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TYPES OF WAR-RELATED SLAVIC BORROWINGS IN TRANSCARPATHIAN HUNGARIAN

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Abstract. This article examines the structural types of 107 Ukrainian- and Russian-derived lexical items associated with the Russo–Ukrainian war in Transcarpathian Hungarian. Eight borrowing types are distinguished: direct, hybrid, semantic, stylistic, formal, secondary, and tertiary borrowings, as well as calques. Direct borrowings constitute the largest category (62 items; 57.9%), followed by secondary borrowings (13; 12.1%), calques (9; 8.4%), semantic and tertiary borrowings (7 each; 6.6%), hybrid borrowings (5; 4.7%), formal borrowings (3; 2.8%), and one stylistic borrowing (0.9%). The distribution reveals three complementary mechanisms: overt importation of Slavic material, productive Hungarian derivation from borrowed bases, and less visible replication through meaning, form, style, or translation. The findings demonstrate that wartime lexical change cannot be reduced to the simple transfer of foreign words: it also activates Hungarian word formation and creates parallel borrowed and translated designations.

Keywords: lexical borrowing; loanword typology; Russo–Ukrainian war; Slavic borrowings; Transcarpathian Hungarian.

1. Introduction. Periods of rapid political and institutional change often produce equally rapid lexical change [4]. Since 2013, and especially after the beginning of Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022, Hungarian speakers in Transcarpathia have encountered a large number of new Ukrainian military, administrative, educational, and civil-protection terms. Some of these forms have been transferred directly into local Hungarian usage, while others have been translated, semantically replicated, or used as bases for new Hungarian derivatives. The resulting vocabulary therefore provides a useful testing ground for a fine-grained typology of lexical borrowing.

The Transcarpathian Hungarian contact variety has developed through long-term interaction with Ukrainian and Russian [5]. The state language is present in official documentation, public administration, education, healthcare, and military procedures, while local Hungarian remains the principal language of everyday communication in many settlements near the Hungarian border. In such a setting, bilingual speakers do not merely alternate between complete linguistic systems. They also integrate individual lexical forms into Hungarian and reshape them according to Hungarian phonological, morphological, semantic, and stylistic patterns [3].

Classical approaches to borrowing distinguish between the importation of foreign material and the substitution of recipient-language material [2]. Direct loanwords represent the clearest form of importation, whereas semantic borrowings and calques

may leave no obvious foreign segment in the resulting Hungarian expression. Between these poles lie mixed and morphologically expanded formations [1]. A typology that recognises only direct loans and loan translations would therefore obscure important differences in how borrowed elements become productive within the recipient language.

Earlier research described Slavic vocabulary connected with the first one thousand days of the war and identified a broad range of military and administrative items in Transcarpathian Hungarian [6]. The present study has a deliberately narrower aim by asking one question: which structural types of borrowing occur in a 107-item war-related dataset, and what do their proportions reveal about the mechanisms of integration? This restricted focus makes it possible to treat borrowing types not as a minor descriptive variable but as the central object of analysis.

2. Data and analytical framework. The database contains 107 lexical items attested in Transcarpathian Hungarian literary works, articles from six Hungarian-language news portals in Transcarpathia, and more than five hundred social-media screenshots. Each item is supported by at least one authentic occurrence. The material includes both recent forms and older borrowings whose use became more frequent or more specialised in wartime discourse. Because the collection was created through targeted qualitative searches rather than a balanced corpus, the figures describe the internal composition of the dataset, not the frequency of the items in the entire speech community.

Each lexical item was assigned to one principal borrowing type. The classification is based on the relationship between the Slavic model and the Hungarian outcome, especially on three questions: whether donor-language form is overtly imported; whether Hungarian derivational morphology creates a new lexeme from a borrowed base; and whether the contact effect is realised through meaning, form, stylistic value, or literal translation. Inflection alone was not treated as the creation of a new borrowing type. Thus, a direct borrowing may receive Hungarian case endings or plural markers and still remain a direct borrowing. Secondary and tertiary status requires derivation or more complex morphological expansion.

Eight operational categories were used [5; 7]. Direct borrowings reproduce a Slavic lexeme, phrase, initialism, or acronym with no Hungarian derivational element. Hybrid borrowings combine an overt Slavic component with a Hungarian lexical component. Semantic borrowings add a contact-induced meaning to an existing Hungarian form, while stylistic borrowings preserve or reactivate a stylistic value under Slavic influence. Formal borrowings modify the shape of a Hungarian cognate or near-equivalent according to the donor-language form. Secondary borrowings contain a borrowed base and one productive Hungarian derivational element; tertiary borrowings contain several Hungarian word-forming elements or represent a further derivational stage. Calques reproduce a Slavic lexical or phrasal model by means of Hungarian material.

3. Distribution of the borrowing types. The distribution is strongly asymmetrical. Direct borrowings form an absolute majority, but the remaining categories are

sufficiently numerous to show that contact-induced lexical change operates through several mechanisms at the same time. Table 1 summarises the results.

Table 1.
Distribution of war-related Slavic borrowings by type

Borrowing type	Number	Share
Direct borrowing	62	57.9%
Hybrid borrowing	5	4.7%
Semantic borrowing	7	6.6%
Stylistic borrowing	1	0.9%
Formal borrowing	3	2.8%
Secondary borrowing	13	12.1%
Tertiary borrowing	7	6.6%
Calque	9	8.4%
Total	107	100%

The eight categories can also be reorganised into three broader groups. First, direct and hybrid borrowings contain overtly imported donor-language material and together account for 67 items (62.6%). Second, secondary and tertiary borrowings are Hungarian derivatives built from imported bases; together they account for 20 items (18.7%). Third, semantic, stylistic, formal, and calqued formations involve recipient-language material reshaped under Slavic influence; they likewise total 20 items (18.7%). The numerical symmetry of the latter two groups is noteworthy: morphological productivity and less visible replication are equally important secondary mechanisms, even though neither approaches the frequency of direct importation.

4. Direct and hybrid borrowings: overt importation. Direct borrowing is the default response when speakers repeatedly encounter a culture-specific designation in official communication and need a concise local label. The 62 direct borrowings include ordinary nouns such as *trivoga* ‘air-raid alert’, *oblik* ‘military records’, *brony* ‘temporary exemption from mobilisation’, and *uhiljant* ‘draft evader’. Multiword expressions may also be transferred directly, as in *vojennėj sztán* ‘martial law’. The category is therefore defined by the absence of Hungarian derivational word formation, not by the number of orthographic words involved.

Initialisms and acronyms considerably strengthen this category. Forms such as *ATO*, *TCK*, *VLK*, *BZVP*, *IPSZO*, *NMT*, *VPO*, and *ZSZU* are compact institutional labels whose full Ukrainian expansions would be cumbersome in everyday Hungarian conversation. Their written form can circulate through news portals, digital state services, official documents, and social media without being translated. Once adopted, they behave syntactically as Hungarian nouns: speakers attach case endings and plural markers according to Hungarian rules. Such inflection is strong evidence of grammatical accommodation, but it does not create a new lexical derivative and therefore does not alter their classification as direct borrowings.

The treatment of minor sound or spelling adjustments also requires care. A borrowed item need not reproduce every phonetic detail of the source language to count as direct. Regular substitution of unfamiliar sounds, Hungarian pronunciation of abbreviations, or orthographic adaptation is expected whenever a lexeme enters a new phonological system. The decisive issue is whether the lexical base itself has been imported. This makes direct borrowing a broad but coherent category encompassing both relatively transparent internationalisms and strongly local forms.

Hybrid borrowings, represented by five items (4.7%), combine imported and Hungarian lexical material within one designation. *VPO-tanúsítvány* ‘certificate confirming internally displaced person status’ joins the Ukrainian initialism *VPO* with the Hungarian noun *tanúsítvány* ‘certificate’. The form is neither a pure importation nor a full translation: the abbreviation preserves the official Ukrainian category, while the Hungarian component specifies the type of document. Hybridisation is especially useful when an official code or acronym must remain recognisable but requires explanation for Hungarian readers. It thus mediates between fidelity to the source institution and accessibility in the recipient language.

5. Secondary and tertiary borrowings: Hungarian morphological productivity. The most important evidence that recent Slavic elements are entering the Hungarian lexical system is the formation of derivatives. Secondary borrowings number 13 (12.1%), making them the second largest individual category. They arise when a direct loan serves as the base for one productive Hungarian derivational operation. The suffix *-s* is particularly frequent because it can form both relational adjectives and person-denoting nouns. *Trivoga* produces *trivogás* ‘connected with an air-raid alert’; *gruppa* produces *gruppás* ‘belonging to a disability group; a person classified in such a group’; *Berkut* produces *berkutos* ‘a member of, or relating to, the Berkut police unit’; and *TCK* produces *TCK-s* ‘an employee of, or relating to, a territorial recruitment centre’.

These derivatives are structurally Hungarian even though their bases are Slavic. They obey Hungarian suffix order, vowel-harmony conventions where applicable, and the syntactic behaviour of the resulting word class. The frequent dual use of *-s* derivatives as nouns and adjectives is particularly revealing. *TCK-s* may denote a person in one context and modify a noun in another. Borrowing therefore supplies not only a label but also a productive lexical base from which speakers create forms that were not necessarily present in the donor language.

Tertiary borrowings, seven items (6.6%), represent a further stage of morphological complexity. The label is used here for formations containing several Hungarian word-forming elements or for later derivatives built on an already integrated base. *Legruppázva* ‘assigned to a disability group for medical reasons’ combines the Hungarian verbal prefix *le-*, the borrowed noun *gruppa*, the denominal verb-forming suffix *-z*, and the adverbial-participial ending *-va*. Similarly, *dekommunizálva* ‘in accordance with decommunisation; decommunised’ reflects a sequence in which a borrowed or contact-supported nominal base enters a Hungarian verbal and participial pattern.

The distinction between secondary and tertiary borrowing is analytically useful because it captures different depths of morphological integration. A direct item can remain a specialised institutional label used mainly in official contexts. A secondary derivative shows that speakers can assign the base a new word class or participant meaning. A tertiary derivative shows that the base has entered a larger derivational chain. The combined 20 items in these two categories (18.7%) demonstrate that wartime vocabulary is not merely received passively. It is actively expanded through the resources of Hungarian grammar.

6. Indirect transfer: semantic, stylistic, formal, and calqued forms. Some of the clearest contact effects are also the least visibly foreign. Seven semantic borrowings (6.6%) consist of Hungarian forms that have acquired an additional meaning under the influence of a Slavic equivalent. *Komisszió*, an older Hungarian word for ‘committee’ or ‘commission’, is used in the analysed material specifically for the military medical commission that evaluates fitness for service. *Grafik* and *grafikon* may denote schedules in general, but in wartime usage they are frequently specialised as the colour-coded tables regulating planned electricity outages. The phonological material is not newly imported; what is transferred is the association between an existing form and a contextually salient meaning.

The single stylistic borrowing, *mobilizálás* ‘mobilisation’, illustrates another subtle process. The word is intelligible in general Hungarian, but the more usual standard-Hungarian term is *mozgósítás*. Constant exposure to Slavic equivalents reinforces the less usual Hungarian form and gives it neutral, current status in the contact variety. Stylistic borrowing thus concerns not a new denotation but a redistribution of register and frequency within a set of available Hungarian synonyms.

Formal borrowings, three items (2.8%), occupy the boundary between imported and recipient-language material. Their shape is altered towards the Slavic model even though Hungarian already has a cognate or closely related form. *Invalid* ‘a person with a disability or health impairment’, used instead of Hungarian *invalidus*, reflects Ukrainian invalid and Russian invalid. The contact effect is therefore encoded in form rather than in a wholly new lexical base or meaning. This category is important because it prevents all sound-level convergence from being incorrectly grouped with direct borrowing.

Calques formed the largest of the indirect categories: nine items (8.4%). They reproduce the structure or conceptual composition of a Slavic expression through Hungarian lexical material. Examples include *Tartalékos+*, mirroring the Ukrainian application name *Rezerv+*; *megtörhetetlenségi pont* ‘Point of Invincibility’; *Mennyei Század* ‘Heavenly Hundred’; and *nemzeti multidiszciplináris teszt* ‘National Multi-subject Test’. The abbreviation *TTSZTK* is a Hungarian initialism created from a translated institutional name and functions as a calqued alternative to the directly borrowed Ukrainian-based *TCK*.

Calquing is particularly characteristic of edited press language. Journalists often need to present Ukrainian institutions to readers who may recognise the original form but also expect Hungarian explanatory wording. A translation can consequently spread alongside the direct loan rather than replacing it. Because calques contain no overt

Slavic segment, their contact origin can be missed unless the analyst reconstructs the source model. They show that the visible foreignness of a word is not a reliable measure of the intensity of language contact.

7. Parallel forms and a continuum of integration. Several concepts occur in competing typological forms. *Brony* ‘temporary exemption from mobilisation’ coexists with the Hungarian calque *lefoglalás*; *TCK* with *TTSZTK*; and *TCK-s* with *TTSZTK-s*. These pairs represent alternative strategies rather than simple synonyms. The direct form preserves recognisability in Ukrainian administration, whereas the calque or translated abbreviation increases Hungarian transparency. Their coexistence is typical of terminology that has not yet stabilised.

The categories should consequently be interpreted as positions on a continuum, not as isolated boxes. At one end, a direct borrowing imports a donor-language form. A hybrid combines imported and Hungarian lexemes. Secondary and tertiary formations retain the imported base but subject it to increasingly productive Hungarian derivation. Formal, stylistic, and semantic borrowings reshape an existing Hungarian item under donor-language influence. Calques replace the donor form completely while replicating its structure. Movement along this continuum reflects different degrees and kinds of integration rather than a single linear scale of ‘foreignness’.

The distribution also suggests a division of labour between registers. Direct abbreviations are efficient in spontaneous interaction and in texts that assume familiarity with Ukrainian institutions. Derivatives often arise in colloquial or evaluative discourse because speakers need to refer to participants, attributes, or actions. Calques are favoured in explanatory and edited texts. This relationship between structural type and communicative function deserves further corpus-based investigation, but the present material already shows that borrowing strategy is partly conditioned by where and why a term is used.

8. Conclusions. The focused analysis of 107 war-related Slavic lexical items identifies eight borrowing types in Transcarpathian Hungarian. Direct borrowing is dominant, with 62 items (57.9%), but it does not exhaust the contact-induced processes found in the material. Hybrid formations combine official Slavic labels with Hungarian explanation; secondary and tertiary derivatives demonstrate productive morphological integration; semantic, stylistic, and formal borrowings reshape existing Hungarian vocabulary; and calques reproduce Ukrainian models through Hungarian lexical material.

Two findings are particularly significant. First, 20 items (18.7%) are secondary or tertiary derivatives, confirming that borrowed bases actively participate in Hungarian word formation. Second, another 20 items (18.7%) belong to the less overt categories of semantic, stylistic, formal, and calqued transfer. Wartime borrowing is therefore both visible and hidden: it can introduce a recognisably Slavic form, but it can also alter the meaning, stylistic distribution, shape, or internal structure of Hungarian expressions.

The typological profile supports a dynamic view of lexical contact. New designations may first enter as direct loans, acquire Hungarian derivatives, and later compete with translated forms. The coexistence of *TCK* and *TTSZTK*, or *Rezerv*+ and

Tartalékos+, captures terminology in the process of stabilisation. Longitudinal research will be needed to determine which variants remain temporary products of wartime discourse and which become permanent elements of the Transcarpathian Hungarian lexicon.

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