference in emotive meaning and ‘smallness of size’, the dictionaries’ ‘translation equivalents’ have to be taken lightly, though their broad generalizations (and that of the internet domain searches) were upheld in the examination of the translation corpus. The quantitative data from the translations from Polish-Russian and Russian-Polish

showed that the adjectives' meanings are not clear-cut but rather are subjected to context, interpretation and the structural difference that I mentioned above. However, we can find a general pattern of which adjectives are more frequently translated as which adjectives and the general range of meaning. In looking closer at the translations from Polish to Russian and the adjectives in context, we find that qualitatively the reasons for the use of a particular adjective (or reason why it was not used) comes clearer. What does come clear is that a translator, interpreter or even a second language learner would benefit from a close study of these adjectives, particularly in context, before deciding on a 'translation equivalent' or making the suggestion that there even is one 'translation equivalent' that can be used consistently (e.g. that *маленький* only means *mały*).

Finally, it seems necessary to indicate some possible directions of research from this study. Some attention could be devoted, for example, to the translation from Russian to Polish, should it provide any new clues about the adjectives; also, a study could examine second-degree diminutive forms (e.g. Polish *malusięńki* and Russian *малюсенький*) and their correlation in diminutive and emotional meaning to each other, which was not addressed in this paper since the forms did not appear in the selected texts under examination. Although the two forms appear similar by diminutive suffix used and phonetically, it is highly unlikely that, based on the differences of the underived and first-degree forms, the emotional connotations would be the same. Rather, it would be more likely that this pair would function more like the *маленький* – *maleńki* pair, where one is the 'standard' version that encompasses more meanings, while the other conveys a single and narrower diminutive meaning. Other adjectives of DIMENSION, including the semantic-pragmatic relationship between Polish *duży*, *wielki* and Russian *большой* would benefit from a similar study. Lastly, the analysis of how an interpreter would translate these forms in spoken discourse (in contrast to translating written text) would benefit interpretation, translation studies and comparative cultural studies to shed light on specific diminutive nuances between Polish and Russian and other Slavic languages.

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