Evaluation of Attila Salamon's Doctoral (PhD) Dissertation
Multilingualism Doctoral School, Faculty of Humanities

Title: Hungarian-English Code-Switching: A comparative analysis of code-switching frameworks on morphosyntactic integration
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The dissertation submitted by Attila Salamon in 2026 investigates Hungarian-English bilingual speech using approximately 30 hours of podcast material from 24 episodes and 37 speakers, comparing 405 intraclausal constructions under the Matrix Language Frame (MLF) Model and the Poplackian variationist approach/Nonce Borrowing Hypothesis (NBH). Its principal strengths are the theory-neutral coding procedure and the direct application of two influential approaches to the same naturalistic corpus. The most persuasive general conclusion is that grammatical integration can be empirically clear while borrowing/code-switching classification remains theoretically indeterminate. The thesis brings together Hungarian-specific phenomena that make this language particularly informative for contact linguistics: extensive case morphology, plural and possessive marking, productive verbalisation, adjectival derivation, coverbs, vowel harmony, and richly ordered suffix sequences. It therefore documents not merely lexical Anglicisation but the productive grammatical treatment of English-origin material by Hungarian.

Literature review
The literature review demonstrates broad and appropriate knowledge of both foundational and recent scholarship. It progressively constructs the theoretical problem that motivates the empirical study. The dissertation engages with major works in code-switching, borrowing, bilingual processing, bilingual grammar and naturalistic corpus research, while also incorporating substantial Hungarian and Hungarian-English scholarship. It moves from general definitions of code-switching and bilingual language production to grammatical approaches, corpus-based research, Hungarian-English contact, morphosyntactic integration, typologically comparable language-contact situations, and a detailed comparison of the MLF and Poplackian traditions. The literature review shows convincingly that the same morphologically integrated item can receive different interpretations under the two theoretical traditions.

Originality of research questions
The four research questions are well-defined: they ask how English-origin material is integrated into Hungarian morphosyntax; how far the MLF Model and the Poplackian/NBH approach account for the constructions; and where the frameworks converge and diverge. Its originality therefore lies primarily in the Hungarian-English application, the breadth of morphological domains considered, the podcast corpus, and especially in the morphologically integrated multiword cases, rather than in inventing a comparative methodology.

Consistency of methodology
As far as methodological logic is concerned, the author first uses theory-neutral coding and only subsequently applies the two competing frameworks, the MLF and Poplackian interpretations. The candidate uses approximately 30 hours from 24 podcast episodes and 37 speakers, manually identifies and transcribes bilingual material, applies explicit inclusion/exclusion criteria, segments morphological structures, and defines coding

dimensions before theoretical classification. The podcast sampling, however, is purposive rather than probabilistic, meaning the corpus supports structural attestation rather than population-level generalisation. The author first describes something as ‘English-origin material’, for example, before deciding whether a particular framework would classify it as an Embedded Language item, a code-switch, a borrowing, or a nonce borrowing. This is exactly the right strategy for a dissertation whose object is partly the comparison of competing classifications. The terminology is introduced explicitly to avoid building theoretical conclusions into the coding stage.

Research findings and results

The results chapter is detailed and logically organized. The empirical findings of greatest importance are the pervasive Hungarian grammatical control. Among the 405 intraclausal constructions, 187 examples contain intraword integration, and the dissertation documents Hungarian case, number, possession, verbalizers, adjectival derivation, comparative morphology, nominalization and coverbs. One of the most interesting findings concerns the 35 morphologically integrated multiword English constructions. Rather than forcing them into an inappropriate category, the dissertation classifies their Poplackian contact status as indeterminate. The results are clearly organised around both linguistic phenomena and theoretical predictions, consequently they are convincing as corpus-internal findings and are presented with commendable theoretical caution.

As far as the future research section is concerned, particularly convincing are the proposals for matched Hungarian comparison data, better community-level evidence of lexical establishment, prosodic/acoustic investigation, speaker judgments, experimental work on the 35 integrated multiword expressions, and replication with other morphologically rich language pairs.

Conclusion

The conclusion directly returns to the research questions rather than merely summarising chapters. The candidate demonstrates extensive Hungarian structural integration, reports the MLF results, provides a more qualified conclusion concerning the Poplackian/NBH account, and then identifies precisely where the frameworks converge and diverge. The central conclusion – that morphosyntactic integration may be established more securely than borrowing/code-switching status – is well supported by the analysis. The strongest conclusion of the dissertation is not numerical: it is the proposition that the morphosyntactic structure of bilingual material can often be determined considerably more confidently than its theoretical classification as borrowing or code-switching. This is a valuable theoretical conclusion with relevance beyond Hungarian-English data.

Academic style, language and format

The dissertation is well organised and of an appropriate length for its focused research problem. The chapter organisation is particularly effective because the methods, results, discussion, limitations, conclusions and future research are clearly separated. It is written in highly proficient academic English and the argument remains clear throughout. Nevertheless, the manuscript requires systematic linguistic copyediting before final archival publication.

Overall assessment

The dissertation addresses a clearly defined and theoretically relevant problem, demonstrates substantial knowledge of bilingualism and code-switching research, uses a sizeable naturalistic corpus, operationalises two theoretical approaches on the same observations, and arrives at a defensible contribution. The candidate also shows commendable awareness of the

limitations of the corpus and explicitly restricts claims concerning representativeness, ungrammaticality, nonce status, phonology and framework ‘accuracy’.
I consider the dissertation to satisfy the scholarly requirements of a PhD dissertation in applied linguistics. It addresses a clearly defined research problem, demonstrates thorough knowledge of the relevant literature, employs an appropriate and carefully considered empirical methodology, contains original analysis, and reaches conclusions that are relevant both to Hungarian-English contact linguistics and to broader theoretical debates concerning bilingual morphosyntax.
The dissertation meets high academic standards, it is recommended for acceptance.

Question to the Candidate:

The podcast corpus provides researcher-unelicited speech but is not a probabilistic sample of Hungarian speakers. To what extent might topic, professional background, individual speakers or repeated lexical items account for the observed distributions? How would you design a follow-up corpus to test the generalizability of the findings?

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