

Morphology and Pragmatics of the Diminutive:

Evidence from Macedonian

by

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## ABSTRACT

Extensive cross-linguistic data document a wide gamut of semantic and pragmatic uses of the diminutive that revolve around the fundamental concepts of ‘small’ and ‘child’. As typical inventory of informal registers, diminutives are utilized as pragmatic markers of politeness in a wide range of contextual meanings. This dissertation is intended to fill some major gaps in the systematic and empirical research on the formation and pragmatic uses of the diminutives in Macedonian and to explore the role of diminutivization in a broader linguistic framework, by examining the consistency of the field of diminutives, the core and peripheral meanings of the diminutive, their typology, as well as their pragmatic potential. The morphology and pragmatics of the diminutive is examined by combining data from electronic and printed sources, video recordings of natural conversations, as well as from material collected from participant and non-participant observations. At the level of morphology, it is argued that three fundamental semantic constraints underlie the formation of diminutives: [-big], [+ emotional], and [+ informal]. Furthermore, it is shown how diminutive combinability is rule governed in Macedonian by proposing sets of formal constraints for all grades of diminutives. At the level of pragmatics, the pragmatic functions of the diminutives proper and the related periphrastic diminutive *maliku* are investigated in a variety of contexts involving child-directed speech (CDS) and adult communication. By analyzing the pragmatic functions of the diminutive in a series of speech acts, and drawing upon cross-cultural interpretations suggested by Wierzbicka (1991), it is argued that, in Macedonian, social bonding, cordiality,

intimacy or affection are pragmatically more salient than personal autonomy in the Anglo-Saxon societies, realized through non-imposition, tentativeness, or similar pragmatic strategies for saving face. Additionally, it is contended that there exist cultural differences in the assessment of the concept of imposition between these societies. The analyses of the pragmatic potential of the diminutive proper and the periphrastic diminutive *malku* give rise to the claim that Macedonian culture is predominantly founded on the pragmatic principle of positive politeness.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

### 1.1. Aims

Cross-cultural studies strongly suggest that the prototypical function of the diminutive is to index “smallness”. Additionally, extensive cross-linguistic data document various semantic and pragmatic uses of the diminutive that revolve around two major concepts: “smallness” and “child” (Wierzbicka 1984, Jurafsky 1996). Across languages, diminutives are typically part of the informal register and are frequently used in child-directed speech (CDS) to communicate affection and endearment. Further, diminutives have been used as pragmatic devices to communicate both positive and negative politeness (Brown and Levinson 1978, 1987; Sifianou 1992) as well as a wide range of other contextual meanings.

The aim of this doctoral dissertation is to investigate the morphology and pragmatics of the diminutive in Macedonian. Specifically, Macedonian material will be used to elucidate the following major issues:

1. The role of diminutivization in a broader linguistic framework
2. Categorical consistency of the field of diminutives
3. Core and peripheral meanings of the diminutive
4. Formation and typology of diminutives
5. Pragmatic potential of the diminutive

These aspects of diminutivization deserve to be investigated for several reasons. First, while Macedonian is highly productive in diminutive formation and use

there is a chronic scarcity of research on Macedonian diminutives. A search of Google Scholar, Pro Quest Dissertation and Theses, Worldcat, Linguistics and Language Behavior Abstracts (LLBA), and MLA International Bibliography databases resulted in only two publications that focus on Macedonian diminutives. The first one was Stefanovski's (1997) article on employing diminutives as an apologetic strategy and the second was Jovanova Gruevska's (2009) unpublished dissertation<sup>1</sup> on lexico-semantic analysis of some nouns for subjective assessment (diminutives, hypocorisms, augmentatives, and pejoratives). Both of these studies note the ability of Macedonian diminutive suffixes to stack and reduplicate, but neither goes into explications why they happen, which suffixes have the potential to stack and reduplicate, and what are the rules that govern these processes. Stefanovski (1997) makes some assumptions about socio-cultural underpinnings for diminutive but those remain disconnected from any larger socio-cultural framework or testable theory. Also, he notes that social status can be an important factor governing the use of diminutives, but his examples seem to be mostly impressionistic and lack more systematic data. Jovanova Gruevska's study includes a chapter on diminutives and hypocoristics (13-49) that notes the high productivity of Macedonian diminutivization and presents a taxonomy of lexemes formed by diminutive suffixation. In addition, her dissertation includes some incomplete statistical data of frequency of occurrence of 16 derivational groups of lexemes, but does not

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<sup>1</sup> This unpublished doctoral dissertation is not available in any online databases. The original copy of the dissertation is deposited at the Krste Misirkov Institute of Macedonian Language in Skopje, Macedonia.

delve into any further analysis of why and how these lexemes are formed. There are also several other earlier studies that treat diminutives only in passing, noting some morphological and morphophonemic aspects of diminutive formation, such as stackability (reduplication) or consonant mutations or dissimilations in diminutive derivations: Koneski's (1976) and Friedman's (2002) grammars of standard Macedonian, Friedman's (1993) article on Macedonian within the framework of Slavic languages, and Kramer's (2003) textbook for teaching Macedonian to international students.

This paucity of studies on diminutivization became obvious to me during my teaching Macedonian at the Critical Language Institute, The Melikian Center for Russian, Eurasian, and East European Studies, Arizona State University, where I taught from 1998-2008. In addition, my own observations and pilot studies (Spasovski 2006, 2006a, 2010) have led me to see that many morphophonemic and pragmatic issues concerning the diminutive remain unexplained in the published literature. Thus, there are a number of aspects of diminutive formation that have yet to be addressed in studies on Macedonian diminutives.

At the level of diminutive morphology, this dissertation will: 1. investigate what words get to be diminutivized, 2. identify the morpho-semantic criteria that play a role in diminutive derivations, 3. define the diminutive proper and analyze degrees of lexicalization, 4. establish the constraints that create morpho-semantic blockings for diminutivization, 5. test the Jurafsky's (1996) hypothesis of

semantic and morphological unidirectionality of the diminutive and the related senses, and 6. establish the rules that govern stacking and reduplication of diminutive affixes. As already noted, none of the above aspects of diminutive morphology have been researched so far, so this dissertation intends to make an important contribution to the study of diminutive morphology. In doing so, much more attention will be dedicated to nouns since they are canonical examples of diminutives and have been documented as statistically more relevant (over 90% of all recorded items in the corpora were nouns). Moreover, this study will only refer in passing to assimilation of voicing, palatalizations, and other related morphophonemic processes, such as vowel reductions or consonant cluster simplifications. There are two major reasons for delineating such scope. First, these morphophonemic processes have been sufficiently explored in previous studies (Elson (1973), Koneski (1976, 1983), Kochovska (2000), Kramer (2003), Friedman (2007), Rubach (2011)). Secondly, a discussion on morphophonemic processes that take part in diminutive formation would belabor the discussion and blur the focus of this dissertation. Hence, the dissertation will address only on the aspects of diminutive morphology that have not yet been accounted for.

Furthermore, an investigation of the morphology and pragmatics of Macedonian diminutives is worth pursuing because of the genealogical, typological, and socio-pragmatic similarities that Macedonian shares with not only Slavic languages and those belonging to the Balkan Sprachbund, but with other languages as well. At the level of morphology, diminutive derivations in Macedonian can be related to those of Slavic language group; however, in Macedonian there exist diminutive

suffixes that are language-specific: such are the two diminutive suffixes for neuter gender *-le*, and *-ule*. In addition, Macedonian makes use of some derivational infixes such as *-uvka*, *-ulka*, *-unka*, *-urka*, *-enka*, *-inka*, *-arka*, that function as semantic intensifiers with both nominal and verbal word groups. Also, there is a diminutive suffix for feminine gender *-ca* that has an almost exclusively emotional function.

At the level of pragmatics the uses of *malku* (the periphrastic diminutive in Macedonian) and its diminutivized forms *malce*, *malkucka*, *malcucka* (all of which can be approximately translated as semantic-pragmatic nuances of “a (tiny) little bit” seem to provide some evidence for both Brown and Levinson’s (1987) and Sifianou’s (1992) interpretation of the pragmatic implications of the periphrastic diminutive in other languages, such as Greek. In this regard, Macedonian material will be used to argue for claims about the diminutive in broader typological terms.

The pragmatics of Macedonian diminutives is still largely an uncharted territory. Stefanovski’s (1997) article proposes that diminutives in Macedonian are used as apologetic strategy. Since such diminutive use has not been documented in English, Stefanovski concludes that politeness principles are unlikely to be universal. Stefanovski’s paper is the only study that deals with pragmatic uses of diminutives in Macedonian. Given the fairly extensive body of literature on pragmatic uses of diminutives in other languages, there is a clear need for

investigating the pragmatic potential of Macedonian diminutives by controlling for some relevant variables, and analyzing the pragmatic use of diminutives across various types of texts and in specific socio-pragmatic and pragmalinguistic contexts.

## 1.2. Outline of the Thesis

Chapter 2 offers a review of the consulted literature stretching over several major areas. First, we address the definition and identification of diminutives from both diachronic and synchronic perspectives, and we discuss the core semantic meanings of the diminutive. Next, we discuss the derivation of diminutives in Slavic languages and, more specifically, Macedonian as found in prior research. Finally, the literature review includes a discussion on the theoretical framework for pragmatic analysis of diminutives along with some cross-cultural studies on pragmatic uses of diminutives.

Chapter 3 presents the methodology employed in this research. The first part of this chapter offers a description of the corpus along with the data gathering procedures. The latter section states the major hypotheses and posits the relevant research questions that will be analyzed in this study using this data.

Chapter 4 focuses on the morphology of the diminutive in Macedonian. This chapter showcases the complexity of diminutive morphology in Macedonian:



first, it describes the derivational processes and offers a taxonomy of Macedonian derivational suffixes. In addition, Chapter 4 explores the ordering and the derivational potential of diminutives. First, it postulates categories, types and patterning of the diminutive. Next, this chapter draws distinctions between proper (i.e. productive) and frozen diminutives and discusses the degrees of lexicalization of diminutives. In addition, Chapter 4 investigates derivational constraints, productivity, and combinability of the diminutive. As noted, the discussion on the morphology of the diminutive mostly focuses on nouns as canonical diminutive derivations. The last section of Chapter 4 addresses some major aspects of the diminutivization of verbs, adjectives, and adverbs.

Chapter 5 explores the pragmatic potential of the diminutive in Macedonian by combining data from various sources: electronic, printed, video recordings of natural conversations, or my own records of communicative situations involving various pragmatic uses of the diminutive. This section investigates the range of pragmatic functions of the diminutive and offers a tentative categorization and explanations.

Finally, Chapter 6 summarizes the results of this study and offers a broader discussion. First, this chapter highlights the contribution of this study to cross-linguistic research on the morphology and pragmatics of the diminutive, and the boarder theoretical implications of the obtained results. In addition, the

concluding chapter relates the results from this study to some possible avenues of research in cross-cultural pragmatics and teaching pragmatics.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

### 2.1. Definitions and Identification of Diminutives

#### 2.1.1. Diachronic Perspectives

In order to define diminutives and document their various forms and related lexicalized meanings, we shall resort to both synchronic and diachronic analyses. Diachronically, the diminutive in Slavic languages, including Macedonian, can be related to Brugmann's reconstruction of the Proto-Indo-European (PIE) diminutive suffix *\*-ko*. This reconstructed diminutive suffix *\*-ko* has been documented in many other Indo-European languages; according to Brugmann (1891:262), *\*-ko* used to mean something that is 'tantamount to', 'related to', or 'like' the original. Subsequent reconstructions of diminutive protosemantics for individual languages have proposed that the core meaning of the diminutive is 'small/child' (Matisoff 1991; Heine et. al 1991).

Diminutives in Macedonian and other Slavic languages are typically indexed by suffixation and exhibit diachronic connections to the PIE diminutive suffix *\*-ko*. For instance, in Bulgarian, the most common nominal diminutive suffixes for masculine nouns include *-че*, (*-che*) and *-нче*, (*-ntse*), while the common adjectival diminutive suffixes is *-ък* (*-uk*). Feminine nouns and adjectives commonly end in *-ка* (*-ka*) or *-ца* (*-tca*), whereas neuter diminutives are marked by *-ко* (*-ko*), *-че*, (*-che*), or *-че*, (*-tse*). In Czech, common diminutive suffixes include *-ka*, *-ko*, *-ek*, *-ík*, *-inka*, *-enka*, *-ečka*, *-ička*, *-ul-*, *-unka*, *-iček*, *-ínek*, etc. Polish makes use of multiple diminutive suffixes. The most common are *-ka*, -

*czka, -śka, -szka, -cia, -sia, -unia, -enka, -lka* for feminine nouns and *-ek, -yk, -ciek, -czek, -czyk, -szek, -uń, -uś, -eńki, -lki* for masculine words, and *-czko, -ko* for neuter nouns. In Russian diminutivized masculine nouns typically end in *-ук, (-ik) –ок (-ok), -ёк (-iok)*, feminine typically end in *-ка (-ka)*, while *-ко (-ko)* is the common diminutive suffix for neuter gender. In Serbo-Croatian the common diminutive suffixes for masculine nouns include *-ak* and *-ić*, for feminine *-ca*, and *-ance, -ence, -ešce*, and *-če* for neuter. The most common Slovenian diminutive suffix that occurs with masculine nouns is *-ek*; those attached to feminine nouns are *-ka*, or *-ca*, while the most common diminutive suffix for neuter is *-ček*.

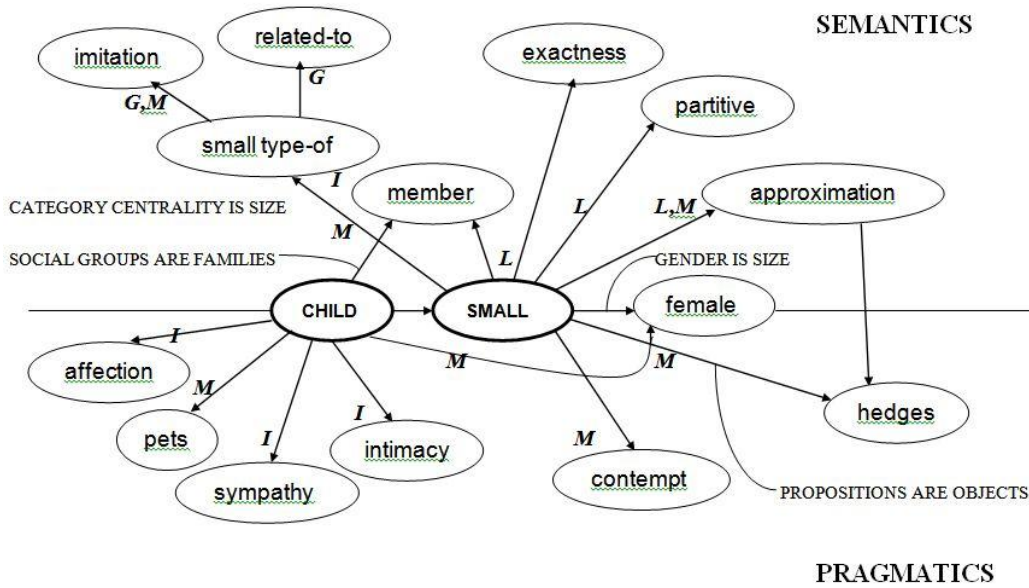
It is noteworthy that in Slavic languages gender is grammatical. Typically, masculine nouns end in consonants, feminine in *-a*, and neuter in *-e* or *-o*. Cross-linguistic studies on the diminutive have established semantic and pragmatic links with children and smallness; it is not surprising then, that across Slavic languages, the reconstructed PIE diminutive suffix *\*-ko* is mostly documented in neuter gender which is directly linked with children. In Slavic languages, the reconstructed diminutive suffix *-ko* (and its palatalized forms, such as *-če, -ce, -ence, -ance, -ešce, -ček*, etc.) is typically suffixed to neuter nominal forms. These connections offer further support to the assumption that the diminutive is semantically and pragmatically related to children and smallness, since, in Slavic languages, children (and related concepts of smallness) are habitually marked by neuter gender.

Furthermore, the diminutive in Macedonian can be morphologically, semantically, and pragmatically connected to the Proto-Slavic common noun \**čędo* meaning “child” (Comrie and Corbett 2002). The most common Macedonian neuter diminutive suffixes *-ęe* is a truncated form of *čędo*. Several major synchronic studies of the diminutive provide support for this connection with Proto-Slavic. For instance, Wierzbicka (1984) argues that the concepts of ‘small/child’ are the basis of Polish diminutives. Jurafsky (1996) shows that ‘small/child’ is at the very heart of the semantic and pragmatic conceptualization of the diminutive across languages. In addition, Dressler and Merlini Barbaresi (1994) argue that, cross-linguistically, the meaning of the diminutive is not restricted to ‘small’ but includes other contextually based inferences, such as “non-serious”. Semantically and pragmatically, non-serious can be associated with the concept child-like. Jurafsky (1996) adopts Dressler and Merlini Barbaresi’s view and convincingly shows that across languages diminutives display some additional, complex, and lexicalized meanings. In analyzing the various forms and meanings of Macedonian diminutives, we shall adopt Jurafsky’s universal structured model (1996:542) of diminutive polysemy shown in Figure 1 below. Jurafsky’s model postulates cross-linguistic regularity in diminutive semantics and displays a unidirectional tendency indicating that diminutives arise from semantic or pragmatic links with children.

Figure 1: Jurafsky’s Universal Structure of the Diminutive (1996:542) <sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Nodes in Figure 1 are labeled with names of senses, and arcs with mechanisms of semantic change; inference (I), metaphor (M), generalization (G), and lambda-abstraction (L).



Jurafsky (544) claims that this model

allows us to claim first, that the central category of the diminutive, ‘child’, is historically prior and metaphorically and inferentially motivates the other senses, and that, second, that if the diminutive in a particular language has sense, it will have (or have had...each prior sense on some path to the root. Thus any language with a diminutive with a ‘member’ sense will have a ‘child’ sense. In every language where diminutives mark ‘imitation; they will also mark ‘small-type-of’ (or will have marked it in the past.)

In Chapters 4 and 5 we apply the Jurafsky’s Universal Structure of the Diminutive on data on Macedonian diminutives. The foregoing analysis testifies to the explanatory power of Jurafsky’s semantic/pragmatic model of the diminutive confirming the unidirectional tendencies that result from semantic and pragmatic connections with children.

### 2.1.2. Synchronic Perspectives

Section 2.1.1 discussed the fundamental hypothesis according to which diminutives function as grammatical primitives that have the core semantic meaning of ‘small’ or ‘child’ (Wierzbicka 1984), along with the diachronic links of Slavic diminutive suffixes. This study adopts this hypothesis in interpreting the semantic and pragmatic meanings of the diminutive. Let us now turn to a synchronic morphological identification of diminutives. Across languages, diminutives are generated by affixation and typically occur with nominal categories. Cross-linguistic studies of diminutive morphology have documented a wide repertoire of morphological devices for diminutivization. Among these, derivational suffixation is the prototypical formation process for diminutives. Analyzing the diminutive in over 60 typologically and genealogically diverse languages, Jurafsky observes that diminutives may be formed through several morphophonemic processes: affixation, shifts in consonants, vowels or lexical tone; as well as changes in noun-class or gender (534). Other cross-linguistic studies on diminutive formation have suggested that in its formal realization, the diminutive is commonly realized by nasals (Jakobson & Waugh 1979), by reduplication or stacking (Moravcsik 1978), and especially by higher tonality executed through high nuclear tones, high front vowels, and fronted consonants (Jespersen (1922), Sapir (1949), Ultan (1978), Nichols (1971), Ohala (1984), Tsur (2006)). English, for instance, is unproductive in forming diminutives and they mainly occur with nominal categories. Schneider (2004) identifies two types of diminutive formation operating in English: morphological (or synthetic), and

syntactic (or analytical). Schneider maintains that synthetic diminutives in English are typically derived through a) prefixation (e.g. mini-vacation, micro-brewery), b) suffixation (e.g. droplet, duckling, doggie, kitchenette), c) reduplication (e.g. John-John, goody-goody; and rhyming reduplication e.g. Annie-Pannie, Brinnie-Winnie), d) compounding (e.g. baby seal, dwarf tree), and e) truncation or clipping (e.g. Pat<Patrick, Sue>Susan). I would argue that the truncated proper names are not real diminutives, but rather hypocoristic forms. Albeit related to diminutives, hypocorisms are pet names or nicknames indexing intimacy with the person, and as such fall outside of the scope of this study. According to Schneider, analytical (or syntactic) diminutives include “little” as a diminutive marker and not as an adjective of size, e.g. “Would you like a little wine?” Jespersen (1948) and Turner (1973) argue that English has only few real diminutives which are mostly “isolated baby forms” while “productive diminutive derivation hardly exists” (qtd. in Schneider 75).

## 2.2. Diminutive Derivations in Slavic languages and in Macedonian

Unlike English, Slavic languages employ rich systems of diminutives. In Slavic languages diminutives are typically generated by derivational suffixes that may be added to both nominal and verbal categories. For instance, Polish makes use of a developed system for diminutivization where the diminutive chiefly occurs with nouns and less frequently with adjectives and adverbs. It is also possible to coin diminutive verbs in Polish but they are quite uncommon (Haman 2003:38). In



Russian the formation of diminutives in many respects parallels that of Polish. Bratus (1969) reports that Russian diminutives are derived from nouns, adjectives and adverbs. Albeit possible, the diminutive in Russian seldom occurs with verbal forms. Studies on Serbian offer similar examples. In contrasting diminutive suffixes in Serbian and English, Đurić (2004) shows how nouns, adjectives, adverbs, and verbs may be subjected to diminutivization. Similarly to Serbian, Bulgarian has an extended diminutives system operating with all nominal and verbal categories, including numerals (Milenova 2010).

Macedonian shares all of these features with its South Slavic relatives -- Serbian and Bulgarian. In Macedonian, diminutives are generated through standard derivations and are typically employed to index smallness. Koneski (1976), Kramer (2003), and Friedman (1993, 2002) have shown how diminutive formation in Macedonian is done through suffixation. Koneski (1976) lists 12 primary diminutive suffixes that operate in Macedonian: *-ec*, *-ok/-čok*, *-ka*, *-ica*, *-ička* (*-ica* + *-ka*), *-čence* (*-če* + *-ence*), *-ce*, *-e*, *-če*, *-le*, *-ence*, and *-ule*. The taxonomy of these primary diminutive suffixes is presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Taxonomy and Gender of Macedonian Diminutive Suffixes (Koneski (1976))

Diminutive Suffix	Gender		
	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
<i>-ec</i>	x		
<i>-ok -čok</i>	x		
<i>-ka</i>		x	
<i>-ica</i>		x	
<i>-ička (-ica + -ka)</i>		x	
<i>-čence (-če + -ence)</i>			x
<i>-ce</i>			x
<i>-e</i>			x
<i>-če</i>			x
<i>-le</i>			x
<i>-ence</i>			x
<i>-ule</i>			x

It needs to be pointed out that in Macedonian diminutives are derived of both nominal word categories (nouns and adjectives) and verbal categories (verbs and adverbs). Table 2 on the next page illustrates some typical diminutive suffixations in Macedonian and exemplifies diminutivization of all four major word categories. The taxonomy of Macedonian diminutive derivations in Table 2 below also suggests that Macedonian diminutive can be readily traced back to PIE diminutive suffix *\*-ko* and to the Proto-Slavic common noun *\*čędo* (child). In Macedonian, the reconstructed PIE *\*-ko* is traceable in the Masculine diminutive suffixes *-ok* and *-čok* as well as in the feminine suffixes *-ka* and *-ička*. Specifically, the Proto-Slavic *\*čędo* (child) can be semantically and morphologically related to the commonest and most productive Macedonian diminutives suffix for neuter gender *-če*. As noted, the following table displays

some typical diminutive derivations in Macedonian. In terms of potential, both nominal and verbal word groups in Macedonian can undergo diminutivization; as in most other languages, nouns are by far the most productive in diminutivization.

Table 2: Typical Diminutive Derivations in Macedonian:

Suffixation of Nouns, Verbs, Adjectives, and Adverbs

Unmarked Base Form	Diminutive Suffix	Diminutivized Form
grad “town” (masc.)	-če	gratče “small town” (neut.)
reka “river” (fem.)	-ička	rekička “small river” (fem.)
sonce “sun” (neut.)	-ence	soncence “small sun” (neut.)
dlabok “deep” (masc. adj.)	-ok	dlabočok “deep-DIM” (masc. adj.)
tivka “quiet” (fem. adj.)	-ička	tivkička “quiet-DIM” (fem. adj.)
ubavo “pretty” (neut. adj.)	-ko	ubavko “pretty-DIM” (neut. adj.)
pliva “to swim” (inf., a-stem)	-ka	plivka “to swim-DIM” (inf., a-stem)
seče “to cut” (inf., e-stem)	-ka	secka “to cut-DIM” or “to cut into small pieces” (inf., e-stem)
vozi “to drive” (inf., i-stem)	-ka	voska “to drive-DIM” (inf., i-stem)
dlaboko “deep” (adv.)	-ko	dlabočko/dlabokičko “deep-DIM” (adv.)
rano “early” (adv.)	-ko	raničko “fairly early-DIM” (adv.)
lesno “easy” (adv.)	-ko	lesničko “fairly easy-DIM” (adv.)

The above taxonomy briefly exemplifies how diminutive formation in

Macedonian may be accompanied by a number of morphophonemic processes.

One such is consonant assimilation: grad + če → gratče (the voiced dental stop /d/

undergoes devoicing and transforms into its homorganic counterpart - the voiceless dental stop /t/. Another typical morphophonemic process that operates with diminutives is consonant dissimilation: *dlaboko* + *-ko* → *dlabočko* (the velar stop /k/ is replaced by the palato-alveolar affricate /tʃ/). Consonant mutation is also frequent: *seče* + *-ka* → *secka* (the palato-alveolar affricate /tʃ/) changes into the alveolar affricate /ts/, along with vowel elision. Such morphophonemic processes of diminutive formation have been already examined sufficiently in Koneski (1976), Kramer (2003), and Friedman (1993, 2002), so this study will keep its focus on the morphology proper and the pragmatics of the diminutive. Like in many other languages, the diminutive in Macedonian has the potential to reduplicate. The semantic meaning of such reduplications is typically intensified diminutivizing effect. In Macedonian, the diminutive may form more complex forms by stacking (attachment of non-identical diminutive suffixes) or reduplication (adding identical diminutive suffixes). Koneski (1976), Stefanovski (1997), and Friedman (2002) have shown that Macedonian diminutives have the ability to “stack” onto one another or reduplicate. In Table 3 below, the diminutives display some possible patterns of stacking (*bratčence* “brother-DIM-DIM”, *knižule* “book-DIM-DIM”, *knižulence* “book-DIM-DIM-DIM”, *knigičule* “book-DIM-DIM”, and *knigičulence* “book-DIM-DIM-DIM”, whereas *prasence* “pig-DIM-DIM” shows simple reduplication of identical diminutive suffixes in Macedonian. These stacked and reduplicated diminutives showcase the complexity and the potential for combinability of the diminutive.

Table 3: Stacking and Reduplication of Macedonian Diminutive Suffixes

Unmarked form	Diminutive (base form + 1 suffix)	Stacked Diminutives (base form + 2 suffixes)	Stacked Diminutives (base form + 3 suffixes)
brat “brother”	bratče (brat + -če)	bratčence (brat + -če + -ence)	
kniga “book”	kniže (knig <sup>3</sup> + -e)	knížule (knig + -e + -ule)	knížulence (knig + -e + -ule + -nce)
kniga “book”	knigička (knig+ -ička)	knigič <sup>4</sup> ule (knig + -iče + -ule)	knigičulence (knig + -iče + -ule+ -nce)
prase “pig”	presence (prase + -ence)	prasence (prase + -ence + -ence)	

The above diminutive derivations indicate that Macedonian has grammatical gender marked by distinctive endings of the nominal categories: masculine nouns end in a consonant +  $\emptyset$ , feminine end in a consonant + *a*, whereas neuter nouns terminate in consonant + *o/e*. The productivity of diminutive systems in Macedonian can be illustrated by the fact that even words like *džin* “giant” or *milion* “million” may easily be diminutivized as *džinče* “giant-DIM” and *milionče* “million-DIM”, respectively. However, in Macedonian there exist certain groups of words that don’t accept diminutivization. Belamarić (2001:15-16) identifies several word categories that do not yield diminutives: deverbal nouns expressing feelings, times of the day, days of the week, months of the year, seasons, and time periods longer than a year. In addition, similarly to most languages, abstract

<sup>3</sup> Due to palatalization rules, the velar stop /g/ becomes a palatal fricative /ʒ/.

<sup>4</sup> The diminutive suffix *-če* undergoes vowel elision and is reduced to *-č* before the diminutive suffix *-ule* is added.

nouns in Macedonian are much less likely to diminutivize. This dissertation argues that some nouns derived from verbs can be diminutivized in Macedonian, whereas gerunds never are.

Koneski (1976), Stefanovski (1997), and Friedman (2002) note this specific aspect of diminutive formation in Macedonian yet they do not elaborate on which suffixes have the potential to stack or reduplicate and why. This dissertation will argue that only a limited number of Macedonian diminutive suffixes can stack on one another or reduplicate. Furthermore, this study will investigate the possible morpho-semantic constraints that operate in stacking and reduplication of diminutives.

### 2.3. Theoretical Framework for Pragmatic Analysis

In order to explore the pragmatic potential of the diminutive we will resort to pragmatic politeness theories. Early politeness theories investigate communicative strategies employed to promote social harmony in human interaction. According to Leech, the role of Politeness Principle is “to maintain the social equilibrium and the friendly relations which enable us to assume that our interlocutors are being cooperative in the first place.” (1983:82). Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987) argue for a universal model of linguistic politeness and claim that “...politeness, like formal diplomatic protocol (for which it surely must be the model), presupposes that the potential for aggression, as it seeks to disarm it, and

makes possible communication between potentially aggressive parties.” (1987:1). Brown and Levinson’s politeness theory (1978, 1987) draws upon Goffman’s (1967) conceptualization of ‘face’ and Grice’s (1975) argument that all conversationalists are rational beings primarily interested in the efficient conveying of messages. Brown and Levinson postulate the concept of ‘face’ which is a universal human property comparable to self-esteem or self-representation. They argue that all humans are endowed with “face’ which results from our desires to be judged favorably by others (‘positive face’), as well as to be unrestricted in our actions (‘negative face’). Brown and Levinson’s politeness theory focuses on pragmatic strategies of saving face (or avoiding face-threatening acts (FTAs)). A similar view is adopted by Lakoff who defines pragmatic politeness as a sum of strategies for minimizing confrontation in discourse. (1989:2) It needs to be immediately noted that politeness is a matter of degree and that speech acts containing FTAs should be analyzed along a communicational spectrum. Leech (1983) distinguishes between absolute and relative politeness, and argues that some illocutions are inherently polite (such as compliments or expressions of gratitude) while others are inherently impolite (1983:83). Similarly, Brown and Levinson, argue that some acts, such as orders, prohibitions, or criticisms “intrinsically threaten face.” (1987:65) Diminutives are rarely the pragmatic inventory of such intrinsically face-threatening acts.

While politeness theories focus on strategies of saving face (or avoiding FTAs), studies on linguistic impoliteness (Culpeper 1996; Leezenberg 1999; Culpeper,

Bousfield and Wichmann 2003; Bousfield 2007 and 2008; Bousfield and Locher 2008; Limberg 2009) investigate the strategies and the effects of attacking face, i.e. effects of impoliteness. Impoliteness can be defined as negative attitudes towards specific behaviors occurring in specific contexts. Jonathan Culpeper (1996) argues that politeness theories fail to consider confrontational situations and related strategies. He offers examples of inherent (and, according to Culpeper, necessary) impoliteness (those that cause unavoidable damage to positive face) such as direct prohibitions or orders in an army training camp (1996:360). Culpeper argues that in contexts such as army camps, destroying one's self-esteem (face) is necessary to rebuild it by molding a person into an obedient soldier. We can argue that such destruction of one's face is also used in team building in some sports. While studies on impoliteness strongly suggest that inherent impoliteness exists, it must be pointed out that, just like the inherent politeness, the degree of pragmatic politeness is heavily dependent on the context. For example, mock politeness like sarcasm is a case where an FTA is performed with apparently insincere politeness (Leech 1983). In addition, Lakoff (1989) argued that social power is a crucial element of impoliteness. According to Lakoff, a powerful participant has a "license" to be impolite, because she can 1. Reduce the ability of the less powerful participant to retaliate with impoliteness, and, 2. Threaten more severe consequences should the less powerful participant be impolite. Lakoff documented systematic use of impoliteness by prosecutors aimed to provoke the defendant and have them found guilty. Penman (1990) showed how this power imbalance is notorious in the courtroom where attorneys



have the license to threaten witness's face, while the witness is very restricted in threatening attorney's face.

In response to the different face-oriented pragmatic models discussed above, Fraser and Nolan (1981:96) counterargue that no sentence is inherently polite or impolite...it is not the expressions themselves but the conditions under which they are used that determine the judgment of politeness. Subsequent studies of face have problematized the purported universality of Brown and Levinson's theory. One of the criticisms of Brown & Levinson's theory of politeness is that it is a highly rational and individualistic model rather than a relational one (Matsumoto, 1988; Gu, 1990; Ho, 1976; Ting-Toomey, 1988; Chang & Holt, 1994). Matsumoto's argues that Brown and Levinson's conceptualization of negative face does not apply to Japanese culture. Gu's findings from Chinese suggest that Brown and Levinson's face-based model does is not applicable in Chinese social interaction. Ho (1976), Ting-Toomey (1988), and Chang and Holt (1994) object to Brown & Levinson's theory for conceptualizing 'face' in an individualistic cultural framework, one that cannot be applied to a number of Asian cultures. Goddard and Wierzbicka (2004) argue that Brown and Levinson's model is Anglocentric adopting "as a baseline or template some aspect of Anglo norm or practices and attempt[ing] to generalize or adjust to suit all others." (158-9) Scollon & Scollon (1994) make an indirect objection to Brown and Levinson's model and warn that the Western approaches to face are chiefly transactional; instead, they suggest that the concept of self is better suited for explaining such

relationships. On a separate note, Kasper (1990:194) rightfully remarks that treating all human interaction as potentially face threatening is a rather pessimistic interpretation. In the same vein, Sifianou (1987) notes that Brown and Levinson's model represents a negative value of politeness and undoubtedly reflects preoccupation with impositions. Newer theories of face point out to some further elements that facework needs to consider. For instance, Arundale (2006) and Locher note the relational aspect of face. Spencer-Oatey (2007) maintains that 'face' 'face' is a multi-faceted concept that is cognitively based. It is socially constituted in interaction and can be regarded as an individual or collective trait, and yet it also applies to interpersonal relations. Analyses of face thus need to take all of these elements into consideration. For instance, Pikor-Niedzialek (2005) has argued that a viable theory of politeness cannot rest upon a set of rules based on social, normative behavior. What one views as polite or impolite behavior depends on contextually negotiated factors. Thus the normative perspective of politeness ought to be rejected.

Having all these objections in mind, this study calls upon some basic tenets of the Brown and Levinson's model without assuming that their model contains universal formulae for regulating politeness. We adopt Brown and Levinson's concept of 'face' since it has substantial explanatory power in accounting for pragmatic uses and can be helpful in constructing a basis of a pragmatic grammar of Macedonian. However, it should be borne in mind that, given its connectedness to social power, politeness is not equally distributed. Just as Gricean principles

can be used to account for the pragmatic meaning of certain utterances (and not all of them), Brown and Levinson's model provides a foundation for a system of pragmatic politeness since it is central to "the linguistic expression of social relationships." (1987:49) While Brown and Levinson do not discuss the functions of diminutives in English at length they do identify diminutive terms of address and endearments as in-group identity markers (1987:108). These in-group identity markers help the speaker establish in-group solidarity with the addressee and as such serve to mitigate face-threatening acts with imperatives. Our data in Chapter 5 support this assumption showing that Macedonian speakers seem to use diminutives to claim in-group solidarity and attenuate the illocutionary force of the utterance.

#### 2.4. Cross-cultural Pragmatic Uses of Diminutives

Wierzbicka (1991:1) maintains that humans use language as a tool for social interaction. In such interactions, categories like singular/plural, colors or gender do not involve the speaker, the addressee or the relationship between them.

However, categories like diminutives, augmentatives or honorifics, do.

Wierzbicka goes on to suggest that diminutives are among those pragmatic devices that are used to communicate interactional (or pragmatic) meanings. To understand human interaction we need to understand 'interactional' (or pragmatic) meanings (5). Wierzbicka (1991) analyzes the pragmatic implications of diminutives in cultural context; in particular, she postulates that cordiality is a

cultural value and argues that in Polish, warm hospitality is conveyed via diminutives as it is by a ‘hectoring’ style of offers and suggestions. Typically, in Polish culture the food offered to the guest is referred to by the host in diminutive (51). Wierzbicka (1991:51) goes on to explain that instead of asking:

(1) *Would you like some more herring? Are you sure?*

one might say in Polish:

*Weź jeszcze śledzika! Koniecznie!*

Take some more dear-little-herring-(DIM)! You must!

Wierzbicka concludes that the diminutive is used to praise the quality of the food and minimize the quantity pushed onto the guest’s plate, where the diminutive and the imperative are used to communicate the cordial, solicitous attempt to encourage the guest to help themselves to more food. She argues that the cultural style of such offers is quite different from that of *Would you like some more?*, and that the difference cannot be described in terms of politeness but in terms of different cultural traditions, and ultimately, different hierarchies of values (1991:51-2). In commenting on such cultural differences, Wierzbicka draws an important distinction between Anglo-Saxon and Polish cultures:

If one’s own view of what is good for another person does not coincide with the view of that person, Anglo-Saxon culture requires that one should respect the other person’s wishes (i.e., autonomy) than to do what we think is good for the person; Polish culture tends to resolve the dilemma in the opposite way. (52)

Wierzbicka points out to a similar pragmatic use of diminutives in leave taking. She claims that in Anglo-Saxon culture, if the guests hint their intentions to leave,

one respects their autonomy and ‘self-determination’ by letting them go. In Polish culture, on the other hand, such behavior would be interpreted as cold or uncaring. Therefore, a Polish host would routinely try to prevent the guests from leaving, since a display of warmth towards the addressees is regarded as more important than a display of respect for their autonomy. In such an attempt, a Polish host would insist that the guests stayed longer, combining ‘you musts’ and “warm diminutives” (52)

- (2) *Ale jeszcze troszeczkę! Ale koniecznie!*  
But stay a little-DIM more! But you must!

Wierzbicka points out to requests as another example of interaction between diminutives and illocutionary strategies. Specifically, she argues that in Polish, a request in imperative mood is conventionally mitigated by diminutives. In addition, in Polish it is more natural to use imperative than interrogative-cum conditional request (which is preferred in the Anglo-Saxon cultures). Wierzbicka (1991:52) offers this example to communicate such illocutionary strategy achieved by the use of the diminutive:

- (3) *Jureczku, daj mi papierosa!*  
George-DIM-DIM, give me a cigarette!

Wierzbicka argues that the double diminutive in (3) and the intonation soften the grammatically direct imperative. She goes on to argue that in such informal, familial contexts,

An indirect interrogative request would be less appropriate in this situation because ‘interrogativity’ in directness is a distance-building device [in Polish]: there is an implicit conflict between

intimacy and affection on the one hand and complete mutual independence on the other. (If I ask you to do something for me, and if I think we are close, I will assume that you will do what I want you to do; to show that I don't know if you'll do it is to acknowledge your independence, but also, your 'distance' from me.) (52-53)

According to Wierzbicka (1991:53) in child-directed speech (CDS) one would typically use imperatives softened not only by the multiple name diminutives but also diminutives of nouns, adjectives, adverbs, and less frequently some other parts of speech. The following examples showcase such mitigated imperatives (Wierzbicka 1991:53)

(4) *Monisienko, jedz zupkę!*  
Monica-DIM-DIM, eat your soup-DIM!

*Jedź pręciutko!*  
Eat quickly-DIM!

*Zjedz wszystko!*  
Eat it all-DIM up!

Wierzbicka concludes that,

Rich systems of diminutives seem to play a crucial role in cultures in which emotions in general and affection in particular is expected to be shown overtly. Anglo-Saxon culture does not encourage unrestrained display of emotions. In adult English speech diminutives (even those few diminutives which English does have) feel out of place, just as non-erotic kissing and hugging feels more often than not out of place. (53)

In Chapter 5, we will examine diminutive uses suggesting that Macedonian shares some cultural patterns with Polish in this regard: hospitality and cordiality of the host are dominant cultural concerns and tend to override the personal autonomy of

the guest. In communicating such cordiality diminutives appear to be among the most typical pragmatic devices, not only with children, but with adults as well.

Pragmatic alignment of the diminutive with imperatives exists in Macedonian and has been briefly noted by Petrovska (2010:146)

- (5) [food items offered to a guest]  
*Zemi si od gravčeto!*  
Take refl.pro from the beans-DIM  
“Have some beans!”

According to Petrovska (2010:146) in Macedonian, the diminutive and the imperative work hand in hand in the cordial attempt to get the guest to have some more food. In Chapter 5 we will test the above assumptions. Unlike Anglo-Saxon cultures that rarely employ imperatives with suggestions, requests, or offers, in Macedonian (like in Polish) it is customary to combine diminutives with imperatives to communicate genuine concern, warmth and hospitality. In such contexts, the imperative tends to index immediate concern for the interlocutor’s wellbeing, whereas the diminutive communicates affection by minimizing the quantity of the food.

Another cross-cultural study provides an important insight into the pragmatic uses of the diminutive. Sifianou’s (1992) contrastive study on the use of diminutives in expressing politeness indicates that, compared to English, Greek is a) more flexible in the formation of diminutives, and b) uses more diminutives. In Greek, the prototypical function of diminutives is to signal smallness but they are used

extensively to indicate familiarity, informality, endearment and affection.

Sifianou points out that, in English, just like in many other languages, diminutives do not function exclusively as address terms. Her data from Greek and English confirms Brown and Levinson's (1987:177) claim that diminutives are used as negative politeness markers intended to minimize impositions. Moreover, Sifianou shows that in Greek pragmatic functions of diminutives and the related lexical item *ligo* "a little" serve as markers of friendly, informal politeness.

Specifically, in collocations with verbs, *ligo* serves as a conventionalized marker of politeness without a literal meaning (1992:171). Jurafsky (1996:569) refers to such uses of "a little" as periphrastic or analytic diminutive. This periphrastic diminutive is evident cross-linguistically: *malo* (Bosnian/Serbian/Croatian), *trochu* (Czech), *een beetje* (Dutch), *un petit* (French), *ein bisschen* (German), *chotto* (Japanese) *malku* (Macedonian), *trochę* (Polish), *un poquito* (Spanish), *trochi* (Ukrainian), etc. However, in Greek, *ligo* serves as a marker of informal, friendly politeness and that the concept of imposition is processed differently in Greek and Anglo-Saxon societies (Sifianou 1992:156). According to Sifianou, impositions in Greek are minimized by other means, and the diminutive is mainly used "to establish or reaffirm a solidarity framework for the interaction." The upcoming discussion in Chapter 5 on the uses of *malku* (the periphrastic diminutive in Macedonian) and its diminutivized forms *malce*, *malkucka*, *malcucka*, (all of which can be approximately translated as semantic-pragmatic nuances of "a tiny little bit") seem to provide some evidence for both Brown and



Levinson's and Sifianou's interpretation of the pragmatic implications of the periphrastic diminutive.

The use of diminutives in CDS has been amply documented in almost all languages. Studies on acquisition of diminutives suggest that diminutives facilitate the acquisition of pragmatic competence (Bates (1974); De Marco (1998); Voeykova (1998); Laalo (2001); Kempe (2005), Savickienė (1998) and (2007); Kempe et al. (2007); Cenoz (2007); Marrero et al. (2007); Protassova and Voeykova (2007); Palmovic (2007); Thomadaki and Stephany (2007)). Not surprisingly, Sifianou cites CDS as of the most frequent uses of diminutives in Greek. She maintains that children are frequently referred to, or addressed by, diminutivized forms of their full names. She goes on noting that, "One or two of these may be established as standard self-designations, and may also be used by relatives and friends; others may be just creations of the moment in a specific context. By using diminutives towards children, adults not only express their affection, but also attempt to represent the world as a friendly place." (1992:158) Sifianou also suggests that children themselves use diminutives extensively when echoing adult speech or in attempt to sound polite or less demanding so as to attain adults' approbation. (1992:158)

- (6) [mother to her three-year old daughter]  
*Ela karðula mu anikse to stomataki su na fas*  
Come on heart-DIM my open the mouth-DIM you to eat-you

*To psaraki su*  
 the fish-DIM your  
 “Come on sweetheart eat up all your fish.”

Sifianou asks a crucial question: What can be diminutivized? She argues that although nouns denoting natural phenomena can be diminutivized, threatening manifestations of such phenomena, as well as imposing, unmanageable object usually cannot. (1992:158) However, according to (Wierzbicka 1984:126) some metaphorical attempts to “tame” such threatening manifestations and imposing, unmanageable objects may be exceptions to this. In responding the above question of what can be diminutivized, Sifianou argues that in Greek, diminutivization of nouns denoting human artifacts is quite common where the pragmatic focus is that of endearing or attenuating of its potential negative force. Sifianou’s examples in (7) and (8) illustrate such pragmatic uses of diminutives in Greek (1992:158-159).

(7) [waiter in a restaurant]  
*Travate tin kareklitsa sas para mesa an thelete?*  
 Pull-you the chair-DIM your a bit forward if want-you?  
 “Could you please move your chair a bit?”

Sifianou notes that even nouns denoting activities, such as *kseskonisma* “dusting” or *taksiði* “journey”, can be found in diminutivized forms.

(8) [between friends]  
*Poli θαθela ena taksiðaki tora*  
 Very would-like-I a trip-DIM now  
 “I would very much like to go on a trip now.”

She adds that some adjectives connoting negative qualities, such as *ksinos* “sour” or *askimos* “ugly” can be diminutivized as *ksinutsikos* “sourish” or *askimulis* “ugly-ish.” The same attenuating pragmatic uses have been documented in Macedonian: *kiselo* “sour” or *grdo* “ugly” are diminutivized as *kiseličko* “sourish” or *grdičko* “ugly-ish.” According to Jurafsky’s Universal Structure of the Diminutive presented in Figure 1 on p.11, such examples from Greek exemplify semantic approximations that are pragmatically used as hedges. Pragmatic uses of diminutives of this type have also been documented in Macedonian and are discussed in detail in Chapter 5.

One of Sifianou’s major claims is that in Greek politeness is expressed by claiming common ground and showing solidarity towards the addressee or by demonstrating affectionate concern for imposing on their freedom of action. (1992:159) Moreover, she argues that Greek has a highly developed system of diminutive derivations that tend to index affection; she suggests that Greeks use these as pragmatic devices for signaling positive politeness. Sifianou quotes Mamaridou’s (1987) study that argues that Greek society is more oriented towards positive politeness than the English-speaking societies. Sifianou’s and Mamaridou’s claims on Greek preference for positive politeness coincide with Wierzbicka’s (1991) assumption that Anglo-Saxon society is more oriented towards negative politeness because the major concern is minimizing the threat towards the addressee’s face. Furthermore, Sifianou notes that this cultural

preference for positive politeness is evident in Greek where diminutives are used to express modesty.

When speakers use diminutives to refer to their own possessions, characteristics, or achievements, the connotation may be that of affection, but it may also, at the same time, be an attempt to reduce the possibility of the utterances' being interpreted as self-praise. The strategy is not altogether unlike that in Japanese of indicating modesty by humbling oneself before one's partner, and thereby raising the partner's esteem. It is a positive politeness strategy.  
(159)

It is worth noting that besides English, Greek, and Japanese, using diminutives for expressing modesty has also been documented in Arabic (Badarneh 2010; Farahat 2009), Dutch (Shelter 1959), Italian and German (Dressler and Merlini Barbaresi 1994), Serbian (Đurić 2004), and Spanish (Mendoza 2005; Placencia 2005). This dissertation expands the above list by offering evidence from Macedonian where the diminutive may be used to express modesty on the part of the speaker as a positive politeness strategy. Moreover, this study will argue that the use of the diminutive in Macedonian is pragmatically more similar to those in Greek and Polish. Namely, in Macedonian culture the diminutive is commonly employed to establish positive politeness by indexing affection and various forms of social bonding.

There is a substantial body of evidence documenting the occurrence of pragmatic diminutive in requests (Thomas (1983); Wierzbicka (1985); Dressler and Merlini Barbaresi (1994); Trosborg (1995); Jurafsky (1996); Van Mulken (1996); Stefanovski (1997); Caffi (1999); Makri-Tsilipakou (2003); Đurić (2004); Travis

(2005); Mendoza (2005); Félix-Brasdefer (2007); Pinto and Raschio (2007); Economidou-Kogetsidis (2008); Larina (2008); Badarneh (2010); Böhmerová (2011); Placencia (2005)). Sifianou discusses pragmatic uses of diminutives largely restricted to informal speech that typically involve exchange of ‘free goods’. Brown and Levinson (1987:80) define ‘free goods’ as “things and services... which all members of the public may reasonably demand from one another.” In Russia, for instance, asking for a cigarette is socio-pragmatically acceptable since cigarettes are deemed as ‘free goods.’ However, asking for a cigarette in some other cultures may be regarded as an imposition. (Thomas 1983:103-4) Throughout the Balkans, asking for a cigarette is considered culturally “free goods”. Chapter 5 includes data from Macedonian where the pragmatic diminutive is used to ask for free goods. Requesting ‘free goods’ in Macedonian is not necessarily viewed as an imposition and the pragmatic diminutive in requesting ‘free goods’ ought not to be interpreted as minimizing imposition. Rather, as Sifianou suggests, in such requests “...participants have specific, culturally, and situationally determined rights and obligations to perform particular acts, or when the result of a request directly or indirectly benefits the addressee“ (160). This can be postulated as a Balkan Sprachbund feature: in Macedonian (as in Greek and all other Balkan cultures) requesting “free goods” does not necessarily categorize as imposition thus softening devices are hardly necessary to mitigate such requests of “free goods”. The pragmatic diminutive requesting ‘free goods’ in Macedonian, as the one exemplified in (9) below, is rather a marker of in-group solidarity. As Sifianou explains, such requests are not

perceived as impositions but are actually welcomed as occasions to be of service to someone. In a pilot study, the same use of diminutives was recorded in Macedonian (Spasovski 2006:9)

(9) [typical exchange between friends in Macedonia]  
A: *Ķe<sup>5</sup> ti zemam edno cigarče.*  
FTM you I take one cigarette-DIM  
“I’m taking one of your cigarettes.”

B: *Nema gajle. Zemaj!*  
No worries. You take!  
“No worries, help yourself!”

Sifianou maintains that, in Greek requests, the diminutive is not restricted to certain syntactic patterns and shows that they may co-occur with imperative, subjunctive, and indicative. What is more, the diminutive in Greek can be embedded in constructions that leave the addressee no options and cannot therefore be regarded as ‘polite’ requests. (1992:161)

(10) [on the phone]  
*Perimenete ena leptaki.*  
Wait a minute-DIM  
“Hang on a minute please.”

Note that the translation in English includes the formulaic “please” which is expected. According to Sifianou, constructions like the one in (10) occur in daily exchanges, not only between family and friends, but among strangers as well, enacting routine roles and suggesting a Greek preference for positive politeness makers (1992:161). She concludes the argument by maintaining that such

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<sup>5</sup> FTM = future tense marker

examples are not perceived as impositions. Accordingly, the diminutives in these situations are not intended to minimize impositions but to establish friendly context for interaction. Our data will suggest that much the same holds in Macedonian: the diminutive may co-occur with imperative, subjunctive, and indicative, and can be embedded in constructions that leave the addressee no options and cannot therefore be regarded as only 'polite' requests.

A number of pragmatic studies on diminutivization in various languages have indicated that the pragmatic diminutive is common with offers: Arabic (Badarneh 2010); Dutch (Gillis 2008); Greek (Sifianou 1992; Makri-Tsilipakou 2003); Macedonian (Stefanovski (1997); Polish and Ukrainian, (Szymanek and Derkach 2005); Russian (Larina 2008) Spanish (Travis 2005); Serbian (Đurić 2004; Veljković Stanković 2011). Across cultures, offers are often realized by a broad category of nouns that refer to food, beverages, and other related items, such as culinary recipes or tableware. In such cases, the pragmatic diminutive is used to index positive politeness during ritualized contexts that involve offering food or beverages. According to Sifianou (1992:164)

Offers constitute basic positive politeness strategies, in that speakers indicate that they know and are concerned with the addressee's desires, which they try to satisfy. From a certain viewpoint, pressure is put on the addressee to either reject the offer, something which would naturally be seen as inconsiderate, or accept it, in which case s/he has a potential debt to reimburse. This obligation, which can threaten the addressee's negative face, is compensated for implicitly by the shared knowledge of the reciprocity of giving and receiving, and is mitigated explicitly by the use of the diminutive: a conventional linguistic device.

Sifianou makes a claim that in Greek culture potential threats to negative face tend to be viewed as rather insignificant compared to the constant positive face needs. We will argue that the same cultural interaction operates in Macedonian. For example, it is customary for Macedonian hosts to insist on offering food and beverages and use diminutives to downplay the offer and the resulting obligation on the part of the guest(s). According to Sifianou, such uses of pragmatic diminutives eliminate two inferences: 1. the likelihood of self-praise related to the things offered, and 2. the possibility of imposition since it is suggested that the offered goods are merely a small thing.

The downplaying of the gift (the use of diminutive) by B is almost formulaic. By downsizing the magnitude of the gift, the speaker B counteracts the overstatement of the speaker A. According to Sifianou, such interaction reveals participants' sense of equality in sharing goods, a somewhat symmetrical giving. (164)

Another cross-linguistic pragmatic use of the diminutive has been documented in compliments. Wierzbicka (1991) has shown that the frequent use of the diminutive in languages such as Russian and Polish plays a valuable role in realizing the cultural goal of the expression of good feelings towards others. Using the diminutive for complimenting others is common in other Slavic languages: Czech (Böhmerová 2011), Polish (Huszczka 2005), Serbian (Đurić 2004), as well as in Arabic (Farahat 2009, Badarneh 2010), Greek (Sifianou 1992, Terkourafi 2001, Makri-Tsilipakou 2003, Kouletaki 2005), Italian (Dressler and



Barbaresi 1994), Portuguese (Soares Da Silva 2008), Spanish (Mendoza 2005), and Turkish (Ruhi 2006).

The above discussion exemplified how cross-culturally the diminutive is used to communicate positive and negatives politeness in a variety of speech acts. In addition, the pragmatic use of diminutives has been verified in a number of contextual situations. Đurić (2004:161-2) identifies 13 specific contexts in Serbian where the diminutive plays some specific pragmatic function: a) to communicate affection, love, or tenderness to children, friends, or pets; b) to adapt to children's perception of the world (in CDS); c) to convey contempt or irony (often in idiomatic expressions); d) to achieve some communicative effect in jokes; e) to express false modesty; f) to serve as euphemisms for some unpleasant or difficult words; g) to convey sympathy for someone's personal loss; h) to evoke empathy in interlocutors; i) to express kindness via mitigation (in a number of speech acts, such as requests or offers); j) to alleviate some negative outcomes or bad news for the interlocutors; k) to pay a compliment; l) in describing positive human characteristics (via metaphors); and, m) in hypocorisms of personal and family names. A more general analysis of the pragmatic of the diminutive in colloquial Jordanian Arabic is proposed by Badarneh (2010). He notes several major functions of diminutives in Jordanian Arabic: a pejorative pragmatic function (where the diminutive is used to show insult or contempt (158-9); as positive (emotional) intensifiers; as pragmatic hedges (as interactional pragmatic devices to minimize imposition on the

interlocutor); and, a ludic function (here the diminutive is used as a positive politeness strategy to emphasize the shared background knowledge and values between communicants).

The last section of the review of the literature on cross-cultural uses of the diminutive has shown that diminutives are used both as positive and negative politeness markers in a variety of speech acts with children and adults. The above review suggests that the pragmatic functions of diminutives are chiefly to be sought in informal situations that allow more space for expression of subjective judgments, personal affection, empathy, etc. Cross culturally, the diminutive appears to serve as a convenient pragmatic device to magnify the illocutionary force of the utterance in positive politeness (when used to intensify the affection, to compliment, to establish common ground, empathy, etc.) or attenuate the illocutionary force in cases of negative politeness (to minimize the degree of imposition or criticism, to show awareness of addressee's negative face, etc.) As already noted above, the forthcoming exploration of the pragmatic functions of the diminutive in Macedonian will be analyzed within Brown and Levinson's framework of politeness. This will form the discussion in Chapter 5.

In sum, this literature review has outlined the theoretical framework of this study by presenting a number of relevant studies on the morphology and pragmatics of the diminutive. Chapter 2 has discussed some diachronic and synchronic aspects of the diminutive in Macedonian. While Macedonian remains similar to its Slavic

linguistic relatives, at the level of morphology, the structure, formation, formal constraints, combinability and the reduplication potential of the diminutive will be analyzed in a broader linguistic context. In doing so, the analysis will necessitate input from cross-cultural morphology and semantics that connect the diminutive to the semantic primitives “child” and “small”. The review of synchronic perspectives introduced the Macedonian system of diminutive suffixes and announced the major questions that will be addressed regarding the morphology of the diminutive. The theoretical framework for investigating the pragmatic potential of the diminutive will range from Brown and Levinson’s (1978, 1987) theory of pragmatic politeness and face. However, their theory of politeness will not be adopted as a normative tool, i.e., it will not be taken as set of universal rules that regulate social behavior. Rather, pragmatic (im)politeness is to be investigated by including relevant contextually negotiated factors that operate in specific culture. To that end, the dissertation will resort to a number of cross-cultural studies. Our data will show that the gamut of pragmatic use of the diminutive in Macedonian shares similarities with cultures that extend beyond the immediate socio-cultural milieu of Macedonian language. Thus, the study of the pragmatic uses of the diminutive in Macedonian becomes valuable not only in the context of Slavic languages or the Balkan Sprachbund, but in a wider, cross-linguistic and cross-cultural context.

## Chapter 3: Methodology

### 3.1. Description of the Corpus and Gathering of Data

This dissertation is intended to fill some major gaps in the systematic and empirical research on the formation and pragmatic uses of diminutives in Macedonian. The chronic lack of systematized corpora and insufficient scholarly work on Macedonian diminutives are two major challenges that we had to deal with. This study will rely on two collections of data: electronic textual corpora that represent various written genres and video recordings of natural conversations involving children (and use of CDS) as well as conversations among adult native speakers of Macedonian. Specifically, the electronic corpora consist of newspaper and magazine articles, discussion postings from online forums, blogs, published short stories, as well as children's literature. In addition, this study makes use of a sizable collection of diminutives assembled by Jovanova Gruevska (2009). Besides contemporary data, her corpus includes diminutives from regional dialects, as well as examples of literary, poetic, or archaic usages. Jovanova Gruevska's (2009) corpus is classified in her unpublished doctoral dissertation according to specific diminutive suffixes. My own compilations of data are more varied. They include printed and electronic texts, Internet postings, online forums, public and private video recordings, as well as examples and commentaries from grammars, scholarly articles, and my own conversations with native speakers and my own recorded observations of native speakers' conversations. In addition, the corpora include documented records of natural

exchanges from my own previous unpublished studies and pilot projects: the first on pragmatic competence and cross-cultural pragmatic failure (Spasovski 2010) and the other two are pilot studies that dealt with semantics and pragmatics of Macedonian diminutives (Spasovski 2006 and 2006a). I want to underscore that verifying diminutives is a daunting task since many of them are not even listed or discussed in dictionaries or grammars. In order to achieve objectivity, I have consulted fellow researchers, lexicographers, and colleagues who are native speakers of Macedonian. It needs to be noted that all the diminutives included in this study have been verified by some reliable source: electronic, printed, Internet, or via native speakers' competence.

The second set of data consists of approximately 12 hours of video recordings of natural conversations across a number of informal conversational registers: 1. children's shows (three hours); 2. televised panel discussions (three hours); 3. talk shows, culinary shows, and stand-up comedy performances (each of these genres is represented in an hour recording, three hours total); and 4. private recordings of family gatherings (three hours). As seen, these conversational genres have been proportionally represented in the corpus. This will be the first study on Macedonian diminutives based on actual video recordings. Thus, this dissertation will be the first systematic empirical study of the pragmatic uses of diminutives in Macedonian. Except for the private recordings of family gatherings, all of the other video materials were publicly available on the Internet. The private recordings were obtained from native speakers of Macedonian who voluntarily

shared their video recordings of family events. These private recordings were obtained with participants' written consent, with full protection of their privacy, and following the approval of the Arizona State University Institutional Review Board. The participants were informed in writing of the scope of this study and publicizing the results. As noted, to protect participants' privacy their names were altered. The Appendix A includes the Arizona State University Institutional Review Board approval and the Appendix B contains the Participant Consent Form.

We maintain that the listed corpora are representative in exploring the morphology and pragmatics of Macedonian diminutives. For the purposes of morphological analysis, the electronic and textual corpora are representative since they include examples from modern Macedonian as well as examples from regional dialects, literary, poetic, or archaic usages. As outlined in Chapters 1 and 2, the morphological analysis is carried out on two levels: diachronic and synchronic. The exploration of the morphology of Macedonian diminutives will also rely on related morphological studies on the diminutive in other Slavic languages. Chapter 4 will examine the morphology of Macedonian diminutives by looking at their characteristics, formation, and possible rules and constraints.

The video recordings are representative of diminutivity in Macedonian since they take into consideration some relevant factors in analyzing texts and pragmatic uses. Jurafsky (1996:563) notes that diminutives form part of the informal

inventory of language, and that they are most frequent in spoken informal registers. Hence, our selected video recordings include several informal registers of spoken Macedonian that are represented in a range of different situational contexts with attention to some relevant situational parameters. Biber and Conrad (2001:175) point out the importance of situational parameters:

Situational parameters are important for the discourse: the participants, their relationships, and their attitudes toward the communication; the setting, including factors such as the extent to which time and place are shared by the participants, and the level of formality; the channel of communication; the production and processing circumstances (e.g. amount of time available); the purpose of the communication; and the topic of the subject matter. A register can be defined by its particular combination of values for each of these characteristics. (175)

They also note that “...there are systematic and important linguistic differences across registers, referred to as patterns of *register variation*...functional descriptions based on texts without regard for register variation are inadequate and often misleading...” (176) and that

“...any functional description of a linguistic feature will *not* be valid for the language as a whole. Rather, characteristics of the textual environment interact with register differences, so that strong patterns of use in one register often represent only weak patterns in other registers. (176-7)

Biber and Conrad (2001:193) remind us that “...control of a range of registers is important for any competent speaker of a language.”

To sum up, the corpora analyzed in this dissertation meet relevant research standards. First, the corpus comprises contemporary and historical examples that warrant diachronic and synchronic morphological analyses of Macedonian diminutives. For the purposes of the morphological analyses, the corpora extend over several registers and genres ranging from colloquial usage and regional dialects, to literary, poetic, and archaic usages. Next, in view of the documented frequency of diminutives in informal registers, our data focus exactly on such registers of spoken Macedonian. These informal registers include CDS, as well as a variety of registers of colloquial Macedonian analyzed in specific contextual situations and bearing in mind some relevant situational parameters. In this way, our study on Macedonian diminutives offers a discussion that systematically controls for some relevant socio-pragmatic parameters and explores the pragmatic potential of the diminutive in well defined contextual situations.

### 3.2. Hypotheses

As the title suggests, the hypotheses of this dissertation can be classified in two major areas: morphology and pragmatics. In terms of their morphology, we will offer examples from Macedonian to hypothesize that ultimately, diminutivization is semantically based. The ensuing question is what morpho-semantic criteria play a role in formation of diminutives? What are the reasons that cause possible morpho-semantic blockings for diminutivization? Another hypothesis concerning the morphology of the diminutive is that stacking and reduplications in



Macedonian have to be rule governed. This dissertation will shed some light on those rules governing the stacking and reduplication.

The second set of hypotheses relate to the pragmatics potential of Macedonian diminutives. The overarching hypothesis is that diminutives index more than size or affection. Chapter 3 offers a discussion on cross-linguistic data that suggest a wide gamut of pragmatic uses of the diminutive. This overarching hypothesis will be tested against a wide range of data suggested by cross-linguistic studies in controlled contextual situations and parameters. Specifically, this dissertation will explore the possible pragmatic functions of Macedonian diminutives in a variety of standard speech acts, in well defined contextual situations and while controlling for relevant situational parameters. By testing all the above hypotheses, this study aims to offer new insight founded on empirical data that should serve as the basis for further analyses of diminutives in Macedonian.

These hypotheses are founded in the following assumptions resulting from previous cross-linguistic studies. First, this study builds on the theory of semantic-pragmatic unidirectionality of the diminutive (advocated by Jurafsky (1996) and Wierzbicka (1991)) where the central concepts are “child”, “small” and, via extension (Dressler and Merlini Barbaresi (1994)), “non-serious”. Second, my own data from the pilot studies (Spasovski (2006) and (2006a)) indicate that the diminutive in Macedonian is predominantly used as a positive politeness strategy aimed toward establishing social bonding as well as connoting cordiality, intimacy and affection. Drawing upon cross-cultural interpretations suggested by

Wierzbicka (1991:27-55) we will argue that, in Macedonian, social bonding, cordiality, intimacy or affection are pragmatically more salient than personal autonomy in the Anglo-Saxon societies, realized through non-imposition, tentativeness, or similar pragmatic strategies for saving face.

## Chapter 4: Morphology of the Diminutive

Chapter 4 focuses on the morphology of the diminutive in Macedonian, explains the derivational processes, and presents a taxonomy of Macedonian diminutive affixes. One of the basic questions treated in this chapter is: What can be diminutivized and why? While the diminutivization is highly productive in Macedonian, not all words appear in diminutive forms. Section 4.1. investigates the possible morpho-semantic criteria that play a role in formation of diminutives along with the reasons that cause morpho-semantic blockings for diminutivization. In addition, section 4.1 analyzes the differences between real (i.e. productive) and frozen diminutives, and includes a commentary on the degrees of lexicalization. Section 4.2. discusses the semantic and morphological unidirectionality of the diminutive and the related senses. In the section, 4.3. we test a major hypothesis concerning the morphology of the Macedonian diminutive: that diminutive stacking and/or reduplications in Macedonian ought to be rule governed. Moreover, section 4.3. explores the order of reduplicating diminutive affixes along with the possible types.

### 4.1. What Can Be Diminutivized and Why?

It was already noted in 2.2. that Macedonian has a highly developed system of diminutives that encompasses both nominal word categories (nouns and adjectives) and verbal categories (verbs and adverbs). Next, Table 2 displayed

some typical diminutive suffixations in Macedonian and exemplified the diminutivization of all the major word categories. It was also noted that in Macedonian even words like *džin* “giant” or *milion* “million” may easily be diminutivized as *džinče* “giant-DIM” and *milionče* “million-DIM”, respectively. However, there seem to be certain groups of words that resist diminutivization in Macedonian. Belamarić (2001: 15-16) lists several categories of words that do not accept diminutive affixes: deverbal nouns expressing feelings, times of the day, days of the week, months of the year, seasons, and time periods longer than a year. Moreover, it ought to be noted that, just like in most other languages, most abstract nouns in Macedonian are rarely diminutivized. Cross-linguistically, the abstractness of the object, notion, or concept functions as somewhat universal semantic blocker.

To answer the question what can be diminutivized, we have to resort to semantics. Jurafsky’s model (1996:542) of diminutive polysemy presented in Figure 1 on p. 11 exemplifies cross-linguistic regularity in diminutive semantics. This model exhibits a unidirectional semantic tendency indicating that diminutives arise from semantic or pragmatic links with children, where the central semantic features are “child” or “small”. On a conceptual level, diminutives have been shown to follow predictable patterns established in cognitive semantics. Sáenz (1999:175) reports the findings of Lakoff (1987, 1989) and Ruiz de Mendoza (1996, 1998a). Lakoff theorizes that our minds organize knowledge in some stable cognitive structures that he calls Idealized Cognitive Models (ICMs). According to Lakoff, these

cognitive models are radially structured and may be extended via metaphors or metonymy. Jurafsky's model (1996:542) is an example of a radial ICM that revolves around the semantic primitives "child" or "small". In analyzing the semantic nature of the Spanish diminutive, Ruiz de Mendoza (1998a) postulates that ICMs of "child" and "size" constantly interact with one another. Mendoza goes on to argue that "the different values of Spanish diminutives are in principle associated with our experience-grounded knowledge of the way in which we usually interact with other entities according to their size." (qtd. in Sáenz 1999:176) Building on Ruiz de Mendoza's cognitive work, Sáenz (1999: 176) postulates a propositional ICM of size and that of metonymic mapping that distinguish diminutives from augmentatives. This ICM has a universal explanatory power and applies to conceptualization of Macedonian diminutives as well.

(11) ICM based on 'size' (Sáenz 1999: 176)

- a) Entities range in size from very small ones to very large ones.
- b) A small entity is usually more manageable than a bigger one.
- c) A small entity usually looks potentially less harmful than a bigger one.

The above ICM of size may be used to explain the conceptualization of diminutives across languages. Diminutives designate smaller objects or concepts. Consequently, because of their size, they do appear more manageable. Additionally, smaller things are, typically, less harmful than those larger in size or volume. This leads us to the initial question in 4.1.: What can be diminutivized?

For instance, in Macedonian, certain emotions or psychological states, such as *omraza* “hatred”, *gnev* “anger”, *bes* “rage”, *zavist* “envy”, *zloba* “evil”, *pakost* “malice”, *očaj* “desperation”, *zbunetost* “confusion” never accept diminutive affixes. On the other hand, other nouns denoting emotions or psychological states, such as *spokoj* “calmness”, *sreća* “happiness”, or *lezet* “relaxing fun” can take diminutive affixes. Furthermore, nouns denoting times of the day, days of the week, months of the year, seasons, and time periods longer than a year<sup>6</sup> are almost never diminutivized. It could be readily noted that these emotions and concepts are not physical, tangible objects. In addition, cross-cultural data suggest that abstract nouns are much less likely to diminutivize. But why are abstract nouns, in general, much less likely to be diminutivized? Is abstractness the only semantic criterion?

We propose the following hypothesis: the semantic constraints that allow diminutivization in Macedonian involve simultaneous operation of at least three ICMs that revolve around two major semantic components. The explanatory power of the ICM of size (formally represented as [-big]) is fundamental. However, [-big] is insufficient to explain the formation of all diminutives in Macedonian. If [-big] was the sole conceptual criterion, how can we explain the existence of diminutives of concrete nouns, such as *džinče* “giant-DIM”, *milionče* “million-DIM”, *palatička* “palace-DIM” *zamoče* “castle-DIM” or even

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<sup>6</sup> When speaking to children, the common noun *godina* “year” is routinely diminutivized to *godinka* “year-DIM”. A particularly common way to ask a small child about their age is *Kolku godinki imaš?* “How many years-DIM you have?”, *i.e.*, How old are you?

*kosmosče* “cosmos-DIM”? According to Wierzbicka (1984), Dressler and Merlini Barbaresi (1994), and Jurafsky (1996), apart from denoting smallness and child-related semantic links, the diminutive also indexes intimacy, endearment, or affection. Can intimacy, endearment or affection explain the diminutivization? The answer is affirmative, since *džinče* “giant-DIM”, *milijone* “million-DIM”, *palatička* “palace-DIM”, *zamoče* “castle-DIM” and *kosmosče* “cosmos-DIM” were found either in children stories or in CDS. However, we will go further and argue that the other basic semantic criterion for generating diminutives (besides [-big]) is that of personal, emotional involvement of the speaker/writer. We hypothesize that the semantic component [+ emotionally salient] can be metaphorically mapped via ICMs as close or otherwise emotionally connected to the speaker/writer. This emotional connection could refer to a feeling, value, dimension, or phenomenon. These phenomena can be monetary, cultural, emotional, symbolic, sentimental, etc. We argue that the above giants, millions, palaces, castles, or cosmoses (which essentially denote sizable objects, notions and concepts) are ultimately viewed as close to the speaker or are made to appear emotionally close. Hence, it is possible that such diminutives of otherwise large-scale objects and concepts can exist in Macedonian. To these we can also add toponyms such as *Skopjence* “Skopje-DIM”, *Londonče* “London-DIM”, or *Makedonijčka* “Macedonia-DIM”. Our hypothesis is that, from the semantic-cognitive viewpoint, the intimacy, endearment, or affection that is indexed by the diminutive is fundamentally [+ emotionally salient]. Thus, we theorize that [-big]

and [+ emotionally salient] are the two basic semantic constraints that allow an object, concept, action, or notion to accept diminutive affixes.

It has been already stated that across languages, abstract, less tangible objects, and concepts are less likely to be diminutivized. Cross linguistically, many concepts that are non-physical and largely abstract, like meditation, contemplation, speculation, transcendence, conceptualization, reflection, etc. are almost never diminutivized. However, abstractness of concepts is not an absolute restriction. Our data showed that a number of abstract nouns in Macedonian, such as *slobodička* “freedom-DIM”, *fajdička* or *fajdenca* “benefit-DIM”, *vistinka* “truth-DIM”, *srekička* “freedom-DIM”, *ubavinka* “beauty-DIM” occur as diminutives. Clearly, the semantic feature [-abstract] does not operate as semantic blocker in the above nouns. The semantic criterion [- big] does not seem to apply, either, since size does not seem to be an applicable criterion in diminutivizing *slobodička* “freedom-DIM”, *fajdička* or *fajdenca* “benefit-DIM”, *vistinka* “truth-DIM”, *srekička* “freedom-DIM”, *ubavinka* “beauty-DIM”, etc. We argue that these abstract nouns occur in their diminutive forms primarily because of the semantic feature [+ emotionally salient]. The semantic component [+ emotionally salient] seems to work hand in hand with [-big] to generate diminutives in Macedonian. The smallness in the above examples could be understood as metaphorical (as related to children or in CDS), but certainly not physical. The violation of these fundamental semantic constraints [-big] and [+ emotionally salient] blocks the formation of the diminutive. Our data did not show a single



example of Macedonian where a diminutive is possible if the underlying semantic components are [-big] and [+ emotionally salient]. One might ask, how do *džinče* “giant-DIM” or *kosmosče* “cosmos-DIM” meet the above criteria? At first glance, *džinče* “giant-DIM” or *kosmosče* “cosmos-DIM” are denotationally [+ big] and seem to go against the first semantic restriction. The Digital Dictionary of Macedonian Language (Дигитален речник на македонскиот јазик) lists *џинче* (*džinče*) “giant-DIM” as a neuter noun occurring in its diminutive form. I have recorded the use of *kosmosče* “cosmos-DIM” in a conversation between an art teacher and her nine-year-old student.

- (12) [art teacher commenting on her student’s drawing of cosmos]  
*Ama kosmosčevo ti e malku prazno, neli?*  
 But this cosmos-DIM you it is a bit empty, isn’t it?  
 “But your cosmos is a bit empty, isn’t it?”

The crucial importance of context in becomes readily apparent in the example (12). Here, the diminutive does not apply to the denotational meaning of the word “cosmos”; rather, the child’s portrayal of the outer space on paper (and not its actual magnitude) is being referred to in an intimate, affectionate way.

Can the criteria of size and emotional involvement be sufficient to explicate diminutivized giants and cosmoses? The answer may seem a bit complicated. In addition to the ICM of size in (11) Sáenz (1999: 76) proposes another ICM based on size via metonymic mapping

- (13) ICM based on ‘size’

d) Small entities are usually manageable; as a result, they may be perceived as likeable.

We can expand the metonymic mapping in the ICM in (13) and add the following rule:

(14) e) Any likeable entities or concepts can be downsized

Thus, friendly giants in fairy tales or children's books or imperfect renditions of the cosmos in students' drawings get to be diminutivized. According to the ICMs in (11), (13), and (14) above, likeable entities or concepts can be downsized, and made more friendly, likeable, or closer to the children's world. In turn, they appear potentially less harmful (like the giant-DIM) or less imperfect (as the cosmos-DIM). This is confirmed by Taylor (2003:174) who claims that cross-culturally, humans have a natural suspicion towards large creatures, and a instinctive affection for small animals and small. Hence, the semantic components of size [- big] and emotional involvement [+ emotionally salient] seem to be working simultaneously and in both directions where size induces emotional involvement and vice versa. This potential of diminutivizing unusually big objects or unmanageable entities is especially evident in CDS and can be explained via the complementary semantic conditioning of the features [- big] and [+ emotionally salient].

Diminutive meanings are very often positive since they are connected to concepts related to children and smallness. However, one might readily object that there exist diminutives that connote negative attitudes or meanings. Such examples in Macedonian are *pederče* “faggot-DIM”, *šefče* “boss-DIM”, *direktorče* “director-DIM”, etc. Clearly, these diminutives have demeaning, pejorative connotations. In the case of diminutives that connote pejorative meanings, the underlying semantic components are still [-big] and [+ emotionally salient]. The smallness in the above examples is not that of physical size. Rather, the smallness is viewed as equivalent of their negative role, small importance, or lack of competence or authority. In other words these are not regarded as “real” homosexuals, bosses, or directors. The [-big] component is reducing their social value. One might further argue that diminutives communicating pejorative meanings connote non-seriousness or lack of social importance. Such pejorative diminutions support Drexler and Merlini Barbaresi’s (1994) argument that “non-serious” is one of the crucial contextual meanings of the diminutive. Furthermore, we need to bear in mind that all diminutives (with either positive or negative connotations) are typically employed in informal, colloquial registers. Thus, the register (i.e., the degree of formality of spoken or written style) plays a crucial part in diminutivization. In addition, one could argue that diminutives ultimately reflect subjective viewpoints. In other words, diminutives also communicate speaker/writer’s personal involvement, interest, or outlook. Hence, many abstract nouns, non-positive concepts can be diminutivized. In sum, the delineation of the underlying semantic components of diminutives is far from simple and linear.

There seem to be a limited number of semantic features that characterize diminutivization: [- big] and [+ emotionally salient] is one such set applicable to all diminutives. However, one can argue that there could be other, more specific semantic matrixes governing the formation of diminutives. For instance, when diminutives connote denigrating, pejorative meanings [-big] and [- serious] seem to be the semantic features that better describe their contextual meanings. As noted, informality of style and register, along with subjective conceptualizations of the referent in a particular text or context are contributing factors in diminutivization. These subjective conceptualizations include various emotional attitudes towards the referent (positive or negative), personal involvement or interest, etc. Thus, informality of style/register and subjective conceptualization are two additional salient components that work in concert with [- big] and [+ emotionally salient]. This subjective, emotional load of diminutives is essentially a semantic-pragmatic feature of the diminutive and will be discussed in detail in Chapter 5.

#### 4.2. Diminutives vs. Lexicalized Forms

According to Brinton and Traugott (2005:18) the term “lexicalization” has been used for two very different phenomena. Synchronically, it has been used for the coding of new conceptual categories. Diachronically, it has been used variously for adopting new items into the lexicon or falling outside the productive rules of grammar. Bauer (1983: 50) notes that “lexicalization ... is essentially a diachronic

process, but the traces it leaves in the form of lexicalized lexemes have to be dealt with in a synchronic grammar.” In discussing the differences between real diminutives and lexicalized items resembling diminutives, we shall exclude the possible diachronic changes and focus on the synchronic perspective.

Consequently, lexicalization is the final stage of the development of the language system, where the lexeme has adopted a form which it could not have had if it had arisen by the application of productive rules of grammar. At this stage the lexeme is considered to be lexicalized. (Lipka et al. 2004: 6) Over time, many diminutivized nouns lose their diminutive meaning. For instance, the English noun “tablet” meaning “pill” is not a “small table” but solidified substance in a shape of a small flat slate, in which a drug is dispensed. In Macedonian, such is the case with *viluška* “fork“ (a kitchen utensil). Conceptually, *viluška* “fork“ can be related to *vila* “pitchfork“ and certainly, a fork resembles the much larger object pitchfork. While the process of lexicalization is certainly motivated by the shape of the original object (i.e., “table” in English, or *vila* “pitchfork“ in Macedonian) the lexicalized nouns „tablet“ and “ *viluška* “fork“, respectively, have lost the proper diminutive meaning. Namely, „tablet“ is not a mere small table, nor is *viluška* “fork“ just a downsized *vila* “pitchfork“. Thus, these nouns have acquired new, unrelated meanings.

Lexicalization of diminutives is much more complex phenomenon: lexicalizations cannot always be readily established nor do they result solely from shape or size-motivated diminutions. We will offer several examples to illustrate that

complexity. The lexicalized noun *viluška* is morphologically segmentable into *vila + uš + ka*<sup>7</sup>, where *-uš* is an intensifying infix, and *-ka* is an inflectional suffix used with feminine singular nouns denoting tools, instruments, utensils, pieces of equipment, etc. Many nouns in Macedonian have been generated via the addition of a number of intensifying suffixes *-uv*, *-ul*, *-un*, *-ur*, *-en*, *-in*, *-ar* to the inflectional suffix *-ka*. For instance, the common noun *nevestulka* “weasel“ is morphologically analyzable into *nevesta* “bride“ + *ul* + *ka*. Today, a native speaker of Macedonian is unable to find any connection between *nevesta* “bride“ and the morphologically similar (and formally diminutivized) form *nevestulka* “weasel“. While one may attempt to trace the connection between these two, from a synchronic point of view, that connection is irrelevant since the Macedonian lexicon lists *nevesta* “bride“ and *nevestulka* “weasel“ as separate, semantically independent lexemes. Let us consider the example with two other lexicalizations of *Vardar* (a toponym denoting the major river in Macedonia). In Macedonian, there exist two hyponymous lexemes *vardarec1* and *vardarec2* that are derived through addition of the diminutive suffix *-ec*. The diminutive suffix *-ec* is attached to masculine singular nouns. The first of the two lexicalizations, *vardarec1*, denotes a kind of wind that blows along the Vardar valley. The second one, *vardarec2* is a common noun designating a fan of the sports club named “Vardar“. The above examples show that lexicalization is quite complex and may refer to different processes of establishing new lexemes. As already explained above, the processes of lexicalization fall outside of the scope of this study.

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<sup>7</sup> A more detailed discussion on the suffix *-ka* is presented in the foregoing section 4.4.2.

In the present study, “diminutives” will be referred to as lexical items that exert morphological and semantic features of diminutivized word forms.

Morphologically, diminutives are marked by suffixes attached to nouns, verbs, adjectives, or adverbs. With nominal word classes, these diminutive suffixes agree in number and gender with the base nominal form. Semantically, diminutives are marked by two major attributes. According to Chamonikolasová and Rambousek (2007:39) diminutives “display display two basic semantic features: they denote referents of small size and suggest the speaker’s emotional attitude to the referent. The emotional load is what distinguishes diminutives from noun phrases with size adjectives<sup>8</sup> as well as from lexicalizations. Lexicalized forms that resemble (or, that have historically been derived from) diminutives are semantically independent of the base form. These lexicalized forms of diminutives are listed as separate items in dictionaries. Notwithstanding the fact that lexicalizations had, at one point in time, been diminutives, from a synchronic point of view lexicalized forms are not diminutives. The Table 4 below displays examples of such lexicalizations of diminutives. It includes examples of lexicalized forms containing all diminutive suffixes operating in Macedonian: *-ec*, and *-ok/-čok* (for masculine); *-ka*, *-ca/-ica*, and *-ička* (for feminine); *-če*, *-ce*, *-e*, *-le*, *-ence*, and *-ule* (for neuter).

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<sup>8</sup> For example, the word “puppy” is a proper diminutive and is different from the noun phrase “small pup”. The difference between these is emotionally marked and has certain pragmatic consequences. (Chamonikolasová and Rambousek 2007:39)

Table 4: Fully Lexicalized Forms of Diminutives (Frozen Diminutives)

Base Form	Diminutive Suffix	Lexicalized Form
MASCULINE		
<i>klin</i> “wedge”	-ec	<i>klinec</i> “nail”
<i>zab</i> “tooth”	-ec	<i>zabec</i> “dent”, “prong”
<i>pat</i> “road, way”	-ec	<i>patec</i> “part (of the hair)”
<i>prav</i> “dust”	-ok	<i>prašok</i> “powder”
<i>izvadi</i> “to take out”	-ok	<i>izvadok</i> “excerpt”
<i>kus</i> “short”	-ok	<i>kusok</i> “shortage, deficit”
FEMININE		
<i>raka</i> “hand”	-ka	<i>račka</i> “handle”
<i>praća</i> “to send”	-ka	<i>pratka</i> “parcel, shipment”
<i>zaem</i> “loan”	-ka	<i>zaem</i> “loan word”
<i>baba</i> “grandmother”	-ica	<i>babica</i> “midwife”
<i>vikend</i> “weekend”	-ica	<i>vikendica</i> “cottage, summer house”
<i>glava</i> “head”	-ica	<i>glavica</i> “bulb of a plant”
<i>strana</i> “side”	-ička	<i>stranička</i> “page of a book”
<i>kola</i> “car”	-ička	<i>količka</i> “stroller, wheelchair, wheel barrow”
<i>karta</i> “map, playing card”	-ička	<i>kartička</i> “credit card”
NEUTER		
<i>godina</i> “year”	-če	<i>godinače</i> “one-year-old infant”
<i>šamija</i> “head scarf”	-če	<i>šamiče</i> “handkerchief”
<i>kapak</i> “lid”	-če	<i>kapače</i> “bottle cap”
<i>nebo</i> “sky”	-ce	<i>nepce</i> “hard palate”
<i>železo</i> “iron”	-ce	<i>želevence</i> “heel plate”
<i>krilo</i> “wing”	-ce	<i>krilce</i> “vent, shutter”
<i>sandak</i> “casket”	-e	<i>sandače</i> “mailbox”
<i>mečka</i> “bear”	-e	<i>meče</i> “bear cub”
<i>uši</i> “ears”	-le	<i>ušle</i> “big-eared person” (pej.)
<i>nos</i> “nose”	-le	<i>nosle</i> “big-nosed person” (pej.)
<i>zab</i> “tooth”	-le	<i>zable</i> “person with big and/or crooked teeth” (pej.)
unknown base form	-ence	<i>velence</i> “little rug”
<i>grlo</i> “throat”	-ence	<i>grlence</i> “neck of a bottle”
unknown base form	-ule	<i>džundžule</i> “daffodil”



Chamonikolasová and Rambousek (2007:39-40) propose a general typology of diminutives that distinguishes between proper, semi-frozen, and frozen diminutives. Morphologically, all of these three categories include diminutive affixes. However, substantial differences exist among them in terms of semantics, pragmatics, and style. Specifically, diminutives proper are characterized by smallness in size, higher emotional load, and stylistic informality. Examples of proper diminutives in English are mommy, kitty, puppy, piglet, booklet, kitchenette, towelette, while proper diminutives in Macedonian include *stolče* “chair-DIM”, *trkalce* “wheel-DIM”, *teglička* “jar-DIM”, *srculence* “heart-DIM-DIM”, *knigičulence* “book-DIM-DIM-DIM.” Frozen (i.e., fully lexicalized) diminutives, are semantically independent from the base form from which they have been derived and appear as separate lexical entries in dictionaries. They do not connote smallness in size, lack emotional load, and are frequently used in both informal and formal registers. In English, frozen diminutives are tablet, cigarette, bullet, and the like. A list of frozen (fully lexicalized) diminutives in Macedonian was presented in Table 4. Semantically and stylistically, frozen diminutives behave like their respective base forms.

Chamonikolasová and Rambousek (2007:39-40) postulate a third, transitional type – semi-frozen diminutives. These resemble the diminutives proper in that they may connote smallness in size (although not always) and are less formal than their base forms. The opposition base form-diminutive form still exists in semi-frozen diminutives, and they are still found in informal registers. However, semi-

frozen diminutives have already lost the emotional load that is typical for diminutives proper (40). Understandably, semi-frozen diminutives are the most difficult to identify. Chamonikolasová and Rambousek (2007) did not offer any examples of semi-frozen diminutives in English. Arguably, *lažička* “small spoon, teaspoon” can be an example of a semi-frozen diminutive in Macedonian. Namely, *lažička* still shows diminution in size from *lažica* “spoon” and is still preferred in colloquial registers. Nevertheless, it cannot be regarded as diminutive proper because the emotional load of *lažička* has faded. Hence, it is translated as “small spoon” or “teaspoon” rather than “spoon-DIM.” The typological differences between proper, semi-frozen, and frozen diminutives are summarized in Table 5.

Table 5: Semantic/Stylistic Features and Pragmatic Potential of the Diminutive<sup>9</sup>

Type	Smallness in Size	Emotional Load	Informality of Style	Pragmatic Potential
Diminutive Proper	+	+	+	+
Semi-frozen Diminutive	-/+	-	+	-
Frozen Diminutive	-	-	-	-

Chamonikolasová and Rambousek (2007:39-40) maintain that the semi-frozen and frozen diminutives show neutrality in terms of smallness in size. We contend

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<sup>9</sup> Adapted from Chamonikolasová and Rambousek (2007:40)

that the diminutive proper differs from the semi-frozen and frozen diminutives in yet distinctive component: pragmatic potential. Chapter 5 demonstrates that the pragmatic functions (i.e., their illocutionary force) separate the diminutives proper from the frozen and semi-frozen diminutives:

It should be noted that the synchronic approach to lexicalization does not eliminate gray areas in the categorization of diminutives. In our view, Chamonikolasová and Rambousek's (2007) typology can be further expanded by an additional category of diminutives that does not show smallness in size, yet contains some emotional load, and is used informally. In Macedonian, there is a limited number of nouns have been generated by adding intermorphic extensions, i.e., intensifying suffixes *-uv*, *-ul*, *-un*, *-ur*, *-en*, *-in*, *-ar* to the inflectional suffix *-ka*. Such are *majstorinka* "unskilled craftsman" (*majstor* "craftsman" + *-in* + *-ka*), *pisatelinka* "marginal or incompetent writer" (*pisatel* "writer" + *-in* + *-ka*), *mucunka* "ugly face" (*mucka* "snout" + *-un* + *-ka*), or *skalunka* "tall unattractive person" (*skala* "ladder" + *-un* + *-ka*). One can argue that these are not proper diminutives, as defined on p. 52. The above examples do not show smallness in size, but they do connote an emotional overlay (a negative one), and occur in informal registers. A common semantic feature for all of the above intermorphic derivations is that they have clearly pejorative connotations. Such examples lead us to the conclusion that the degrees of lexicalization may be even more nuanced, involving additional diminutive categories along the spectrum of lexicalization. Perhaps it is more plausible to speak of diminutives proper, fully lexicalized

(frozen) diminutives, and partially frozen diminutives that can be traced along a semantically and stylistically nuanced continuum. Consequently, we can speak of gradual erosion of diminutive meaning or some sort of semantic bleaching. As many other linguistic phenomena, lexicalization ought to be observed along a spectrum, where at one end, canonical diminutive features can be established in diminutives proper, and on the opposite end, one can identify semantically frozen, fully lexicalized diminutives. In this study we focus on the diminutives proper, i.e., on diminutive derivations that are characterized by smallness in size, higher degree of emotionality, informality, and, as we shall see in Chapter 5, illocutionary force manifested in a wide range of pragmatic uses.

#### 4.3. Morphological and Semantic Unidirectionality of Diminutives and Related Senses

Formation of diminutives in Macedonian is a unidirectional derivation process: diminutive affixation follows a gender-based derivational unidirectionality. Specifically, masculine nouns can yield masculine, feminine, or neuter diminutive derivatives; feminine nouns can produce feminine or neuter diminutives, while neuter nouns can only generate neuter diminutives. Consider the diminutive derivations in Table 6.

Table 6: Gender-Based Unidirectionality in the Derivation of Macedonian

Diminutivized Nouns

MASC. → MASC.		MASC. → FEM.		MASC. → NEUT.	
UNMARKED	DIMINUTIVE	UNMARKED	DIMINUTIVE	UNMARKED	DIMINUTIVE
kol “stake”	kolec	prat “stick”	pračka	brat “brother”	bratče bratčence bratule
lov “hunt”	lovčok	stol “chair”	stolica stolička	nos “nose”	nose nosče nosule
leb “bread”	lebec	glog “hawthorn”	gloginka “haw” (partitive)	prst “finger”	prste prstence prstule
FEM → FEM		FEM → NEUT.			
UNMARKED	DIMINUTIVE	UNMARKED	DIMINUTIVE		
reka “river”	rekička	kniga “book”	kniže knižence knigiče knigičence knižule knižulence		
glava “head”	glavička	torba “bag”	torbe torbence torbiče torbičence torbule turbulence		
vrata “door”	vратиčka	duša “soul”	dušiče dušičence		
NEUT. → NEUT.					
UNMARKED	DIMINUTIVE				
dete “child”	detence detule detulence				
jagne “lamb”	jagnence jagnule jagnulence				
ezero “lake”	ezerce ezercence ezercule				

The derivations in Table 6 show that morphologically, the diminutive derivatives shift their gender only in one direction, and, according to a strict hyponymy.

Masculine diminutives can be formed only from masculine nouns; feminine diminutives can be derived from either masculine or feminine, while neuter can be generated from masculine, feminine, or neuter.

This grammatical (morphological) unidirectionality is interesting since it coincides with some patterns of social stratification and semantic ordering. Namely, like most other languages, Macedonian has existed in a largely male-dominated society, where females and children have subordinate roles. As already noted, Macedonian has grammatical gender: typically, masculine nouns end in consonants or zero inflection, feminine in *-a*, and neuter in *-e* or *-o*. The grammatical gender in Macedonian seems to mirror the scale (or social importance) of objects and concepts that follow established social stratification and semantic patterning. Whatever is important, substantial, sizeable or male-like is the least likely to be diminutivized. Jovanova Gruevska's (2009:13-49) data documents that upward of 90% of all the diminutives and hypocorisms are either feminine or neuter. Her corpus includes all the 12 suffixes used in formation of diminutives and hypocorisms proposed by Koneski (1976:290-1): *-ok/čok*, *-ec* (indexing masculine gender), *-ka*, *-ička*, *-ca*, *-ica* (indexing feminine gender); and *-e*, *-le*, *-ule*, *-ce*, *-ence*, *-če*, *-iče* (indexing neuter gender). The suffixes *-čo* and *-uš* have been found to occur only in colloquial registers. Not surprisingly, the affixes that signal masculine gender are far fewer -- only *-ok/čo* and *-ec* index masculine gender. Jovanova Gruevska's (2009:13-49) data suggest that the most

productive diminutive derivations in Macedonian (over 65%) occur in neuter gender, while feminine gender derivations factor in with about 30%.

This morphological unidirectionality of the diminutive seems to follow a much more fundamental semantic unidirectionality. Let us again consider Jurafsky's universal structure for the semantics of the diminutive presented in Figure 1. First, Jurafsky shows how all semantic and pragmatic senses of the diminutive develop from "child" and "small". Jurafsky's universal semantic model of the diminutive indicates that there is a unidirectional tendency from generic to specific. Thus, first order predicates give rise to second order predicates. For instance, the semantic uses "exactness" or "partitive" are derived via the notion "small". Furthermore, Jurafsky hypothesizes a second, perhaps more fundamental semantic unidirectionality: "child" gives rise to "diminutive". Cross linguistically, diminutives arise from semantic and pragmatic links with children. Jurafsky concludes that

...first, "child" is the central category of the diminutive...[it is]...historically prior and metaphorically and inferentially motivates the other senses, and second, ...if the diminutive in a particular language has a sense, it will have (or have had)...each prior sense on some path to the root. Thus any language with a diminutive with a 'member' sense will have a 'child' sense. (1996:543)

Thus, for instance, in every language where diminutives connote 'imitation'. They will also connote 'small-type-of' (or will have had that connotation in the past) (Jurafsky1996:543)

In sum, Jurafsky's study has demonstrated that diminutives are characterized by

a) unidirectionality (the concept "child" gives rise to diminutive; diminutives arise from semantic or pragmatic links with children), and b) strict hyponymy:

universal tendency to shift from physical smallness → linguistic domain  
(weakening the locutionary force of predicates) → metalinguistic (or  
pragmalinguistic) domain (weakening the illocutionary force of predicates).

However, it would be overly simplistic to reduce the Jurafsky's semantic model of the diminutive to unidirectionality. Jurafsky postulated a radial model where diminutives do not only denote small/downsized objects, concepts, or phenomena but also may also 1. denote lexical categories children/offspring, 2. denote individuating or partitive markers, 3. be lexicalized as words referring to smaller objects/phenomena resembling larger ones, or 4. be used for approximation. All of the universal semantic/pragmatic meanings listed in Figure1 (along with examples of some verbal diminutives) can be analyzed in Table 7 as results of specific scaling from "small" (i.e., size) to amount, intensity, deictic extent, temporal extent, and illocutionary force. Table 7 below displays the links of some second-order senses of Macedonian diminutives through implicit scale - sense relations.



Table 7: Second-Order Senses of Macedonian Diminutives: Implicit Scale - Sense

Relations

Argument	Unmarked Form	Diminutivized Form	Implicit Scale	Sense/ Function
Mass Nouns or Plurals	grav "beans" sneg "snow" širina "space" slama "straw"	gravče "a bean" snegulka "snowflake" širinka/ širinče "clearing, meadow" slamka "drinking straw"	amount or scope	partitive
Abstract Nouns	sreća "happiness" sloboda "freedom" ideja "idea" prostor "space, room" komfor "comfort" univerzum "universe" grev "sin"	srekička "sweet happiness" slobodička "sweet freedom" ideička "nice idea" prostorče "cozy space/room" komforče "private/relaxing comfort" univerzumče "private universe" grevče "a poor little soul"	size	affection, intimacy of privacy, empathy
Gradable Predicates	topol "warm" sladok "sweet" spor "slow" glup "stupid" grd "ugly" skap "expensive" tivok "quiet" kus "short"	topličok "warmish" slatkičok "rather sweet" sporičok "rather slow" glupičok "rather stupid" grdičok "rather ugly" skapičok "rather expensive" tivkičok "rather quiet" kusičok "rather short"	warmth sweetness speed intelligence appearance cost loudness height	approximation or hedging
Count Nouns <sup>10</sup>	vila "pitchfork" kobila "mare" noga "leg" raka "hand" usta "mouth" oko "eye" ključ "key" nož "knife"	viluška "fork" kobilica "bridge of guitar" nogarka "leg of a table" račka "handle" ustinka "spout" okce "peak hole/opening" ključalka "keyhole" nošče "razor"	size or shape	"small type of" and/or resemblance
Deictics	tuka "here" jas "I" mene "to me" tebe "to you"	tukička l1 "right here" jaska "I" meneka "to me" tebeka "to you"	deictic extent person deictic	exactness or creating social bonding

<sup>10</sup> The diminutivization of all of the listed count nouns has resulted in new lexicalized units – new words based on the universal semantic extensions "small type of" and/or resemblance.

<sup>11</sup> Such diminutivized deictics as well as diminutives of durative verbs occur mostly in Child-directed speech (CDS)

Table 7: Second-Order Senses of Macedonian Diminutives: Implicit Scale - Sense Relations (continued)

Argument	Unmarked Form	Diminutivized Form	Implicit Scale	Sense/ Function
Durative Verbs	trča “run” pliva “swim” pie “to drink” čita “read” šeta “take a walk” nosi “carry/wear”	trčka “run” plivka “swim” pivka “to drink” čitka “read” šetka “take a walk” noska “carry/wear”	temporal extent, amount of effort	briefness, fragmentariness, or child-like behavior
Numerals (cardinal and ordinal numbers; nominal, and adj. uses)	edno “one” dve “two” tri “three” million “a million” dvojka “duce” desetka “tenner” prvo “first” vtoro “second”	ednočko “one” dvečki “two” trički “three” millionče “a million” dvojče “duce” desetče “tenner” prvače “first-grader” vtorače “second-grader”	quantity or order	downsizing or downplaying the quantity
Propostns.	Može penkaloto <sup>12</sup> ? can the pen “Can I use your pen?”	Može malce penkalceto? can a little-DIM the pen-DIM “Can I use your pen, please?”	illocution. force	downsizing the amount of request or imposition

Table 7 extends beyond Jurafsky’s (1996:559) universal categorization of second-order senses of the diminutive. Our data has suggested a broader use of diminutives in Macedonian in terms of their semantic-pragmatic relations (implicit scale-sense relations). Specifically, I have expanded Jurafsky’s categorization and added the categories of abstract nouns, durative verbs, and numerals, and expanded the pragmatic uses of gradable predicates and deictics.

<sup>12</sup> *-to* in *penkaloto* and *penkalceto* is the definite article suffix attached to neuter singular nouns. Macedonian has three sets of definite articles: *-ov, -va, -vo*; *-on, -na, -no*; and *-ot, -ta, -to*. The definite articles follow the general rule governing the endings of nominal categories discussed on p. 8. Definite articles in Macedonian are marked for number and gender and occur post-nominally.

The pragmatic potential of Macedonian diminutivized gradable predicates is discussed in detail in Chapter 5. As for the pragmatic uses of diminutivized deictics, my analyses of Macedonian data suggest that diminutive forms of durative verbs and deictics are predominantly found in CDS. With adults they are very rare and may have additional pragmatic implications (such as creating social bonding or intimacy).

#### 4.4. Ordering and Derivational Potential of Diminutives: Categories, Types and Patterning of Diminutives; Derivational Constraints, Productivity and Combinability of Diminutives

##### 4.4.1. Categories, Types, and Patterning of Diminutive Suffixes

It was already noted that Macedonian employs a long list of diminutive suffixes. According to Koneski (1976:290-1) the following 16 suffixes generate diminutives and hypocorisms: *-ok/čok*, *-ec* (indexing masculine gender), *-ka*, *-ička*<sup>13</sup>, *-ca*, *-ica* (indexing feminine gender); and *-e*, *-le*, *-ule*, *-ce*, *-ence*, *-če*, *-iče* (indexing neuter gender). He also included two more diminutive suffixes that generate hypocorisms: *-čo* and *-uš*. Jovanova Gruevska's study has shown that the hypocoristic suffixes *-čo* and *-uš* (both indexing masculine gender), occur only in colloquial registers (2009:13). Hypocorisms should be separated from diminutives; hypocorisms are typically contractions of given names or pet names, typically indexing some affection or intimacy. In English, such hypocorisms are:

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<sup>13</sup> Koneski (1976:290) has argued that the feminine diminutive affix *-ička* is a composite suffix resulting from blending of *-ica* + *-ka*.

Tony (for Anthony), Lyn (for Carolyn), Vickie (for Victoria), Eddie or Ned (for Edward), etc. Some typical Macedonian masculine hypocoristic forms ending in -*čo* and -*uš* include *Stevčo* (for Stefan), *Igorčo* (for Igor), *Dimuš* (for Dimitri), *Petruš* (for Peter) etc. Of course, there are many other hypocorisms for both males and females. The following are frequent hypocorisms used in female names: *Mare* (for Marija), *Sneže*, *Sneška*, or *Žana* (for Snežana), *Verče* (for Vera), *Bibi*, *Bile*, or *Biljanče* (for Biljana). Here are some other male hypocoristic forms *Bage* (for Blagoja), *Tome* (for Tomislav), *Vlado*, *Vlatko*, *Vlade*, or *Vlatče* (for Vladimir), etc. This study will not consider hypocorisms since they are a separate group that, while similar in form, is not representative of the morphological and pragmatic complexities of diminutivization.

Before we embark on the discussion of stacking and reduplication of diminutives, it seems appropriate to explain some basic morphological features of the diminutive. In Macedonian, there exist diminutive suffixes that are added directly to the base form (Grade1), as well as diminutives that may undergo stacking or reduplications (Grade2). These two basic types of diminutive suffixes have been amply documented patterns in all Slavic and Romance languages, and less commonly so in Finnish, Hebrew, German, Dutch. For instance, Chamonikolasová and Rambousek (2007:38) identify Grade1 and Grade2 diminutive suffixes operating in Czech each of which has separate forms for masculine, feminine, and neuter, respectively. In Macedonian, the situation is somewhat different. Namely, there are no Grade2 or Grade3 diminutive suffixes

for masculine gender. In other terms, the diminutive suffixes added to masculine nouns never undergo stacking or reduplications. Thus, Grade2 diminutive suffixes only appear in feminine and neuter gender, while Grade3 diminutive suffixes are exclusively neuter. This means that diminutive suffix stacking and reduplication is possible only in feminine and neuter nouns. There is only one diminutive suffix classified as Grade3: the neuter gender suffix *-ence*. In Table 8 below we propose the following categorization of Macedonian diminutive suffixes and corresponding diminutive derivations according to grade and gender. The resulting diminutive derivations can be of three major types: a) Grade1 diminutives (Base Form + DIM1), such as *bebe* “baby”+ *-če* → *bepče*; b) Grade2 diminutives (Base Form + DIM1 +DIM2), as in *bebe* “baby”+ *-če* ”+ *-ule* → *bepčule*; and c) Grade3 diminutives (Base Form + DIM1 +DIM2+DIM3) as in *bebe* “baby”+ *-če* ”+ *-ule* + *-ence* → *bepčulence*.

Masculine diminutive suffixes are attached to masculine nouns, i.e. those that terminate in consonants (-C); feminine diminutive suffixes are affixed to feminine nouns (those ending in *-a* or, a special group of feminine nouns terminating in consonants); neuter diminutive suffixes are added to neuter nouns (i.e., those terminating in *-e* or *-o*.)

Table 8: Diminutive Suffixes and Resulting Derivations in Macedonian:

Classification According to Gender and Grade

Gend.	Diminutive Suffix Grade			Diminutive Derivations			
	1 DIM1	2 DIM2	3 DIM3	Base Form	Grade1 Dim. (Base + DIM1)	Grade2 Dim. (Base + DIM1 + DIM2)	Grade3 Dim. (Base + DIM1 + DIM2 + DIM3)
Masc.	-ec -ok/ -čok			brat “brother” sin “son” den “day”	brat + -ec → bratec sin + -ok → sinok den + -čok → denčok		
Fem.	-ka -ca -ica -ička	-ička		sliva “plum” sol “salt” pita “pie” soba “a room”	sliva + -ka → slivka sol + -ca → solca pita + -ica → pitica soba + -ička → sobička	slivka + -ička → slivkička solca + -ička → solcička	
Neut.	-e -le -ule -ence -ce -če -iče	-ule -ence	-ence	ež “hedgehog” koza “goat” dete “child” meso “meat” zaliv “bay” vrata “door”	ež+ -e → eže koza+ -le → kozle dete+ -ule → detule dete+ -ence → detence meso <sup>14</sup> + -ce → mevce zaliv + -če → zalivče vrata + -iče → vratiče	eže + -ule → ežule kozle + -ence → kozlence detence + -ence → detence mevce + -ence → mevce zalivče + -ence → zalivčence vratiče+ -ence → vratičence	eže + -ule + -ence → ežulence dete+ -ule + -ence → detulence dete+ -ence+ -ence → detence

<sup>14</sup> Here, *meso* first undergoes an elision of /o/ followed by a dissimilation of the emerging fricative cluster (/s/ and the incoming /c/). All of these morpho-phonological processes have been already amply investigated in Macedonian and fall outside the scope of this study.

The morphological differences among Grade1, Grade2, and Grade3 diminutives are mirrored in their semantic-pragmatic potential. Specifically, Grade2 and Grade3 diminutives signal additional diminution in size, quantity, scope, etc. In addition, Grade2 and Grade3 diminutives connote higher emotional load than Grade1 diminutives. Consequently, stacking and reduplication of diminutive suffixes reflects further diminution in size or intensified emotional effect. Furthermore, stacking and reduplication derivations occur only in neuter gender. The grades of diminutive suffixes and resulting derivations conform to the universal rule of unidirectionality. Namely, higher grade diminutives (Grade 2 and 3) are possible only in feminine and neuter. Semantically/pragmatically, the stacking of suffixes could be translated as “tiny little bit” or “tiny-teeny”. The examples in (15) and (16) showcase stacked diminutive suffixes:

(15) [two females shopping]  
*Glej što slatko bundičule!*  
 You look (imper.) what cute (neut.) fur coat-DIM1-DIM2  
 “Check that cute little fur coat!”

(16) [mother feeding a toddler]  
*Ajde<sup>15</sup> zlato, samo ušte edno zalačence...*  
 DM gold only more one morsel-DIM1-DIM2  
 “Come on, sweetie, just one more tiny little morsel...”

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<sup>15</sup> DM = discourse marker. *Ajde* is a common discourse marker used in Macedonian, Serbo-Croatian, and Bulgarian. In the latter two, the form is *hajde*. Typically it occurs utterance-initially and has “social and/or expressive” rather than “referential or descriptive functions” (Schiffrin 1987). *Ajde* is mostly found in informal registers and has several major functions: (1) to preface action-initiating utterances such as orders/requests, advice/suggestions, warnings, offers, promises, etc.; (2) to index leave-taking as a pre-closing or closing device; (3) to accompany agreements or (4) to express surprise and astonishment. (Tchizmarova 2005:1143) *Ajde* is often phonologically reduced to *aj*.

In (15) and (16) the stacked diminutives occur as sequences of a first-grade diminutive suffix (DIM1) followed by a second-grade one (DIM2). The stacked diminutive suffixes in (15) and (16) are in neuter. In Macedonian, stacked diminutives are regular derivations used for intensification and could be paraphrased as “very little X”. Such recursive diminution in Macedonian is exemplified in all Grade2 diminutives of the type “very little X”.

As noted, the representative examples in Table 7 above indicate that Grade2 diminutive suffixes appear only in feminine and neuter gender, and Grade3 diminutives are exclusively neuter. This is no surprise given the previous discussion on the fundamental semantic properties of the diminutive, along with the social power indexed by gender. Namely, masculine diminutive suffixes and resulting diminutive derivations are statistically rarer than those in feminine or neuter genders. This statistical difference confirms the fundamental hypothesis that, cross-linguistically, the diminutive is quintessentially related to “small” and “child”. Not surprisingly, as in most languages with grammatical gender, both “small” and “child” are indexed by neuter gender in Macedonian. Moreover, Jurafsky’s universal semantic model of the diminutive (refer again to Figure 1) clearly identifies the semantic relations between “small”/“child” and “female”. In that regard, the morphological constraints for stacking of diminutive suffixes in Macedonian offers further support for Jurafsky’s model (1996:542).

However, recursive diminution is not restricted to stacking of diminutive suffixes. There exists a relatively small group of nouns (related to children, body parts,



small cute objects, or small animals) that allow reduplication of identical diminutive suffix. The only diminutive suffix that is subject to such reduplication is the DIM3 suffix *-ence*, reduplicating in nouns such as *detence* (very little child), *bebence* (very little baby), *vretence* (very little spindle), *mucence* (very little muzzle), *prasence* (very little piglet), *grozjence* (very little grapes), etc. Our data has suggested that reduplications of diminutive suffixes in Macedonian occur exclusively with concrete nouns designating small, child-like objects or items according to the pattern:

(17)

$$\left[ \begin{array}{l} + \text{noun} \\ + \text{concrete} \\ - \text{small} \\ + \text{child-like} \end{array} \right] + \text{DIM3} + \text{DIM3}$$

In contrast with stacking, reduplication of identical diminutive suffixes in Macedonian is much less frequent. In addition, to some native speakers of Macedonian disprefer reduplicated diminutives of the type *detence* (very little child), *bebence* (very little baby), *vretence* (very little spindle), *mucence* (very little muzzle), *prasence* (very little piglet), *grozjence* (very little grapes). To many Macedonian native speakers, such reduplicated diminutives sound exaggerated and they are unlikely to use them (Spasovski 2006). What is more, such DIM3 reduplications have been registered in isolated cases (predominantly in CDS). Macedonian dictionaries and corpora do not register such reduplications, so they remain to be characterized by highly limited occurrence and marginal lexical status.

#### 4.4.2. Derivational Constraints, Productivity, and Combinability of Diminutive Suffixes

Although diminutive suffixes are semantically homogeneous they do not freely combine with one another. From the previous discussion, it follows that out of the 16 diminutive suffixes in Macedonian only three been documented to be used recursively: *-ička* (for feminine) and *-ule* and *-ence* (for neuter). Similar restrictions in recursive uses of diminutive suffixes have been registered in Polish and Bulgarian (Manova and Winternitz 2011). What are then, the formal restrictions that govern the order and, consequently, the recursiveness of diminutive suffixes? To answer this question, we need to examine some basic processes in Macedonian word formation and derivation. Skalička (1979) has shown that Slavic languages exemplify features of the inflecting-fusional type, where a fundamental distinction is made between derivational and inflectional suffix slots. In analyzing the structure of the Slavic word, Manova (2002, 2010b) postulates the following generalized structure that operates in all Slavic languages:

(18) (PREF.)--BASE--(DERIV. SUFF.)--(THEM. MARK.<sup>16</sup>)--(INFL. SUFF.)

Since diminutives are exclusively derived via suffixation, Manova proposes a simplified general structure that operates in Slavic morphology (2011:6):

(19) BASE--DERIV. SUFF--INFL. SUFF.

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<sup>16</sup> Thematic markers are relevant mostly in verbal morphology and have inflectional status (Manova 2011:6). Hence these are not relevant for the analyses in this section.

Manova claims that derivation and inflection ought to be differentiated since they behave differently in suffixation (2011:6-7) In Macedonian, there are many nouns that follow paradigms illustrated in (18) and (19) and accept homophonous derivational suffixes. Such are the following examples *pratka* “a parcel, shipment” and *ministerka* “a female minister”. *Pratka* is a derivative of the verb *praća* “to send”, whereas *ministerka* is a feminine (marked) form of *minister* “male minister”. We adopt Manova’s argument that, while on the surface we see identical inflections (-ka), we deal with two different homophonous derivational suffixes. She argues that such distinct derivational suffixes should be marked as -k1- and -k2- respectively. The suffix -k1- in *pratka* “a parcel” allows attachments of further derivational suffixes, whereas, -k2- in *ministerka* “a female minister” does not. The constraint is semantically based: the -k2- derivational suffix is closing. A closing suffix cannot be followed by another suffix of the same type. Specifically, a closing derivational suffix cannot be followed by another derivational suffix, just like a closing inflectional suffix cannot be followed by another inflectional suffix. The closing derivational suffix of the -k2- type is ubiquitous in Slavic languages, especially in derivations of female humans from male humans. In Macedonian, examples of such derivations are *akrobatka* “female acrobat”, *prodavačka* “female sales associate”, *političarka* “female politician”, *ambasadorka* “female ambassador”, etc. Note that these closing derivational suffixes of the type -k2- may accept other suffixes, but they have to be inflectional, never derivational. This morpho-semantic constraint is illustrated in the examples below.

(20)	base form (masc.)	fem. form (der. suff. <i>-ka2</i> )	fem. pl. (infl. suff. <i>-i</i> )	fem. def. art. pl. (infl. suff. <i>-te</i> )
	<i>akter</i>	<i>akterka</i>	<i>akterki</i>	<i>akterkite</i>
	“actor”	“female actor”	“female actors”	“the female actors”

The examples in (20) illustrate how *-k2-* functions as a closing derivational suffix, allowing only inflectional suffixes to follow: *-i* (indexing feminine plural), and *-te* (definite article form for feminine plural). This constraint explains why no diminutive suffixes are possible after closing derivational suffixes of the type *-k2-*.

Let us now analyze the non-closing derivational suffix *-k1-*.

(21)	base form (fem.)	base form <i>+k1-+k1-</i> (der. suffixs. <i>-ica + -ka</i> )	base form <i>+k1-</i> (der. suff. <i>-če</i> )	base form <i>+k1-</i> (der. suff. <i>-iče</i> )
	<i>zelka</i>	<i>zelkička</i>	<i>zelče</i>	<i>zelkiče</i>
	“cabbage”	“cabbage-DIM-DIM”	“cabbage-DIM”	“cabbage-DIM”

base form *+k1-+k1-*  
(der. suffixs. *-če + -ence*)  
*zelkičence*  
“cabbage-DIM-DIM”

The examples in (21) illustrate how *-k1-* functions as a non-closing derivational suffix, allowing other derivational suffixes to occur: the diminutive suffixes *-ica +ka (ička)*, *-če*, *-iče*, and *-iče + -ence*, respectively. As shown, Macedonian nouns can have multiple suffixes in derivational and inflectional slots and they follow the general constraints that operate in other Slavic languages (Manova 2011:9). More specifically, in Macedonian, a diminutive suffix is always found

in the derivational slot occupied by nouns or adjectives. The diminutive suffix occurs in the following two environments:

a) it may follow another derivational suffix, as in

(22) *slab* “thin” + *-ič* (der. suff.) + *-ok* (dim. suff.) → *slabičok* “rather thin“

or,

b) it could be directly attached to a non-derived base, as in

(23) *brat* “brother” + *-če* (dim. suff.) → *bratče* “brother-DIM”

In the case of stacked diminutives (as in *zelkičence* “cabbage-DIM-DIM”) both of the diminutives occur in the derivational slot. These fundamental morpho-semantic constraints are crucial for understanding the ordering of diminutive suffixes and distinguishing homophonous derivational suffixes. With these in mind, we can now argue that the masculine suffixes exemplified in Table 8 in 4.3.1. (i.e., *-ec* and *-ok/-čok*) are not productive, i.e. they are closing suffixes that do not permit additions of other derivational suffixes.

A separate discussion relating to gender and diminutivization should be presented here. In most Slavic languages masculine nouns terminate in consonants, feminine in *-a*, while the default neuter terminating vowels are *-e* or *-o*. However, in Macedonian (just like in Bulgarian) first-grade diminutive suffixes can be gender-altering. This property of the Grade1 diminutive suffixes is illustrated below.

(24) *gurel* “eye gunk” + *-ka* → *gurelka* “eye gunk-DIM1”  
(masc.) (Grade1 dim. suff., fem.) (fem.)

(25) *grad* “town” + *-če* → *gradče*<sup>17</sup> “town-DIM1”  
 (masc.) (Grade1 dim. suff., neut.) (neut.)

(26) *vrba* “willow tree” + *-e* → *vrbe* “willow tree-DIM1”  
 (fem.) (Grade1 dim. suff., neut.) (neut.)

As can be seen, the above Grade1 diminutive suffixes change the grammatical gender of the noun they are affixed to. It is noteworthy that the morpho-semantic derivational rule of gender unidirectionality is in force. Recall the discussion in section 4.2. on gender unidirectionality of diminutives and the examples in Table 6 in section 4.3.

It was already noted on p. 59 that in Macedonian, there is a special group of feminine nouns that end in consonants (-C), instead of the default ending in *-a*. Such are *pepel* “ashes”, *kal* “mud”, *krv* “blood”, *sol* “salt”, *loj* “lard”, *mast* “grease/ointment”, *var* “whitewash”, *zob* “oats”, etc. These feminine nouns, however, accept only feminine Grade1 diminutive suffixes that are gender-preserving.

(27) *pepel* “ashes” + *-ca* → *pepelca* “ashes-DIM1”  
 (fem.) (Grade1 dim. suff., fem.) (fem.)

(28) *kal* “mud” + *-ca* → *kalca* “mud-DIM1”  
 (fem.) (Grade1 dim. suff., fem.) (fem.)

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<sup>17</sup> The terminal dental voiced stop /d/ in *grad* undergoes assimilation and is devoiced. Thus, it changes into its homorganic counterpart /t/ due to the incoming voiceless segment /tʃ/ in the diminutive suffix *-če*.

- (29) *krv* “blood” + *-ca* → *krvca* “blood-DIM1”  
 (fem.) (Grade1 dim. suff., fem.) (fem.)
- (30) *salt* “sol” + *-ca* → *solca* “salt-DIM1”  
 (fem.) (Grade1 dim. suff., fem.) (fem.)
- (31) *loj* “lard” + *-ca* → *lojca* “lard-DIM1”  
 (fem.) (Grade1 dim. suff., fem.) (fem.)
- (32) *mast* “grease” + *-ca* → *mavca*<sup>18</sup> “grease-DIM1”  
 (fem.) (Grade1 dim. suff., fem.) (fem.)
- (33) *var* “whitewash” + *-ca* → *varca* “whitewash-DIM1”  
 (fem.) (Grade1 dim. suff., fem.) (fem.)
- (34) *zob* “oats” + *-ca* → *zobca* “oats-DIM1”  
 (fem.) (Grade1 dim. suff., fem.) (fem.)

The examples in (27) through (34) demonstrate that the gender preserving, Grade1 diminutive suffix *-ca* occurs exclusively with this special group of feminine nouns terminating in *-C*. It is noteworthy that the diminutive suffix *-ca* does not combine with feminine nouns terminating in the default *-a*. Much the same constraints in the behavior of *-ca* have been documented in Bulgarian (Manova 2011:25). However, in contrast with Bulgarian, in Macedonian, there are also feminine nouns terminating in *-C* that do not accept *-ca* to form diminutives.

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<sup>18</sup> The resulting diminutive form *mavca* is derived through 1. consonant cluster simplification /-st/ → /-s/, and, 2. dissimilation of alveolar fricatives /s/ and /ts/. Through dissimilation, the cluster /-sts/ becomes /-fts/ consisting of a labio-dental /f/ and alveolar /-ts/.

These are polysyllabic nouns and their diminutivization is exceptionally rare. In my data I have documented a couple of such uses in CDS:

- (35) *ljubov* “love” + *-če* → *ljubovče* “love-DIM1”  
(fem.) (Grade1 dim. suff., neut.) (neut.)
- (36) *radost* “joy” + *-če* → *radostče* “joy-DIM1”  
(fem.) (Grade1 dim. suff., neut.) (neut.)

The explanation for this is the following. First, in Macedonian, the vast majority of polysyllabic feminine nouns that end in *-C* are abstract. A very small number of abstract nouns get to be candidates for diminutivization. Out of that small number of polysyllabic feminine abstract nouns terminating in *-C*, only those that contain the semantic-stylistic features [ - big], [ + emotional], and [ + informal] get to be diminutivized (recall our discussions in 2.2. and 4.2.).

Now it seems fitting to address the productivity and combinability of Macedonian diminutive suffixes. The selection of the diminutive suffixes follows the basic principles set forth by Manova and Aronoff (2010) and Manova (2011). These two studies hypothesize that the formal restrictions of the ordering of diminutive suffixes in Slavic languages can be due to three major factors: 1. phonological or morphological elements, 2. semantic ordering, and 3. psycholinguistic ordering (in our view, this is a morphological constraint). It is noteworthy that all the above factors are not absolute – they apply if the information communicated by the



elements or ordering is relevant to suffix ordering. This study considers each of these major types of constraints that operate with nouns as the prime bases for diminutivization. Standard Macedonian makes use of 12 diminutive suffixes: *-ok/čok*, *-ec* (indexing masculine gender), *-ka*, *-ička*, *-ca*, *-ica* (indexing feminine gender); and *-e*, *-le*, *-ule*, *-ce*, *-ence*, *-če*, *-iče* (indexing neuter gender). Table 8 displayed the categorization of Macedonian diminutive suffixes and diminutive derivations according to grade and gender. The phonological constraints that govern suffix selection in Macedonian are the following.

Nouns ending in a consonant (-C) accept the following suffixes *-ec*, *-ok/-čok*, *-ca*, *-če*, *-e*, *-le*, *-ence* and *-ule*. Of these, only one is productive: *-če*. Productivity of a diminutive suffix is its ability to attach to other derived bases (i.e., to follow other derivational suffixes). Consider the following examples.

(37) *riba* “fish” + *-ar* + *-če* → *ribarče* “fisherman-DIM1”  
 der. suff. dim. suff. (neut.)  
 designating a  
 masc. agent

(38) *pijano* “piano” + *-ist* + *-če* → *pijanistče* “pianist-DIM1”  
 der. suff. dim. suff. (neut.)  
 designating a  
 masc. profession

(39) *čita* “to read” + *-tel* + *-če* → *čitatelče* “reader-DIM1”  
 der. suff. dim. suff. (neut.)  
 designating a  
 masc. agent

As shown, *-če* is a productive Grade1 diminutive suffix because it may occur after other derivational suffixes (such as *-ar*, *-ist*, *-tel*, etc.) What is more, *-če* alters the gender of the diminutivized noun. In the examples (37) through (39), the masculine nouns *ribar* “fisherman”, *pijanist* “pianist”, and *čitatel* “reader” change their gender to neuter when *-če* (a DIM1 indexing neuter gender) is attached. Thus, the resulting diminutive nouns *ribarče* “fisherman-DIM1”, *pijanistče* “pianist-DIM1”, and *čitatelče* “reader-DIM1” all in neuter gender. The rest of the suffixes that are affixed to nouns terminating in *-C* (*-ec*, *-ok/-čok*, *-ca*, *-e*, *-le*, *-ence* and *-ule*) are unproductive, i.e., they may not be attached to other derivational suffixes. Out of them, *-e*, *-le*, *-ence* and *-ule* are gender changing.

Nouns that terminate in *-a* combine with the following suffixes: *-ka*, *-ica*, *-ička*, *-iče*, and *-ule*. Out of these, only three are productive: *-ička*, *-iče*, and *-ule*. The below examples showcase the productivity of *-ička*, *-iče*, and *-ule*.

(40) *noga* “a leg” (fem.) + *-arka* (der. suff. designating a fem. member) + *-ička* (dim. suff.) → *nogarkička* “leg of a table-DIM1” (fem.)

(41) *soba* “a room” (fem.) + *-arica* (der. suff. designating a fem. agent) + *-iče* (dim. suff.) → *sobariče* “hotel maid-DIM1” (neut.)

(42) *masa* “table” (fem.) + *-iče* (dim. suff.) + *-ule* (dim. suff.) → *masičule* “table-DIM1-DIM2” (neut.)

As shown in the examples (40) through (42) the diminutive suffixes *-iče* and *-ule* are gender changing – they alter the gender of the feminine nouns *soba* “a room” and *masa* “table” to the respective neuter nouns *sobariče* “hotel maid-DIM1” and *masičule* “table-DIM1-DIM2”. What is more, in *masičule* “table-DIM1-DIM2” we note a case of stacking: a combination of two diminutive suffixes. As discussed above, *masičule* “table-DIM1-DIM2” denotes further diminutivization of *masiče* “table-DIM1”. Lastly, the suffixes *-ka*, and *-ica* are unproductive, i.e., they may not be attached to other derivational suffixes.

Nouns terminating in *-o* accept the diminutive suffixes *-ce* and *-ule* , whereas nouns terminating in *-e* diminutivize by attaching *-ule* and *-ence*, both of which are productive diminutive suffixes.

(43) *selo* “village”    +*-ce* +                → *selce* “village-DIM1”  
    dim. suff.

(44) *selo* “village”    +*-ce* + *-ule*                → *selcule* “village-DIM1-DIM2”  
    dim. suff. dim. suff.

(45) *selo* “village”    + *-ce* +*-ence*                → *selcence* “village-DIM1-DIM2”  
    dim. suff. dim. suff.

(46) *pile* “chick”            + *-ence*                →     *pilence* “chick-DIM1”  
    dim. suff.

(47) *pile* “chick”            + *-ence* + *-ule*                → *pilencule* “chick-DIM1-DIM2”  
    dim. suff. dim. suff.

From examples (43) through (47) follows that the diminutive suffixes *-ence* and *-ule* are productive, while *-ce* is not. Neither of these is gender-changing suffix. This follows from the rules of gender unidirectionality in the derivation of diminutives exemplified in Table 6. Changing gender is no longer possible since *-ce*, *-ence*, and *-ule* combine with neuter gender nouns, which can only yield neuter diminutivized nouns. There is no substantial semantic difference between *-ce* and *-ule* appearing as closing DIM2 suffixes. Pairs like *selcence* and *selcule* (exemplified in (44) and (45) above) are used interchangeably, depending solely on the native speaker's preference. Arguably, *-ule* might be said to add a semantic nuance of affection to that of size. However, there are no objective criteria that would warrant substantial semantic differences between *-ence* and *-ule* in pairs like these.

In summary of the discussion about the derivational productivity and gender-changing properties, we can postulate the following categorization for the Macedonian Grade1 diminutive suffixes.

Table 9: Grade1 (DIM1) Diminutive Suffixes in Macedonian: Productivity and Changes of Gender

Nominal Ending	Diminutive Suffix and Productivity	Examples
in -C	-ec (unproductive)	dožd “rain” + <i>-ec</i> → doždec narod “people” + <i>-ec</i> → narodec
	-ok/-čok (unproductive)	brat “brother” + <i>-ok</i> → bratok zrak “ray” + <i>-čok</i> → zračok
	-ca (unproductive)	salt “sol” + <i>-ca</i> → solca piper “pepper” + <i>-ca</i> → piperca
	-če (productive, gender-changing)	kroj “tailoring” + <i>-če</i> → krojče (masc.) (neut.) kutija “box” + <i>-če</i> → kutiiče (fem.) (neut.)
	-e (unproductive, gender-changing)	vol “ox” + <i>le</i> → vole (masc.) (neut.) igla “needle” + <i>le</i> → igle (fem.) (neut.)
	-le (unproductive, gender-changing)	nos “nose” + <i>-le</i> → nosle (masc.) (neut.) koza “goat” + <i>-le</i> → kozle (fem.) (neut.)
in -a	-ka (productive)	trevka “grass” + <i>-ka</i> → trevka linija “line” + <i>-ka</i> → linijka
	-ica (productive)	dzvezda “star” + <i>-ica</i> → dzvezdica voda “water” + <i>-ica</i> → vodica
	-ička (unproductive)	žaba “frog” + <i>-ička</i> → žabička tabla “board” + <i>-ička</i> → tablička
	-iče (unproductive, gender-changing)	solza “a tear” + <i>-iče</i> → solziče (fem.) (neut.) duša “soul” + <i>-iče</i> → dušiče (fem.) (neut.)
in -o	<i>ce</i> (productive)	pivo “beer” + <i>-ce</i> → pivce oko “eye” + <i>-ce</i> → okce
in -e	-ule (productive)	jagne “lamb” + <i>-ule</i> → jagnule srce “heart” + <i>-ule</i> → srcule
	-ence (productive)	lale “tulip” + <i>-ence</i> → lalence kopče “button” + <i>-ence</i> → kopčence

The discussion on the productivity of Grade1 diminutive suffixes can be summarized in the following. First, most of the Grade1 suffixes that attach to nouns terminating in *-C* are unproductive; only one of the seven suffixes (*-če*) is productive, and three of them alter the gender of diminutive derivations: *-če*, *-e*, and *-le*. Two of the four Grade1 diminutive suffixes that attach to nouns ending in *-a* are productive: *-ka* and *-ica*; among these four only *-iče* is gender-changing. There is only one Grade1 diminutive suffix that is affixed to nouns terminating in *-o*: the suffix *-ce* which is productive. Nouns terminating in *-e* accept two productive Grade1 diminutive suffixes: *-ule* and *-ence*. At the level of suffix productivity, the only suffixes that can be added to other diminutives are *-če*, *-ence* and *-ule*, all of which attach to neuter gender nouns.

We already discussed the phonological constraints and combinations operating on the first level, i.e., that involving Grade1 diminutive suffixes and DIM1 nouns. Let us now analyze the derivations of second-grade diminutives (DIM2). Now let us analyze the possible combinations of DIM2 nouns. As suggested by the productivity of Grade1 suffixes in Table 7, DIM1 nouns that terminate in *-C* do not yield DIM2 forms. The constraints that prevent nouns that terminate in *-C* to generate DIM2 forms can be phonological and semantic – in most cases, nouns that end in *-C* are of masculine gender. As shown, masculine nouns are the least likely to be diminutivized and that potential carries over to the attachment of DIM2 suffixes. As illustrated in Table 7, masculine nouns never accept Grade 2

or Grade 3 diminutives. DIM1 nouns ending in *-a* combine with *-ka* and *-ica* to generate DIM2 nouns.

(48) *mama* “mom” + *-ica* + *-ka* → *mamička* “mom-DIM1-DIM2”

(49) *cucla* “binky” + *-ica* + *-ka* → *cučlička* “binky-DIM1-DIM2”

(50) *kukla* “doll” + *-ica* + *-ka* → *kuklička* “doll-DIM1-DIM2”

(51) *glava* “head” + *-ica* + *-ka* → *glavička* “head-DIM1-DIM2”

The examples (48) through (51) showcase the morphological complexity of *-ička*, i.e., how it can be regarded as a blend of two diminutive suffixes (two derivational morphs) *-ka* and *-ica*.

All Grade1 diminutive suffixes that terminate in *-e* (*-e*, *-ce*, *-če*, *-iče*, *-le*, *-ule*, and *-ence*) are invariably followed by *-ence*. The below examples illustrate this in respective order.

(52) *prst* “finger” + *-e* → *prste* “finger-DIM1” + *-ence* → *prestence* “finger-DIM1-DIM2”

(53) *blago* “treat” + *-ce* → *blakce* “treat-DIM1” + *-ence* → *blakcence* “treat-DIM1-DIM2”

(54) *mačka* “cat” + *-če* → *mače* “cat-DIM1” + *-ence* → *mačence* “cat-DIM1-DIM2”

(55) *torba* “tote” + *-iče* → *torbiče* “tote-DIM1” + *-ence* → *torbičence* “tote-DIM1-DIM2”

(56) *cucla* “binky” + *-le* → *cucle* “binky-DIM1” + *-ence* → *culence* “binky-DIM1-DIM2”

(57) *ždrebe* “calf” + *-ule* → *ždrebule* “calf-DIM1” + *-ence* → *ždrebulence* “calf-DIM1-DIM2”

(58) *srce* “heart” + *-ence* → *srcence* “heart-DIM1” + *-ence* → *srcence* “heart-DIM1-DIM2”

Grade 3 diminutives reflect the highest stage of diminutivization in Macedonian and are always part of the highly informal register: either colloquial speech or in CDS. Dictionaries and corpora rarely register such forms. DIM3 nouns can be derived only by suffixes used in forming DIM2, and as expected, DIM3 nouns invariably occur in neuter gender. In Macedonian, third grade diminutives are much less frequent than Grade2 or Grade1 (Grade3 diminutives are represented by less than 1% in the corpora) and always terminate in DIM3 *-ence*<sup>19</sup>. The examples below display formations of third grade diminutives (DIM3).

(59) *zab* “tooth” + *-če* + *-ule* + *-ence* → *zabčulence* “tooth-DIM1-DIM2-DIM3”  
DIM1 DIM2 DIM3

(60) *glava* “head” + *-iče* + *-ule* + *-ence* → *glavičulence* “head-DIM1-DIM2-DIM3”  
DIM1 DIM2 DIM3

(61) *lice* “face” + *-ule* + *-ence* + *-ence* → *liculence* “face-DIM1-DIM2-DIM3”  
DIM1 DIM2 DIM3

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<sup>19</sup> *-ence* can function as DIM1, DIM2 or DIM3 suffix.



The possible suffix combinations in the formation of Grade3 diminutives are [-*če* + *-ule* + *-ence*], [-*iče* + *-ule* + *-ence*], or [-*ule* + *-ence* + *-ence*]. As already noted, not all native speakers of Macedonian use third grade diminutives; some find them overly “child-like”, wimpy, or unnecessary.

A graphic summary of the productivity and combinability of the Macedonian diminutive suffixes is presented in Table 10.

Table 10: Combinability of Diminutive Suffixes in Macedonian: Classification by Grade and Productivity

Nominal Ending	DIM1 suffixes		DIM2 suffixes	DIM3 suffixes
	productive	unproductive		
in -C	<i>-če</i>	<i>-e</i> <i>-ec</i> <i>-ok/-čok</i> <i>-ca</i> <i>-le</i>	<i>-ule</i> <i>-ence</i> <i>-ička</i>	
in -a	<i>-ica</i> <i>-ka</i>	<i>-ička</i> <i>-iče</i>	<i>-ule</i> <i>-ence</i> <i>-ička</i>	<i>-ence</i>
in -o	<i>-ce</i>		<i>-ule</i> <i>-ence</i>	<i>-ence</i>
in -e	<i>-ule</i> <i>-ence</i>		<i>-ule</i> <i>-ence</i>	<i>-ence</i>

The above table shows that nouns terminating in *-C* do not yield DIM3 suffixes. The diminutive suffixes in double (DIM2) and multiple (DIM3) combinations occur in fixed order, as suggested in the Table 8.

In summary, Macedonian makes use of three grades of diminutive suffixes and corresponding diminutive forms. Diminutives apply to all three grammatical genders. Diminutive suffixes that derive DIM2 and DIM3 nouns are semantically, phonologically, and morphologically constrained. At the level of semantics, Macedonian seems to have fewer constraints than other languages, allowing huge objects or concepts as well as abstract nouns to be diminutivized. As elaborated in section 4.2., the underlying semantic-stylistic components of proper diminutives are [-big], [+ emotional], and [+ informal]. These are the three underlying constraints that allow an object, concept, action, or notion to accept diminutive affixes and function as diminutive proper. The semantic matrix in the example (17) on p. 68 displays the semantic features of the prime candidates for diminutivization: concrete, small, child-like nouns. As for the phonological constraints that operate in the derivation of diminutives, Macedonian is similar to Bulgarian, as discussed in Manova (2011:28). In both Macedonian and Bulgarian, morphologically simple nouns terminating in *-e* are the prime candidates for diminutivization, allowing attachment to DIM2 and DIM3 suffixes. Also, in both languages there are no general phonological constraints that limit the number of suffixes attached. Manova's data and my own corpora did not reveal any examples of stacked diminutives that exceed level 3 (DIM3). Next, in both

Macedonian and Bulgarian, there are phonological constraints on the suffix that is affixed to DIM1 or DIM2 nouns. Specifically, DIM2 and DIM3 suffixes terminate in phonological unison with the bases to which they attach: DIM1 and DIM2 nouns ending in *-e* trigger the use of a suffix terminating in *-e* (namely, *-ence*).

However, there are some differences. First, Macedonian has more diminutive suffixes than Bulgarian: three unproductive DIM1 suffixes *-ok/-čok*, *-ca* (attached to nouns terminating in *-C*), one unproductive DIM1 suffix attached to nouns terminating in *-a* (namely, *-iče*) and one DIM1/DIM2 productive suffix attached to bases terminating in *-a*, *-o*, and *-e*. Next, in Macedonian, DIM1 nouns ending in *-a* may combine with suffixes ending in either *-e* or *-a*. Unlike Bulgarian, DIM2 and DIM3 in Macedonian are always disyllabic. Lastly, from a morphological standpoint, only productive suffixes generate DIM2 and DIM3 derivations. Unproductive suffixes are closing, i.e., they do not allow attachment of other diminutive suffixes.

#### 4.5. Diminutivization of Verbs, Adjectives and Adverbs

Across languages, diminutive affixes are predominantly attached to nouns, and much less frequently to other lexical categories. So far we have discussed the morphology of the diminutive in Macedonian with reference to nouns since they are the typical bases for diminutivization. However, in Macedonian, it is possible

to derive diminutives from verbs, adjectives, and adverbs. The diminutivization of these word classes is far less frequent and less complex than the diminutivization of nouns. In the following section we will address the diminutivization of each of these categories in respective order.

#### 4.5.1. Diminutivization of Verbs

In standard Macedonian, verb forms can be predicted from the third-person, singular, present-tense form which is considered the infinitive. Macedonian verbal paradigms operate along three basic verbal stems: *a*-stem verbs (such as *čita* “read”), *e*-stem verbs (such as *pee* “sing”), and *i*-stem verbs (such as *odi* “go”). This formal categorization is purely phonological: in standard Macedonian, verb infinitives terminate in vowels which can be *-a*, *-e*, or *-i*.

Compared to nominal diminutives, verbal diminutives are much rarer. Typically, active, durative verbs denoting physical actions are prime candidates for diminutivization. In addition, verbal diminutives can only occur as DIM1. In Macedonian there are no second- or third-grade diminutives of verbs, meaning that there are no stacked or reduplicated verbal diminutives. Table 11 below displays verbs that combine with diminutive suffixes. The Table 11 lists all of the 53 verbal diminutives that were registered in our data: of these 21 verbal diminutives are of the *-a* stem, 18 are of the *-e* stem, and 10 are of the *-i* stem. The distribution of verbal diminutives follows the frequency of the verbs in

Macedonian. Namely, most verbs belong to the *-a* stem and the *-e* stem, while fewer of them occur as *-i* stem verbs.

Table 11: Taxonomy of Verbal Diminutives in Macedonian

Base Verbal Form + <i>-ka</i> → Verb-DIM		
<i>a</i> -stem	<i>e</i> -stem	<i>i</i> -stem
<i>kopa</i> “dig” → <i>kopka</i>	<i>jade</i> “to eat” → <i>jatka</i>	<i>vozi</i> “to drive/to ride” → <i>voska/vozika</i> <sup>20</sup>
<i>trča</i> “run” → <i>trčka</i>	<i>pie</i> “to drink” → <i>pvka</i>	<i>nosi</i> “to carry, wear” → <i>noska</i>
<i>pliva</i> “swim” → <i>plivka</i>	<i>trie</i> “to rub” → <i>trivka</i>	<i>odi</i> “to walk” → <i>otka</i>
<i>preta</i> “to move <sup>21</sup> ” → <i>pretka</i>	<i>pee</i> “to sing” → <i>pevka</i>	<i>lazi</i> “to crawl” → <i>laska</i> <sup>1</sup> / <i>lazika</i> <sup>22</sup>
<i>ripa</i> “to skip” → <i>ripka</i>	<i>veze</i> “to embroider” → <i>veska</i>	<i>gali</i> “to stroke/pet” → <i>galka</i>
<i>šeta</i> “to stroll” → <i>šetka</i>	<i>plete</i> “to knit” → <i>pletka</i>	<i>sviri</i> “to play an instrument” → <i>svirka</i>
<i>moča</i> “to urinate” → <i>močka</i>	<i>mete</i> “to sweep” → <i>metka</i>	<i>leži</i> “to lay down” → <i>leška</i>
<i>čita</i> “to read” → <i>čitka</i>	<i>vrie</i> “to boil” → <i>vrivka</i>	<i>sveti</i> “to shine” → <i>svetka</i>
<i>pišuva</i> “to write” → <i>pišuvka</i>	<i>se mie</i> “to wash” → <i>se mivka</i>	<i>se mazi</i> <sup>23</sup> “to act in a cuddly or affectionate way” → <i>se mazika</i>
<i>crtā</i> “to draw” → <i>crtka</i>	<i>plače</i> “to boil” → <i>plačka</i>	<i>se gali</i> “to act in a cuddly or affectionate way” → <i>se galka</i>

<sup>20</sup> Non-reflexive *vozika* “to drive-DIM” is different from the reflexive verb *se vozika* “to drive oneself around idly” where *vozika* has a pejorative or sarcastic connotation. The particle *se* indexes reflexivity, i.e., an action that is done to oneself or is otherwise reflexive. In standard Macedonian, *se* precedes the base form of the verb and does not conjugate. Reflexivity can be disambiguating in other cases as well. For instance, the reflexive *se pletka* “to interfere, to meddle with” is different than *pletka* “to knit-DIM”. Another such pair is *se smee* “to laugh” and *smee* “to dare”.

<sup>21</sup> It is difficult to offer a simple translation of *preta*. It is the most commonly used verb describing the movements of an infant in a crib referring to the (often sudden) hand movements and/or leg kicks. *Routledge Macedonian-English Dictionary* (1998) lists the following meanings of *preta*: **impf 1** to stir *trans.*; to scrape, to scratch about, rummage; **preta pepel** “to rake ashes”, **2** to struggle, lash out **3 fig.** to complain **ne tuku pretaj!** “don’t make such a fuss!” **4 fig., colloq.** to stir *intrans.*, give signs of life; **ušte preta** “he’s still alive”

<sup>22</sup> *lazika* “to crawl-DIM” occurs as a disambiguating form to distinguish from *laska*<sup>2</sup> “to flatter”.

<sup>23</sup> *se mazi* “to act in a cuddly or affectionate way” is not standard. It is common in Skopje dialect as well in some northern Macedonian dialects. The standard verb is the reflexive *se gali* which also may occur in diminutive forms.

Table 11: Taxonomy of Verbal Diminutives in Macedonian (continued)

Base Verbal Form + <i>-ka</i> → Verb-DIM		
<i>a</i> -stem	<i>e</i> -stem	<i>i</i> -stem
<i>se banja</i> <sup>24</sup> “to bathe” → <i>se banjka</i>	<i>se smee</i> “to laugh” → <i>se smeška</i>	
<i>uživa</i> “to enjoy” → <i>uživka</i>	<i>seče</i> “to cut” → <i>sečka/secka</i>	
<i>tera</i> “to steer” → <i>terka</i>	<i>grize</i> “to bite” → <i>gricka</i>	
<i>šutira</i> “to kick” → <i>šutirka</i>	<i>spie</i> “to sleep” → <i>spivka</i>	
<i>gleda</i> “to watch” → <i>gletka/glecka</i>	<i>briše</i> “to wipe” → <i>briška</i>	
<i>sluša</i> “to listen” → <i>sluška</i>	<i>štipe</i> “to pinch” → <i>štipka</i>	
<i>duva</i> “to blow” → <i>duvka</i>	<i>kube</i> “to pluck, to pull” → <i>kupka</i>	
<i>džvaka</i> “to chew” → <i>džvačka</i>	<i>teče</i> “to read” → <i>tečka</i>	
<i>miluva</i> “to caress” → <i>miluvka</i>		
<i>sonuva</i> “to sleep” → <i>sonuvka</i>		
<i>leta</i> “to fly” → <i>letka</i>		
<i>kloca</i> “to kick” → <i>klocka</i>		
<i>pojaduva</i> “to eat breakfast” → <i>pojaduvka</i>		
<i>večera</i> “to eat dinner” → <i>večerka</i>		
<i>užina</i> “to eat a snack” → <i>užinka</i>		

The above examples demonstrate that all verbal diminutives are typically formed from durative action verbs to which the diminutive suffix *-ka* is attached. From a semantic standpoint, diminutives verbs most typically connote child-like actions or behaviors. All of the above diminutivized verbs were recorded in CDS. In

<sup>24</sup> *se banja* “to bathe oneself” is not standard. It is common in Skopje dialect as well in some northern Macedonian dialects. The standard verb is the reflexive *se kape* “to bathe oneself” which does not occur in diminutive. This can be explained by the fact that diminutives are much more common in informal, colloquial registers.

Child-directed speech, actions and behaviors performed by children are routinely diminutivized; if performed by adults, these actions are communicated as child-like or child-friendly, whereby they are adapted to the children's world of smallness. A handful of diminutivized verbs are used outside CDS: such are *guška* (*imperf* (form of *gušnuva*) "to hug, cuddle"; *gricka* (from *grize* "to bite"); *secka* (from *seče* "to cut"); *se smeška* (from *se smee* "to laugh"); *čitka* (from *čita* "to read"); or *šetka* (from *šeta* "to stroll"). Besides the ubiquitous features of smallness, the additional semantic feature in these is briefness or fragmentariness. For instance *gricka* means "to bite off small pieces"; *secka* translates as "to dice, or to cut into small fragments"; while *se smeška* and *čitka* imply brief actions. The pragmatic meanings communicated by verbal diminutives will be discussed in Chapter 5.

The above discussion included only the basic verbal forms in present tense, imperfective. Macedonian has highly developed verbal paradigms that involve complex prefixation to signal verb aspect, degree of completion, iterativity, etc. For instance the verb *trča* "to run" has a diminutive form *trčka*. In addition, *trča* may occur with a number of other prefixes indexing, among others, verbal aspect, inchoativity, or completion of action: *potrča* (*imperf.*) "to run a short distance/to run for awhile"; *istrča* "to run a distance" (*perf.*), *se zatrča* "to start running" (*refl., inchoative*), *se iznaistrča* "to run one's butt off" (*refl., perf., intens.*). Out of all these complex verb forms 6 diminutives were registered. All of these 6 instances were recorded in CDS and signal short activities or doing something just

for a brief period of time. These are all imperfective verbs that were found in imperatives with children: *potrčka* “run-DIM“, *povoska* “ride a bike-DIM“, *počitka* “read-DIM“, *poplivka* “swim-DIM“, *pogalka* “to pet-DIM“, *popretka* “to move-DIM“. All of these diminutives of imperfective action verbs include the sense “for awhile“ or “for a short period of time“.

(62) [mother talking to her young daughter at a beach]

<i>Ajde</i>	<i>dučiške,</i>	<i>poplivkaj</i>	<i>malce</i>	<i>sama.</i>
DM	soul-DIM-vocat.	you swim-DIM	a little	alone

“Come on sweetie, go swim (for awhile) by yourself.”

(63) [grandfather to his toddler niece on spotting a puppy in the park]

<i>Dobro,</i>	<i>aj</i>	<i>pogalkaj</i>	<i>go</i>	<i>kučenceto.</i>
All right	DM	you pet-DIM	it	the dog-DIM

“Alright, you can pet the doggie.”

A separate note should be made about a couple of verbs that were historically derived from diminutives: *patka* “to toddle” and *nutka* “to offer (typically food) in an affectionate way”. *Patka* may be related to *patuva* “to travel”, while *nutka* is derived from *nudi* “to offer”. Both *patka* and *nutka* are lexicalized in standard Macedonian, and show that lexicalization of diminutives happens over time and is a matter of degree.

Now that we have described and exemplified verbal diminutives, a number of questions still need to be answered. Why are verbal diminutive so much rarer than nominal ones? Out of the 2219 diminutives documented in our corpora, only 53 were verbal. That is less than 1%. In addition, are verbal diminutives equivalent to



the nominal with regard to their diminutive properties? In other terms, can verbal diminutives be classified as diminutives proper? In the section 4.2. it was shown that three major semantic-stylistic features can be ascribed to all diminutives proper: smallness in size [ - big ], higher emotional load [ + emotional ], and typical use in informal registers [ + informal ]. Based on these criteria, with regards to verbal diminutives, both perfective and imperfective verbs without additional affixes (for verbal aspect, inchoativity, iterativity, completion, etc.) can classify as diminutives proper. Moreover, such verbal diminutives proper are found almost exclusively in CDS or in references to children or pets. The below examples will illustrate the distinction between verbal diminutives proper and verbal forms that cannot be regarded as diminutives.

(64) [mother talking a small girl at a city park]

*Eve trčkaj zlato, ripkaj na širinkava.*  
 Here you run-DIM gold-DIM you skip-DIM on this space  
 “Come on honey, go run and jump on this playground.”

(65) [pet owner talking to her puppy]

*Pak li se izmočka na tepih?! Aman<sup>25</sup>!*  
 Again interr. part refl. clit pee-perf.-DIM on carpet excl. phrase  
 “You peed on the carpet again?! For goodness’ sake!”

(66) [art teacher addressing a class of six-graders]

*Gi iseckavte li site delčinja od kolažot?*  
 Them you cut-perf.-DIM interr. part. all parts-DIM of the collage?  
 “Have you cut out all the parts of the collage?”

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<sup>25</sup> *Aman* is a Turkish loanword that is frequently used in colloquial speech. It is equivalent to a phrase appealing for mercy, forgiveness, help, etc., or to communicate impatience, desperation, lack of tolerance, etc. In such contexts, it can be interpreted as “For God’s/heaven’s/goodness’ sake!” or “For crying out loud!”

The examples (64) through (66) display verbal diminutives proper: the diminutive verbal forms *trčka* “to run-DIM”, *ripka* “to skip-DIM”, *izmočka* “to pee-perf.DIM” and *isecka* “to cut-perf.-DIM” are used with children and pets and share all the semantic-stylistic criteria that characterize diminutive proper: these actions connote small sizes or quantities [ - big ], they connote higher emotional load [ + emotional ], and belong to informal registers [ + informal ]. Note that the base form of the perfective verb *isecka* “to cut-perf.-DIM” in (66) is actually *secka* “to cut-DIM”. Now let us examine two other examples with *secka*.

(67) [wife giving instructions to her husband preparing food in the kitchen]  
*Taka seckaj go kromidot positno.*  
 Like that you chop-imperf. it onions more finely  
 “There you go, keep dicing the onions just like that.”

(68) [customer explaining the problem to a car mechanic]  
*Mi secka kolava, daj<sup>26</sup> vidi što e.*  
 me intermittently move this car DM you see what is  
 “The engine goes off and on, can you please take a look?”

As suggested by the glosses and the translations of *secka* in (67) and (68), these are not diminutive forms. We can postulate that these are separate lexical units, that are not diminutives: *secka 1* (in 67), and, *secka 2* (in 68). The verb *secka 1* can be translated as “to chop” or “to dice.” Following the typology of the diminutive in Table 5, one can argue that *secka 1* is a partially-frozen diminutive that has retained the features [ - big ], and [ + informal ], but has lost the component [ + emotional ]. Consequently, *secka 1* can be classified as a separate

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<sup>26</sup> DM = discourse marker

lexical entry. The verb *secka 2* “to move or act intermittently” is also not a diminutive proper. While there might be some diminutive relation to the magnitude of the movement or action, *secka 2* does not incorporate the features [ + emotional ] and [ + informal ]. It has completely emancipated itself from any diminutive meaning so it is plausible to classify *secka 2* as a separate lexical item that once might have had some diminutive connotation. Hence, from a synchronic standpoint, *secka 1* and *secka 2* and cannot be considered diminutives.

We argue that, outside a relatively small list of verbal diminutives that occur in CDS, all other are inherently ambivalent in terms of diminutivization, and ultimately do not meet the semantic-stylistic criteria for diminutives proper. For instance, there exist a group of *a*-stem verbs in Macedonian that are exclusively used in informal registers. Such are *se vrtka*, *se trtka*, *se aška* (all can be translated as to “to go about idly”), *rčka* and *prčka* (both can be translated as to “to mess with something, to tinker”), *hurička* and *taraška* (both can be translated as to “to snoop around” or “to pry”), *se vrcka* or *se prcka* (both can be translated as “to show off” , “to strut”, “to flaunt” or “to parade”), and a few more. All of these verbs share the stylistic component [ + informal ] but have no direct relations to size or magnitude of the action. One can postulate that this group of *a*-stem verbs include a non-distinctive semantic component [ - serious ] that somewhat relates them to diminutives. However, they certainly lack the emotional load to be deemed as diminutives proper.

To illustrate the full complexity of verbal diminutivization, let us examine another verbal diminutive: *se šetka* “to take a walk-DIM“ or “to stroll-DIM“. This diminutive is derived from the base *se šeta* with identical denotational meaning “to take a walk“ or “to stroll“. The particle *se* indexes reflexivity and serves as a non-changeable reflexivity marker in Macedonian verb conjugations. The verbal diminutive is one of the few that is regularly used outside CDS to connote some intimacy or affection towards the interlocutors. In other words, *se šetka* connotes a clear emotional load and is very frequently found in colloquial speech or writing.

(69) [two couples meeting in a park]

*Kaj ste be? Ve nema<sup>27</sup> da se javite.*  
 Where you are DM<sup>28</sup> you there are no to you call (refl.)  
 “Well, where are you guys? Long time no hear.”

*Eve<sup>29</sup> se šetkame, vie kako ste?*  
 As usual we take a walk (refl.)-DIM you how you are?  
 “As usual, taking a walk, and how are you?”

The above use of *se šetka* exerts all the features of a diminutive proper and is comparable to its uses in CDS in terms of affection and intimacy. However, there can be substantial pragmatic differences between using verbal diminutives with children or pets, and with adults.

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<sup>27</sup> *Nema* is used personally or impersonally (existentially) as a negative auxiliary verb for perfect and future tenses, corresponding to the affirmative auxiliary *ima* (to have, to exist). In this context, *nema* means “there are no...”

<sup>28</sup> DM = discourse marker. In this context, *be* could be translated as “y’all”.

<sup>29</sup> *Eve* is a universal deictic that has a wide range of contextual uses. For instance, *eve* be used spatially (with the meaning “here”). Also, it may call for attention (meaning “look!”), to show how something is done (meaning “like so”) etc. In some contexts, it can be a discourse marker communicating some routine, habitual actions or states. In the context presented in 69) *eve* could be translated as a phrase meaning “as normal” or “as usual.”

(70) [This example was shared by a professor emerita recounting a situation when she was greeted in the street by a former graduate student.]

*Kako ste mi<sup>30</sup> profesorke, si<sup>31</sup> šetkate?*

How you are to me-IOC professor-voc. you take a walk-DIM  
“How are you my dear professor, taking a little walk?”

In a personal communication, Dr. Ruža Panovska, a professor emerita of Slavic linguistics at the University of Skopje, argued that the diminutive uttered by her former student contained a subtle patronizing attitude that struck her more than the intended affection. In her view, the verbal diminutive in (70) connoted her diminished physical capacity to take a proper walk. Despite the intended affection, she found the remark rather condescending. This example hints that the analysis of the meanings of verbal diminutives, and diminutivization in general, ought to be always considered in a particular context or text, where the speakers’ intentions and their effects on the interlocutors are negotiated in complex communicative situations. More detailed analyses of such situation will be presented in Chapter 5 that will address the pragmatic potential of the diminutive.

We can summarize the discussion on verbal diminutives in the following. First, verbal diminutives proper are extremely rare and mostly occur in CDS or in interactions with pets. In such contexts, verbal diminutives are marked by all three semantic-stylistic components of the diminutive proper: smallness in size, higher emotional charge, and intimacy or affection. Very few verbal diminutives are

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<sup>30</sup> In this context, the indirect object clitic *mi* and the reflexive clitic *si* (*si šetkate*) perform the function of *dativus sympatheticus* aimed to convey affection and intimacy with the interlocutor.

<sup>31</sup> Indexes *datives sympatheticus*: intimacy and affection towards the addressee.

used outside CDS or communication with pets. Thus, the diminutivization of verbs is very limited in scope and context, rendering the verbs inherently ambivalent to diminutivization. In the case of verbs, categories such as tense and aspect are much more salient and class-defining than diminutivization.

#### 4.5.2. Diminutivization of Adjectives and Adverbs

As a nominal word class, adjectives can be diminutivized. Semantically, adjectives themselves are similar to diminutive suffixes. Just like adjectives, diminutive suffixes function as quantificational devices that modify the base to which they are attached. Consequently, on a broad semantic level, diminutive suffixes may be ascribed adjectival functions. However, not all adjectives can be diminutivized. According to Dressler and Merlini Barbaresi diminutive formation is possible only with gradable or dimensional adjectives (1994:120). Gradable adjectives operate along some dimensional scale, such as *dolg* “long”, *kus/kratok* “short”, *visok* “tall/ high”, *nizok* “low”, *dalečen* “far”, *blizok* “near”, *star* “old”, *mlad* “young”, etc. More specifically, gradable antonymic adjectives (such as the ones listed above) are the only ones that serve as potential bases for diminutivization of adjectives formation (Ștefănescu 1992:351). This universal semantic constraint has been verified in our data. Non-gradable adjectives such as *mrtov* “dead”, *apsoluten* “absolute”, *kompletan* “complete”, *celosen/sevkupen* “whole”, *virtuelan* “virtual”, *kraen/esktremen* “extreme”, *edinstven/unikatan* “unique”, *konečen* “ultimate”, *mažena/ženet* “married”, “unmarried”, *legitimn*

“legitimate”, or the like do not yield diminutives. Morphologically, Macedonian adjectives (and their diminutive derivations) agree in number and gender with the noun they modify. The inflections for gender and number follow those of nouns: singular masculine forms terminate in *-C*, feminine in *-a*, whereas neuter end in *-o*. Pluralized adjectives terminate in *-i*. More precisely, there are four possible diminutive suffixes that are added to adjectival bases: *-čok* for masculine, *-ička* for feminine, *-ičko* for neuter, and *-ički* for plural. While there are exceptions in terms of inflections of nouns (recall the discussions in 2.1.1. and 4.3.), the regularity of terminal inflections of diminutivized adjectives is absolute. These features of the diminutivized adjectives are illustrated in the table below.

Table 12: Morphological Features of Diminutivized Adjectives in Macedonian

Base Adjectival Form	Diminutive Derivations			
	Masculine Sing.	Feminine Sing.	Neuter Sing.	Plural
<i>suv</i> “dry”	<i>suvičok bor</i> “dry-DIM pinetree”	<i>suvička kora</i> “dry-DIM bark”	<i>suvičko drvce</i> “dry-DIM tree-DIM”	<i>suvički granki</i> “dry-DIM branches”
<i>brz</i> “rapid, fast”	<i>brzičok voz</i> “fast-DIM train”	<i>brzička kola</i> “fast-DIM car”	<i>brzičko kuče</i> “fast-DIM dog”	<i>brzički zajačinja</i> “fast-DIM rabbits”
<i>umen</i> “smart”	<i>umničok pes</i> “smart-DIM dog”	<i>umnička mačka</i> “smart-DIM cat”	<i>umničko jagne</i> “smart-DIM lamb”	<i>umnički životni</i> “smart-DIM animals”
<i>skap</i> “expensive”	<i>skapičok prsten</i> “expensive-DIM ring”	<i>skapička belezica</i> “expensive-DIM bracelet”	<i>skapičko lanče</i> “expensive-DIM chain”	<i>skapički podaroci</i> “expensive-DIM presents”
<i>visok</i> “tall”	<i>visočok maž</i> “tall-DIM man”	<i>visočka žena</i> “tall-DIM woman”	<i>visočko dete</i> “tall-DIM child”	<i>visočki luđe</i> “tall-DIM people”
<i>sladok</i> “sweet”	<i>slatkičok čaj</i> “sweet-DIM tea”	<i>slatkička čanta</i> “sweet-DIM purse”	<i>slatkičko bebe</i> “sweet-DIM baby”	<i>slatkički deca</i> “sweet-DIM children”

The crucial semantic overlay of all diminutivized adjectives in Macedonian is that of approximation that can be translated as “rather X” or “X-ish”. This was already noted in Table 7 that listed a number of diminutivized adjectives: *topličok* “warmish”, *slatkičok* “rather sweet”, *sporičok* “rather slow”, *glupičok* “rather stupid”, *grdičok* “rather ugly/ugly-ish”, *skapičok* “rather expensive”, *tivkičok* “rather quiet”, and *kusičok* “rather short/short-ish.” Should then, diminutivized adjectives be classified as diminutives proper? Let us apply the semantic-stylistic criteria from 4.2. to examine the case of diminutive derivations of adjectives. The fundamental semantic component (or criterion) is that of smallness in size or magnitude, i.e., [ - big ]. Can we posit that *topličok* “warmish”, *skapičok* “rather expensive”, or *sporičok* “rather slow” connote smallness? The answer is affirmative. According to Dressler and Merlini Barbaresi (1994:131), gradable dimensions (such as big or small) are intrinsic properties of nominal word classes: nouns and adjectives. What about the other two criteria; do diminutivized adjectives signal some emotional attitude and are they used informally? Our data confirm that Macedonian diminutivized adjectives conform to both of these criteria. First, the approximation connoted by diminutivized adjectives is not emotionally neutral: to native speakers of Macedonian diminutivized adjectives are more affectionate, intimate or otherwise more emotional forms compared to their respective base forms. Statistically, diminutivized adjectives are frequently found in CDS. Our data showed that out of 78 unique diminutivized adjectives that were documented, 66 were registered in CDS. Secondly, diminutivized adjectives are very typical for informal register. The above discussion and data



confirm that diminutivized adjectives belong to the category of diminutives proper.

In Macedonian, adverbs may also occur with diminutive suffixes and their morphology is even simpler than that of adjectives. It ought to be immediately noted that diminutivized adverbs are a marginal category in Macedonian.

Depending on the stem vowel of the base adverb, two diminutive suffixes may be added to adverbial bases: *-ka / -ička* and *-ko / -ičko*: the suffix *-ka / -ička* occurs is added to adverbial bases terminating in *-a*, while *-ičko* is added to all other adverbial bases. Macedonian diminutivized adverbs are few in number and our data verified that scarcity. Out of 2219 unique examples of diminutives that were registered in the corpora, only 13 of them were diminutivized adverbs. Nine of these were formed with the suffixes *-ko / -ičko*: *lesničko* “easily-DIM”, *brzičko* “fast-DIM”, *sporičko* “slowly-DIM”, *ranko/raničko* “early-DIM”, *dlabočko* “deep-DIM”, *ubavko* “nicely-DIM”, *vospitanko* “well mannered-DIM”, *mirničko* “still-DIM”, *tivkičko* “quiet-DIM”, and four with the diminutive suffixes *-ka / -ička*: *tukička* “here-DIM”, *polecka/polekička* “slowly-DIM”, *ednaška* “once-DIM”, and *kolkucka* “how much-DIM”. Out of these 13 diminutivized adverbs, nine were adverbs of manner, one was a place adverb, one was temporal, one was an adverb of frequency, and one of quantity. The classification of the documented adverbs is presented in Table 13.

Table 13: Classification of Diminutivized Adverbs according to Specific Adverbial Functions

Base Adverb: Manner	Diminutive	Base Adverb: Place	Diminutive
<i>lesno</i> “easy”	<i>lesničko</i> “easily-DIM”	<i>tuka</i> “here”	<i>tukička</i> “here-DIM”
<i>brzo</i> “fast”	<i>brzičko</i> “fast-DIM”		
<i>sporo</i> “slow”	<i>sporičko</i> “slow-DIM”	Base Adverb: Time	Diminutive
<i>dlaboko</i> “deep”	<i>dlabočko</i> “deep-DIM”	<i>rano</i> “early”	<i>ranko/raničko</i> “early-DIM”
<i>ubavo</i> “nice”	<i>ubavko</i> “nicely-DIM”		
<i>vospitano</i> “well-mannered”	<i>vospitanko</i> “well-mannered-DIM”	Base Adverb: Frequency	Diminutive
<i>mirno</i> “still”	<i>mirničko</i> “still-DIM”	<i>enaš</i> “once”	<i>ednaška</i> “once-DIM”
<i>tivko</i> “quiet”	<i>tivkičko</i> “quiet-DIM”		
<i>poleka</i> “slowly”	<i>polecka</i> / <i>polekička</i> “slowly-DIM”	Base Adverb: Quantity	Diminutive
		<i>kolku</i> “how much”	<i>kolkučka</i> “how much-DIM”

It is noteworthy that 12 of the 13 diminutivized adverbs were documented in CDS. Only *kolkucka* “how much-DIM” was found on a Macedonian Internet forum<sup>32</sup>. Below are two examples from our data that illustrate typical use of diminutivized adverbs in child-directed speech.

<sup>32</sup> The adverb/quantifier *kolkucka* was registered in a post on the topic Skopje 2014. A user nicknamed *Golemiot Brat* (Big Brother) posted a sarcastic comment referring to the government’s largely criticized overspending on monuments in the Macedonian capital. The comment was: *Aj*

(71) [typical parent warning to a small child]

*Popolecka sinče da ne se udriš!*  
More slowly-DIM son-DIM to not refl. pro. you hit  
“Go more slowly baby, don’t hurt yourself!”

(72) [mother is helping her four-year old daughter build a sand sculpture at a beach]

*Ajde fati ubavko so dve rāčinja, eve<sup>33</sup> vaka.*  
DM hold nicely-DIM with both the hands-DIM here (deix.) like so  
“Come on, hold with both your hands, just like so.

These examples confirm Wierzbicka’s (1984:127) claim that diminutivized adverbs convey a friendly attitude to the child, especially in giving instructions and directions.

In terms of semantic content of the diminutivized adverbs resemble adjectives in that they both connote approximation or imprecision. Dressler and Merlini Barbaresi (1994:157) suggest that diminutive suffixes added to adverbs block modification denoting precision. As with diminutivized adjectives, the common semantic component of diminutivized adverbs is that of “rather X”, or “X-ish.”

A special note should be made about comparatives of adjectives and adverbs. One such example is *popolecka* “more slowly-DIM” from (71). Comparatives of diminutivized adjectives or adverbs do not fundamentally change their semantic

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*da vidime kolkucka ke koštaat site ovie spomenici* “Let’s see how much-DIM will all these monuments going to cost.”

<sup>33</sup> *Eve* is a universal deictic pointing to a place, object, action, etc., with the purpose of providing immediate reference. As exemplified in 69), *eve* can acquire different meanings in other contexts.

properties. The comparative forms of diminutivized adjectives and adverbs are more salient from a point of view of pragmatics, since they are used as fine-tuning devices in attenuating illocutionary forces of utterances.

From a formal viewpoint, not all diminutives of adverbs are diminutives proper since the fundamental semantic component [ - big ] seems to be absent in some of them. I would argue that there is no intrinsic diminution in size or scope in adverbs like *ranko/raničko* “early-DIM”, *tukička* “here-DIM”, or *ednaška* “once-DIM”. While diminution can be accounted for in adverbs of manner, such as *lesničko* “easily-DIM”, *brzičko* “fast-DIM”, *sporičko* “slowly-DIM”, etc., adverbs of time, place, or quantity/frequency such as *ranko/raničko* “early-DIM”, *tukička* “here-DIM”, or *ednaška* “once-DIM” do not seem share the basic semantic-stylistic features of diminutives proper. This shows that diminutivization is observable over a semantic-stylistic continuum. On one end, diminutives proper are clearly identifiable in nouns. From there, diminutivization decreases as one progresses from lexical to grammatical word classes. Nieuwenhius (1985) proposed a diminutivization hierarchy in the following order: nouns > adjectives > verbs > numerals > interjections > pronouns > prepositions > demonstratives. He argued that “The further down the hierarchy a diminutive form occurs, the less the actual change in meaning and the greater the importance of subjective diminutive force” (223). Dressler and Merlini Barbaresi (1994:131-2) found Nieuwenhius (1985) hierarchy to be only partially correct. They maintain that gradable dimensions are a typical property of adjectives and nouns, while other

dimensions are more important for verbs (e.g., verbal aspect or tense). Word classes like interjections, pronouns, and prepositions are hardly gradable. Dressler and Merlini Barbaresi conclude that the more unlikely a decrease in quantity or quality, the more probable a connotational or pragmatic meaning (131-2). The pragmatic potential of the diminutive will be discussed in detail in Chapter 5.

In sum, the Macedonian material confirms cross-linguistics findings that nouns are primary bases for diminutivization. Consequently, diminutives of nouns occur much more frequently than those of verbs, adjectives or adverbs. In addition, nouns allow much larger gamut of diminutive formation (there are many more diminutive suffixes for nouns) than for all other word classes together. Lastly, the data from Macedonian further validate Dressler and Merlini Barbaresi (1994:94) theory that diminutivization of nouns gives the language user much greater freedom of use.

## Chapter 5: Pragmatic Potential of the Diminutive

It was already established that cross-linguistically, diminutivization is based on the notions of smallness in size or magnitude (Wierzbicka 1985, Jurafsky 1996) and non-seriousness (Dressler and Merlini Barbaresi 1994). In addition, Jurafsky's study has demonstrated (see Figure 1) that, across languages, diminutives are characterized by a) unidirectionality (the concept "child" gives rise to diminutive; diminutives arise from semantic or pragmatic links with children), and b) strict hyponymy: universal tendency to shift from physical smallness → linguistic domain (weakening the locutionary force of predicates) → metalinguistic (or pragmalinguistic) domain (weakening the illocutionary force of predicates). Pragmatically, the use of the diminutive extends well beyond these universal semantic functions. Jurafsky's (1996) study has outlined a polysemous structure of the diminutive that is reflected in a range of pragmatic meanings, from affection, intimacy, sympathy, or references to pets, to signaling contempt, or pragmatic hedges.

This chapter investigates the pragmatic potential of the diminutive in Macedonian by combining data from various sources: electronic, printed, video recordings of natural conversations, as well as my own records of communicative situations involving various pragmatic uses of the diminutive in two pilot studies (Spasovski 2006 and 2006a). In total, my data contain conversational material that has been collected from participant and non-participant observations for a period spanning

over a decade. The vast majority of material contains data that is representative of spoken and written contemporary Macedonian. The interpretations that are offered in this chapter are admittedly subjective. Of course, any interpretation ought to be scientifically viable. Following the methodology in similar studies, the proposed interpretations in this study are substantiated by applicable theoretical models, and following consultations with colleagues who are native speakers of Macedonian. It should be noted that my interpretations are made on representative data and are substantiated by relevant scholarly research on comparable data from other languages. Similar studies on pragmatic uses and functions in other languages are founded on typicality of occurrence and the researcher's own interpretation. Most of the examples presented in this chapter are authentic utterances recorded in some of the indicated sources. This discussion has included a few contrived examples that illustrate typical contextual situations. These contrived examples have been referred to as typical contextual situations or uses.

Specifically, Chapter 5 examines a range of contexts and texts where diminutives are employed to communicate pragmatically salient information and proposes tentative categorizations and explanations. The theoretical framework for investigating the pragmatic potential of the diminutive draws upon Brown and Levinson's (1978, 1987) theory of pragmatic politeness and facework. As already explained in Chapter 3, Brown and Levinson's model will not be applied as a normative set of criteria, i.e., it will not be taken as set of universal rules that

regulate socio-pragmatic behavior in all languages. Rather, the diminutive use will be examined along the continuum of pragmatic (im)politeness by accounting for culture-specific contextually negotiated factors.

Section 2.4. on cross-cultural uses of the diminutive has shown how diminutives can be used as both positive and negative politeness markers in a variety of speech acts with children and adults. In addition, the reviewed studies on diminutivization in section 2.4. suggest that the pragmatic functions of the diminutive are to be sought in informal situations that allow more space for expression of subjective judgments, personal affection, empathy, intimacy, sympathy, etc. Cross culturally, the diminutive has been documented to serve as a convenient pragmatic device to magnify the illocutionary force of the utterance in positive politeness. For instance, the diminutive can be used to establish common ground, to intensify the affection towards the interlocutor, to compliment, to convey the air of empathy, etc. On the other hand, diminutives can attenuate the illocutionary force thus signaling negative politeness: they can minimize the degree of imposition or criticism, show awareness of interlocutor's negative face, and so on. This chapter examines pragmatic uses of the diminutive in child-directed speech (CDS) and in adult communication. The analysis of the pragmatic functions of the diminutive will include discussions on the nature of speech acts, pragmatic force of utterances, and socio-cultural interpretations of pragmatic (im)politeness.



### 5.1. Child-Directed Speech (CDS)

Diminutives are typically associated with and based on communication with children (Dressler and Merlini Barbaresi (1994); Jurafsky (1996); Wierzbicka (1984, 1991, and 1992). According to Travis (2005), this prototypical sense of the diminutive pragmatically encodes positive feelings toward children and, at the same time, conceptualizes them as small persons. According to Savickienė (2007) child-related communication is based on the diminutive's pragmatic functions of affection, endearment, sympathy, or empathy. Hence, the use of diminutives is particularly appropriate for child-centered communication. In child-directed speech (CDS) diminutives are extensively used in Macedonian culture as a positive politeness strategy. They appear as conventionalized positive politeness formulae conveying strong affection, endearment, intimacy, or empathy towards the child, and are distinctive pragmatic devices in motherese.

(73) [mother admiring her eight-month-old baby boy]  
*Lepotanče najuvabo mamino, uf ke te izedam!*  
beauty-DIM most beautiful of mommy excl. fut. tense part. you I eat up  
“Mommy’s gorgeous boy, oh I could eat you up!”

(74) [mother soothing her crying two-year-old son who fell on the ground]  
*Ništo milo, ništo te boli kolenceto?*  
Nothing darling nothing you hurt the knee-DIM  
“It’s nothing, darling, does your little knee hurt?”

*Čekaj da vidam, ništo nema, samo malku e crvenko.*  
Wait inf. particle I see nothing there isn’t only a little is red-DIM  
“Let me see, it’s nothing, it’s just a little red.”

The uses of diminutives in (73) and (74) exemplify how attachment and intimacy are achieved via the use of diminutives. Moreover, the example (74) displays empathy towards the child: here the diminutives are used not only to convey affection but also to minimize the amount of redness on the knee in the attempt to sooth the crying child. According to Melzi and King (2003:3) and King and Melzi (2004:257) emotional bonding in mother-child interaction is routinely created through the use of diminutives.

In addition, the diminutive can be used to elicit sympathy or empathy towards children. The series of diminutives in (75) illustrate such pragmatic use in Macedonian.

(75) [mother desperately trying to find her little son in the mall]

*Lele, go izgubiv sinčeto!*  
 int<sup>34</sup>, him<sup>35</sup> I lost the son-DIM  
 “Oh my God, I lost my son!...”

*Da ne vidovte detence vo belo jakniče?*  
 by any chance you saw a child-DIM in white jacket-DIM?  
 Have you seen a child in a white jacket?”

As already shown in 4.5.1. the diminutive is ubiquitous in references to children and pets. It is noteworthy that, in CDS, diminutives are especially common with directives: imperatives are frequently used to give instructions or directions to children. As illustrated in the examples (71) and (72) presented in section 4.1., in CDS, the diminutive attenuates the illocutionary force of the imperative verb,

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<sup>34</sup> Int. = interjection. *Lele* is used in a wide number of contexts to signal excitement, surprise, frustration, pain, desperation, etc.

<sup>35</sup> *Go* is a short pronominal form for direct object (direct object clitic) for masculine singular.

communicating affection and intimacy. Our data included 82 recorded pragmatic uses of the diminutive in CDS. Out of these 82 exchanges, 57 were directives that involved imperatives. The other 25 examples of diminutive use in CDS occurred in requests (16) and offers (9). We shall separate the discussion on the diminutive use in directives in CDS, since it is quite different from that one with adults. The use of the diminutive with requests and offers will be discussed in later sections and will refer to both CDS and adult communication.

The examples below show how directives that include mitigated imperatives are used to speak to children. In CDS, diminutivized imperatives are formulaic expressions used by adults to give directions, suggestions, or instructions in routine actions like eating, washing, dressing, playing, going to bed, etc.

(76) [at a restaurant, mother feeding a toddler]

*Ajde pilence, ušte malce kašička, ušte edno lažiče...*  
 DM chick-DIM more a little-DIM puree-DIM more one spoon-DIM  
 “Come on sweetie, how about some more soup, just one more spoon.”

(77) [mother dressing her six-month-old infant]

*Kreni račeto milo, aj<sup>36</sup> sega nodžeto,*  
 Raise the arm-DIM darling DM now the leg-DIM  
 “Raise your little arm, darling, come on, now the little leg...”

*taka bravo!*  
 so (deix.) bravo  
 just like that, good job!”

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<sup>36</sup> DM – discourse marker. *Aj* is a phonologically reduced form of *ajde*.

(78) [mother tucking in her four-year-old twins]

*Ajde dečinja-mečinja<sup>37</sup>, zatvorete gi očinjata...*  
DM children-DIM bears-DIM you close them the eyes-DIM  
“Come on you kiddos, close your eyes...”

*slatko sonče.*  
sweet dream-DIM  
“sweet dreams.”

(79) [grandmother talking to her two grandchildren at a park]

*Eve, tuka trčkajte, ripkajte dečinja, ajde!*  
deix. here you run-DIM you jump-DIM children-DIM DM  
“Run and jump here, kiddies, come on!”

(80) [mother giving directions to her toddler]

*Ete taka miličko, stavi go kukleto tukička...*  
deix. so dear-DIM you put it the doll-DIM here-DIM  
“There you go, little darling, put the little doll right here...”

Diminutives are used ubiquitously when talking to or referring to children. As illustrated, in Macedonian, CDS is characterized by a wide range of diminutives. Nouns are not the only parts of speech that are routinely diminutivized in CDS, but so are verbs, adjectives, and adverbs. The use of diminutives in adult communication is much more restricted. Specifically, diminutivized verbs, adjectives and adverbs are far more frequent in CDS than in other informal registers that do not involve children or pets, or references to them.

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<sup>37</sup> *Dečinja-mečinja* is a typical rhyming pattern used frequently in nursery rhymes or affectionate references in CDS. This rhyming pattern has equivalent emotional effect like the English rhyming patterns *teenie-weenie*, or *eenie-meenie*.

However, the pragmatic diminutive can be used in CDS as a mitigating device of the propositional content. Such pragmatic uses of the diminutive have been identified as ‘bushes’ or ‘propositional hedges’ (Caffi 1999:890). Below is such an example.

(81) [pediatrician examining my friends’ three-year-old son]

*Ajde sine isplazi go jazičeto...*  
 DM son you stick out it the tongue-DIM  
 “Come on, son, stick out your little tongue...”

*daj da vidime grlceto... hmmm crvenko e...*  
 let to we see the throat-DIM hmm red-DIM it is  
 “let me see your little throat, hmm...it’s red...”

*i kašlaaaš... ke<sup>38</sup> probame so sirupče prvo*  
 and you cough (emph.) FTM we try with cough medicine-DIM first  
 “and you cooough...we’ll try with some cough medicine first.”

It could be argued that the diminutives *jazičeto* “the tongue-DIM”, *grlceto* “the throat-DIM”, *crvenko* “red-DIM”, and *sirupče* “cough medicine-DIM” are used to convey affection and intimacy with the child patient. The emphatically lengthened vowel in *kašlaaaš* “you cooough” is an additional signal of doctor’s concern. However, the diminutives *crvenko* “red-DIM”, and *sirupče* “cough medicine-DIM” seem to function as propositional hedges. Thus, *crvenko* “red-DIM” is intended to mitigate the severity of the inflammation, while the diminutivized cough medicine (*sirupče*) functions as a pragmatic hedge aimed to soften the unpleasantness of the therapeutic prescription. Caffi (1999:890-1) discusses such examples in Italian and notes that in doctor-patient interaction, these propositional hedges “often instantiate a *diminutivum puerile* which further encourages the

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<sup>38</sup> FTM = future tense marker

patients' natural tendency toward regression...the use of this mitigating resource [i.e., the pragmatic diminutive]...is extremely frequent, sometimes becoming a distinctive feature of a doctor's communicative style that makes it very close to a sort of baby-talk." Thus, these bushes minimize the seriousness of the problem or the severity of the prescribed therapy. In addition, *diminutivum puerile* indexes genuine concern for the patient and a friendly, more intimate relationship in doctor-child patient interactions.

It seems plausible to argue that in CDS, the use of the diminutive is a powerful pragmatic tool for communicating affection and intimacy. Jurafsky's (1996:542) model in Figure 1 postulates direct links between children and pragmatic implications of intimacy and affection. Across cultures, children and small things are perceived as cute, likeable, and consequently, are regarded as the objects of affection. Taylor (2003:174) argues that across cultures, humans have a natural suspicion towards large creatures, and a natural affection for small animals and small children that can be caressed without embarrassment or fear. However, it can be argued that the pragmatic implication of affection has emancipated itself from the fundamental concept of smallness in size: recall the discussion in 4.1. and examples such as *džinče* "giant-DIM", *milionče* "million-DIM", *palatička* "palace-DIM", *zamoče* "castle-DIM" and *kosmosče* "cosmos-DIM". While all of these examples were found in CDS, one can argue that it is the pragmatic component of affection, rather than that of size that is prominent in these diminutivized nouns. Taylor's study (2003:174) aligns with this view arguing that

affection has detached itself from the prototypical category of size through processes of metonymic transfer. Specifically, via the metonymy emotions = size, “affection” is derived from the meaning of “small.”

While pragmatically prominent in CDS, affection is not the sole pragmatic implication of the diminutive. According to Sifianou (1992:158) by employing the diminutive, adults not only express their affection, but also attempt to represent the world as a friendly place. To interpret diminutivized imperatives in CDS, we ought to examine their pragmatic implications in a specific cultural context. In Macedonian, directness in communication is much more common and far more acceptable than in English-speaking societies. Consequently, directive speech acts (which typically contain imperatives) are ubiquitous in Macedonian because directness is culturally favored over tentativeness or hedging. In Macedonian, direct references are interpreted as frankness, genuine concern, personal involvement, or care for someone, while tentativeness or indirectness signal detachment, lack of involvement, or even lack of sincerity. In other words, directness in the communication enhances social bonding in Macedonian. Wierzbicka (1991:52) makes the same claim about Polish arguing that directness is more natural while indirect interrogatives (that are preferred in English) are distance-building devices in Polish. Culturally, Macedonia is much closer to Poland, where affection and concern (communicated through imperatives in directives) supersede individual autonomy, which, according to Wierzbicka (1991:52), is more culturally salient in English-speaking societies. The foregoing

sections discuss these cultural differences in further detail and exemplify other pragmatic uses of the pragmatic diminutive in a variety of speech acts.

## 5.2. Requests

The pragmatic use of the diminutive in Macedonian is amply documented in requests: our data included 81 situations where diminutives were used to form requests. In Macedonian, the grammatical formulation of requests and the pragmatic implications of requests is notably different than those in English. According to Brown and Levinson requests invariably entail some degree of imposition that necessitates some attenuation or minimization. This is certainly true in English-speaking societies, but not necessarily in others. In Anglo-Saxon societies, imposition is a face-threatening act that requires some mitigation of the illocutionary force. Hence, in English, requests typically occur in interrogative or interrogative-cum-conditional forms. Green (1975:107-130) posits the following syntactic formulae that operate in English requests (qtd. in Wierzbicka 1991:32)

- (82)
- a. Will you + verb*
  - b. Will you please + verb*
  - c. Would you + verb*
  - d. Would you mind + verb*
  - e. Would you like + verb*
  - f. Won't you + verb*
  - g. Do you want to + verb*
  - h. Why don't you + verb*
  - i. Why don't you be a sweetheart + verb*



Wierzbicka (1991:33) explains that

Polish has no similar constructions. In Polish the use of interrogative forms outside of the domain of questions is very limited. Also, in Polish, the interrogative form is not culturally valued as a means of performing directives. There was, so to speak, no cultural need to develop special interrogative devices for performing speech acts other than questions, and in particular, directives.

Just like Polish, Macedonian does not employ interrogative constructions with requests such as those listed in (82). In Macedonian interrogatives are typically used in genuine questions. In contrast with English-speaking cultures, Macedonian does not use interrogatives to minimize imposition because, a) impositions are differently defined, interpreted, or negotiated, and b) the imposition itself is not viewed as negative. In Macedonian culture, as in some other cultures in the Balkans, Mediterranean, or Middle-East, for instance, requests do not exert the pragmatic force of impositions. For instance, in Macedonian culture, a vacant seat on a bus, train, or an airplane is expected to be used and a request to use such seat is not viewed as an imposition. Or at least, not such an imposition as is in English-speaking cultures. Thus, in crowded buses in Macedonia, it is not really an imposition to ask a fellow passenger to move over or make space for others. In such situations, the diminutive is a conventional pragmatic strategy to formulate polite requests in Macedonian.

(83) [on a bus: a passenger is asking two fellow passengers if he could squeeze into a seat]

*Dečki, aj ve molam napravte edno mestence za mene.*

You guys DM please (pl.) you make one seat-DIM for me

“Guys, could you please make space for me?”

The example (83) deserves some additional commentary. Note that the request in (83) occurs in the imperative; however, the conventional politeness formula *ve molam* “please” along with the diminutive *mestence* “seat-DIM”, render it pragmatically polite. In order to decode the illocutionary force of the Macedonian utterance in (83) I have tentatively translated this imperative request by an interrogative: “*Guys, could you please make space for me?*” In American culture, even though it is an interrogative and contains the conventional “please”, the above italicized request still connotes some degree of imposition. In American English, the culturally appropriate requests in such situations would be “*Excuse me, is that seat taken?*”, “*Excuse me, is somebody sitting there?*” or the like.

Sifianou (1992:160) maintains that in Greek culture “there are situations where requests are not interpreted as impositions at all: when participants have specific, culturally, and situationally determined rights and obligations to perform particular acts, or when the result of a request directly or indirectly benefits the addressee.” I argue that this is also true for Macedonian culture. Many situational contexts that involve service providers and clients entail clearly delineated rights, obligations, and expectations. In such contexts, as Sifianou points out, the communicants do not really see a necessity to mitigate impositions. The

Macedonian examples below show some uses of the diminutive with requests where the diminutive does not attenuate the illocutionary force but is employed for other communicative goals.

(84) [at a supermarket: sales associate is helping a customer while trying to answer a phone call]

*Customer: Devojče, daj mi dve kilca meleno.*  
 Girl-DIM give me two kilos-DIM ground meat  
 “Miss, could I have two kilos of ground meat?”

*Sales Ass.: Samo minutka, tetkice... alo, ke ti se javam posle*  
 Only minute-DIM aunt-DIM hello FTM<sup>39</sup> you I call after  
 “Just a minute, Ma’am, hello, can I call you later?”

(85) [at a restaurant: a customer is ordering food]

*Customer: Bate, daj donesi ni tri pivca, ama kamen.*  
 Bro DM<sup>40</sup> you bring us three beers-DIM but stone  
 “Bro, could you bring us three beers, but ice-cold?”

*Server: Nema problem, nešto za mezence? Salatička? Naforče?*  
 No problem something for appetizer-DIM salad-DIM nafora<sup>41</sup>-DIM  
 “No problem, would you like some appetizers to go with? Nafora?”

(86) [at a post office: the postal worker is asking the customer to sign the reception of the parcel]

*Postal Worker: Aj edno potpisče tuka*  
 DM one signature-DIM here  
 “Could you sign over here, please?”

The diminutives occurring with the requests in (84), (85), and (86) cannot be said to mitigate the illocutionary force of the utterances (i.e., to minimize impositions), since in Macedonia, it is expected of sales associates or servers to receive orders

<sup>39</sup> FTM= future tense marker

<sup>40</sup> DM = discourse marker. *Daj* is used in informal requests to signal some sense of urgency or to emphasize someone’s role in a course of action. Its discourse function is similar to *ajde*.

<sup>41</sup> *Nafora* =popular appetizer in the Balkans made of grilled bread that is cubed and topped with grated feta cheese.

in form of direct requests. Similarly, it is pragmatically appropriate of service providers to place direct requests to costumers, as is the case in (86). As noted before, in Macedonian culture, establishing social bonds and cordial relationships is culturally more salient than refraining from imposing on others. Moreover, as illustrated in (84) and (85), both interlocutors use diminutives with the intent of establishing a familiar, cooperative, friendly context for interaction. Makri-Tsilipakou maintains that in Greek culture, customers and service providers are using the diminutive to propose a friendly, cooperative interaction that resembles friendship (2003:718). The same can be claimed about Macedonian culture. When interacting with service providers, customers resort to the diminutive abundantly, not to mitigate any imposition but to communicate friendliness or cordiality.

The pragmatic diminutive is a conventional device in the interactions between friends and family. Macedonian native speakers routinely refer to food and drinks in the diminutive: *lepče* “bread-DIM”, *sirence* “cheese-DIM”, *mlekce* “milk-DIM”, *piperče* “pepper-DIM”, *patlidžanče* “tomato-DIM”, *pleskaviče* “hamburger-DIM”, *vodička* “water-DIM”, *sokče* “juice-DIM”, *pivce* “beer-DIM”, *vince* “wine-DIM”, *rakiička* “brandy-DIM”, etc. Correspondingly, when arranging to meet with friends and loved ones, Macedonians use phrases that contain pragmatic diminutives. Such common phrases are: *vo kafeanče* “at a bar-DIM”, *na kafence* “to meet over a cup of coffee-DIM”, *na pivce* “to meet for a

beer-DIM”, *na bureče* “to go and have burek<sup>42</sup>-DIM”, or *na čaška muabet* -- literally, “to meet over a glass-DIM of conversation” (i.e., “to meet for a drink and chit-chat”), etc. The use of diminutives for establishing a cooperative atmosphere or social bonding has been also documented in Greek (Sifianou (1992:162-163) and Makri-Tsilipakou (2003: 718)) and Serbian (Đurić 2004:161). Commenting on this pragmatic use of the diminutive in Greek, Makri-Tsilipakou notes that “the abundance of pragmatic/metalinguistic diminutives in the Greek language...is very much in accordance with the cultural mode of verbal laxity, as a release of structural tension between autonomy and sociability” (2003:718). She argues that such verbal conduct in Greek culture explains the overwhelming use of diminutives – her data report that 75% of the diminutives refer to non-human (non-animate entities) (2003:718). Just like Greek and Serbian cultures, Macedonian is a positive politeness culture where social interaction, involvement, and cordiality are highly valued. The pragmatic diminutive in Macedonian is encultured as a positive politeness strategy that serves as a somewhat social lubricant favoring informal, cooperative, and friendly interactions. Just like in Greek, the use of diminutives in Macedonian mostly refers to non-human (non-animate) entities. Our data showed that out of 2219 unique examples of diminutives, 1724 (or 77%) referred to non-human entities. As Makri-Tsilipakou observes, this makes an important note about the discourse orientation of the pragmatic diminutive (2003:718). This seems to be the case in Macedonian as well. I argue that in Macedonian, just like in other Balkan

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<sup>42</sup> *Burek* is a popular type of pastry (filled with ground beef, cheese, or spinach) that is typically eaten for breakfast.

languages, the pragmatic diminutive has detached itself from the original concept of smallness and has acquired a separate, independent pragmatic function: a pragmatic device signaling positive politeness.

Among the best examples of the pragmatic diminutive in requests are those related to ‘free goods.’ Across the Balkans, asking for a cigarette is considered culturally ‘free goods.’ Hence, in Macedonian culture, requesting ‘free goods’ is not perceived as an imposition; the pragmatic diminutive in requesting ‘free goods’ is a positive politeness marker that signals the interlocutor’s freedom to use other resources or possessions freely. The exchange presented in example (9) on p. 31 showed how cigarettes can be requested by employing the pragmatic diminutive. The example (87) illustrates a similar situation, where cologne is taken to be free goods among classmates.

(87) [two college girls preparing to go out]

G1: *Ej, ke se prsnam so tvoevo parfemče, ako?*  
 Hey, FTM<sup>43</sup> RP<sup>44</sup> I spray with your perfume-DIM DM<sup>45</sup>  
 “Hey, is it okay if I use your perfume?”

G2: *Fala bogu, prsni se.*  
 Thank god you spray RP  
 “Sure thing, go ahead!”

In view of the above, the employment of the pragmatic diminutive in requests can be postulated as a Balkan Sprachbund feature: in Macedonian (as in most other Balkan cultures) the diminutive in requesting “free goods” does not really

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<sup>43</sup> FTM = future tense marker

<sup>44</sup> RP = reflexive pronoun

<sup>45</sup> DM = discourse marker. With raising intonation, *ako* is frequently used in informal registers to ask for permission. It is equivalent to the phrases “May I?” or “Can I?”

function as imposition-softening device. Rather, in requesting “free goods”, the pragmatic diminutive serves as a marker of in-group solidarity. Brown and Levinson identify diminutive terms of address and endearments as in-group identity markers (1987:108). What is more, the pragmatic diminutive can be used for establishing in-group solidarity outside of the realm of ‘free goods.’

- (88) [at a parking lot: a person is trying to fasten the battery contact]  
*Dečko, može malce šrafčigerčeto?*  
 Hey guy can a little-DIM the screwdriver-DIM  
 “Hey man, can I borrow your screwdriver for a sec?”
- (89) [a person is watering his lawn; a passerby is asking for a drink of water]  
*Može malce vodička?*  
 Can little-DIM water-DIM  
 “Can I have a drink of water, please?”
- (90) [a neighbor asking his new neighbor]  
*Zdravo, komši, da ne imaš nekoje skaliče?*  
 Hi neighbor by any chance you have some ladder-DIM  
 “Hi, neighbor, could I borrow your ladder?”

Admittedly, the above examples (88) through (90) involve some degree of mitigation of the impact of the request. However, I contend that the mitigation in these examples is communicated via syntactic means: by the modal *može* “can/may” (used for asking permission); by the politeness markers *malku* “a little” and *malce* “a little-DIM”; as well as by the phrase *da ne imaš* “do you have by any chance”. The pragmatic impact of the diminutives *šrafčigerčeto* “the screwdriver-DIM”, *vodička* “water-DIM”, and *skaliče* “ladder-DIM” is, in my

view, that of establishing friendly, cooperative relationship, rather than minimizing the size or quantity of the requested favor.

However, diminutives in Macedonian can be used to diminish the scope or the magnitude of requests, services, goods received, etc. This is a case where the diminutive plays the role of a pragmatic attenuator of the illocutionary force. Stefanovski (1997: 374) documents such use and points out to three important parts of the exchange. First, note how the customer uses diminutives to list the items on the table (the goods received). Then, it is interesting how the server diminutivizes the sum on the bill. Lastly, when presented with the bill, the customer can't believe the high price, and the absence of the diminutive in his echoed question makes it clear that the customer feels he is overpaying.

(91) [A restaurant. The waiter is making out the check.]

Waiter: *Što imavme?*  
What we had?  
“What did we have?”

Customer: *Tri rakivčinja, mezenca so sirence...*  
Three brandies-DIM appetizer-DIM with cheese-DIM  
“Three brandies, some appetizers with cheese...”

*lukče, kromitče I deset kebabčinja.*  
garlic-DIM onion-DIM and ten kebabs-DIM  
garlic, onions and ten kabobs.”

Waiter: *I grav.*  
“And beans.”

Customer: *Da, be, i gravče.*  
Yes, DM<sup>46</sup>, and beans-DIM  
“Oh, yes, and beans.”

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<sup>46</sup> DM = discourse marker



Waiter: *Pedeset iljadarčinja!*  
Fifty thousand notes-DIM  
“Fifty thousand denars!”

Customer: *Aman be, pedeset iljadi za ova?!*  
“Good heavens, fifty thousand for this?!”

Stefanovski’s interpretation (1997: 374-5) is that both the customer and the server are aiming towards pragmatic minimization: the former diminutivizes the goods received, while the latter diminutivizes the bill. While I agree with his explanation, I would add that the above exchange also includes elements of humor that build on the pragmatic attenuation of the diminutive. In doing so, the diminutive serves not only as a pragmatic softener, but also has a stylistic purpose to connote the informality of address. Our data also included eight examples that revealed mitigating pragmatic uses of the diminutive in requests. A canonical example of diminishing the requested sum of money is presented in the following exchange.

(92) [a person asking his friend for a loan]

A: *Dobro de, kolku pari ti trebaat?*  
good DM<sup>47</sup> how much money to you are needed  
“Okay then, how much money do you need?”

B: *Abe<sup>48</sup> edno stotče bi mi završilo rabota.*  
well, one hundred-DIM MOD<sup>49</sup> me complete job  
“Well, one hundred Euros would probably do the job.”

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<sup>47</sup> DM = discourse marker

<sup>48</sup> *Abe* is a discourse marker used in a wide range of contexts and may connote, hesitation, tentativeness, skepticism, call for speaker’s attention, etc. In this particular context it is used conjointly with the diminutive to convey tentativeness, hesitation and/or hedging.

<sup>49</sup> MOD = modal marker

The face-threatening illocutionary force of requests such as the one in (92) require some pragmatic mitigation. The speaker B appears hesitant and tentative in his request: note the use of hesitation marker “well” at the very beginning, along with a modal/conditional *bi + l* construction (*bi završilo rabota* “would probably do the job”). The use of future tense *ke završi rabota* “will do the job”) would be perceived as more assertive. Additionally, in (92) the diminutive *stotče* referring to “a mere one hundred Euros” is intended to downplay the amount of the requested loan. In such contexts the pragmatic diminutive in Macedonian is used as a negative politeness strategy aimed towards saving face and minimizing the imposition. Lastly, in terms of perspective, this request is made impersonal and consequently, least imposing (Blum-Kulka and Olshtain 1984:203). Requests usually include reference to the requester, the recipient of the request, and/or the action to be performed. The speaker can manipulate requests by opting for various perspectives: hearer-oriented, speaker-oriented, speaker-and-hearer-oriented, or impersonal (Blum-Kulka, House, and Kasper 1989). Compare the impersonal request uttered by B in (92) to requests such as *Možeš li da mi pozajmiš...* “Could you lend me...” or *Može li da pozajmam...* “Could I borrow...” The former request is hearer-oriented (you), while the latter is speaker-oriented (I). The example (92) showcases the complexity of pragmatic attenuation of face-threatening illocutionary force in Macedonian, where the pragmatic diminutive works in concert with hesitation markers, modals, or conditional phrases.

However, the use of pragmatic diminutives in requesting goods and favors may involve more than that. Let us examine the following situations.

(93) [at a dorm, a student is asking a fellow dorm resident for some coffee]

*Izvini, da ne imaš malce kafe?*  
Excuse me, by any chance you have a little-DIM coffee-DIM  
“Excuse me, do you have some coffee by any chance?”

(94) [at a bus stop, two young men are being picked up by a friend; a stranger who is waiting for a bus is asking them if he can get a ride as well]

*Dečki, izvinete ke ima li edno mestence za mene?*  
You guys, excuse me FTM<sup>50</sup> there is IM<sup>51</sup> one spot-DIM for me  
“Excuse me, guys, would there be a spot for me?”

Since coffee and a car ride requested in (93) and (94) respectively are not considered “free goods”, these requests involve some impositions. Note that in both cases the speakers acknowledge their impositions by the phrase *izvini/izvinete* “excuse me” and by pragmatic hedges signaled by *da ne imaš* “do you have by any chance” and *ke ima li* “would there be”. Pragmatically, dubitative phrases like *da ne imaš* “do you have by any chance” and *ke ima li* “would there be” are used for attenuating the illocutionary force of an imposing act. Another example that involved a combination of a pragmatic diminutive and a dubitative phrase was found in the following example:

(95) [A parent is holding his injured son who had cut himself and asking the school secretary.]

*Se izvinuvam vi se naóga li nekoe flasterče?*  
Excuse me (form.) you find (refl.) IM<sup>52</sup> one band aid-DIM  
“Excuse me, would you have by any chance a band aid?”

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<sup>50</sup> FTM = future tense marker

<sup>51</sup> IM = interrogative marker

<sup>52</sup> IM = interrogative marker

It is noteworthy that in (95) the speaker uses the formal address *se izvinuvam* “excuse me (form.)”. Together with this conventional apologetic phrase, the pragmatic diminutive is also employed to mitigate the impact of the imposition, along with the dubitative phrase *vi se naogá li* “would you have by any chance”.

One final commentary needs to be made about the pragmatic diminutives showcased in (93) through (95). While in (93) one can argue that the pragmatic diminutives are intended to minimize the requested quantity (*malce kafence* “a little-DIM coffee-DIM”), that cannot be said for (94) and (95). How then, does the mitigation work in these latter examples? According to Sifianou (1992:163), the redressive force of the diminutive in such contexts can be inferred from association with in-group language. In other words, the diminutive is used not only to mitigate the pragmatic impact of the impositions, but also to establish in-group identity. According to Sifianou (1992:163), some imposing acts “fall within the framework of reciprocal rights and obligations between cooperating members of the group.” We can argue that in (93), despite the possible minimizing effect of the quantity of goods requested, the pragmatic diminutive is also employed to establish an in-group bonding with the fellow student at the dorm. In a similar fashion, in (94), the person requests a free ride by appealing to passengers’ solidarity via the use of pragmatic diminutive. Lastly, the parent asking for a band aid for his injured son in (95) aims to create an in-group solidarity with the school secretary – that of concerned parents.

The above discussion on the uses of pragmatic diminutive in requests reveals that the boundaries between positive politeness and negative politeness are neither clear cut nor fixed. Moreover, these examples from Macedonian show that politeness forces can work simultaneously – namely, the analyses of (93) through (95) suggest that the pragmatic diminutives involve cooccurrence of negative politeness features (attenuating the illocutionary force of requests) and positive politeness strategies (establishing in-group identity or solidarity). Brown and Levinson (1987:230) refer to such cases as “mixture of strategies” where “The mixture of elements deriving from positive- and negative-politeness strategies in a given utterance may simply produce a kind of hybrid strategy somewhere in between the two.” This is especially the case where there is greater social distance, such as in (95). According to Brown and Levinson these cases reveal the delicacy of the interactional balance where “...positive- and negative-politeness strategies may operate as a social accelerator and a social brake, to modify the direction of interaction at any point in time.” (1987:231).

### 5.3. Offers

Offers are a type of commissive speech acts that refer to a future action performed by the speaker. Such future action is at the expense of the speaker and to the benefit of the addressee. According to Schneider (2003:180) offers fall into two major subclasses according to the nature of the future action offered by the speaker. To the first subclass belong ‘offers of assistance’ while the second one is

composed of 'hospitable offers', or, in Goffman's terms 'ritual offerings' (1971:65). The data analysis documented 62 exchanges where diminutives were employed in offers. Out of these 62 pragmatic uses of the diminutive in offers, 10 diminutives were registered in offers of assistance, 48 occurred in hospitable offers where food and beverages were offered, and 4 were documented in situations where the magnitude of the gift or goods was intended to be downplayed. We will address each of these in respective order.

In offers of assistance, the speaker expresses their willingness to do something for the addressee. For instance, 'Shall I get the door?' or 'Would you like me to pick up the prescription for you' would belong to this subclass of offers. Offers of assistance are largely unrestricted by the context and may occur in a variety of contextual situations among neighbors, colleagues, friends, or family members, as well as between complete strangers. Schneider (2003:182) maintains that offers of assistance are characterized by some general social (or ethical) norms whereby stronger individuals are expected to assist those who are (perceived as) weaker. Consequently, small children, elderly or disabled individuals are typical potential addressees for offers of assistance, despite the magnitude of social distance. Our data contain 10 situations where pragmatic diminutives were documented in such offers. Six of them were part of CDS and four were among adults. Below are examples of each of these uses.

(96) [at supermarket: an elderly person is trying to fit all her groceries in one bag]

*Tetkice, sakate ušte edna kesička?*  
aunt-DIM you want (formal) more one bag-DIM  
“Ma’am, would you like another plastic bag?”

In (96) the sales associate uses formal address (V-form) to offer assistance to the elderly customer but also two pragmatic diminutives: *tetkice* “aunt-DIM” and *kesička* “bag-DIM”. In Macedonian culture, the diminutivized forms of address like *tetkice* “aunt-DIM” or *čiče* “uncle-DIM” are often preferred over honorifics like *gospoĝo* “madam” or *gospodine* “sir”. The diminutivized form of direct address *tetkice* “aunt-DIM” or *čiče* “uncle-DIM” are not only respectful but also convey intimacy, concern, and friendly attitude. On the other hand, honorifics like ‘sir’ or ‘madam’, while perfectly appropriate, in such contexts would connote greater social distance and could be perceived as lack of involvement. As a positive politeness culture, Macedonian often favors the use of diminutivized forms of address as more genuine, cordial, or friendly.

(97) [in the street: a father is bending down to tie his daughter’s undone shoe]

*Daj<sup>53</sup> zlato da ti go zavrzam patiĉeto.*  
DM gold to you it I tie the running shoe-DIM  
“Sweetheart, let me tie your shoe.”

It should be emphasized that that such diminutives as *patiĉeto* “the running shoe-DIM” is acceptable only in communication with or referring to children. As already noted, in CDS just about any object related to the child’s world and its perception can be diminutivized.

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<sup>53</sup> DM = discourse marker. In such contexts *daj* is used in a similar fashion with *ajde*, i.e., to initiate a course of action.

By contrast, the second subclass of offers -- hospitable (or ritual) offers -- are restricted to specific contexts. Hospitable offers are ubiquitous at social events and gatherings such as dinners, parties, receptions, etc. Furthermore, such offers (as the Goffman's term suggests) are much more ritualized and with predetermined roles, such as hosts or guests, for instance (Schneider 2003:182). The pragmatic diminutive is typical in hospitable offers and is characteristic both for CDS and in adult interaction. In Macedonian culture, meals follow ritualized cultural patterns of behavior that involve abundant use of the pragmatic diminutive. The diminutivization of food items and beverages is a positive politeness strategy where interlocutors demonstrate concern for the wellbeing of the other participants. In Macedonian culture, a host has the obligation to demonstrate cordiality and hospitality by constantly offering food and beverages to the guests, thus making sure that they are appropriately taken care of.

(98) [a typical offer in a Macedonian home]

*Ajde, kasnete salatička, mezence...*  
 DM you eat-perf. salad-DIM appetizer-DIM...  
 "Come on, have some salad and appetizers..."

*pivnete malku domašna rakička...*  
 you drink-perf. a little homemade brandy-DIM...  
 "drink some homemade brandy..."

(99) [a host offering food to guests]

*Abe vie ništo ne jadete, ajde zemetete od sirencevo,*  
 DM you nothing not you eat DM you take from this cheese-DIM  
 "Well, you are not eating anything, come on, have some cheese..."



*ajde, i od pindžurčevo, daj vam u tanjirčeto...*  
 DM and from this pindžur<sup>54</sup> give here the plate-DIM  
 “come on, and some pindžur, hand me your plate...”

(100) [a host offering food to guests]

*Aaa ne može vaka, mora da kasnete od mevicevo, puter e!*  
 excl. no can like this must to you eat from this meat-DIM butter it is  
 “Oh no, you can’t leave without trying this meat, it’s so tender!”

*Staj si poiše salatička, patlidžančevo e od bavča, taze!*  
 “put RP<sup>55</sup> more salad-DIM this tomato-DIM is from garden, fresh!”  
 “Have some more salad, these tomatoes are from my garden, fresh!”

To outsiders, particularly Westerners, these offers may seem quite imposing. In Macedonian culture, the concern for the wellbeing of the guests is displayed by the insistent offers of food and beverages. Such insistence is socio-pragmatically more salient and is expected of the host. A westerner, on the other hand, might view these offers as threatening to their negative face, i.e., as overly imposing. To many Americans the direct imperatives in such offers sound overly strong and imposing. However, the pragmatic diminutive is the key to the interpretation of these seemingly “militant offers”. In Macedonian, the pragmatic diminutive and the grammatical imperative work hand in hand in offers (Petrovska 2010:146). The force of grammatical imperatives in such speech acts is significantly abated by the pragmatic diminutives. The imperative tends to index immediate concern for the interlocutor’s wellbeing, whereas the pragmatic diminutive communicates affection by minimizing the quantity of the food offered.

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<sup>54</sup> Macedonian traditional relish made of roasted and mashed peppers, eggplant, garlic, and spices, served as a side dish or an appetizer.

<sup>55</sup> RP = reflexive pronoun

I argue that in such routine offers of food and beverages, the diminutive plays at least three distinct pragmatic functions. First, it is utilized to convey affection and cordiality towards the interlocutors. Macedonian is largely a positive politeness culture, where the pragmatic diminutive is ubiquitously employed to establish cordiality and intimacy. Next, the pragmatic diminutives minimize the quantity of food offered, thus rendering the offers of food and beverages less imposing. Furthermore, as Sifianou (1992:164) observes, the pragmatic diminutive mitigates the resulting obligation on the part of the guest. She goes on to argue that "...in this way, the likelihood of self-praise inferences related to his/her food are eliminated, and the possibility of the imposition that may be induced by his/her insistence is alleviated: after all, what is offered is only a small thing."

It is important to clarify that, in such interpersonal rituals as offering food and beverages, the concern of the host ought not to be viewed as dominating the guests' individuality or comfort zone. Rather, hosts' concern for the guests is negotiated by guests' comfort and tastes. Consider the following exchanges.

(101) [at a dinner table]

Host: *Turi si ušte nekoja sarmička. Može ušte vince?*

Pour RP<sup>56</sup> more some sarma<sup>57</sup>-DIM can more wine-DIM

"Why don't you have some more sarma. How about some more wine?"

Guest: *Fala, dosta e. Vince može i edna salfetka.*

thanks enough is wine-DIM can and one napkin-DIM

"Thanks, I've had plenty. Wine would be good...and a napkin please."

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<sup>56</sup> RP = reflexive pronoun

<sup>57</sup> *Sarma* is a dish made of stuffed marinated cabbage leaves.

Sifianou (1992:164) argues that the reciprocation of diminutives in such contexts reflects the participants' sense of equality along with their involvement in sharing goods. Note that, food and beverages are not the only things that get to be routinely minimized in dining rituals. Quite often, dining-related items, such as cutlery, tableware, dishes, glasses, etc. occur in diminutivized forms. Thus, in a Macedonian restaurant, it is customary to ask for or offer *viljuvče* "fork-DIM", *priborče* "silverware", *čisto čaršavče* "clean tablecloth-DIM", *činivče* "plate-DIM", or other related objects, such as *separence* "restaurant booth-DIM", *svekička* "candle-DIM", *kibritče* "matches-DIM", *pepeljarče* "ashtray-DIM", etc.

When making offers in Macedonian, the pragmatic diminutive was documented in 4 instances with the intent to eliminate possible self-praise or magnitude of the offered gift (Spasovski 2006).

(102) [presentation of a gift at a birthday party]

A: *Lele, što e ova? Stvarno ne si<sup>58</sup> trebala.*  
 O wow, what is this? Really not RP you should (fem.)  
 "Wow, what is this? You really shouldn't have."

B: *Ma ništo posebno, skromno podaroče.*  
 Oh nothing special modest gift-DIM.  
 "Oh, it's nothing special, just a small gift."

(103) [friends arriving at a party with a home-made cake]

A: *Neli<sup>59</sup> ti rekov da ne se mačiš? Se` spremivme.*  
 IM, to you I said to not you bother (refl.) everything we prepared  
 "You shouldn't have gone through all this. We've prepared everything."

<sup>58</sup> RP = reflexive pronoun

<sup>59</sup> IM = interrogative marker. *Neli* is used as a universal interrogative marker in tagged questions.

B: *Ajde pa ti, edna tortička, golemo čudo...*

DM DM you one cake-DIM big miracle  
“Oh come on, it’s just a small cake-DIM. No big deal.”

The exchanges in (102) and (103) resemble formulaic situations operating in many other languages (including English), where the magnitude of the offered gift is downplayed to eliminate the possibility of self-aggrandizement.

#### 5.4. Compliments

Compliments are expressive speech acts whose crucial pragmatic function is to communicate feelings and attitudes (cf. Searle and Vanderveken 1985). In particular, compliments are positive expressions or evaluations, involving praise, admiration, or respect (Manes and Wolfson 1981:124). The principal function of compliments is that of positive politeness: compliments are aimed towards establishing and maintaining friendly social rapport among participants. In analyzing compliments in American culture, Manes and Wolfson (1981:124) point out that compliments serve to reinforce and/or create solidarity between the speaker and addressee. Holmes (1986:486) further observes that compliments operate as ‘social lubricants’ that enhance or consolidate the solidarity among interlocutors. Examining the uses of diminutives in compliments, Sifianou (1992:165) maintains that in Greek “through the use of diminutives, the speaker attempts to make the addressee feel good by communicating his/her positive feelings towards the item diminutivized, and by extension, towards the

addressee's owner. In Macedonian, the pragmatic diminutive is often associated with compliments. Our data documented 32 such uses. Out of these 32 uses of the pragmatic diminutive with compliments, 25 were found to refer to appearance and property, 5 were related to children and spouses, while in 2 cases diminutives were used as replacements of greetings. We will exemplify those uses in the respective order.

(104) [between female coworkers]

*Novo frizurče? Super ti stoi!*  
 new hairstyle-DIM super you it suites  
 “New hairstyle? You look super cute!”

(105) [between female friends]

*Farmerčinjava ti se son.*  
 these jeans-DIM to you they are a dream  
 “These jeans look fabulous on you!”

(106) [between male friends]

*Opa, novo Audi TT, a? Top kolica, nema što.*  
 wow new Audi TT eh top car-DIM no what  
 “Wow, a new Audi TT, eh? Top-of the-line car, no question.”

(107) [between male friends]

*Od kaj ti e odelcevo be<sup>60</sup> peer<sup>61</sup>? Spie, čoeče.*  
 From where you it is this suit-DIM DM fag it sleeps man  
 “Where did you get this suit, bro? It so cool, man!”

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<sup>60</sup> DM = discourse marker

<sup>61</sup> *Peer* “fag” is a colloquial form of *peder* “faggot” where the medial voiced stop / d / is elided. In recent years, especially among teenagers and adolescents, *peer* has served as an in-group marker aimed for establishing social bonding. The full, non-elided form *peder* “faggot” in most contexts has strong derogatory meaning. In-group markers of male bonding such as *peer* exist in other languages: *malaka* (Greek), *maricon* (Spanish), *foo* (some American communities), etc.

Notwithstanding the gender differences in terms of social bonding, the pragmatic diminutives in examples (104) through (107) are used to compliment on the addressee's appearance and property. The diminutives in compliments of this type express positive emotional involvement, affection, intimacy, and even solidarity with the interlocutor. Via extensions, personal compliments on appearance communicate speaker's positive feelings towards the addressee.

Macedonians also use the diminutive to compliment on one's children, partners, or spouses. As in the examples (104) through (107) above, complimenting on one's family or partner is by extension a personal compliment for the addressee.

(108) [female complementing on her friend's choice of a boyfriend]  
*Alal da ti e za tipčevo. Epten e fraerče.*  
 Kudos to you it is for this guy-DIM too much he is cool  
 "You go girl! You've got yourself a really cool guy."

(109) [a male friend complimenting on his friend's wife's cooking]  
*Ženčevo kako ti gotvi, prsti da izedeš!*  
 this wife-DIM how you she cooks fingers to you eat  
 "Your wife really knows how to cook, I'm licking my fingers!"

(110) [an elderly woman responding to a young mother's pointing to her child]  
*Ona e vašeto? Neka vi e živo i zdravo. Kukliče!*  
 that is yours may you it is alive and healthy doll-DIM  
 "Is that her? May she grow big and healthy! What a doll!"

Compliments not only express sincere admiration or positive qualities but they are also used to substitute greetings (Manes and Wolfson 1981:123). Our

conversational data included 2 such instances where compliments seem to function as replacements of conventional greetings.

(111) [a female meeting her male cousin]  
*Glej go be<sup>62</sup>, fraerče.*  
you look him DM cool guy-DIM  
“Hello, Mr. cool guy!”

(112) [a customer opening the door to a repairman]  
*Stigna li<sup>63</sup> be majstorče!*  
arrived IM DM you craftsman-DIM  
“Here is the master craftsman!”

In sum, the pragmatic diminutive with compliments is employed as a positive politeness strategy in Macedonian. In the examples (104) through (112) the diminutives operate as maximizing pragmatic devices enhancing the illocutionary force of the compliment and meeting the addressee’s positive face needs.

Comparable pragmatic uses of diminutives in compliments were documented in English (Kasper 1990:199) and Greek (Sifianou 1992:165). It could be concluded that in compliments, the pragmatic diminutive plays its prototypical function of “emotional intensification rather than deintensification.” (Dressler and Merlini Barbaresi 1994:202)

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<sup>62</sup> DM = discourse marker

<sup>63</sup> IM = interrogative marker

## 5.5. Hedges

Cross-linguistically, the diminutive has been documented to serve a conventional pragmatic tool in hedges. Such hedging functions of the diminutive have been recorded in languages as diverse as Arabic (Badarneh 2010), Awtuw (Feldman 1986), Cantonese (Jurafsky 1988), Dutch (Shetter 1959), German (Dressler and Merlini Barbaresi 1994), Greek (Sifianou 1992, Terkourafi 2001), Italian (Dressler and Merlini Barbaresi 1994), Japanese (Matsumoto 1985), Polish and Russian (Ogiermann 2009), Serbian (Đurić 2004), Spanish (Mendoza 2005; Placencia 2005; Travis 2005), Tzeltal (Brown and Levinson 1978), etc. In hedges, the diminutive serves as an interactional pragmatic device to minimize imposition on the interlocutor (Badarneh 2010:161-3; Mendoza (2005:163)). Studies of Slavic languages also reveal that the diminutive may pragmatically soften unpleasant or serious outcomes or situations (Đurić 2004:161; Jovanović 2005; Tczhizmarova 2005:1147; Veljković Stanković 2011).

In our data there were 22 situations showing pragmatic uses of diminutives as hedges. Consider the next two examples where the diminutives are used as hedging devices. These are clear cases of negative politeness where the pragmatic diminutive is intended to save addressee's negative face.

(113) [Professor to the students arguing loudly in the hall, next to his the classroom]

*Dajte, ve molam potivkičko, studentive polagaat ispit.*  
DM you I please more quiet-DIM these students are taking exam  
“Could you please keep it low, my students are taking an exam.”



(114) [parent is discussing her son's behavior in school with the teacher]

P: *Kakov e kaj vas na časovi?*

How he is at you in classes

“How's he doing in your class?”

T: *Dobar e so ocenkite, samo grubičok e. Nemirničok e.*

good he is with the grades only rude-DIM he is undisciplined-DIM he is

“His grades are fine, but he's kinda rude. He's a bit undisciplined.”

*Go zamoliv malku povospitanko da se odnesuva,*

him I asked a little more polite-DIM to he behaves

“I've asked him to try to be a bit more polite...”

*ama dolgo mu e jazičeto<sup>64</sup>... se rasprava, se kara često.*

but long him it is the tongue-DIM (emph.) he argues he fights often

“but he's a bit of a loudmouth, he often tends to argue and confront others.”

I would argue that both of the exchanges in (113) and (114) are pragmatically complaints. Formally, the professor's utterance in (113) looks like a request; however, pragmatically, it is a complaint. The pragmatic diminutives in these situations are employed to attenuate the illocutionary force of the propositions that imply a prohibition (i.e., stop talking in (113), and criticism (in 114). In American English such pragmatic softening may be effectuated via the approximating adverb ‘kinda’. Note that in (114) the teacher uses the analytical diminutive *malku* “a little” to further mitigate the potential air of criticism. According to Caffi (1999:890) such fuzziness or imprecision is often aimed for in hedges, where the focus of the mitigating device is on the propositional content. The diminutives in (113) and (114) are used to soften the prohibition implied by the adverb *potivko* ‘more quiet’ to *potivkičko* “more quiet-DIM”. In a similar

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<sup>64</sup> Note the emphatic lengthening of the final vowel. In Macedonian, such vowel prolongations typically occur with pitch downsteps to signal some finality or lack of possibility for further actions.

vein, the diminutivized adjectives *grubičok* “rude-DIM” and *nemirničok* “undisciplined-DIM” along with the adverb *povospitanko* “more polite-DIM” are employed to attenuate the illocutionary force of propositions containing their non-diminutive counterparts. Other such examples of diminutivized adjectives used to mitigate the illocutionary force were found in the following utterances.

(115) [between friends]

*Nešto si mi<sup>65</sup> bleđičok.*  
 Something you are to me pale-DIM  
 “You look kinda pale.”

(116) [between two colleagues at a staff meeting]

A: *Čekaj, Sonja e onaa ahritektkata od Veles?*  
 Wait Sonja she is that one the architect from Veles  
 “Wait, Sonja is the architect from Veles?”

B: *Da, edna debelka. Ja znaeš?*  
 Yes one fat-DIM her you know  
 “Yes, she’s kinda chubby. You know her?”

(117) [between two teenage female friends]

A: *Zvonko e zgoden, šteta što ostana kusičok.*  
 Zvonko he is handsome pity that he stayed short-DIM  
 “Zvonko is handsome, it’s a pity he’s kinda shortish.”

B: *Da, nizok e za maško.*  
 yes short he is for male  
 “Yes, he’s short for a guy.”

Durić (2004:161) notes the same pragmatic use of the diminutive in Serbian and poses that the diminutive functions as euphemisms for harsh or unpleasant words. Badarneh (2010:164) observes that in Jordanian Arabic the hedging function of the diminutive is often found in diminutivized adjectives. In such contexts, the

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<sup>65</sup> In this case, the indirect object clitic *mi* is used to connote intimacy, concern, and affection, i.e., *dativus sympatheticus*.

diminutivized adjectives mitigate potentially negative references and present them in a rather positive light. Ultimately, the speaker attempts to show their good intentions towards the addressee. In addition, Caffi (1999:890) argues that the pragmatic diminutive in hedges operate as ‘approximators’ that reduce the intensity of the negative, prohibitive, or otherwise face-threatening force of the utterances. Given their intrinsic gradability, prime candidates for such pragmatic approximation are adjectives and adverbs.

Diminutivized verbs can also appear as pragmatic approximators in hedges. I have recorded the following exchange.

(118) [2 a.m.: police officer (O) is stopping two passersby in front of a major bank]

O: *Dobravečer! Vašite lični ispravi, ve molam. Kade ste trgnale?*  
Good evening your personal documents you I please where you are departed  
“Good evening! May I see your IDs please? Where are you heading?”

P1: *Znaete, ne ni se spieše pa si rekovme aj da se prošetkame.*  
you know not us we slept so we said (refl.) DM to we go for a walk-DIM  
“You know, we couldn’t sleep, so we thought we’d go for a little stroll.”

In (118) the diminutivized *se prošetkame* “we go for a walk-DIM” softens the intensity of the action, i.e., it is made to appear as a spontaneous action that is above suspicion. It ought to be borne in mind that diminutivized verbs are almost exclusively used in CDS or in reference to children. As suggested by our data presented in 4.5.1, verbal diminutives occur with durative verbs that connote child-like actions or such that are part of the children’s world. Hence, the

pragmatic diminutive *se prošetkame* “we go for a walk-DIM” connotes a child-like, innocent stroll. The pragmatic diminutive here works in concert with the hesitation markers *znaete* “you know”, *pa* “so” along with the subjunctive mood of the utterance. In (118) the pragmatic diminutive is a part of a positive politeness strategy seeking solidarity with the addressee. Wierzbicka’s (1984) study corroborates this interpretation showing that the diminutive is used cross-linguistically as a solidarity code.

The exchanges in (113) through (118) exemplify the complexity of the diminutive operating as pragmatic hedge. First, the diminutive is rarely the sole pragmatic tool in hedges; more often it combines with other morpho-syntactic tools, such as hesitation markers, subjunctives, modals, analytic diminutives of the type ‘a little (bit)’ or ‘kinda’, etc. In hedges, the focus of the mitigation is on the illocutionary force. Jurafsky (1996) maintains that when used as approximators, the diminutives involve some description of a scalar predicate (verb, adjective, adverb, or numeral). In the case of durative verbs (such as *se prošetka* “to go for a walk-DIM” in (118)) the scale is length of temporal extent (559). From an instrumental viewpoint, hedges minimize the magnitude of the problem or conflict. From a relational viewpoint, these minimizations seek to reassure the addressee about the speaker’s good intentions and/or their reliability. Quite often, such hedges include differences in terms of social power (Caffi 1999:892-4).

## 5.6. In-Group Solidarity

One of the prototypical functions of the diminutive is establishing and maintaining in-group solidarity. Our data registered 94 such pragmatic uses, all of which were invariably instances of positive politeness where the speaker seeks to create some sense of community, closeness, or claim some affiliation with the addressee. Badarneh (2010:159-161) regards such pragmatic function as extension of its use with children and argues that the diminutive operate as positive emotional intensifiers, conveying feelings of intimacy and affection. Among the best examples of such uses are diminutives of kinship and kinship-claiming terms and phrases. Brown and Levinson (1987:107) note that diminutivized kin terms intensify the emotional tone of the utterance and communicate an air of ‘in-group membership.’ In Macedonian, diminutivized vocative forms of kin terms are habitual form of address. Examples are *strinke* “aunt-DIM”, *tetinče*<sup>66</sup> “uncle-DIM”, *vujče* “uncle-DIM”, *zetko/zetče* “son-in-law-DIM”, *снашке/снајче* “daughter-in-law-DIM”, *kumče*<sup>67</sup> “best man-DIM”, *kumice* “best man’s wife-DIM”. In addition, there exists a series of kinship-claiming terms such as *čiče* “uncle-DIM”, *tetkice* “aunt-DIM”, *bate* “bro-DIM”, *bratče* “bro-DIM”, *drugarče* “friend-DIM”, *majče* “mother-DIM”, *sinče* “son-DIM”.

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<sup>66</sup> Macedonian kinship terms are more specific compared to those in English. For example, paternal and maternal uncles and aunts are lexicalized differently. *Tetin* is a kin term referring to paternal’s or maternal’s sister’s husband. *Čičko/striko* is used for paternal’s brother. Maternal’s brother is *vujko*. The same level of specificity extends to female members as well: *tetka/strina* is paternal’s uncle’s wife, whereas *vujna* is maternal’s uncle’s wife.

<sup>67</sup> In Macedonian culture, *kum* refers to the couple’s best man in a wedding. His wife is *kuma*. Traditionally ‘the kum/kuma’ are also the godparents of the couple’s children. In many Eastern Orthodox cultures, like Macedonian, the ‘kum’ and ‘kuma’ are considered de facto members of the immediate family, and their offspring are not to be married with those of the couple to whom they are ‘kumovi.’

These kinship-claiming terms are used with members outside one’s family, so, *čiče* “uncle-DIM” or *tetkice* “aunt-DIM” would be habitually used to address people that are older than the speaker and are of the age of one’s parents. As already explained in the exchange (84) on p. 115, such kinship-claiming address establishes intimacy, cordiality, or in-group solidarity. It needs to be immediately noted that all of these kinship-claiming terms are typical in informal situations where cooperative, friendly rapport is intended. In formal situations, honorifics such as *gospodine* “sir” or *gospoĝo* “madam” are the cultural norm. In informal everyday situations, the pragmatic diminutive serves as a powerful in-group marker. The below examples well illustrate such uses.

(119) [at a bakery: a customer is asking the sales associate for a loaf of bread]  
*Tetkice, aj edno lepĉe, ama popeĉeno.*  
 aunt-DIM DM one bread-DIM but more baked  
 “Ma’am, can I get a loaf of bread, extra crusty and golden brown, please?”

(120) [at a farmer’s market]  
 Customer: *Majĉe, kolku pari patlidĝanov?*  
 mother-DIM how much money this tomato  
 “How much are the tomatoes, ma’am?”

Farmer: *Sedum denari, zlaten, patlidĝanĉe za merak.*  
 Seven denars you golden tomatoes for pleasure  
 “Seven denars a kilo, hon, these tomatoes are first rate.”

In both cases, the diminutive is used to establish friendly, family-like closeness between the customers and sellers. These fictive kin terms are very powerful in-group markers. Even among complete strangers, such diminutivized kinship-claiming terms are preferred forms of address to say, distance-building honorifics such as ‘sir’ or ‘madam’. This is so because of the culturally salient emotional

warmth and cordiality expressed by the diminutive. The pragmatic potential of the diminutive becomes evident in the elliptical utterance in (119). Note that, syntactically, the customer's utterance in (119) is a directive, yet, to a native-speaking Macedonian, such utterances are perfectly polite. The English equivalents of the pragmatic diminutives in (119) are those of "may I please have" or "can I please have". In such instances, the pragmatic diminutive reveals its potential to functioning like a polite request that, in languages like English, gets to be communicated through more elaborate syntax.

In-group solidarity is also the underlying element in pragmatic uses of the diminutive aimed to communicate modesty (both genuine and false). According to Van Dijk, it is not always easy to determine genuine from false modesty as is the case with most speech acts (1984:117; 1997: 46-48). Regardless, the use of the pragmatic diminutive to connote modesty revolves around the same basic concept: minimizing praise of self (Leech 1983:132). Moreover, Dressler and Merlini Barbaresi (1994:336-7) argue that genuine and false modesty are interchangeable and, formally, both are understating pragmatic strategies. By minimizing one's possessions, the importance of one's work, etc. the speaker attempts to establish common ground with the interlocutor (Brown and Levinson 1987:103). This function of the pragmatic diminutive serves as an effective social lubricant not only between friend and family, but also with new acquaintances. These characteristics of the pragmatic diminutive are displayed in the utterances below.

- (121) [between business partners]  
*Fala bogu, dobro tera firničevo do sega.*  
 thank god good goes this company-DIM by now  
 “Thank God, my company’s been doing pretty well so far.”
- (122) [two couples meeting in the street]  
*Kako ste, što ima novo?*  
 How you are what there is new  
 “How are you, what’s new?”
- Eve, baš pred malku kupivme količe...*  
 DM exactly before little we bought car-DIM  
 “Fine, we’ve just bought a nice little car...”
- (123) [young man to his father-in-law]  
*Ene go našeto stanče na sedmi kat so spuščeni roletni*  
 deix. it the our condo-DIM on seventh floor with rolled down blinds  
 “There is our condo, on the seventh floor, the one with the blinds closed.”

Spasovski (2006) recorded several cases where false modesty was indexed via the pragmatic diminutive. One of my accomplished friends, a prolific playwright, sometimes refers to his published works as: *edna moja knigička* “one of my books-DIM”, or *pred da ja napišam dramoletkata* “before I wrote the theatrical play-DIM”. From a pragmalinguistic point of view, these diminutives expressing false modesty belong to the same category of claiming common ground by trying to minimize the importance of their accomplishments, and consequently, create a rather egalitarian sense of solidarity.

The pragmatic diminutive was also found to serve as a marker of in-group solidarity in narratives. All of these pragmatic uses were documented in video clips posted on YouTube: 7 video clips contained pragmatic diminutives in



cookery recipes and only one video clip exemplified pragmatic diminutives used in a stand-up narrative. Makri-Tsilipakou also reports extensive uses of the diminutive in recipe giving in Greek (2003:706). In Macedonian cookery recipes (and references to food and beverages in general) abound in diminutives. The following excerpt instantiates the use of diminutives in recipe giving. In one of the video clips from the show *Četiri sezoni* (Four Seasons), the show host used diminutives with nearly all food ingredients.

(124) [Deni, the chef, explaining how to make *turli tava*<sup>68</sup>]

*Eve što vi e potrebno za turli tava: kilo ubavo jagneško*  
 deix. what to you is needed for turli tava a kilo nice lamb meat  
 “Here’s what you need for turli tava: a kilo of nice lamb meat,”

*dve glavici kromid, nekolku morkovčinja, dve-tri piperčinja,*  
 two bulbs onions several carrots-DIM two or three peppers-DIM  
 “two onions, a few carrots, two or three peppers,”

*može i lutko po želba nekolku patlidžančinja*  
 can and hot and spicy-DIM after taste several tomatoes-DIM  
 “according to taste, you can use a hot-and-spicy one, a few tomatoes,”

*dva modri patlidžani, edno 150 grama grašače i isto tolku*  
 two eggplants about 150 grams peas-DIM and same as much  
 “two eggplants, about 150 grams peas and the same amount of”

*boraniička, pet kompiri, malku magdonosče, edna šolja zejtin,*  
 green beans-DIM five potatoes, little parsley-DIM, one cup of cooking oil  
 “green beans, five potatoes, some parsley, a cup of cooking oil...”

*al piper, vegeta<sup>69</sup>, malce solca i biberče.*  
 paprika vegeta, a little-DIM salt-DIM and black pepper-DIM  
 “paprika, vegeta, a pinch of salt and pepper...”

In another video clip of cookery recipe for making *zelnik* (puff-pastry layer pie with vegetable filling), all the ingredients were diminutivized: *vodička* “water-

<sup>68</sup> *Turli tava* is a traditional Macedonian casserole dish made of variety of vegetables and meat.

<sup>69</sup> Vegeta = brand of all purpose seasoning

DIM”, *brašnenece* “flour-DIM”, *zejtinec* ”cooking oil-DIM”, *margarinec* “margarine-DIM”, *zeljence* “greens-DIM”, *prazec* “leek-DIM”, *patlidžanec* “tomato-DIM”, but also the utensils, such as *plehče* “cookie sheet-DIM”, as well as the related materials *korički* “phyllo dough sheets-DIM”, etc.

The diminutives in the next example were found on a 12 minute YouTube video clip of a stand-up performance. The stand-up artist was Igor Džambazov, a prominent Macedonian theatrical actor and TV personality. In the video, Igor is narrating a joke about a fictitious character named Icka from Bosilovo, a village in Eastern Macedonia, who had a dream about having close encounters with an Italian famous actress Monica Bellucci. Igor recounts the joke in a Bosilovo dialect replenished with diminutives – virtually every line contains a diminutive. For instance, throughout the stand-up he uses the in-group marker *drugarče* “friend-DIM” in addressing the audience. Igor’s narrative contains series of diminutives like *kerče* “daughter-DIM”, *kafaničkata* “the bar-DIM“, *dividitekičkata* “the DVD rental store-DIM“, *cedenca* “CDs-DIM“, *filmčinja* “films-DIM“, *ribički* “fish“, *parička* “money-DIM“, *aplikaciički* “appliqués-DIM“, *evrenca* “Euros“, *saksiičkata* “the flower pot“, *zemjičkata* “the soil“, etc. In addition, he routinely refers to Monica Bellucci with hypocoristics *Moniče* “Monica-DIM“ or *Moničeto* “the Monica-DIM“.

The use of diminutives in humorous narratives can be particularly effective as a pragmatic strategy of creating and maintaining common ground with the audience

when telling jokes. The diminutive itself encodes a humorous element and the diminutive use in this stand-up performance effectively establishes common ground and intimacy with the audience. Such pragmatic function of the diminutive is corroborated by two major theoretical studies on pragmatics of the diminutive. The humorous element of the diminutive has been best examined by Dressler and Merlini Barbaresi (1994) who argue that, as an extension to pragmatic links with children, the diminutive exerts the basic morphopragmatic feature [non-serious]. Second, Brown and Levinson (1987:124) classify joking as a positive politeness strategy used to emphasize shared background knowledge and common values between the interlocutors. Badarneh also notes such function of the diminutive in Jordanian Arabic that he categorizes as ludic. He maintains that, the diminutive in conversational Jordanian Arabic can be used as a positive politeness technique to establish or assert intimacy between the interlocutors (2010:165).

### 5.7. Irony/Sarcasm/Contempt

The last pragmatic function of the diminutive proper to be discussed in this chapter is different than the previous ones in that it exerts elements of pragmatic impoliteness realized as irony, sarcasm, or contempt. As noted in 2.3., impoliteness may be defined as negative attitudes towards specific behaviors occurring in specific contexts, and ultimately creates some antagonism with the addressee or referent. According to Dressler and Merlini Barbaresi 1994:323)

both irony and sarcasm can be related to the feature [non-serious] rather to [small]. In addition they note that while irony is always ludic and playful, sarcasm is neither ludic nor playful (1994:198).

Using diminutives to convey irony, sarcasm or contempt was found in various types of electronic texts posted on the Internet. Four of them were columns in Macedonian daily newspapers, and another seven examples were found in responses and commentaries posted on the largest Internet forum in Macedonia – Kajgana Forum. We shall discuss several of them to illustrate how the diminutive may be utilized to convey irony, sarcasm or even contempt.

The diminutive can be an effective pragmatic tool to convey irony. This comment was posted on Kajgana Forum. The topic was titled *Skopsko, vkusot na Makedonija. Navistina?* “Skopsko Beer, the Taste of Macedonia. Really?” The topic revolved over a controversy of a TV commercial for Skopsko, the major beer brand in Macedonia brewed by one of the major corporations – *Pivara Skopje* “Skopje Brewery”. The TV commercial presented a group of young Macedonians in a bar watching a ball game and rooting for their national team. In the foreground a young man was wearing a national team scarf with the Vergina flag (the use of this flag was objected by the Greeks). The Vergina flag on the scarf was digitally altered so it was not fully shown. Some members of the online forum were outraged by this, given the political tensions around the name dispute between the Republic of Macedonia and Greece. The online discussion revolved

around whether this digital alteration of the flag was authorized to be aired by Skopje Brewery, or whether it was politically motivated, given the prospective acquisition of the Skopje Brewery by a Greek company. The member

CrAzY^IvAn posted the following comment on Oct. 2011:

(125) *Smetam deka ova e prilično loš publicitet za Pivara.*  
I think that this is pretty bad publicity for Pivara  
“I think this is pretty bad publicity for Skopje Brewery.

*Me interesira kako će<sup>70</sup> se spravati oni so toa*  
I am interested how FTM they deal they with that  
“I am curious to see how the Skopje Brewery will deal with that”

*i dali će go krka toj što go odobril spotot*  
and whether FTM it take the rap he that it approved the clip  
“and whether the person who approved the commercial will take the rap”

*Mokničok neprijatelj e Pivara*  
powerful-DIM enemy it is Pivara  
“Skopje Brewery is a pretty powerful enemy.”

The member CrAzY^IvAn ironically refers to Skopje Brewery in diminutive, referring to their actual powerlessness. Skopje Brewery’s decision to satisfy the purported expectations of their prospective Greek owner by eliminating the symbol on the young man’s scarf was seen by many Macedonians as a sellout. The diminutive in (125) also has elements of social marginalization where an entity is viewed as powerless, and eventually, socially marginalized. This overlay of social marginalization is even more obvious in the next exchange that was recorded on Kajgana Forum on Mar. 1, 2012. The topic was the ethnic tensions in Macedonia at the beginning of 2012. Some members of the forum were critical of

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<sup>70</sup> FTM = future tense marker

the government's inefficiency and the overall Macedonian lack of forceful response in dealing with ethnic conflicts with Albanians. Two members, Ultra Boy and AloTt are debating on these issues.

(126) Ultra Boy:

*Poradi takvite kako niv pati Makedončeto,*  
Because of such like them suffers the Macedonian-DIM  
“Macedonians suffer because of such politicians,”

*poradi takvite kako niv ni pati državava,*  
because of such like them suffers this state  
“our country suffers because of such politicians,”

*prodaj go svojot brat za mala para*  
sell him one's own brother for small money  
“sell your brother for a few bucks,”

*i živej od taa prokleta para*  
and go live of that damn money  
“and go, live of that damn money.”

*Poradi takvite kako niv Makedončeto pati,*  
Because of such like them the Macedonian-DIM suffers  
“Macedonians suffer because of such like them,”

*od koga znae za sebe.*  
from when he knows for oneself  
“ever since Macedonians began to exist,”

*air da ne vidite, ja prodadovte državata za smrdena fotelja.*  
profit to not you see it you sold the country for stinking armchair  
“May you never prosper, you sold our country to get a friggin' desk job.”

Alo Tt:

*Pošto si od Ćorče<sup>71</sup> ... edna zabeleška dobronamerna*  
Since you are from Gyorche one friendly remark  
“Since you are from Gyorche, let me give you a friendly advice”

*i mislam deka ke ja svatiš,*  
and I think that FTM it you understand  
“which, I think, you will accept,”

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<sup>71</sup> Gyorche is a part of Skopje, the capital of Macedonia, where a series of ethnic riots and attacks were reported.

*Dosta so toa Makedonče... MAKEDONEC!!!*  
enough with that Macedonian-DIM... MACEDONIAN!!!  
“stop with the ‘poor little Macedonians’, we are MACEDONIANS!!!”

Ultra Boy:

*Dodeka gomnari imame na vlast ke bideme Makedončinja,*  
while shitheads we have on power FTM we be Macedonians-DIM  
“As long as shitheads are in power we shall be poor little Macedonians,”

*Makednoci, vistinski MAKEDONCI ke staneme onoj moment*  
Macedonians true MACEDONIANS FTM we become that moment  
“we will become Macedonians, true MACEDONIANS when”

*ke se pobunime za našite pravaa vo našata država*  
FTM we rebel for our rights in our state  
“we stand up and fight for our rights in our country

*i ke go izvadime stapot od gzot*  
and FTM it take out the stick from the ass  
“and take out the stick out of our asses”

*što veke do grklan ni e vlezan*  
that already until throat us it is entered  
“that has been shoved in all the way to our throats.”

The above exchanges show how the diminutive may be used to convey a sense of social marginalization. The diminutivized forms *Makedonče* “Macedonian-DIM” and *Makedončinja* “Macedonians-DIM” have the contextual meaning “poor little Macedonian(s)” Such utilization of the diminutive to mark social marginality have also been documented in English, Latin, and Cantonese (Jurafsky 1996:547).

In a newspaper column titled *Titinja*<sup>72</sup> “Little Titos”, Ljubiša Georgievski, a prominent Macedonian theatrical director and politician, writes about some wannabe politicians who try to imitate the style of the former Yugoslav president Josip Broz Tito. An excerpt of this column is presented in (127) below. For the sake of brevity and ease of processing of this text, only an English translation is presented here, without the original text and the regular gloss.

(127)

What shall we call those born and not-yet-born parasites that are yet to hide behind his [Tito's] name, wanting, at the least, to be proclaimed his epigones -- a referential point from which they are galaxies away?! In Macedonian, the diminutive (hypocorism) of *Tito* is *Tite*! The Albanian colleagues will say their position on this issue... But Macedonian, similar to Italian, has a diminutive of a diminutive, which, in this case, would be *Titence* [Tito-DIM] or *Titule* [Tito-DIM]. If, on the other hand, we deal with plural, which is precisely the present situation in Macedonia, then, the name would be *Titinja* [Titos-DIM], *Titenca* [Titos-DIM], *Titulencinja* [Titos-DIM-DIM] (could they be any cuter!) I decided to refer to them as *Titinja* [Titos-DIM] but I have no doubt that our members of the Academy [of Sciences and Arts] will publish an official opinion. I decided on *Titinja* because of the genre of this article, because *Titinja* sounds ridiculous and resembles those things that hang down and or sway left and right...

It is clear that the above excerpt contains sarcasm and contempt. The diminutives *Titinja* [Titos-DIM], *Titenca* [Titos-DIM], *Titulencinja* [Titos-DIM-DIM] certainly incorporates the meaning [non-serious]; however, these diminutives are neither playful nor ludic. On the contrary, they deliver the punch line of the author's criticism towards this group of people that he describes as “little Titos”.

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<sup>72</sup> The column *Titinja* was published in the Internet edition of Dnevnik, issue no. 2837 posted on Saturday, 18 March 2006. Dnevnik is a major Macedonian daily newspaper.



The caustic diminutives are not related to size, but rather to the social importance (or lack thereof) of the “little Titos” and their political insignificance.

Lastly, the diminutive may be used as a positive impoliteness strategy in criticism or insults. Culpeper argues that positive impoliteness strategies are designed to damage the addressee's positive face wants (1996:8). In such cases the diminutive is often intended to reduce the qualities, value, intelligence, or abilities of the addressee. Among positive impoliteness output strategies, Culpeper includes the following (1996:9-10)

- a. Ignore, snub the other - fail to acknowledge the other's presence.
- b. Exclude the other from an activity
- c. Disassociate from the other - for example, deny association or common ground with the other; avoid sitting together.
- d. Be disinterested, unconcerned, unsympathetic
- e. Use inappropriate identity markers - for example, use title and surname when a close relationship pertains, or a nickname when a distant relationship pertains.
- f. Use obscure or secretive language - for example, mystify the other with jargon, or use a code known to others in the group, but not the target.
- g. Seek disagreement - select a sensitive topic.
- h. Make the other feel uncomfortable - for example, do not avoid silence, joke, or use small talk.
- i. Use taboo words - swear, or use abusive or profane language.
- j. Call the other names - use derogatory nominations.

The example below was documented in an exchange on Kajgana forum. The topic was titled *Na odmor kaj negatorite* “Vacationing in the Country of our Negators<sup>73</sup>” One of the members, nicknamed Vezilka argued with several other

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<sup>73</sup> This is a direct reference to Greece which negates the right of the Republic of Macedonia to use this name in international communication.

members who opposed her vacationing in Greece. Her commentary despite the official political animosity between Macedonia and Greece was posted on Dec. 12, 2009.

(1286) Vezilka:

*Get a life, bre, kolku ste ograničeni vo toa mozočulinjata*  
Get a life DM how much you are limited in those brains-DIM-DIM  
“Oh, get a life, how can you be so narrow minded”

*Ne mi se veruva među kakvi ograničeni umovi živeam,*  
not me is believed among what kind limited brains I live  
“I can’t believe I live among such narrow minded people,”

*Do kade ke dozvolite da vi vlezte politikata?*  
until where FTM you allow to you enter the politics  
“Do you realize how stuck you are stuck into politics?”

*Bedni čovečinja ste site.*  
miserable people-DIM you are all of you  
“All of you people are so miserable.”

Insults are inherently antagonistic interactions. When connoting sarcasm, the diminutive tends to upgrade antagonism in the discourse (Dressler and Merlini Barbaresi 1994:257 and 322). Clearly, the intent of the writer in (128) is to attack the narrow-mindedness of her opponents. In doing so, she opts for positive impoliteness strategy by diminutivizing their brains and human perspectives.

### 5.8. The Periphrastic Diminutive *maluku*

Across languages, functional equivalents of ‘little’ are utilized as a periphrastic (analytic) diminutive to express diminution and perform some pragmatic functions of the diminutive (Jurafsky 1996:557 and 569). For instance, in English

utterances such as “Let’s have a little talk” or “You little weasel!” function as periphrastic diminutives. In both of these utterances, ‘little’ is used not in its literal meaning (i.e., to denote smallness) but as a pragmatic device. Macedonian belongs to this group of languages where the word *malku* “little” (and its diminutive derivations *malce* “little-DIM”, *malkucka* “little-DIM”, *malcucka* “little-DIM”), are used periphrastically to perform some typically diminutive functions. However, in contrast with English, where this periphrastic use is relatively limited, the periphrastic diminutive *malku* in Macedonian serves as a politeness marker in hedges, requests, or offers. Moreover, in most such cases, *malku* is grammaticalized as a pragmatic equivalent of “please”.

As already elaborated, pragmatic hedges are used to mitigate the illocutionary force of utterances. In pragmatic hedges, the scope of the mitigation centers on the illocution, i.e. on illocutionary force indicators (Caffi 1999:892). For instance, in a situation when someone using a public library is too loud, any request asking them to be less noisy (or more quiet) contains a potential face-threatening effect. Across languages, such face-threatening acts are attenuated by some kind of politeness marker that could be a phrase, a lexical item, diminutive, etc. In Macedonian, *malku* (and its diminutive derivatives *malce*, *malkucka*, *malcucka*) are used as pragmatic hedges in situations where the speaker’s utterance posits a potential threat to the speaker’s negative face. At a first glance, in such instances, *malku* seems to work as a mitigating device playing the role of a negative politeness marker. Its diminutivized derivatives *malce*, *malkucka*, *malcucka* are

semantically and pragmatically softer and used to further attenuate the potential face-threatening act or increase the degree of politeness.

- (129) [at a public library: a person is addressing the two young people giggling at the adjacent table]

*Aj malku potivko.*  
 DM little more quiet  
 “Could you tone it down a bit, please?”

- (130) [in a taxi: a passenger is reacting to driver’s fast driving]

*Aj malce popoleka.*  
 DM little-DIM slower  
 “Could you drive a bit slower, please?”

- (131) [in a taxi: a passenger is reacting to the excessive cold air blowing from the air conditioner]

*Može malce klimata.*  
 can little-DIM the air conditioner  
 “Could you turn down the air conditioner, please?”

- (132) [at a restaurant: a patron stands up and is asking the two patrons sitting at the adjacent table to move their table further away from his]

*Dečki, aj malce masata, ako sakate*  
 you guys DM little-DIM the able if you like  
 “Excuse me guys, do you want to move your table a bit, please?”

- (133) [on an airplane: a passenger is asking others to make space for her to pass through]

*Dajte malce napravajte mesto*  
 DM<sup>74</sup> little-DIM you make space  
 “Excuse me, can I please pass through?”

- (134) [on a bus: a passenger is asking others to move over so he can exit]

*Aj malce trnete se ako može*  
 DM little-DIM you move over if can  
 “Excuse me, can you please mover over?”

<sup>74</sup> *Daj/dajte* is a vocative form (for singular and plural respectively) of the verb *dava* “give”. In contexts like the above, the vocative forms *daj/dajte* are used as discourse markers aimed to attract the addressee’s attention and elicit some action on their part.

The utterances in (129) through (134) are ubiquitous in informal registers in Macedonian. Such requests are formulaic, largely elliptical, and polite informal requests that contain potential threats to addressee's face. The periphrastic diminutive *malku* occurs in syntactic formulae of the type ATTENTION GETTER + *MALKU* + COMPLEMENT. The attention getter is a somewhat apology for the interruption and can be either a discourse marker is *ajde (aj)*, a verb *daj/dajte*, a modal like *može* "can/may" or an in-group identity markers such as *dečko/dečki* "you guy(s)". As can be seen, *malku* may collocate with nouns (*klimata* "the air conditioner", *masata* "the table"), gradable adjectives or adverbs (*potivko* "more quiet", *popoleka* "slower"), or imperatives of verbs (*naprajte* "you make", *trgnete se* "you move over-refl."). In its most elliptical form, *malku* frequently appears in minimal formulae such as *Aj malku...* that can be translated as "Excuse me, would you please..." and can be used in a wide range of context as a request or hedge.

The functions of the periphrastic diminutive *malku* in utterances like the above can be summarized as follows. First, *malku* is not used in literal sense – the requester does not really ask for a partial execution of their request. Rather, *malku* is grammaticalized as a pragmatic equivalent of "if you please" or "please". Macedonian speaker frequently utilize *malku* to be informally polite: our data documented 32 contextual situations where *malku* was used as a marker of informal politeness. Such use of periphrastic diminutives have been documented in Japanese, Malagasy, and Tamil (Jurafsky 1996:557-8) and in Greek by Sifianou (1992) who refers to such uses of 'little' as 'syntactic modification'

(168-171). Brown and Levinson (1987:176) maintain that expressions such as ‘a tiny little bit’ or a ‘little’ are realizations of the negative politeness strategy ‘minimize the imposition’. Such uses of *malku* can be identified in the examples presented in (129) through (134) where *malku* plays attenuating pragmatic functions. However, it needs to be borne in mind that *malku* is utilized as a mitigating device in contexts that involve minor or minimal imposition. Hence, the mitigating function of *malku* can be questioned in Macedonian. It seems more plausible to claim that *malku* contributes to the creation of friendly, cooperative atmosphere (Sifianou 1992:170) and serves as a grammatical equivalent of “please”. While it is certainly true that the periphrastic pragmatic function of *malku* works in concert with discourse markers, modals, or phrases like *ako može/ako sakate* “if possible/if you please”, minimal formulae such as *Aj malku...* “Excuse me, would you please...” display the full pragmatic potential of *malku* as the pragmatic substitute for this polite phrase.

However, *malku* is also used in situations such as the following.

(135) [a family is barbecuing at a beach camp; a fellow camper is asking for some charcoal]

*Može malce kumurče?*  
 can little-DIM charcoal-DIM  
 “Can I borrow some charcoal, please?”

(136) [restaurant patron to server]

*Aj donesi malce solca.*  
 DM you bring (imp.) little-DIM salt-DIM  
 “Excuse me, can I have some salt, please?”

(137) [host to her guests]  
*Zemete,*                      *kasnete*                      *malku.*  
 you take (imp.)              you bite (imp.)              little  
 “Please, have something to eat.”

(138) [at a seaside resort; one friend to her group]  
*Aj sea malce plivanje*  
 DM now little-DIM swimming  
 “Do you want to go for a swim?”

In (135) *malku* is not really used to mitigate the request, since charcoal among campers is regarded ‘free goods’. It is considered campers’ etiquette to share goods like water, batteries, charcoal, lighters, etc. Hence, in this case, *malku* is not a negative politeness marker. It was already explained in Chapters 2 and 5 that requesting ‘free goods’ in Macedonia is not necessarily viewed as an imposition, thus the pragmatic devices requesting ‘free goods’ ought not to be interpreted as minimizing imposition. While in the examples (129) through (134) it might be argued that *malku* is a negative politeness marker, the use of *malku* in (135) does not offer support for such explication. In addition, it could be argued that *malku* is a conventional politeness marker that contributes to the overall atmosphere of informality and cordiality. The plausibility of such interpretation of *malku* is corroborated by the analysis of the uses of *malku* in (136) through (138). From a formal standpoint, the utterances in (136) and (137) resemble directives – they contain actual imperative verbal forms: *donesi* “you bring”, *zemete* “you take” and *kasnete* “you bite”. In such instances, *malku* and *malce* are politeness markers that perform functions of pragmatic diminutives. Given that Macedonian is a positive politeness culture the use of imperatives in requests is acceptable, since

such imperative verbs work in concert with pragmatic markers of positive politeness, such as the pragmatic diminutive or periphrastic diminutive *maliku*. In other words, what might be perceived as an imposition by outsiders is overridden by the cultural propensity for cooperative, friendly communication. Thus, the translation of the Macedonian utterances in (136) is an informal polite request, and in (137), an informal polite offer. The last utterance in (138) is an informal polite suggestion that formally contains a gerund *plivanje* "swimming" which falls under the general formula ATTENTION GETTER + *MALIKU* + COMPLEMENT. As explained, the complement can be a noun (such as the gerund in (138)), a verb, an adjective or an adverb. Lastly, from a syntactic perspective, *maliku* demonstrates flexibility in terms of its position in the utterance: it may occur utterance-medially (typically following an attention getter) or utterance-finally in offers like (137). This is so because of the relatively free word order that operates in Macedonian.

This chapter attempted to exemplify and analyze the pragmatic potential of the diminutive in Macedonian in CDS and among adults. In child-directed speech (CDS) diminutives are extensively used in Macedonian culture as a positive politeness strategy based on the diminutive's pragmatic functions of affection, endearment, sympathy, or empathy.

When used among adults, the diminutive was documented as playing a number of major pragmatic functions in hedges, requests, offers, compliments, in-group bonding, as well as to communicate irony or sarcasm, or even to be used in



insults as an impoliteness strategy. In a wide variety of contexts, the pragmatic diminutive in Macedonian is encultured as a positive politeness strategy that serves somewhat as a social lubricant favoring informal, cooperative, and friendly interactions. Moreover, it was shown that in Macedonian different politeness forces may work simultaneously within the domain of the pragmatic diminutive. It was argued that the pragmatic diminutive may involve cooccurrence of negative politeness features (attenuating the illocutionary force of requests) and positive politeness strategies (establishing in-group identity or solidarity). Lastly, this chapter examined the periphrastic diminutive *malku* and argued that *malku* shares a number of pragmatic functions of the diminutive proper. In addition, it was contended that the periphrastic *malku* (and its diminutive derivatives) occur in simple syntactic formulae.

## Chapter 6: Conclusions

This dissertation investigated the morphology and pragmatics of the diminutive in Macedonian. The exploration of the diminutive was initiated by Wierzbicka's (1984) and Jurafsky's (1996) cross-cultural studies postulating that the semantic meanings and pragmatic uses of the diminutive revolve around two major concepts: 'smallness' and 'child'. Moreover, the pragmatic functions of the diminutive were examined in a range of contextual meanings within Brown and Levinson's (1978, 1987) framework of politeness. Using Macedonian material, the dissertation shed light on the role of diminutivization in a broader linguistic framework, the categorial consistency of the field of diminutives, the core and peripheral meanings of the diminutive, the formation and typology of the diminutive, and, the pragmatic potential of the diminutive proper and the periphrastic diminutive *malku*.

The present study aimed to fill some major gaps in the empirical research on the formation and pragmatic uses of diminutives in Macedonian, such as the chronic lack of systematized corpora and insufficient scholarly work on Macedonian diminutives. In that regard, this is the first larger empirical study of the pragmatic uses of diminutives in Macedonian. Two sizable collections of data were used in the present analyses: the first included electronic textual corpora that represented various written genres and video recordings of natural conversations involving children (and use of CDS) as well as conversations among adult native speakers of Macedonian. The second set of data consisted of video recordings where

several conversational genres have been proportionally represented in the corpus. These informal registers included CDS, as well as a variety of registers of colloquial Macedonian analyzed in specific contextual situations and bearing in mind some relevant situational parameters.

The present study covered two major areas: the morphology and pragmatics of the diminutive in Macedonian examined in Chapters 4 and 5, respectively. We tested a number of hypotheses in both areas and the main results of the corpus analysis are presented below.

At the level of diminutive morphology, the examination of Macedonian material confirmed that diminutivization is semantically based. It was shown that diachronically, the reconstructed Proto-Indo-European diminutive suffix *\*-ko* is traceable in the masculine diminutives. Moreover, the Proto-Slavic *\*čędo* (child) can be semantically and morphologically related to the commonest and most productive Macedonian diminutives suffix for neuter gender *-čę*.

Morphologically, diminutives in Macedonian are marked by suffixes attached to nouns, verbs, adjectives, or adverbs. This dissertation contends that the diminutive proper differs from partially or fully frozen diminutives in respect of its pragmatic load, i.e., its illocutionary force. We argue that the diminutive proper is characterized not only by smallness in size or magnitude [+ small], increased emotional effect [+ emotional load], its use in informal registers [+ informality of style], but equally importantly, by its pragmatic yield [+ pragmatic potential]. It

was further suggested that the lexicalizations of the diminutive should be observed over a semantically and stylistically nuanced continuum, where at one end, canonical, proper diminutives can be identified, and at the other end, one can speak of semantically frozen, fully lexicalized diminutives.

The results confirmed Jurafsky's (1996) theory that diminutive formation is a unidirectional derivation process where diminutive affixation follows a gender-based unidirectionality. Such derivational shift in only one direction is unchallenged in Macedonian and involves a strict hyponymy. The gender unidirectionality can be related to some cross-linguistic patterns of social stratification and semantic ordering. In particular, the unidirectionality of Macedonian diminutive derivations offers further evidence to male domination in the discourse. Moreover, the grammatical gender unidirectionality in Macedonian seems to mirror the scale (or social relevance) of objects and concepts, so whatever is culturally deemed substantial, sizeable, male-like or otherwise important is least likely to be diminutivized. Our corpus analysis expanded Jurafsky's categorization and proposed that diminutives in Macedonian are characterized by at least three additional second order senses: abstract nouns, durative verbs, and numerals.

At the level of typology of the diminutive, our study contributed new insights in the processes of stacking and reduplication of diminutives, their typology, as well as the derivational constraints that govern the productivity and combinability of

diminutive suffixes. First, we proposed a classification showing which diminutives may be added to the base form (Grade 1) as well as those that may undergo stacking or reduplications (Grade 2). Unlike a number of Slavic, Romance, and Germanic languages, in Macedonian there are no Grade 2 or Grade 3 diminutive affixes for masculine gender (i.e., masculine diminutive suffixes never stack or reduplicate). Furthermore, Grade 2 diminutive suffixes only appear in feminine and neuter, while Grade 3 diminutives are exclusively neuter. Moreover, the present study argued that the morphological differences among Grade 1, Grade 2, and Grade 3 diminutives are mirrored in their semantic-pragmatic potential. It was shown that Grade 2 and Grade 3 diminutives in Macedonian index additional diminution in size, quantity, or scope, and also connote higher emotional load than Grade 1 diminutives. Consequently, stacking and reduplication derivations occur only in neuter gender conforming to the universal rule of derivational unidirectionality. In that regard, the morphological constraints for stacking of diminutive suffixes in Macedonian offer further support for Jurafsky's universal model of the diminutive (1996:542).

The derivational constraints in productivity and combinability of diminutive suffixes in Macedonian were established on the basis of Skalička's (1979) functional distinction between derivational and inflectional suffix slots, along with Manova's (2002, 2010b) general suffix structure operating in Slavic languages. Our results confirmed the hypotheses in both of these studies and showed that, while Macedonian nouns accept multiple suffixes in derivational and

inflectional slots, closing suffixes disallow additions of other derivational suffixes. It was also documented that in Macedonian the derivational slot is invariably occupied by nouns or adjectives. Our study proposed a categorization in terms of derivational productivity and gender-changing properties of Macedonian Grade 1 diminutive suffixes. The results suggested that the majority of Grade 1 suffixes that attach to nouns ending in – *C* are unproductive. In addition, diminutive suffixes that derive DIM2 and DIM3 nouns are morpho- semantically constrained. At the level of semantics, Macedonian seems to have fewer constraints than many other languages, allowing sizable objects or concepts as well as abstract nouns to be diminutivized. The fundamental semantic-stylistic constraints that allow an object, action, concept, or quality to be diminutivized in Macedonian are [-big], [+ emotional], and [+ informal]. The violation of these constraints was shown to block the formation of diminutives. As for the phonological constraints, morphologically simple nouns terminating in *-e* are the prime candidates for diminutivization, allowing attachment to DIM2 and DIM3 suffixes.

It was shown that diminutive derivations in Macedonian may occur with suffixations of all major word classes: nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs. Out of the total number of 2219 unique examples of diminutives, 2075 (or 93.5%) were nouns, 53 (or 0.02%) were verbs, 78 (or 0.03%) were adjectives, and 13 (or 0.005%) were adverbs. The statistical analysis suggests that the diminutivization in Macedonian largely occurs with nouns designating non-human entities: out of

the 2219 unique examples of diminutives 1724 (or 77%) referred to non-human entities.

It was also documented that, apart from being prime candidates for diminutivization, nouns allow a much larger gamut of diminutive formation (there are many more diminutive suffixes for nouns, reflecting different degrees of diminutivization). In Macedonian, there are more diminutive suffixes occurring with nouns than for all other classes together. Further, the results from Macedonian further validate Dressler and Merlini Barbaresi's (1994:94) theory that diminutivization of nouns gives the language user much greater freedom of use. It was also argued that the major semantic-stylistic features [ - big ], [ + emotional], and [ + informal] that characterize diminutives proper can be ascribed to verbal diminutives. However, the results suggested that outside of relatively limited list of verbal diminutives (typically action, durative verbs) that occur in CDS or in communication with pets, verbs are inherently ambivalent to diminutivization. In regards to diminutivization of adjectives and adverbs, our results confirmed Ștefănescu's hypotheses that gradable antonymic adjectives are the only potential bases for diminutivization. In addition, it was shown that the crucial semantic overlay communicated by diminutivized adjectives and adverbs is that of approximation. Next, it was demonstrated that comparative forms of diminutivized adjectives and adverbs do not alter their semantic properties and that these diminutivized forms are pragmatically salient since they are used to fine-tune illocutionary forces of utterances. While the results of this study

confirmed Nieuwenhuis (1985) hypothesis about diminutivization hierarchy, we contend that such ordering extends over a semantic-stylistic continuum. On one end, diminutives proper can be clearly identified in concrete nouns. From there, diminutivization decreases as one progresses from lexical to grammatical word classes.

The second set of hypotheses relate to the pragmatics potential of Macedonian diminutives. The overarching hypothesis is that diminutives index more than size or affection. At the level of pragmatics, it was demonstrated that the highly developed system of diminutives in Macedonian is widely used to facilitate positive politeness both in CDS (including references to children and pets) and among adults. Culturally, Macedonians seem to favor affection and concern over individual autonomy in the sense that directness and genuine concern is culturally more acceptable than tentativeness or indirectness. The analyses revealed that Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory has a limited application in Macedonian. Namely, the degrees of imposition or the degrees of directness are culture specific: these are differently defined and interpreted in Macedonian culture in contrast with English-speaking communities.

While the attenuation of illocutionary force is the primary pragmatic strategy of the diminutive in requests in Anglo-Saxon cultures, in Macedonian, the diminutive in requests serves other communicative goals, such as establishing familiar, cooperative context for interaction, social bonding, or communicating intimacy. In a wide variety of contexts, the pragmatic diminutive in Macedonian



seems to be encultured as a positive politeness strategy that serves somewhat as a social lubricant favoring informal, cooperative, and friendly interactions. Thus, while in Anglo-Saxon societies the diminutive in requests serves as a face-saving (i.e., negative politeness strategy); in Macedonian the diminutive in requests is principally used as a positive politeness strategy. We argue that in Macedonian, just like in other Balkan languages, the pragmatic diminutive has detached itself from the original concept of smallness and has acquired a separate, independent pragmatic function: a pragmatic device for facilitating positive politeness. When used as a pragmatic attenuator (i.e., as a negative politeness marker) the pragmatic diminutive typically operates in concert with other pragmatic devices used for mitigating illocutionary forces such as dubitative phrases, hesitation markers, modals, impersonal references, etc. Also, the results of this dissertation confirm Caffi's (1999:905) hypothesis that mitigation works at many levels and on many dimensions, and that the effects of the mitigating devices include both instrumental and relational aspects that can be mutually reinforcing or somehow in conflict. We argued that the pragmatic uses of the diminutive in Macedonian suggest that the boundaries between positive and negative politeness are conventional, and cannot be sharply delineated. Moreover, the results suggest that politeness forces in Macedonian operate simultaneously. The pragmatic uses of the diminutive reveal cooccurrence of negative politeness (attenuating illocutionary forces of utterances) and positive politeness strategies (establishing in-group identify or solidarity). This study showed that the diminutive can also be used as a positive politeness to enhance the illocutionary force of utterances (in

compliments or to communicate in-group solidarity and convey sense of community, closeness, common affiliation or intimacy with the interlocutors.) The pragmatic potential of the diminutive extends beyond the domain of politeness: it was shown that in Macedonian the diminutive may be used as a positive impoliteness strategy in criticism and insults, where the diminutive is employed to minimize or marginalize someone's qualities, value, intelligence, abilities, etc. In such cases the diminutive is enhancing the antagonism in the discourse. Lastly, a special case of periphrastic diminutive *maliku* was examined. It was found that the periphrastic diminutive *maliku* (and its diminutive derivatives) typically occurs in syntactic formulae of the type ATTENTION GETTER + MALIKU + COMPLEMENT. In addition, it was argued that in Macedonian *maliku* is largely used as a positive politeness marker that shares some features with the diminutive proper.

Commentary on the limitations of this study is warranted. Given that assimilation of voicing, palatalizations, and other related morphophonemic processes have been extensively researched in previous scholarship, this dissertation referred to these only in passing. The processes of lexicalization of diminutives along with lexicalized diminutives and hypocorisms fall outside the scope of this study. Hypocorisms ought to be separated from diminutives since they are typically contractions of given or pet names, which, while indexing affection, do not exert the full pragmatic potential of diminutives proper. Fully lexicalized forms are presented in Table 4. In this study we focused on the diminutives proper, i.e., on

diminutive derivations that are characterized by smallness in size or magnitude, higher level of emotionality, occurrence in informal spoken or written registers, and possessing illocutionary force that is manifested in a gamut of pragmatic functions. In addition, this dissertation did not involve quantitative analyses of the results. Such levels of analyses are certainly important, and I intend to include them in my further investigation of the forms and functions of the diminutive.

A further exploration of the potential of the pragmatic diminutive in Macedonian could be done by controlling for other, additional variables and speech acts. For example, it would be interesting to see whether and how much gender differences affect the use of the pragmatic diminutive in Macedonian. It seems plausible to assume the existence of gender differences in the use of diminutives in CDS, but it would be of interest to examine whether (and to what extent) gender differences in use of the diminutive exist in adult communication in Macedonian. In addition, given the documented cross-cultural uses of the diminutive in CDS, it is worth exploring whether the use of diminutives facilitates first-language acquisition in Macedonian children. In connection with that, the relationship between the use of the diminutive and prosody could be the focus of prospective empirical studies. Last, but certainly not least, the pedagogical implications of the pragmatic uses of the diminutive deserve further research, since the diminutive is used as a pragmatic device for communicating politeness. The results of this study along with those of future research could form part of a prospective pragmatic grammar of Macedonian. The prospective studies listed above will fit well into the existing

body of cross-linguistic research on language acquisition, cross-cultural communication and interlanguage pragmatics, politeness theory, sociocultural transfer, pragmatic failure, as well as acquisition of and teaching pragmatic competence.

In sum, this dissertation contributed to the cross-linguistic body of evidence for the morphology and pragmatic potential of the diminutive and played a part in the better understanding of the mechanisms that govern the formation of diminutives, their typology and constraints of combinability, as well as the gamut of the pragmatic uses of the diminutive proper and the periphrastic diminutive *maliku*.

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APPENDIX A:  
ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD  
APPROVAL



Office of Research Integrity and Assurance

**To:** Karen Adams  
LL

**From:** Mark Roosa, Chair   
Soc Beh IRB

**Date:** 05/27/2011

**Committee Action:** Exemption Granted

**IRB Action Date:** 05/27/2011

**IRB Protocol #:** 1105006430

**Study Title:** Morphology and Pragmatics of Macedonian Diminutives

The above-referenced protocol is considered exempt after review by the Institutional Review Board pursuant to Federal regulations, 45 CFR Part 46.101(b)(2).

This part of the federal regulations requires that the information be recorded by investigators in such a manner that subjects cannot be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects. It is necessary that the information obtained not be such that if disclosed outside the research, it could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability, or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

You should retain a copy of this letter for your records.

APPENDIX B:  
PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

**CONSENT FORM  
MORPHOLOGY AND PRAGMATICS**

**INTRODUCTION**

The purposes of this form are to provide you (as a prospective research study participant) information that may affect your decision as to whether or not to participate in this research and to record the consent of those who agree to be involved in the study.

**RESEARCHERS**

Dr. Karen Adams, Professor of Linguistics at Arizona State University, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and Lupco Spasovski, Ph.D. Candidate invite your participation in a research study.

**STUDY PURPOSE**

The purpose of the research is to study the structure and scope and function of diminutive linguistic constructions in Macedonian. Diminutives are linguistic forms typically used to express smallness (e.g. *booklet, doggie, teeny, pinky*, etc.) In addition to this basic meaning of smallness, diminutives may have a number of related meanings and contextual uses. For instance, diminutives may denote politeness by “downsizing” the favor asked: “*Can I have a tiny bit of chocolate?*” In addition, diminutives may be used to create social bonds or intimacy: “*What can I do for you, bro?*” This study will investigate what is the range of linguistic uses of diminutives in Macedonian related to the basic concept of smallness. This research will analyze the usage of diminutives in formal and informal contexts as well as contexts with children, adults and both children and adults. This study will be the first one providing such material for completing the grammar of Macedonian.

**DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH STUDY**

If you decide to participate, then you will join a study involving research of use of language. Your video recordings will be viewed and the participants’ use of language will be analyzed.

Approximately 100 of subjects will be participating in this study.

**RISKS**

There are no known risks from taking part in this study, but in any research, there is some possibility that you may be subject to risks that have not yet been identified.

**BENEFITS**

Although there may be no direct benefits to you, there will be benefits to the field of language study and teaching.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

All information obtained in this study about you as an individual or about your family is strictly confidential. The results of this research study may be used in reports, presentations, and publications, but the researchers will not identify you. In order to maintain confidentiality of your records, Prof. Adams and Mr. Spasovski will use numeric and letter coding, as well as pseudonyms altering names and they will alter or omit any personal identifying or confidential information. No portion of the video part of the recordings will be publicly shown, broadcast, or made accessible to anybody else except Prof. Adams, Mr. Spasovski and the committee members. Your recordings, the signed consent, assent, and parental permission forms will be securely stored on an ASU campus at Professor Karen Adams's office (LL 211B). Mr. Spasovski will return all of your video recordings after the completion of the study, by June 30 2012.

### **WITHDRAWAL PRIVILEGE**

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. It is ok for you to say no. Even if you say yes now, you are free to say no later, and withdraw from the study at any time. Your video recordings will be immediately returned to you and no data from those recordings will be used.

### **COSTS AND PAYMENTS**

There is no payment for your participation in the study.

### **VOLUNTARY CONSENT**

Any questions you have concerning the research study or your participation in the study, before or after your consent, will be answered by

Prof. Karen Adams,  
Department of English,  
Arizona State University,  
or  
PO Box 870302,  
Tempe AZ, 85287-0302,  
(480) 965-3013

Mr. Lupco Spasovski,  
Department of English,  
Arizona State University,  
PO Box 870302,  
Tempe AZ, 85287-0302,  
(480) 206-3054,

If you have questions about your rights as a subject/participant in this research, or if you feel you have been placed at risk; you can contact the Chair of the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board, through the ASU Office of Research Integrity and Assurance, at 480-965 6788.

This form explains the nature, demands, benefits and any risk of the project. By signing this form you agree knowingly to assume any risks involved. Remember, your participation is voluntary. You may choose not to participate or to withdraw your consent and discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefit. In signing this consent form, you are not waiving any legal claims, rights, or remedies. A copy of this consent form will be given (offered) to you.

Your signature below indicates that you consent to participate in the above study.

_____ Subject's Signature	_____ Printed Name	_____ Date
_____ Legal Authorized Representative (if applicable)	_____ Printed Name	_____ Date

**INVESTIGATOR'S STATEMENT**

"I certify that I have explained to the above individual the nature and purpose, the potential benefits and possible risks associated with participation in this research study, have answered any questions that have been raised, and have witnessed the above signature. These elements of Informed Consent conform to the Assurance given by Arizona State University to the Office for Human Research Protections to protect the rights of human subjects. I have provided (offered) the subject/participant a copy of this signed consent document."

_____ Signature of Investigator	_____ Date
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