

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

Reviewer: Dr. habil. Katalin P. Márkus

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

Dear Dr. habil. Katalin P. Márkus,

Thank you very much for your thorough, constructive, and highly supportive review of my doctoral dissertation. I am especially grateful for your positive assessment of the dissertation's empirical foundations, methodological design, structure, and contribution to contact linguistics, minority language research, and Hungarian linguistics. Your comments have helped me improve the dissertation considerably, both conceptually and formally.

In response to your earlier observation concerning the broad scope of the research questions and hypotheses, I clarified the aims of the dissertation. The purpose of the study is not to provide an exhaustive treatment of every linguistic, sociolinguistic, historical, and etymological dimension of East Slavic lexical borrowing. Rather, it seeks to establish a comprehensive and internally coherent analytical framework through which the principal characteristics of Ukrainian- and Russian-origin lexical elements in the Transcarpathian Hungarian contact variety can be described and classified.

I also clarified the status of hypotheses concerning, for example, the predominance of nouns and the high proportion of direct borrowings. These were not formulated as entirely new theoretical claims. Instead, they were intended to test whether tendencies widely described in international contact-linguistic scholarship are also observable in the specific historical, social, and linguistic context of Transcarpathian Hungarian.

Following your comments, I strengthened the presentation of the theoretical framework. I explained more explicitly why particular theoretical models and typologies were selected and how they complement one another in the analysis. Since no single model covers all the formal, semantic, etymological, chronological, and sociolinguistic dimensions of the corpus, the dissertation adopts an integrative approach. At the same time, I made it clearer that the theoretical chapter is methodologically selective rather than exhaustive.

I also revised the internal organisation of the theoretical and methodological chapters. Introductory overviews and clearer transitions were added to guide the reader through the different analytical levels and to show more directly how the theoretical concepts are applied in the empirical chapters.

The questions of transliteration and the representation of Ukrainian and Russian source forms were also clarified. In addition to applying internationally recognised conventions where appropriate, I retained Hungarian-based forms in cases where they reflect the actual phonological and orthographic integration of the borrowings into Transcarpathian Hungarian. This choice is particularly important from a contact-linguistic perspective because the dissertation analyses not only the source-language forms but also their adaptation and use in Hungarian discourse.

I am grateful for your positive assessment of the methodology and the corpus on which the dissertation is based. The corpus combines material from earlier contact-linguistic studies, literary

works, online news portals, social media, interviews, and other sources. This diversity made it possible to analyse the borrowings across different registers, periods, and communicative settings. One of the most important points raised in your earlier comments concerned the need for a deeper qualitative and sociolinguistic interpretation of the quantitative findings. In response, I expanded the discussion of the high proportion of borrowings that may be traced to both Ukrainian and Russian, as well as the dominance of lexical material associated with the Soviet period.

The large number of loanwords originating from both Ukrainian and Russian reflects the considerable structural similarity between the two East Slavic languages, but this pattern is also connected to the historical multilingualism of Transcarpathia. In many cases, it is impossible to identify a single donor language with complete certainty because speakers may have encountered formally similar lexical items through both Ukrainian and Russian. Therefore, the combined Ukrainian/Russian category is not merely the result of etymological uncertainty; it also reflects the region's complex history of language contact.

The dominance of Soviet-era lexical material can be explained by the profound political, administrative, educational, economic, and cultural changes that affected the Hungarian-speaking population of Transcarpathia during the Soviet period. A large number of East Slavic words entered local Hungarian vocabulary in connection with institutions, occupations, administrative procedures, everyday objects, and social practices that became widespread during this period. Many of these borrowings have remained in use after the collapse of the Soviet Union and have become integrated elements of the regional contact variety.

I also discussed generational and register-related differences more extensively. Older language users on social media and literary sources preserve a higher proportion of Russian-origin vocabulary, while contemporary news discourse contains a comparatively larger proportion of Ukrainian-origin items. This pattern reflects the gradual strengthening of Ukrainian in administration, education, public communication, and the media after Ukraine's independence. At the same time, the continued use of Russian-origin and mixed Ukrainian/Russian forms demonstrates that lexical change does not occur immediately after a political or institutional transition.

I have interpreted these findings cautiously. Lexical choices may indicate historical experience, habitual language practices, communicative domains, or generational background, but they cannot automatically be treated as direct indicators of ethnic, national, or political identity. The revised dissertation therefore distinguishes more clearly between observable linguistic patterns and their possible sociolinguistic interpretations.

I also thoroughly revised the references and formal aspects of the dissertation. Wherever possible, I consulted and cited original English-language publications, clarified the function of citations, removed unnecessary editorial information from in-text references, standardised abbreviations, and expanded the bibliography with more recent international research. These changes improved both the formal consistency of the dissertation and its connection to current international scholarship.

Your comments have contributed significantly to the final form of the dissertation. They encouraged me to define its aims more precisely, strengthen the theoretical connections between the models used, make the methodological procedures more transparent, and provide a deeper interpretation of the results.

Thank you once again for your careful reading of the dissertation, for your constructive recommendations, and for recommending the work for defence and the awarding of the PhD degree. I am deeply grateful for your professional guidance and positive evaluation.

Berehove, 22 June 2026

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