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CERTAINTY AND PERSUASION: HOW BOOSTERS SHAPE ENGLISH AND CROATIAN TOURIST BROCHURES

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Tourist brochures, which serve the dual communicative purpose of informing and persuading readers, rely extensively on metadiscourse. Early analyses of metadiscourse were conducted in the context of academic discourse, where its significance was first established (Hyland 1998a; 1998b; Vande Kopple 1985). More recently, research has expanded to other types of discourse, including tourism (Dafouz-Milne 2008; Mauranen 1993; Fuertes-Olivera et al. 2001; Dafouz Milne 2003) and other languages except English. However, in terms of metadiscourse, Croatian remains underresearched (Balažić Bulc and Požgaj Hadži 2018; Pon and Petrić 2023). This study focuses specifically on the use of boosters, which play a crucial role in persuasion and engagement with the reader but remain underexplored, particularly in languages of lesser diffusion such as Croatian. The research forms part of a doctoral research on metadiscourse in English and Croatian tourist brochures and their English translations. This study aims to examine the use and translation of boosters in a self-compiled Tourist Corpus in order to identify cross-linguistic differences and determine whether English translations of Croatian brochures follow Croatian usage patterns or align with English tourist discourse norms. Findings indicate considerable cross-linguistic differences in the use of boosters.

However, English translations of Croatian brochures tend to mirror Croatian usage more closely than the norms of English tourist discourse, which may influence how such brochures are received by international audiences.

Keywords: *metadiscourse; tourist discourse; tourist brochures; boosters*

1. Introduction

Metadiscourse has proven to be essential in the writer-reader communication and in attaining persuasiveness (Hyland and Tse 2004; Hyland 2005; Suau-Jiménez 2016; 2012; Ädel and Mauranen 2010; Mauranen 1993; Ädel 2012; Pisanski Peterlin 2007; Hyland and Jiang 2022). It has been the focus of research on academic discourse, but it has not been researched to a greater extent in the context of other discourses such as promotional and tourist discourse where informing and persuading the reader is essential (Suau-Jiménez 2012; Suau-Jiménez and Dolón-Herrero 2007; Suau-Jiménez 2016; Dafouz Milne 2003). Boosters, as one of the interactional categories of metadiscourse whose role is to express certainty in the proposition and generate confidence in readers have been proven to model persuasion (Vázquez Orta and Giner 2009; Vassileva 2001). However, they have been very often neglected in metadiscourse research or researched only along with hedges. In terms of Croatian language, there has been little research on boosters i.e. 'pojačivači' in Croatian (Balažić Bulc and Požgaj Hadži 2018) to date, previous research mostly focuses at metadiscourse in general (Pavičić Takač and Ivezić 2019; Balažić Bulc and Požgaj Hadži 2018; Balažic Bulc 2020). This study addresses this gap in the existing literature. By examining these linguistic elements in Croatian and English, the research provides comparative and cross-linguistic insights into boosters. It also sheds light on translation shifts involving boosters and thus contributes to translation studies.

In this study, Hyland's model of metadiscourse (Hyland 2005) was adapted for both English and Croatian tourist discourse and applied to examine the use of boosters in tourist brochures in these two languages. Boosters were chosen as the focus of analysis based on previous research, which identified them as particularly significant for achieving persuasion, especially given the limited research on this feature.

To investigate the persuasiveness of contemporary Croatian tourist discourse through text analysis, a corpus of tourist brochures was com-

piled. The analysis concentrates on the use of boosters as persuasive devices in original Croatian brochures and examines whether these elements are retained, adapted, or omitted in their English translations, with comparisons also made to original English brochures. The Tourist corpus consists of three parts: TouristHR (original Croatian brochures), TouristEN (original English brochures), and TouristHREN (English translations of Croatian brochures).

Since translated tourist brochures are typically intended not only for native speakers of English but also for users of English as a lingua franca (ELF), translators face multiple challenges in balancing linguistic accuracy with persuasive impact. These translation choices can significantly influence the quality, reception, and effectiveness of the brochures, making the examination of boosters especially relevant.

To account for these factors and the cultural specificity of tourist texts, particularly brochures, this study explores whether Croatian and English tourist texts differ considerably in their use of boosters as a means of achieving persuasive effect and whether in Croatian–English translations, the frequency and type of boosters differ from those found in original English texts.

2. Boosters

Hyland divides metadiscourse in two categories, the interactive and interactional one (Hyland 2005). Since the focus in tourist discourse is on interaction with and engagement of the reader (Suau Jiménez and Dolón Herrero 2007), the interactional metadiscourse categories that are more prominent in tourist brochures are the ones used to express certainty in the presented information. This is also reflected in the frequencies of these metadiscourse categories, which are used significantly more than others.

This study thus focuses on boosters that have proven to be used extensively in tourist brochures and that are essential for attainment of persuasiveness (Fuertes-Olivera et al., 2001). They are used by authors to "close down alternatives, head off conflicting views and express their certainty in what they say" (Hyland 2005, 52). They are also called 'emphatics' (Vande Kopple 1985; Bondi 2008; Crismore 1989; Heiniluoma 2008; Fuertes-Olivera et al. 2001), 'intensifiers' (Holmes 1990) and 'certainty markers' (Dafouz Milne 2003; Crismore, Markkanen, and Steffensen 1993).

Myers sees them as examples of positive politeness devices (Myers 1989), and they have often been researched in combination with hedges since together they help authors in balancing conviction and caution when presenting their work, and thus helping them gain acceptance (Hyland 2000, 179). While boosters are used to express certainty, hedges are used to mitigate the strength of the propositional content and withhold commitment (Holmes 1990) and are thus often combined. There has been significant research on the interplay between hedges and boosters (Hu and Cao 2011; Vassileva 2001; Dontcheva-Navratilova 2016; Hyland 2000; Holmes 1990; Akbas and Hardman 2018; Oktay 2020; Heiniluoma 2008), and while some claim that they both fall under the same category along with attributors (Vande Kopple 1985), collectively defined as 'validity markers', and some see them as inseparable concepts (Crismore, Markkanen, and Steffensen 1993), hedges have also been researched independently (Pisanski Peterlin and Zlatnar Moe 2016; Salager-Meyer 1994; Hyland 1996), whereas boosters have not been dealt with independently to a significant extent, except for a few studies (Bondi 2008; Yeung 2007; Carrió-Pastor and Albalat-Mascarell 2023; Bogdanović and Bulatović 2020). The works dealing with boosters mostly examine persuasive texts, including advertising i.e. "headlines and slogans where copywriters use intensifying adjectives, adverbs, or phrases which have a heightening effect on the noun or proposition they modify, thus persuading consumers to buy what is being offered" (Fuertes-Olivera et al. 2001). From all categories of interpersonal metadiscourse, only person markers (i.e. engagement markers), hedges and emphatics are seen as relevant in the headlines, subheads and slogans of printed ads (Fuertes-Olivera et al. 2001).Bondi states that boosters mostly include "adverbs and adverbials which attribute an increased force or authority to statements" (Bondi 2008), and has analysed their frequencies and patterns in academic discourse, including their syntactic roles, lexico-semantic patterns and textual patterns. She states that these functions can be fulfilled by other superordinate projecting/inference frameworks, and what they all share is the basic pragmatic function of bringing the author's endorsement of a certain statement and universality of that belief to the foreground (Bondi 2008, 33).

Wierzbicka deals in greater detail with these epistemic adverbs (Wierzbicka 2006), while Hyland provides a list of items that are potentially boosters: "*Actually, always, believe, believed, believes, beyond doubt, certain, certainly, clear, clearly, conclusively, decidedly, definite, definitely, demonstrate,*

demonstrated, demonstrates, doubtless, establish, established, evident, evidently, find, finds, found, in fact, incontestable, incontrovertible, incontrovertibly, indeed, indisputable, indisputably, know, known, must (possibility), never, no doubt, obvious, obviously, of course, prove, proved, proves, realize, realized, realizes, really, show, showed, shown, shows, sure, surely, think, thinks, thought, truly, true, undeniable, undeniably, undisputedly, undoubtedly, without doubt" (Hyland 2005, 221–22). These are used to act either as emphatics, i.e. to "reinforce truth value", or as amplifying adverbs that "strengthen verbs and adverbs" (Hyland 2005, 130).

These taxonomies were modified to develop the taxonomy of boosters used in persuasive texts that was used in this research, which includes the following groups:

1. adverbs of frequency (such as: *always, often, usually*),
2. adverbs of quantity (such as: *many, much, a lot of*),
3. qualifying adjectives (such as: *spectacular, wonderful, fascinating*),
4. superlatives (such as: *best, most interesting, greatest*),
5. boosting expressions (such as: *it is a fact, definitely, without doubt*).

Examples of the five categories can be found in Table 1.

Table 1. *Examples of boosters in the TOURIST corpus*

	TouristEN	**TouristHREN**	**TouristHR**
Adverbs of frequency			
1	There are some fantastic caves to choose from and it's **always** an exhilarating day out" he says.	Whenever I'm in Baranja, I **always** live at least two parallel lives – one that is so irretrievably gone, comes back, and the one that is going on right now feels much more intense than my urban everyday life.	Kada sam u Baranji, **uvijek** potpuno usporedno živim barem dva života – vraća se onaj koji je tako nepovratno prošao i puno intenzivnije nego u gradskome svakodnevlju osjećam ovaj, koji mi se događa sada.

	TouristEN	TouristHREN	TouristHR
		Adverbs of quantity	
2	An Irish music fan creates a soul band from a **bunch** of amateurs.	In one whole day of feasting, according to books neatly written by Varaždin's butcher's guild, back in 1693, these gourmet masters, about thirty of them, consumed no less than one whole calf, four pigs, a dozen pounds of cooked beef, a few chickens, pigeons, turkeys, geese and ducks, along with a brace of rabbits, wild birds, lots of sausage, exactly 22 hens, a few ox tongues on skewers and **a bunch of** snails.	Za cjelodnevnoga trajanja samo jedne gozbe, kako je zapisano u uredno vođenim knjigama Varaždinskoga mesarskog ceha, još davne 1693, ti su gurmanski meštri, njih tridesetak, potamanili ni manje ni više nego jedno cijelo tele, četiri praščića, desetak kila kuhane govedine, nekoliko pilića, golubova, purana, gusaka i pataka, uz par zečeva, divlje peradi, mnoštvo kobasica, točno 22 kokoši, nekoliko nabodenih volovskih jezika i **hrpu** puževa.
		Qualifying adjectives	
3	Inside, gallery spaces show **top** works from home and abroad, and a retail space sells pieces of stunning jewellery, ceramics, glass, metalwork and textiles; all created by the country's leading makers.	By choosing this unique mode of camping you can treat yourself to an unforgettable holiday in accommodation with all the comforts of home, or even of a **top** hotel, while at the same time experiencing an unforgettable closeness to nature and a laid-back atmosphere that only campsites provide.	Odabirom ovoga posebnog doživljaja kampiranja priuštit ćete nezaboravan odmor u smještajnom objektu sa svim blagodatima koje danas očekujete, uz sve sadržaje u kojima možete uživati u svojem domu ili čak i u **vrhunskom** hotelu, a ujedno uz nezaboravno iskustvo kontakta s prirodom i ležernosti koje samo kampovi pružaju.

	TouristEN	TouristHREN	TouristHR
4	Beautiful Beachdean is a peaceful, tranquil park offering a safe and secure environment with **attractive** shrubs and flowers around every caravan.	Within reach of the sea, the **attractive** beach and near to the main traffic route, this natural campsite offers its guests a refuge from the noise of the city, whilst everything necessary is at hand.	Nadomak mora, **atraktivne** plaže i u blizini glavnoga prometnog pravca, prirodni kamp svojim gostima nudi utočište od gradske buke, a sve potrebno je nadohvat ruke.
5	There are **wonderful** cliffs, headlands, sea arches, caves and islands.	From here there is a **wonderful** view of Korčula, Mljet and of the peninsula's coast as well.	Odavde se pruža **predivan** pogled na Mljet i Korčulu, ali i na obalu Pelješca.
6	Divers can enjoy the **fascinating** marine underworld of loughs and bays while those in search of thrills will discover the best of jet-skiing, powerboating, kayaking, rafting and more!	The king of crabs can be prepared in several ways, and some of the master chefs consider that its basic preparation includes a 2-minute cooking in mildly salted water with a bit of olive oil. Served with sprinkled olive oil and a few drops of lemon, shrimp's **fascinating** taste is preserved.	Kralj rakova pripravlja se na nekoliko načina, a neki vrhunski kuhari smatraju da se najelementarnijom pripremom, dvominutnim kuhanjem u blago posoljenoj vodi s malo maslinova ulja i posluženim tako da se škamp naknadno poškropi s nekoliko kapi maslinova ulja i nekoliko kapi limuna, najbolje očuva njegov **fascinantan** okus.

	TouristEN	TouristHREN	TouristHR
7	The warren is an **important** wildlife habitat and site of scientific interest, which shelters a rich variety of plants.	Today, Istria is one of the most **important** Croatian winegrowing areas. Wine is not only an **important** agricultural product, but also an integral part of the tourist offer.	Danas je Istra jedno od **najvažnijih** hrvatskih vinskih područja, gdje vino nije samo **važan** poljoprivredni proizvod, nego i **bitan** dio ukupne turističke ponude.
8	Located in the heart of theatreland can be found one of London's most **spectacular** restaurants.	For Croatia, these are not just **spectacular** and fascinating landscapes but some of the cult locations of the Croatian people.	Za Hrvatsku ovo su ne samo mjesta fascinacije **spektakularnim** krajolicima nego i neka od kultnih mjesta hrvatskoga naroda.
		Superlatives	
9	Slieve Gullion and its surrounding foothills are easily the **most scenic** parts of Armagh.	However, the most **fascinating** location is undoubtedly Kopački rit – a nature park and a zoological reserve, an area of marshlands provide the habitat for over 290 species of birds – which in turn makes the area a frequent destination of ornithologist from all over the world, but also of all other nature lovers who come to see this exquisite corner of the earth.	Svakako je **najzanimljiviji** prirodni fenomen Park prirode i zoološki rezervat Kopački rit – močvarni prostor koji udomljuje i više od 290 vrsta ptica zbog kojih je često odredište ornitologa iz cijelog svijeta, ali i svih drugih ljubitelja prirode koja je tu doista osobita.

	TouristEN	TouristHREN	TouristHR
Boosting expressions			
10		Just looking at the local foods potatoes, cabbage, polenta, smoked meat, cheese, honey and homemade brandy (rakija) – **it is clear** how these products form a part of strong regional identity, which is, at the time of faceless global confection industry, becoming an increasingly important point of attraction.	Gledajući samo domaće namirnice – palentu, sušeno meso, sir, med, domaću rakiju… – **jasno je** koliko su ti proizvodi dio snažnog regionalnog identiteta, koji u doba bezlične globalne konfekcije biva sve važniji čimbenik privlačnosti.
11	The stylish décor is evocative of 1920s Vienna, and the flawless menu **definitely** doesn't disappoint.		

The gaps observed in the table, reflected in the absence of example sentences for certain subcorpora, are due to the fact that instances of the same metadiscourse item were not found in all subcorpora. More specifically, no occurrences of it 'is clear' were identified in the TouristEN subcorpus, while the item 'definitely' was not found in either the TouristHR or the TouristHREN subcorpus.

3. Methodology

The one-million-word *Tourist Corpus* used in this study was compiled with the Sketch Engine tool. It consists of original English and Croatian tourist brochures, as well as English translations of Croatian brochures, published between 2010 and 2018. At the time of compilation, these represented the

most recent versions publicly available on the websites of the relevant tourist boards. The *Tourist Corpus* is divided into three comparable subcorpora:

1. **TouristHR**: original Croatian tourist brochures (30 brochures, i.e. 299,379 words),
2. **TouristHREN**: English translations of Croatian tourist brochures (30 translations of brochures, i.e. 333,286 words),
3. **TouristEN**: original English tourist brochures published in the United Kingdom (29 brochures, i.e. 315,880 words).

Both the brochures written in English and in Croatian were written by various authors and published by various institutions, mainly by various tourist boards. The translations were also written by various translators, although very often the translator was not credited. The UK was selected as the representative English variety, as it is the English-speaking country with the highest number of visitors to Croatia (Gulić 2018). Brochures were chosen to ensure both geographic and thematic diversity, covering topics such as summer and winter tourism, culture, gastronomy, nature, accommodation, events, and adventure, and targeting diverse audiences ranging from families and business travellers to partygoers and couples (see Appendices A-C).

Boosters were identified as particularly significant for achieving persuasiveness and were therefore chosen as the focus of this study. Particular attention was devoted to the translation of the extracted lexemes and expressions. The corpus was processed both automatically and manually. Wordlists generated through Sketch Engine were used to identify candidate items, with manual verification ensuring the exclusion of irrelevant occurrences (e.g., *top* as a noun rather than as a booster adjective). The lists of English boosters were compiled based on previous studies and further refined using dictionaries (Bujas 2001; Drvodelić 1996) and corpus searches. Croatian equivalents were identified through translation, manual searches of the brochures, and frequency lists. To account for translation-specific variation, items identified in the Croatian subcorpus were cross-checked against their English equivalents and vice versa, noting omissions, additions, or shifts in translation. Frequency lists of adjectives were generated in Sketch-Engine for each subcorpus and manually filtered to exclude items not functioning as boosters. This allowed for a direct comparison of how boosters were deployed in original English and Croatian brochures, and how their use was retained, adapted, or omitted in translation. Frequency lists of adjectives were also used as a basis for selection of prominent qualifying adjectives to

be manually analysed and compared (i.e. adjectives *spectacular, fascinating, wonderful, attractive, top, famous*). This study explores the frequency of qualifying adjectives in order to identify the most frequent qualifying adjectives in each language and to determine whether and how their frequency changes in translation compared to the original texts. Additionally, the study investigates whether such differences are significant and whether they may have implications for the reception of brochures.

4. Analysis

Boosters are an interactional metadiscourse category that are used extensively in the brochures. Table 2 shows their overall frequencies in the three subcorpora, with the TouristHR subcorpus containing the least metadiscourse.

Table 2. *Boosters in the three subcorpora per 10,000 words*

	Boosters
TouristHR	105.89
TouristEN	116.66
TouristHREN	127.85

The following table (Table 3) shows how the frequencies are divided among the queried subcategories, indicating a pronounced difference between the subcorpora in most of the subcategories. However, the manual analysis showed that adverbs of frequency and adverbs of quantity are not relevant for achieving persuasiveness. The focus of the qualitative manual analysis was thus on qualifying adjectives, superlatives and boosting expressions.

Table 3. *Boosters subcategories in the three subcorpora per 10,000 words*

	TouristEN	**TouristHREN**	**TouristHR**
Adverbs of frequency	5.48	8.70	10.52
Adverbs of quantity	15.07	18.54	7.48
Qualifying adjectives	100.54	90.61	82.37
Superlatives	12.12	9.48	4.71
Boosting expressions	0.76	0.51	0.80
Total	**118.91**	**127.85**	**105.89**

4.1. Qualifying adjectives

The dominant subcategory is composed of qualifying adjectives, since these are the most numerous subcategory, with 21 adjectives queried. Qualifying adjectives have been shown to have a prominent role in persuasiveness. Five qualifying adjectives were additionally analysed (Table 4) as the adjectives with the most prominent differences in the use in the three subcorpora. *Spectacular, fascinating, wonderful, attractive* and *top* are all used very differently. Those that have higher frequencies in the TouristEN subcorpus (such as *spectacular* and *fascinating*), have lower frequencies in the other two subcorpora. *Wonderful* and *top* are used similarly in TouristEN and TouristHR, but much less in the TouristHREN subcorpus. *Attractive* is one of the very few qualifying adjectives that is used more often in both the TouristHREN and TouristHR subcorpora than TouristEN; interestingly, it is used more in the TouristHREN subcorpus than in the TouristHR subcorpus. These five qualifying adjectives show the overall tendency in the use of qualifying adjectives: in the TouristEN subcorpus their frequencies are higher, whereas in TouristHREN and TouristHR they are lower, often with significant differences in the frequencies between the two subcorpora.

Table 4. *Selected qualifying adjectives in the three subcorpora per 10,000 words*

	TouristEN	**TouristHREN**		**TouristHR**
spectacular	4.18	0.21	spektakularan	0.20
fascinating	3.26	0.81	fascinantan	0.27
wonderful	3.36	1.02	prekrasan	3.14
attractive	0.98	3.87	atraktivan	2.74
top	6.24	2.43	vrhunski	5.04
Total	18.01	8.34		11.39

Since translations are the focus of the study, a deeper examination was made of the differences in the use of qualifying adjectives in the TouristHREN and TouristEN subcorpora, especially given the fact that there is often no direct translation of the qualifying adjectives used, so no direct comparison can be made. In the first two examples in Table 5, the qualifying adjectives are retained, and the rest of the sentence is also equivalent to the original sentence, with a similar tone for the entire extract. In the first example, the superlative *najsuvremenije* (meaning: *the most modern*) is re-

placed with a more neutral adjective *latest*. The only intervention in the second example is that the long Croatian sentence is divided into two shorter sentences in English. The third example illustrates a shift whereby the adjective *prekrasan* (meaning: *wonderful* according to Bujas, 2001) is replaced with the more neutral adjective *beautiful*, which often seems to be the case in TouristHREN. While *beautiful* is typically associated with visual collocations and *wonderful* with experiential or emotional contexts, *prekrasan* in Croatian encompasses both domains. Consequently, its translation as beautiful is not unexpected. However, the data also reveal instances, such as Example 4, where translators opt for the more neutral *beautiful* even in contexts where *wonderful* would be semantically more appropriate.

The fourth example illustrates that the Croatian adjective *vrhunski* is rendered as *fine*, a choice that does not represent its most direct or literal translation. However, given that the term appears in a wine-related context, this shift can be understood as motivated by domain-specific usage.

Moreover, *vrhunski* exhibits a broad semantic range in Croatian, encompassing multiple nuances. This variability is also reflected in dictionary entries (e.g., Bujas, 2001), which provide an extensive set of translation options and collocational patterns for it. This is also reflected in the TouristHREN subcorpus, where translators use various translations for *vrhunski*, including *excellent, superb, the best, superior* etc.

The fifth example shows that the phrase *vrhunski svjetski uspjesi* is translated as the relatively neutral *many medals and trophies*. In this case, the translator opts for a more neutral and concrete formulation rather than using evaluative expressions such as *outstanding achievements, top-level results*, or *world-class success*, which would more closely reflect the intensity and scope conveyed by the original.

Example 6 shows the opposite situation, where the adjective *attractive* was used in the translation instead of the more straightforward translation of *lijep*, i.e. *beautiful*.

Table 5. *Examples of qualifying adjectives in the TouristHR subcorpus and their translations in the TouristHREN subcorpus*

	TouristHR	TouristHREN
1	Marina Lošinj, uz najsuvremenije usluge prilagođene nautičarima, ima i **spektakularni** pogled na mali lošinjski zaljev i starogradsku jezgru.	The Marina Lošinj, with the latest services tailored for boaters, also has a **spectacular** view of the Mali Lošinj bay and heart of the old town.
2	Kralj rakova pripravlja se na nekoliko načina, a neki vrhunski kuhari smatraju da se najelementarnijom pripremom, dvominutnim kuhanjem u blago posoljenoj vodi s malo maslinova ulja i posluženim tako da se škamp naknadno poškropi s nekoliko kapi maslinova ulja i nekoliko kapi limuna, najbolje očuva njegov **fascinantan** okus.	The king of crabs can be prepared in several ways, and some of the master chefs consider that its basic preparation includes a 2-minute cooking in mildly salted water with a bit of olive oil. Served with sprinkled olive oil and a few drops of lemon, shrimp's **fascinating** taste is preserved.
3	To su intenzivno obojena crna vina, puna i jaka, s **prekrasnim** aromama prezrela voća.	These are intensively col-oured red wines, of full and strong taste, with **beautiful** aromas of matured fruit.
4	Priču o životu u ovom slikovitom predjelu šibenske regije ispričat će vam organizatori jedne od dugovječnijih manifestacija na ovom prostoru, Primoštenskih užanci, na kojoj se u prva dva tjedna kolovoza, uz čašu **vrhunskog** vina i domaću ribu, može pogledati i uprizorenje primoštenskog vjenčanja, ali i zabaviti se na utrkama tovara.	You can hear the story of life in this picturesque part of the Šibenik region at the Primoštenski užanci festival, one of the long-established traditions of the area. This event takes place during the first two weeks of August, and with a glass of **fine** wine and some home-cooked fish you can witness the staging of a traditional Primošten wedding, and also have fun at the donkey races.

	TouristHR	TouristHREN
5	Brat i sestra, Ivica i Janica Kostelić, najpoznatiji hrvatski skijaši, tu su se pripremali za svoje **vrhunske** svjetske uspjehe.	This is where famous Croatian skiers and siblings Ivica and Janica Kostelić trained for their **many** medals and trophies.
6	Not forgeting the beautiful, fertile Konavle valley, the mountainous Pelješac peninsula and its vineyards, the unique wet-lands landscape of the Neretva Delta, Trsteno, the most beautiful of all Croatia's arboretums, and many other features. Altogether they make this area one of the most **attractive** in the whole of the Medi-terranean.	Tu je i slikovita plodna dolina Konavle, brdoviti poluotok Pelješac sa svojim vinogradima, jedinstveni močvarni krajolik delte Neretve, najljepši hrvatski arboretum u Trstenom i mnogo drugog što ovaj prostor čini jednim od **najljepših** na Sredozemlju.

An example of the discrepancy is the adjective *famous*, which sometimes overlaps in meaning with well-known, i.e. in Croatian *slavan* and *poznat*, accordingly. The frequencies vary significantly between the subcopora, and the TouristHREN subcorpus following the pattern of the TouristEN subcorpus. Table 5 shows how differently the adjectives *slavan* and *poznat* are translated in the TouristHREN subcorpus. Examples 1-5 show various translations for the adjective *poznat*, which is translated as *known*, *familiar*, *common*, *renowned*. Oxford Learners Dictionary defines both adjectives similarly, i.e. famous as: known about by many people, whereas well-known is defined as:

1. known about by a lot of people
2. (of a fact) generally known and accepted (Oxford University Press, n.d.).

Veliki englesko-hrvatski rječnik translates *famous* as *glasovit, slavan* and *well-known* as *poznat, glasovit* (Bujas 2001).

Table 6. *Examples of the qualifying adjectives* poznat *and* famous *in the TouristHR subcorpus and their translations in the TouristHREN subcorpus*

	TouristHR	TouristHREN
1	Od ribe i morskih plodova preko tartufa, **poznatog** afrodizijaka, do ponovno otkrivenog šafrana, od davnina vrlo cijenjenog začina, Istra je i u kulinarskom smislu vrijedna upoznavanja te iz godine u godinu pokazuje kako je s pravom u samom vrhu turizma Hrvatske i regije.	These range from fish and seafood, through truffles – a **well-known** aphrodisiac – to re-discovered saffron, a highly appreciated spice from ancient times.
2	U neposrednoj je blizini svjetski **poznatog** ATP centra Umag.	Immediately nearby is the **world famous** Umag ATP centre.
3	Ovdje, unutar Parka prirode Velebit, nalazi se **poznato** svetište Majke Božje od Krasna, gdje se svake godine na blagdan Velike Gospe, 15. kolovoza, okupljaju vjernici iz cijele Hrvatske.	Here, within the Velebit Nature Park, you will find the **famous** Shrine of Our Lady of Krasno, where believers from all over Croatia gather every year on the Feast of the Assumption (15th of August).
4	Nalazi se u blizini Malinske, **poznatoga** turističkoga odredišta, i nositelj je prestižne oznake "Ecocamping".	Located near Malinska, a **famous** tourist destination, it is a holder of the prestigious "Ecocamping" award.
5	U mjestu Kampor, uz jednu od **najpoznatijih** pješčanih plaža na otoku Rabu te na samo 7 km od Raba, Lando Resort nudi smještaj u luksuznim vilama.	In the town of Kampor, along one of the most **famous** sandy beaches on the island of Rab, just 7 km from Rab, the Lando Resort offers accommodation in luxury villas.
6	Na zadarskoj rivi možete uživati u, kažu Zadrani, najljepšem zalasku sunca na svijetu, što je svojedobno primijetio i **slavni** redatelj Alfred Hitchcock, jedan od poznatijih ljubitelja Maraschina.	Zadar locals believe that the sunsets from the Zadar waterfront are the most beautiful in the world, and that **famous** lover of Maraschino, Alfred Hitchcock, also remarked on them in a similar way.

From the 21 analysed qualifying adjectives (and their equivalents), only seven showed higher frequencies in the TouristHR subcorpus: the adjectives *nezamjenjiv* (compared to *irrepleaceable*), *jedinstven* (compared to *unique*), *poseban* (compared to *special*), *vrhunski* (compared to top) and *poznat* (compared to *well-known*) had the highest frequencies in the TouristHR subcorpus when all three subcorpora were compared. Two other adjectives, *važan* (compared to *important*) and *atraktivan* (compared to *attractive*) all had a higher frequency in the TouristHR subcorpus than in the TouristEN subcorpus, but a lower frequency when compared to the TouristHREN subcorpus.

When the TouristEN and TouristHREN subcorpus were compared, nine qualifying adjectives had higher frequencies in the TouristEN subcorpus and 12 in the TouristHREN subcorpus. With qualifying adjectives with higher frequencies in the TouristHREN subcorpus, the difference in the use is mostly not so conspicuous (the frequency for *irreplaceable* in the TouristEN subcorpus is 0 per 10,000 words and 0.12 in the TouristHREN subcorpus), but sometimes the use differs significantly (e.g., the frequencies for *famous* and *important* in the TouristEN subcorpus are 5.82 and 2.72 per 10,000 words, and 10.41 and 7.17 in the TouristHREN subcorpus, respectively). However, those qualifying adjectives that have higher frequencies in the TouristEN subcorpus typically have significantly higher frequencies: *stunning* has a frequency of 4.65 in the TouristEN subcorpus as opposed to 0.21 in the TouristHREN subcorpus, *great* has a frequency of 12.66 in the TouristEN subcorpus as opposed to 6.96 in the TouristHREN subcorpus, and *fascinating* has a frequency of 3.26 in the TouristEN subcorpus as opposed to 0.81 in the TouristHREN subcorpus.

Table 7. *The frequencies for the adjectives* famous *and* well-known *across the three subcorpora per 10,000 words*

	TouristEN		**TouristHREN**		**TouristHR**
famous	5.82	famous	10.41	slavan	2.51
well-known	0.32	well-known	1.53	poznati	17.54
Total	6.14		11.94		20.04

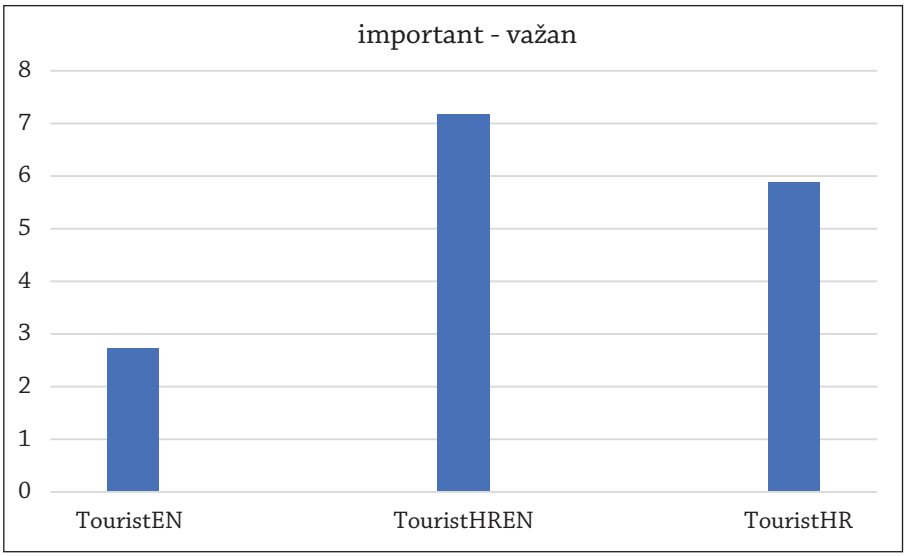


Figure 1. *The differences in the use of the adjective* important *and its equivalent* važan.

Another discrepancy was in the use of the adjective *important* or *važan*. As opposed to the TouristEN corpus, the frequency of the adjective *važan* is almost twice as high in the TouristHR subcorpus, i.e. 2.72 vs. 5.88 per 10,000 words. The frequency is even higher for the TouristHREN subcorpus, with 7.17 instances per 10,000 words of the adjective *important*.

4.2. Superlatives

Another subcategory of metadiscourse that has been analysed are superlatives. With the help of manual analysis, the most common and most prominent superlatives were identified: *best / najbolji, most interesting / najzanimljiviji* and *greatest / najveći*. The adjective *best* is used to the greatest extent in the TouristEN and TouristHREN subcorpora, but not in the TouristHR subcorpus. The use of this adjective in the TouristHREN subcorpus differs significantly from that in the TouristHR subcorpus, as it is used eight times more often in the former subcorpus, although this is still less than in the TouristEN subcorpus. The superlatives of other adjectives have significantly lower frequencies, with only the superlative *greatest / najveći* being used in the TouristHR subcorpus to a greater extent than in the other two subcorpora.

Table 8. *Frequencies of superlatives in the Tourist corpus per 10,000 words*

TouristEN		**TouristHREN**		**TouristHR**	
best	11.52	best	7.50	najbolji	0.90
most interesting	0.03	most interesting	0.45	najzanimljiviji	0.13
greatest	0.57	greatest	1.53	najveći	3.67
Total	12.12		9.48		4.71

Since the superlative ‘best’ is one of the rare metadiscourse items that are used significantly more often than in translation than in the original text, the results were further analysed. The analysis showed that in these cases a shift in translation occurred and that other adjectives have been translated as ‘best’: in Table 8 it can be seen how the adjective ‘vrhunski’ which is equivalent to ‘top’, is here translated as ‘best’.

Table 9. *Best and najbolji: a comparison of a sentence from the TouristHREN and TouristHR subcorpus*

TouristHREN	TouristHR
Mali Ston's oysters Ostrea edulis, islands' lamb, a wealth of freshwater and marine fish, shellfish and crabs, one of the best olive oils in the world, Pag's cheese, Slavonian kulen (hot sausage), Istrian Boškarin (less known type of beef originating from Istria), truffles and asparagus, Dalmatian chard, arugula, artichokes, broad beans, mišancija (Dalmatian mixed herbs) and other types of vegetables, smoked ham and bacon from the Dalmatian hinterland, naturally bred Zagorje turkey, rich wildlife and wild berries, potatoes from Lika and Međimurje's cabbage, rarities like butarge (salted and dried fish roe, a rare and precious delicacy), dried fish eggs, or dried tabinja (a rare fish) which many consider more tasty than dried cod – these are the ingredients on which the **best** Croatian gastronomy is based and which, thanks to tourism, has become well known in Europe and worldwide.	Malostonska kamenica Ostrea edulis, otočka janjetina, pravo bogatstvo slatkovodnog i morskoga ribljeg fonda, školjaka i rakova, jedno od najboljih maslinovih ulja na svijetu, paški ovčji sir, slavonski kulin, istarski boškarin, tartufi i šparoge, dalmatinska blitva, rukola, artičoka, bob, mišancija i druge vrste povrća, vrhunski pršuti i panceta dalmatinskoga zaleđa, prirodno uzgojen zagorski puran, bogatstvo divljači i šumskih plodova, lički krumpir i međimurski kupus, rariteti poput butarge, sušene riblje ikre, ili pak sušene tabinje koju mnogi smatraju ukusnijom od sušenoga bakalara – sve su to namirnice na kojima se temelji **vrhunska** hrvatska gastronomija, zahvaljujući turizmu sve poznatija u Europi i svijetu.

4.3. Boosting expressions

The last category of boosters, boosting expressions, are not present to a great degree in the subcorpora, but it is interesting to see how the translators have dealt with those expressions (Table 10). Very often, boosting expressions are replaced in the translations by other metadiscourse items (usually with engagement markers, i.e. reader-oriented rhetorical strategies).

Table 10. *Boosting expressions in the TouristHR and TouristHREN subcorpora*

	TouristHREN	TouristHR
1	You **must** complete this journey through time and space with some Istrian specialities.	Takvo putovanje kroz prostor i vrijeme **obvezno** upotpunite nekim istarskim specijalitetima.
2	Nature is the best teacher **you have ever seen with your own eyes**.	Priroda je, **nema dvojbe**, najbolja učiteljica zdravoga života.
3	And **be sure to** treat your taste buds to some of the local aperitifs, such as plum or pear brandy, or blueberry liqueur.	Kako se to ipak nebi dogodilo, pri ruci i ustima **obvezno** se mora naći domaća rakija od jabuka ili krušaka, ili ona ponajbolja, od borovnice – brinjevac!

5. Discussion

The aim of the study is to examine how boosters are used in English and Croatian tourist brochures, as well as in translations of tourist discourse from Croatian into English. The first part of hypothesis is that there are considerable differences between Croatian and English tourist texts in terms of the use of boosters. The results of the corpus analysis support this.

Overall, all three subcorpora rely heavily on boosters, with frequencies ranging from 105.89 (TouristHR) to 116.66 (TouristEN) and finally 127.85 (TouristHREN) per 10,000 words. However, the frequencies differ depending on the booster subcategory, and to truly understand the differences in booster use we need to look at the types of boosters typically associated with each subcorpus. The most interesting subcategory are qualifying adjectives, whose use varies greatly depending on the language and adjective. It is not surprising that overall the TouristEN subcorpus has more qualifying adjectives than the other two subcorpora. There is no unique pattern of use for all the qualifying adjectives, and the results for each adjective vary greatly. However, it can be seen that in the TouristEN subcorpus qualifying adjectives are used much more often: various adjectives are used, and they are used often. It is not rare to find a sentence with several qualifying adjectives. A direct comparison of the three subcorpora with regard to qualifying adjectives is not possible, since there are no complete equivalents to be

compared because the qualifying adjectives have at least slight differences in meaning and use, but a general tendency can be noticed. In the TouristEN subcorpus the qualifying adjectives are very positive, whereas those used in the TouristHR subcorpus tend to be more neutral. Adjectives such as *stunning* and *spectacular* have higher occurrences in the TouristEN subcorpus than in the TouristHR subcorpus (e.g. 4.65 versus 0 per 10,000 words for the adjective *stunning*), whereas adjectives such as *poseban* (i.e. *special*) and *poznat* (i.e. *well-known*) are among those that have a higher frequency in the TouristHR subcorpus. The adjective *poznat* i.e. *well-known* is very interesting, since it is the most frequent qualifying adjective in the TouristHR subcorpus and is one of the qualifying adjectives with the lowest frequency in the TouristEN subcorpus. Even its synonym *famous* is not used as often as the other qualifying adjectives, indicating that the Croatian tourist brochures tend to point out different qualities than the English ones. Of all the queried qualifying adjectives, only *unique* has a similar distribution in all the subcorpora.

From the 21 qualifying adjectives queried, the most popular adjective (i.e. with the highest frequency) in the TouristEN subcorpus is the adjective *good*. In the TouristHREN subcorpus, it is the adjective *beautiful*, and in the TouristHR the adjective *poznat* (i.e. *well-known*). If we look at which adjectives have the highest frequencies in which subcorpus, only four such adjectives are found in the TouristHR subcorpus (the ones with higher frequencies are listed first): *poznat* (i.e. *well-known), poseban* (i.e. *special*), *jedinstven* (i.e. *unique*) and *nezamjenjiv* (i.e. *irreplaceable*) – although the frequency for *nezamjenjiv* is actually very low, i.e. 0.13. The low frequency of the adjective *irreplaceable* could also be explained by idiomatic expressions conveying the same meaning that are more appropriate for tourism discourse.

Eight qualifying adjectives have the highest frequency in the TouristHREN subcorpus: *beautiful, famous, important, excellent, ideal, picturesque, attractive* and *impressive*. The TouristEN has the highest number of qualifying adjectives with the highest frequencies, at nine: *good, great, top, perfect, stunning, spectacular, wonderful, fascinating* and *magnificent*. The difference in the use of qualifying adjectives indicates that the propositional content is presented in a more neutral way in Croatian tourist brochures, whereas in English tourist brochures it is presented in a more affirmative and enthusiastic way, using an entire palette of qualifying adjectives ranging from more neutral to very positive ones.

The difference in the use of boosters shows that there are indeed considerable differences between Croatian and English tourist texts in terms of achieving the persuasive effect, which should have an impact on the translations.

The results of the corpus analysis also support the second part of the hypothesis, confirming substantial differences in terms of quantity and type of boosters used in Croatian to English translations from those used in original English texts. Boosters are not often used in the TouristHR subcorpus, but it is surprising that the TouristHREN subcorpus has even less qualifying adjectives than the TouristHR subcorpus. Several qualifying adjectives are used more often in the TouristHREN subcorpus, but for none of the adjectives is the difference very conspicuous. The qualifying adjectives *famous, special, beautiful, important* and *picturesque* are some of the rare adjectives that have higher frequencies in the TouristHREN subcorpus, these are very common qualifying adjectives. In the TouristEN subcorpus a wider range of qualifying adjectives is used, with emotionally laden adjectives such as *spectacular*, *fascinating* and *wonderful* being used more often than in the TouristHREN subcorpus. Sometimes what is being described is even downplayed in the translation. The adjective *wonderful/prekrasan* is an example of this, as it is used almost equally in the TouristHR and TouristEN subcorpus, but three times less in the TouristHREN subcorpus, and it is often translated as simply beautiful. The descriptions in the TouristEN subcorpus thus seem more vivid as opposed to those in the TouristHREN subcorpus.

6. Conclusion

The findings of this study confirm the complex relationship between boosters and certainty and persuasiveness in tourist discourse. By examining Croatian and English tourist brochures and their translations, this research has shown that boosters are employed differently across languages, revealing significant cross-linguistic and cross-cultural variation.

The analysis demonstrated that English brochures (TouristEN subcorpus) rely more extensively on boosters, both in frequency and in variety, than their Croatian counterparts (TouristHR subcorpus). These boosters are often realized through superlatives and emotionally charged adjectives such as *spectacular*, *stunning*, or *magnificent*, which create a distinctly positive and persuasive tone. In contrast, Croatian brochures employ boosters

in a more restrained and subtle manner, favouring neutral qualifiers and avoiding excessive use of superlatives. English translations of Croatian brochures (TouristHREN subcorpus) largely mirror the more neutral Croatian style, suggesting that translators tend to reproduce source-text booster use rather than adapting it to target-text conventions.

These results highlight the role of boosters in shaping the persuasive effect. The underuse of boosters in translations may diminish their persuasive power compared to original English texts, raising important questions for translation practice. If translators continue to closely follow Croatian discourse patterns, the result may be English texts that are less effective in appealing to international audiences. Incorporating a more target-oriented approach to booster use could therefore enhance both the persuasiveness and communicative success of translations.

Beyond offering empirical evidence, this study confirms that Hyland's (Hyland 2005) metadiscourse model, originally developed for academic texts, can successfully be applied to promotional and tourist discourse. It also demonstrates the value of combining corpus and manual analysis to capture subtle differences in booster use. Future research should expand this line of inquiry by examining other metadiscourse categories and exploring newer online genres, where the use of boosters may differ from traditional print brochures.

Ultimately, boosters play a crucial role in ensuring that tourist texts engage and persuade their audiences, helping such texts fulfil their communicative and economic functions. As tourism remains central to Croatia's economy, greater attention to booster use in both original writing and translation could significantly improve the effectiveness of tourist promotion. Moreover, in a time when AI-assisted translation is rapidly advancing, the findings underline the continued importance of human decision-making in negotiating persuasive strategies, especially in managing boosters, where cultural and linguistic nuances remain decisive.

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Appendices

Appendix A: *List of tourist brochures from the TouristHR subcorpus (listed under the name under which they are available for download)*

1 boje_grada_hrv_za web
2 Camping-Hrvatska-2015-HR
3 Cudesna-kulturna-bastina-2011
4 Cudesna-prirodna-bastina-Hrvatske-2011
5 eufraz_hr_web
6 Fantasticna-Baranja
7 gourmet food
8 Hrvatska-Enogastronomija-2012-hrv
9 Hrvatska-Mediteran-kakav-je-nekad-bio…
10 Hrvatska-ocima-lovca
11 ImageBrosura HIZ-HRV-online
12 lmagePorec_HR wb
13 istraculture16_hr
14 lstraNature_HR
15 korak_po_korak_HR_web
16 Kvarner Family A5 2016 – HR – WEB
17 Lika-Karlovac-HR
18 mirogoj_hrvatski
19 Nauticka-Hrvatska-2014-2015-HR
20 okolica_HRV-web
21 pub_kultura_obz
22 slavonija-hrvatski
23 spom_hr_con
24 Turisticke-informacije-s-kartom-Hrvatsk…
25 Vodič IZ Rovinj 2013 hrvweb
26 Wellness-Hrvatska-2012
27 zagreb_glavni_grad_hr_za web
28 Zagreb-grad-filma_hr
29 zdravstveni turizam
30 ZlatniRt_hr

Appendix B: *List of tourist brochures from the TouristHREN subcorpus (listed under the name under which they are available for download)*

1 boje_grada_eng_za web
2 Camping-Croatia-2015-EN
3 Croatian-Cultural-Heritage-2011
4 Croatian-Eno-Gastronomy-2014-2015-EN
5 GM Croatia-The-Mediterranean-as-it-once-w…
6 GM Croatia-through-the-eyes-of-the-hunter…
7 Cudesna-prirodna-bastina-Hrvatske-2011
8 eufraz_eng_web
9 fantasticna-Baranja-EN
10 ImageBrosura HIZ-ENG-online
11 lmagePorec_EN_wb
12 istraculture16_en
13 istranature_en
14 korak_po_korak_ENG_web
15 Kvarner Family brošura A5 – 2016 – EN -…
16 Lika-Karlovac-EN
17 mirogoj_engleski
18 Nautical-Croatia-2014-2015-EN
19 okolica_ENG-web
20 pub_kultura_obz_en
21 Slavonia-2011
22 spom_gb_con
23 Tourist-lnformation-with-Road-Map-of-…
24 IZ Kvarnera Gourmet – brošura 2016 – PR…
25 Vodič IZ Rovinj 2013 eng web
26 Wellness-Croatia-2012
27 zagreb_glavni_grad_eng_za web
28 Zagreb-grad-filma_en
29 zdravstveni tourism
30 ZlatniRt.EN

Appendix C: *List of tourist brochures from the TouristEN subcorpus (listed under the name under which they are available for download)*

1 1999J NITB Caravan-Camping Map-WEB
2 2014 Golf Brochure_WEB
3 2763 Bridgend Bites Leaflet 2014 1e
4 203685 NITB Visitor Guide 2014-English_…
5 204555 NITB GDO Brochure.Web
6 adventureNI
7 canoeNI
8 Cardiff Essential guide 2015
9 Carmarthenshire
10 Ceredigion 2015
11 cycleNI
12 FarmStay Wales 2015
13 Isle of Anglesey Brochure 2013
14 london_guide_2014_pdf
15 LP APRIL 2015
16 LP SEPTEMBER 15
17 Mid Wales My Way Guide
18 myNI
19 North East Wales Brochure 2015 web
20 Pembrokeshire 2015_lores
21 SnowdoniaMC2015
22 Swansea Bay Moments Holiday Guide 2015
23 TheValleys14
24 uniquelyNI
25 Vale Brochure 2014 LR2
26 G^ Visit Llandudno 2015 low res for web
27 Wales Golf 2015
28 WalkNI
29 WWU2012EBrofin

SAŽETAK

Marina Peršurić Antonić

RIJEČI KOJE UVJERAVAJU: KAKO POJAČIVAČI OBLIKUJU ENGLESKE I HRVATSKE TURISTIČKE BROŠURE

Turističke brošure, koje imaju dvostruku komunikacijsku svrhu, tj. informirati i uvjeriti čitatelje, uvelike se oslanjaju na metadiskurs. Prve analize metadiskursa provedene su u kontekstu akademskog diskursa, gdje je njegova važnost prvi put utvrđena (Hyland, 1998a, 1998b; Vande Kopple, 1985). Naknadno su se istraživanja proširila i na druge vrste diskursa, uključujući turizam (Dafouz-Milne, 2008; Dafouz Milne, 2003; Fuertes-Olivera i dr., 2001; Mauranen, 1993), kao i na druge jezike osim engleskoga. Međutim, kada je riječ o metadiskursu, hrvatski jezik i dalje je nedovoljno istražen (Balažić Bulc & Požgaj Hadži, 2018; Pon & Petrić, 2023). Ovo istraživanje posebno se usredotočuje na upotrebu pojačivača (engleski: *boosters*), koji imaju ključnu ulogu u uvjeravanju i interakciji s čitateljem, ali ostaju nedovoljno istraženi, osobito u jezicima manje rasprostranjenosti poput hrvatskoga. Istraživanje je dio doktorskog rada o metadiskursu u engleskim i hrvatskim turističkim brošurama te njihovim engleskim prijevodima. Analiza je provedena na korpusu 'Tourist Corpus' koji je sastavljen za ovo istraživanje i koji se sastoji od tri potkorpusa, a to su: potkorpus brošura izvorno napisanih na engleskom jeziku, potkorpus brošura izvorno napisanih na hrvatskom jeziku te potkorpus engleskih prijevoda hrvatskih brošura. Rezultati ukazuju na značajne međujezične razlike u upotrebi pojačivača. Osim toga, na temelju analize se može zaključiti i da se u engleskim prijevodim hrvatskih brošura teži zadržati obrasce korištenja tipične za hrvatski jezik, umjesto da se slijede norme engleskog turističkog diskursa, što može utjecati na način na koji međunarodna publika interpretira takve brošure.

Ključne riječi: *metadiskurs; turistički diskurs; turističke brošure; pojačivači*