The article deals with the Slovak translation of the children's novel Čudnovate zgode šegrta Hlapića [The Strange Adventures of Hlapich the Apprentice] by Ivana Brlić-Mažuranić (1913), titled Podivné príhody učňa Chlapčeka (1940). The translation is considered in the context of two 'small' related languages and two 'small' European literatures. Special attention is paid to the functionality of the translation for the needs of contemporary Slovak child readers, i.e. its actuality or obsolescence, but the paper also focuses on the social and political circumstances in which this Croatian children's classic was translated into the Slovak language. It analyzes the linguistic aspects of the translation in reference to the original, and draws attention to the strengths and weaknesses (at the level of lexis and style) of this first, and so far the only attempt at making Hlapich the Apprentice accessible to a Slovak, not only children's, readership.

**Keywords:** children's literature, translation, Croatian, Slovak, actuality, obsolescence, Čudnovate zgode šegrta Hlapića