

Candidate's response to the review of the doctoral (PhD) dissertation

Reviewer: Dr. Éva Forintos

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Dissertation title: *A typology of East Slavic (Ukrainian and Russian) lexical borrowings in the Transcarpathian Hungarian contact variety*

Dear Dr. Éva Forintos,

Thank you very much for your thorough and supportive evaluation of my doctoral dissertation. I am grateful for your positive assessment of the empirical scope of the research, the systematic organisation of the dataset, the multidimensional typological framework, and the connection established between the linguistic findings and the historical and sociolinguistic context of Transcarpathia. Thank you as well for highlighting the practical relevance of the findings for lexicography, language documentation, language planning, translation, and editorial practice.

In response to your question concerning the transferability of the typological framework, I would distinguish between its general analytical structure and those components that were developed specifically for the Ukrainian–Russian–Hungarian contact situation in Transcarpathia.

The most transferable part of the framework is its multidimensional structure. The same basic analytical categories could be applied to other minority Hungarian varieties and, with appropriate adaptation, to other multilingual settings. These categories include the identification of immediate donor languages, intermediary and ultimate etymological sources, parts of speech, semantic fields, borrowing types, motivations for borrowing, patterns of phonetic and morphological adaptation, semantic changes, and cross-register variation.

The distinction between the immediate donor language and the ultimate etymological source is particularly transferable. A lexical item may originate historically from one language but enter a minority variety through another contact language. This is relevant not only in Transcarpathia but also in other multilingual regions where several languages have influenced one another over long periods.

The distinction between cultural and core borrowings is also broadly applicable. It makes it possible to determine whether a lexical item was borrowed primarily to designate a new object, institution, practice, or concept, or whether it entered the recipient language despite the existence of a broadly equivalent native expression. This distinction can be used in the study of virtually any minority or contact variety, although the classification of individual words will always depend on the local cultural and communicative context.

The analysis of adaptation patterns is similarly transferable. Phonological substitution, morphological integration, derivational productivity, semantic broadening, narrowing, metaphorical extension, and changes in evaluative meaning are general processes of lexical integration. The specific sounds and affixes involved will differ from one language pair to another, but the analytical principles remain applicable.

Register-based comparison is another important transferable component. The dissertation demonstrates that the distribution of borrowings may differ considerably across literary texts, news discourse, and social media discourse. A similar approach could be used to investigate whether particular semantic fields or borrowing types are associated with formal, informal,

institutional, spoken, written, or digitally mediated communication in other minority-language communities.

The combined use of quantitative and qualitative analysis is also transferable. Quantitative results can reveal general patterns, such as the most dominant etymological sources, semantic fields, or borrowing types, while qualitative analysis is needed to interpret these patterns in relation to historical developments, language policy, speaker practices, and identity. This combination is especially important in minority-language research because numerical distributions alone cannot explain why particular forms are used or what social meanings they may carry.

At the same time, several elements of the framework are specific to the Transcarpathian Ukrainian–Russian–Hungarian context.

The most context-specific component is the combined Ukrainian/Russian donor-language category. Ukrainian and Russian are closely related East Slavic languages, and many lexical items are formally identical or highly similar in the two languages. Moreover, speakers in Transcarpathia have historically encountered both languages in overlapping communicative domains. As a result, the exact donor language cannot always be identified with certainty. In other contact situations, such a dual donor-language category may be unnecessary.

The chronological classification is also strongly connected to the political history of Transcarpathia. The categories used in the dissertation reflect major historical periods, including the pre-Soviet, Soviet, and post-Soviet eras. The predominance of Soviet-period borrowings is closely connected to the incorporation of Transcarpathia into the Soviet Union and to the expansion of Russian in administration, education, employment, and military service. In another minority Hungarian region, the relevant historical periods would need to be defined differently according to changes in borders, state administration, education, migration, and language policy.

Some semantic fields identified in the corpus are also shaped by the local institutional context. Borrowings connected with Soviet administration, collective agriculture, military service, education, official documentation, and more recent Ukrainian state institutions reflect the lived experience of the Transcarpathian Hungarian community. In other multilingual regions, different semantic fields might be more prominent, depending on local economic structures, institutions, cultural practices, and patterns of language use.

The specific forms of phonological and morphological adaptation are also language-pair dependent. The general principles of adaptation are transferable, but the substitutions found between Ukrainian/Russian and Hungarian, as well as the use of particular Hungarian derivational suffixes with East Slavic stems, are characteristic of this contact configuration.

Finally, the sociolinguistic interpretation of the findings must remain context-sensitive. Borrowings may reflect historical experience, institutional pressure, communicative efficiency, group practices, or habitual bilingual language use. However, their presence should not automatically be interpreted as evidence of a particular ethnic, national, or political identity. This cautious principle is transferable, but the concrete social meanings associated with individual lexical items must be established separately in every community.

In summary, the framework is transferable primarily at the level of its analytical dimensions, classification principles, and combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. Its individual categories, chronological divisions, donor-language distinctions, and sociolinguistic interpretations must, however, be adapted to the linguistic ecology and historical development of each community.

A future comparative study could apply this framework to Hungarian varieties in Slovakia, Romania, Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, or Austria. Such research would make it possible to determine which borrowing patterns are general characteristics of minority Hungarian varieties and which result from specific historical, political, and linguistic circumstances.

Thank you once again for your careful evaluation, your positive assessment of the dissertation, and your thought-provoking question.

Berehove, 22 June 2026



Krisztián Váradi