ESUKA – JEFUL 2026, 17–2: 183–213

THE IMPACT OF THE RUSSO–UKRAINIAN WAR ON LEXICAL BORROWING IN THE TRANSCARPATHIAN HUNGARIAN CONTACT VARIETY

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Abstract. The Transcarpathian variety of Hungarian is characterised by extensive lexical borrowing from Ukrainian and Russian. This study examines the lexical impact of the Russo–Ukrainian war on Transcarpathian Hungarian through a quantitative and qualitative analysis of 107 Slavic-derived lexical items associated with the conflict and its sociopolitical consequences. The items are classified by grammatical category, semantic field, donor language, borrowing motivation and type, chronological period, and semantic change. The findings reveal a predominance of Ukrainian-derived items (70.1%), cultural borrowings (83.2%), and direct borrowings (57.9%). They also highlight the role of Ukrainian institutional terminology, including acronyms and initialisms, and the morphological and semantic adaptation of Slavic elements. The results illustrate how sociopolitical transformations are reflected in the war-related vocabulary of a minority contact variety.

Keywords: Hungarian contact variety, lexical borrowing, Russo–Ukrainian war, Slavic loanwords, Transcarpathia, Ukraine

DOI: https://doi.org/10.12697/jeful.2026.17.2.06

1. Introduction

On 24 February 2022, Russia launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine, following years of political confrontation that intensified with the Euromaidan protests in November 2013. The subsequent period saw armed conflict in eastern Ukraine, the removal of Soviet-era monuments and communist-era place names, and administrative, language-policy, and educational reforms affecting minority communities and the public

use of Russian (cf. Csernicskó et al. 2023; Katchanovski 2026). These developments have profoundly affected everyday life and language use in Ukraine.

Numerous studies have examined neologisms emerging in Ukrainian and English in response to the Russo–Ukrainian war (see Aleksandruk, Palchevska & Hubych 2023; Hrydzhuk, Horodylovska & Florko 2025; Ivanenko 2025; Konopelkina & Bezrodnykh 2024; Kramar & Ilchenko 2023; Tkach & Tkach 2023), but relatively little attention has been paid to their impact on the vocabulary of the Transcarpathian Hungarian minority. Two earlier studies (Váradi & Csernicskó 2025; Csernicskó & Váradi 2026) examined 60 and 62 war-related Slavic lexical items, respectively, using the Termini Online Hungarian Dictionary (Benő et al. 2007), which documents contact-induced vocabulary in Hungarian varieties spoken outside Hungary. Both adopted a primarily qualitative approach, classifying borrowings by historical events and semantic domains. The items examined included expressions associated with the Euromaidan protests (e.g., *tyituska* 'hired provocateur'), the conflict in eastern Ukraine (e.g., *ATO* 'Anti-Terrorist Operation'), decommunisation and derussification (e.g., *dekommunizáció* 'decommunisation'), military mobilisation (e.g., *poveszka* 'draft notice', *TCK* 'territorial recruitment and social support centre'), medical examinations (e.g., *VLK* 'military medical commission'), exemption from military service (e.g., *vidsztrocska* 'deferment from military service'), education (e.g., *nemzeti multidiszciplináris teszt* 'National Multi-subject Test'), and everyday life (e.g., *trivoga* 'air-raid alert', *grafik* 'power-outage timetable'). These studies documented the emergence of new lexical items, semantic changes in established borrowings, and the growing influence of Ukrainian, particularly through institutional terminology and abbreviations replacing or coexisting with earlier Russian-derived forms.

Building on this research, the present study examines 107 war-related Slavic lexical items collected from literary works by Transcarpathian Hungarian authors, local Hungarian-language news portals, and social media posts and comments. Unlike the earlier studies, it combines quantitative and qualitative approaches to analyse grammatical category and structure, semantic field, donor language, borrowing motivation and type, chronological period, and semantic change. This broader empirical and analytical framework provides a more detailed account of how the Russo–Ukrainian war and related sociopolitical

transformations are reflected in the vocabulary of the Transcarpathian Hungarian contact variety.

2. Theoretical framework

Following the Treaty of Trianon in 1920, large territories of the former Kingdom of Hungary became part of neighbouring states, leaving more than three million Hungarians outside Hungary's new borders (Sadecki 2020). Hungarian minority communities continue to exist in Austria, Croatia, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Ukraine. Since the political transformations of 1989–1991, cross-border Hungarian varieties have attracted increasing sociolinguistic attention (Csernicskó & Fenyvesi 2012: 22–23). Hungarian is consequently regarded as a pluricentric language, with regional varieties used in public and official domains across several countries (Lanstyák 1998; Vančo et al. 2020).

Cross-border Hungarian varieties differ from standard Hungarian particularly in terms of vocabulary. In the western Ukrainian region of Transcarpathia, these differences are largely attributable to Ukrainian and Russian borrowings (Gazdag 2021; Váradi 2025, 2026a). According to Ukraine's last official census (2001), Transcarpathia had a predominantly Ukrainian population (80.5%), while Hungarians constituted its largest ethnic minority, numbering 151,516 (12.1%) and living primarily near the Hungarian border (Csernicskó et al. 2023: 22–24; Molnár D. 2018: 150). Since the outbreak of the Russo–Ukrainian war, emigration among Transcarpathian Hungarians, partly driven by fears of conscription, and the arrival of internally displaced persons from other Ukrainian regions have further altered the region's demographic composition (Csernicskó & Gazdag 2023; Erőss, Kovály & Tátrai 2024).

Slavic influence on Transcarpathian Hungarian has been investigated for several decades. Rot (1967, 1968) examined Hungarian–Ukrainian and Hungarian–Russian bilingualism, particularly borrowings associated with Soviet institutions, while Fodó (1973) analysed 31 lexical items. Kótyuk (2007) documented 247 Ukrainian borrowings from 18 settlements in the Uzhhorod district, examining their etymological, phonological, and semantic characteristics and demonstrating their integration into Hungarian word-formation processes through native derivational suffixes.

Subsequent dialectological and sociolinguistic research expanded this perspective. Lizanec's (1992, 1996, 2003) three-volume *Atlas of the Hungarian Dialects of Transcarpathia* and the two-volume *Dictionary of the Hungarian Dialects of Transcarpathia* (Lizanec & Horváth 2012, 2013) document extensive regional lexical variation and Slavic influence. Other studies have explored borrowing alongside code-switching, emphasising the roles of bilingual competence, communicative context, and the functional distribution of languages (Csernicskó 1998; Márku 2013).

Quantitative investigations have provided further evidence of contact-induced vocabulary. Krajnik (2010) classified 256 lexical items collected through an online questionnaire, while Gazdag (2010) identified 150 borrowings in 75 sociolinguistic interviews. In his subsequent monograph, Gazdag (2021) analysed 581 items, of which 65.2% were classified as having shared Ukrainian/Russian origin (Gazdag 2021: 146), highlighting the difficulty of distinguishing between these closely related donor languages. These studies also confirmed the predominance of nouns among Slavic borrowings.

Research has additionally documented such borrowings in written and digital communication. Gazdag (2013) identified 166 state-language borrowings in five Transcarpathian Hungarian newspapers, while Bartha and Márku (2016) and Csuka (2021) investigated their occurrence in online communication. Literary texts provide further evidence: Ferenci (2025) identified 90 Slavic borrowings in the journal *Együtt*, and Gazdag (2023) examined their stylistic functions in regional literature. These findings demonstrate that Slavic lexical elements occur across spoken, journalistic, literary, and digital contexts.

The historical development of these borrowings reflects changing political and linguistic conditions. Lizanec (1993: 51–54) distinguished between older Ukrainian (Rusyn) elements adopted before 1945, primarily associated with traditional rural life (e.g., *polonina* 'mountain pasture', *holupci* 'stuffed cabbage', *druzsba* 'best man at a wedding'), and borrowings acquired after 1945, when Russian became increasingly influential through Soviet education, administration, and employment. Examples of the latter include *gyetszád* 'kindergarten', *csájnyik* 'teapot', and *batarejka* 'flashlight battery'. Lizanec (1993) observed that comparatively few Ukrainian-derived elements entered the local Hungarian dialects during this period.

Following Ukraine's independence in 1991, Ukrainian gradually gained prominence in official communication. Subsequent political developments, including the Euromaidan protests, decommunisation, derussification, and the Russo–Ukrainian war, contributed to the emergence of further Ukrainian-derived expressions, particularly in political, military, and administrative vocabulary (Csernicskó & Márku 2021, 2022; Váradi & Csernicskó 2025; Csernicskó & Váradi 2026). Thus, changes in the composition of borrowed vocabulary may reflect broader sociopolitical transformations.

Lexical borrowing in situations of unequal sociopolitical power often involves the adoption of elements from socially dominant languages (Dawson & Phelan 2016: 496). Its motivations, however, extend beyond dominance and prestige to communicative needs, linguistic economy, bilingualism, and cultural differences (Winford 2010: 177). Lexical gaps arise when speakers encounter unfamiliar concepts lacking established designations in their language (Weinreich 1953: 56; Matras & Adamou 2020: 243). Relatedly, Pavlenko (2009: 138) emphasises conceptual non-equivalence between languages, which may encourage borrowing rather than lengthy explanations or approximate translations.

Haspelmath (2009: 46–48) distinguishes cultural borrowings, which designate culturally specific concepts lacking conventional equivalents, from core borrowings, which are adopted despite the availability of existing expressions. The distinction is not always clear-cut, since translation equivalents may differ in meaning or communicative function. Borrowing may also lead to the coexistence of donor-language forms and native equivalents (Varella 2019: 53–58). Backus's (2001) specificity hypothesis suggests that semantically specific expressions are particularly susceptible to borrowing, while Matras (2007) emphasises the utilitarian motivation for adopting terminology associated with particular institutions and activities.

These mechanisms are particularly relevant to Transcarpathian Hungarian. Ukrainian administrative, educational, healthcare, and military institutions frequently involve concepts lacking concise or widely established Hungarian equivalents (Kótyuk 1995: 9). Slavic-derived expressions may therefore facilitate precise and economical communication. However, borrowing also occurs when Hungarian equivalents exist, owing to speakers' exposure to official terminology,

bilingual communicative practices, or established regional conventions (Csernicskó 1995: 139–140; Kótyuk 1991).

The persistence of Slavic borrowings must also be considered in relation to language attitudes and standard Hungarian. Despite close linguistic and cultural ties with Hungary, Transcarpathian Hungarians regularly communicate within Ukrainian institutional settings. Regional borrowings may therefore remain conventional and communicatively useful even when standard Hungarian equivalents are available (cf. Csernicskó 1998; Márku 2013; Gazdag 2021). Their use does not necessarily imply the absence of puristic attitudes, since lexical choices may vary according to context and interlocutors.

Bilingual speakers may employ direct borrowing, loan translation (calquing), or existing Hungarian equivalents to designate concepts associated with the donor language. For example, Ukrainian *мобілізація* [*mobilizatsiia*] 'mobilisation' reinforces the regional use of *mobilizálás*, whereas *mozgósítás* is more common in standard Hungarian. Similarly, *buszifikáció* 'forced mobilisation using minibuses' coexists with the Hungarian formation *buszosítás*. These choices may depend on communicative context, conventional usage, and exposure to Ukrainian (cf. Haspelmath 2009; Matras 2020). Although such strategies also existed before the war (Lizanec 1993; Gazdag 2021), the available data do not establish whether their relative frequencies have changed. This would require comparable pre-war and wartime corpora.

The distinction between established borrowings and occasional bilingual insertions is likewise not always straightforward. Phonological or morphological adaptation alone does not demonstrate conventionalisation (Haspelmath 2009: 40–41), while borrowing and code-switching may be viewed as related phenomena along a continuum (Matras 2020). The present dataset therefore includes both established Slavic borrowings and more recent innovations whose conventionalisation remains uncertain.

Matras (2020) distinguishes *matter replication*, involving the adoption of linguistic forms, from *pattern replication*, in which structural or semantic patterns are reproduced through recipient-language resources (cf. Haspelmath 2009: 38–40). The loanword *trivoga* 'air-raid alert' (Ukrainian *тривога* [*tryvoha*] 'alarm; air-raid alert') illustrates matter replication, whereas *megtörhetetlenségi pont* 'Point of Invincibility' (Ukrainian *пункт незламності* [*punkt nezlamnosti*]) exemplifies

pattern replication through calquing. Hybrid formations, such as *VPO-tanúsítvány* ‘certificate confirming internally displaced person status’, may combine both mechanisms.

Related theoretical approaches include Johanson’s (2002) *code-copying* framework and Matras’s (2020) concept of *replication*, both emphasising the reproduction of linguistic material or patterns rather than their literal transfer between languages. Nevertheless, the present study retains the established term *borrowing* for consistency with Hungarian contact-linguistic research. Eight borrowing types are distinguished, with operational definitions provided in Section 3 and examples in Section 4.6.

Building on this theoretical and empirical background, the present study examines 107 Slavic-derived lexical items associated with the Russo–Ukrainian war to investigate how sociopolitical transformations are reflected in the vocabulary of the Transcarpathian Hungarian contact variety.

3. Aims and methodology

This study examines Slavic lexical borrowings that emerged or gained prominence in Transcarpathian Hungarian in connection with the Russo–Ukrainian war and its sociopolitical consequences. It addresses four research questions:

1. What proportions of Ukrainian, Russian, and shared Ukrainian/Russian-origin elements can be identified in the war-related dataset?
2. Which types of borrowing are most characteristic of war-related vocabulary?
3. In which semantic fields are these borrowings concentrated?
4. What types of semantic change can be observed among newly attested and previously documented borrowings?

The dataset comprises 107 distinct Slavic-derived lexical items collected from three source types: literary works by Transcarpathian Hungarian authors, articles published on regional Hungarian-language news portals, and social media posts and comments. The material primarily documents Hungarian-language communication in Transcarpathia between the Euromaidan protests of 2013 and June 2026,

although earlier literary sources were also examined to identify established borrowings and changes in their meanings.

The literary material consists of twelve works published between 2009 and 2024, including standalone volumes, poems and short stories published in the literary journal *Együtt*, and contributions to other literary periodicals and online platforms, such as *Kárpátaljai Hírmondó* and *Helyőrség Online*. These sources were selected for their representation of regional Hungarian language use and relevant sociopolitical experiences. The complete list of works is provided in the accompanying dataset (see Váradi 2026b).

Press data were collected through targeted keyword searches of six Transcarpathian Hungarian news portals: *Kárpátalja.ma*, *Kárpáti Igaz Szó*, *Kárpátalja*, *KárpátHír*, *Kárpát.in.ua*, and *Kárpátinfo.net*. Relevant articles were identified using search terms associated with the war and its consequences, and occurrences of Slavic-derived lexical items were manually examined and recorded.

Social media examples were collected primarily from Hungarian-language Facebook posts and comments in groups discussing border crossings and everyday affairs in Berehove, a Hungarian-majority town in Transcarpathia. The material comprises more than 500 screenshots documenting posts and comments published between 2013 and 2026. Screenshots preserved the original linguistic context and spelling of the borrowings. Relevant expressions were manually transcribed and checked against the original material without automated text recognition. Personal information, including names, profile pictures, and telephone numbers, was removed from the screenshots before their inclusion in the research collection.

The 107 lexical items were identified through targeted collection rather than a balanced or representative corpus. Of these, 11 (10.3%) were attested in literary works, 84 (78.5%) in news articles, and 79 (73.8%) in social media material. Since individual items may occur in multiple source categories, these figures are not additive. Moreover, the source types represent different units of material and cannot be compared directly in terms of corpus size or lexical frequency. The uneven distribution partly reflects the prominence of war-related political, military, and administrative terminology in news reporting and social media communication. The sources were therefore used to document lexical

occurrence and context rather than to compare normalised frequencies across registers.

The dataset was compiled as part of a broader investigation of Ukrainian- and Russian-derived vocabulary in Transcarpathian Hungarian (see Váradi 2026a). Items were selected if they were associated with the Revolution of Dignity, Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014, the armed conflict in the Donbas region, decommunisation and derussification, or the full-scale invasion launched on 24 February 2022. Previously established borrowings that acquired new meanings during the war were also included (cf. Csernicskó & Váradi 2026: 62–63). Each item is supported by at least one authentic example of use. The annotated lexical database, including meanings, linguistic classifications, and contextual examples, is available on Zenodo (Váradi 2026b).

The dataset includes both nonce and established borrowings (cf. Muysken 1995: 190; Poplack, Sankoff & Miller 1988: 52). Following Durkin (2020: 169), lexical conventionalisation is understood as a gradual process in which an initially occasional form may become established through repeated use. To distinguish borrowings from occasional code-switches, we considered phonological and morphological adaptation, recurrence across sources, and evidence of conventionalised usage. However, none of these criteria alone establishes whether an item has become an established borrowing (Haspelmath 2009: 40–41; Matras 2020; Wohlgemuth 2009: 53).

The lexical items were classified according to seven criteria:

– **Grammatical category and structure:** noun, verb, adjective, adverb, noun phrase, verb phrase, verbless exclamatory clause, or dual-class item.
– **Semantic field:** military, mobilisation, politics, geography, history, occupations, refugees, law enforcement, judiciary, exemption from military service, healthcare, documents, education, energy supply, everyday life, information technology, public administration, or transport.
– **Donor language:** Ukrainian, Russian, or shared Ukrainian/Russian origin.
– **Motivation for borrowing:** core borrowing, cultural borrowing, or both.

– **Chronological period:** pre-Maidan (before November 2013), Maidan and Donbas war (November 2013–February 2022), or full-scale invasion (from 24 February 2022).
– **Type of borrowing:** direct, hybrid, semantic, formal, stylistic, secondary, or tertiary borrowing, or calque.
– **Semantic change:** no documented semantic change, semantic broadening, semantic narrowing, amelioration, or pejoration.

The chronological classification reflects the available evidence of documented use or increased prominence rather than necessarily indicating the precise date of borrowing. Individual items may have circulated in spoken language before their earliest identified written attestations.

The eight borrowing types were distinguished according to their formal and semantic characteristics (cf. Váradi 2026a: 20–22). Direct borrowings adopt foreign lexical forms, whereas hybrid borrowings combine donor- and recipient-language elements. Semantic borrowings introduce new meanings into existing Hungarian words, while formal and stylistic borrowings involve changes in word form or stylistic status under Slavic influence. Secondary and tertiary borrowings result from the morphological derivation of Slavic stems using Hungarian affixes, whereas calques reproduce donor-language expressions through Hungarian lexical elements. These operational categories may occasionally overlap.

The database also records lexical variants and explanatory notes where necessary to clarify individual classifications.

4. Results

The 107 war-related Slavic borrowings are analysed below according to the seven criteria outlined in Section 3, combining quantitative findings with qualitative observations.

4.1. Classification by grammatical category and structure

Nouns are generally considered the most readily borrowed word class (Muysken 2010: 271; Weinreich 1953: 35). Previous studies of

Transcarpathian Hungarian confirm their predominance: nouns accounted for 90.6% of the 256 items documented by Krajnik (2010), 87.4% of the 581 borrowings recorded by Gazdag (2021), and 69.6% of the 247 items examined by Kótyuk (2007).

The present dataset shows a similar pattern. Of the 107 lexical items, 76 are nouns (71%), such as *blokposzt* 'military checkpoint', while 11 (10.3%) function as both nouns and adjectives, such as *PMZS-s* '1. a Ukrainian citizen whose passport contains an endorsement indicating permanent residence abroad; 2. relating to such a person or passport'. The remaining items comprise seven noun phrases (6.5%), such as *vojennéj sztán* 'martial law'; five adjectives (4.7%), such as *deruszifikációs* 'related to derussification'; and two items (1.9%) each in four categories: verbs (*buszifikál* 'to forcibly mobilise using minibuses'), verb phrases (*ucsoton áll* 'to be registered in military records'), adverbs (*legruppázva* 'assigned to a disability group'), and verbless exclamatory clauses (*Szlava Ukrajini* 'Glory to Ukraine!') (see Figure 1).

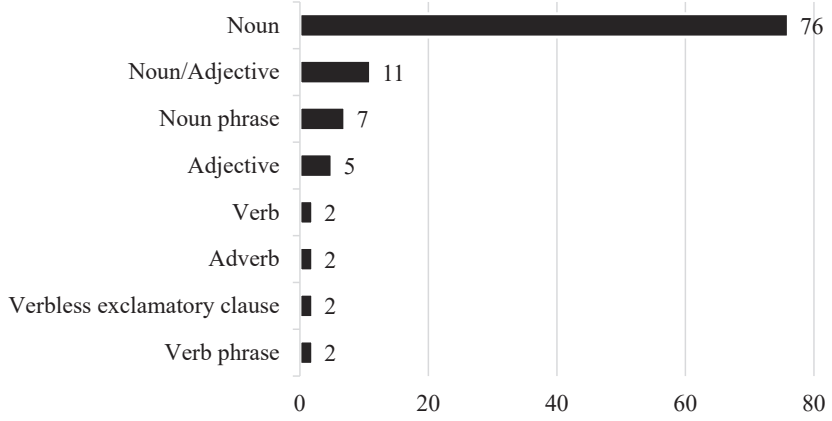


Figure 1. Distribution of loanwords by grammatical category and structure.

The dataset includes eleven multiword expressions (10.3%): seven noun phrases, two verb phrases, and two verbless exclamatory clauses, presented separately in Figure 1. These partly reflect the borrowing or calquing of Ukrainian political, historical, educational, and administrative terminology, including *megtörhetetlenségi pont* 'Point of Invincibility', *nemzeti multidiszciplináris teszt* 'National Multi-subject Test',

and *Mennyei Század* ‘Heavenly Hundred’. Such expressions typically represent cultural borrowing (Haspelmath 2009: 46; see Section 4.4).

Slavic stems may also acquire Hungarian derivational affixes, demonstrating their morphological integration into the contact variety (Csernicskó 1995: 141–143; Kótyuk 2007: 120–134). Derivatives formed with the Hungarian suffix *-s* account for 12 items (11.2% of the dataset), representing 92.3% of the 13 secondary borrowings. Depending on context, these forms may function as adjectives, nouns, or both. For example, *gruppa* ‘disability group’ → *gruppás* ‘person with a recognised degree of disability’, and *TCK* ‘territorial recruitment and social support centre’ → *TCK-s* ‘employee of, or relating to, a military recruitment office’.

4.2. Classification by semantic field

The 107 lexical items were assigned to 18 partly overlapping semantic categories (see Figure 2). The most represented fields were mobilisation (33 items), politics (27), military affairs (19), exemption from military service (15), and public administration (15). Military affairs encompass military operations, activities, and infrastructure (e.g., *blokposzt* ‘military checkpoint’), whereas mobilisation refers to conscription, recruitment, and military registration (e.g., *poveszka* ‘draft notice’). Exemption from military service covers deferment and avoidance of military service (e.g., *vidsztrocska* ‘deferment from military service’). Although these categories may overlap, they represent distinct aspects of military-related language use. Their prominence reflects the importance of institutional contexts in which Ukrainian is the primary language of communication (cf. Csernicskó et al. 2023: 94–96).

The war has also brought changes in education and everyday life. In higher education admissions, the External Independent Evaluation was replaced by the National Multi-subject Test (*nemzeti multidiszciplináris teszt*), a computer-based examination whose shorter format reduces the risk of disruption by air-raid alerts (Hires-László & Váradi 2025: 339–340).

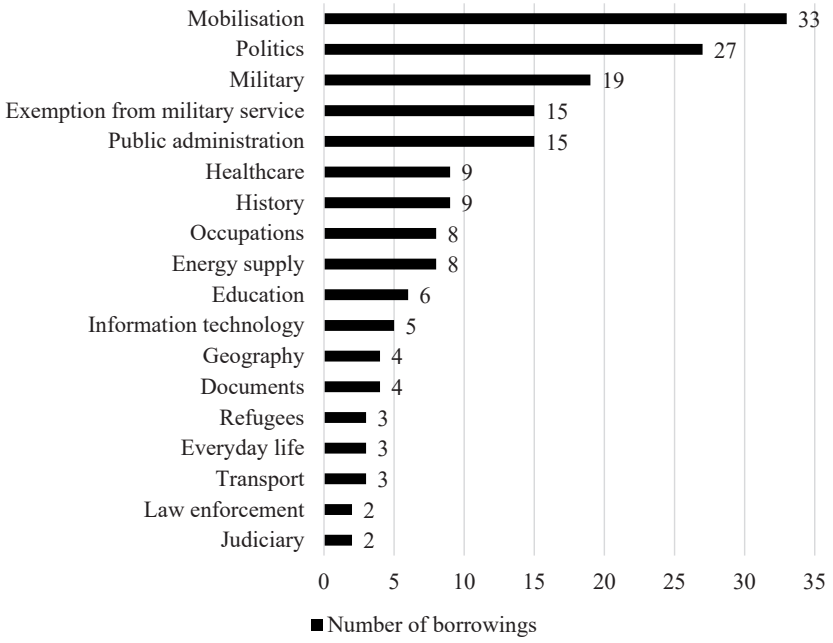


Figure 2. Number of loanwords by semantic field.[1]

Wartime power outages have introduced new uses for established loanwords. *Grafik* and *grafikon*, previously referring to schedules more generally, now also denote power-outage timetables, while *cserha* and *pidcserha* designate consumer groups and subgroups subject to scheduled outages. Points of Invincibility (*megtörhetetlenségi pont*) provide essential services, including electricity, drinking water, and internet access, during prolonged disruptions.

Air-raid alerts have likewise become part of everyday life. The Ukrainian-derived loanword *trivoga* 'air-raid alert' is attested in both literary texts and social media communication, as illustrated by the following literary example:

(1) *…meg akartam állítani az időt, eltelt még egy nap, eltelt még egy hét, eltelt még egy hét, kevesebb* ***trivoga*** *volt, a napok egyformák voltak…* (Sz. Kárpáthy 2024).

1 Individual lexical items may belong to more than one semantic field; therefore, category totals exceed the number of distinct borrowings (N = 107).

> '…I wanted to stop time; another day passed, another week passed, and then another week; there were fewer *trivogas*, and the days were all the same…'
> *trivoga* < Ukrainian *тривога* [*tryvoha*] 'alarm; air-raid alert'

The lexical items and contextual example discussed above illustrate how the effects of the war on education, public services, and everyday life are reflected in the vocabulary of Transcarpathian Hungarian (cf. Csernicskó & Váradi 2026; Váradi & Csernicskó 2025).

4.3. Classification by donor language

During the Soviet period, Russian exerted considerable influence on Transcarpathian Hungarian, particularly in institutional and administrative vocabulary (Csernicskó 1998: 213; Lizanec 1993: 54). Nevertheless, earlier studies found that borrowings of shared Ukrainian/Russian origin formed the largest category, partly because many lexical forms are identical or similar in the two donor languages. Such items accounted for 65.2% of Gazdag's (2021: 146) dataset, 65.7% of Márku's (2013: 240–243), and 72.3% of Váradi's (2023: 121–122).

In contrast, Ukrainian-derived borrowings predominate in the present war-related dataset: 75 of the 107 items (70.1%) are Ukrainian, eight (7.5%) are Russian, and 24 (22.4%) are of shared Ukrainian/Russian origin. Figure 3 compares these results with those of Gazdag (2021) and Váradi (2026a).

Gazdag (2021: 146) classified 5.9% of his 581 borrowings as Ukrainian, 21.3% as Russian, 65.2% as shared Ukrainian/Russian, and 7.6% as hybrid formations. In Váradi's (2026a) dataset of 1,641 items, the corresponding proportions for Ukrainian, Russian, and shared Ukrainian/Russian origin were 16.4%, 22.8%, and 60.8%, respectively. The predominance of Ukrainian-derived items in the present study may reflect the growing prominence of Ukrainian in war-related terminology, particularly following the Euromaidan protests, decommunisation, and derussification (cf. Váradi & Csernicskó 2025: 125). However, differences in thematic scope, sampling procedures, and classification criteria prevent direct statistical comparisons or conclusions about a general historical shift.

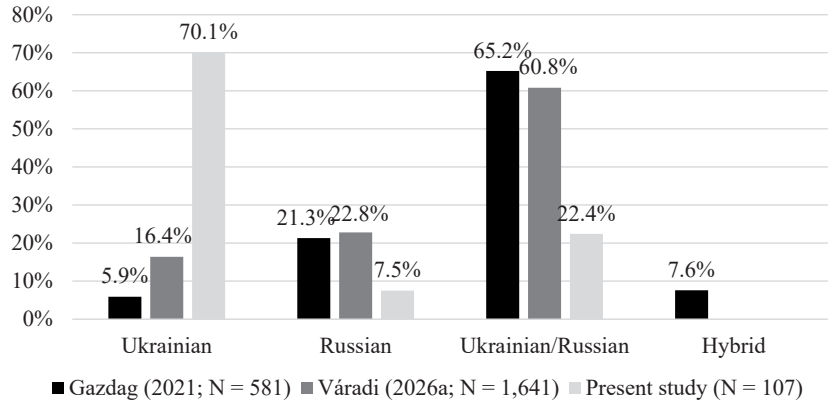


Figure 3. Distribution of Slavic borrowings by donor language in Gazdag (2021), Váradi (2026a), and the present study.

Changes in institutional terminology illustrate the coexistence of older Russian-derived and newer Ukrainian designations (Csernicskó & Váradi 2026: 64). The Russian-derived *vojenkomát* 'military recruitment office' originates from *военкомат* [*voenkomat*], an abbreviation of *военный комиссариат* [*voennyi komissariat*] 'military commissariat'. Alongside this established term and its derivative *vojenkomátos* 'recruitment office employee', newer expressions based on the Ukrainian initialism *ТЦК* [*TTsK*], from *територіальний центр комплектування та соціальної підтримки* [*terytorialnyi tsentr komplektuvannia ta sotsialnoi pidtrymky*] 'territorial recruitment and social support centre', have become prominent. Transcarpathian Hungarian variants include *TCK*, *RTCK*, and *TTSZTK*, together with the derivatives *TCK-s* and *TTSZTK-s*.

Similarly, the Russian-derived *ucsot* (Russian *учёт* [*uchyot*] 'registration; record-keeping') coexists with Ukrainian-derived *oblik* (Ukrainian *облік* [*oblik*] 'registration; accounting') in references to military records. Such variation illustrates the continued presence of established Russian-derived vocabulary alongside newer Ukrainian-based terminology.

The full-scale invasion has also brought Ukrainian neologisms into war-related discourse (cf. Aleksandruk, Palchevska & Hubych 2023; Hrydzhuk, Horodylovska & Florko 2025; Tkach & Tkach 2023). Examples include *buszifikáció* (Ukrainian *бусифікація* [*busyfikatsiia*])

'forced mobilisation using minibuses', *ljudolov* (Ukrainian *людолов* [*liudolov*]) 'manhunter', referring pejoratively to military recruitment officers, and *uhiljant* (Ukrainian *ухилянт* [*ukhyliant*]) 'draft evader'.

Ukrainian-derived initialisms and acronyms are also prominent in the dataset. They designate institutions (*CNSZ* 'National Resistance Centre'), military training (*BZVP* 'basic combined-arms training'), information warfare (*IPSZO* 'information-psychological operation'), state bodies (*NABU* 'National Anti-Corruption Bureau of Ukraine'), medical administration (*VLK* 'military medical commission'), and military operations (*OOSZ* 'Joint Forces Operation'). Although Slavic-derived abbreviations were already documented in earlier research (Borbély 2000; Csernicskó, Hires-László & Márku 2010: 83), the present data highlight their role in the adoption of contemporary Ukrainian institutional terminology.

4.4. Classification by motivation for borrowing

Following Haspelmath (2009: 46–48) and Myers-Scotton (2002: 239), the borrowings were classified as core or cultural. Core borrowings are adopted despite the availability of established Hungarian equivalents, whereas cultural borrowings designate concepts that lack conventional or fully equivalent expressions in the recipient language.

Cultural borrowings predominate in the dataset, accounting for 89 of the 107 items (83.2%; see Figure 4). Examples include *ATO* 'Anti-Terrorist Operation; conflict zone in eastern Ukraine', *Dzsura* 'nationwide military-patriotic competition for children and young people', and *Oberih* 'state register of conscripts'. The predominance of this category highlights the importance of naming culture-specific military, political, and administrative concepts. However, the study did not directly investigate speakers' motivations or language attitudes.

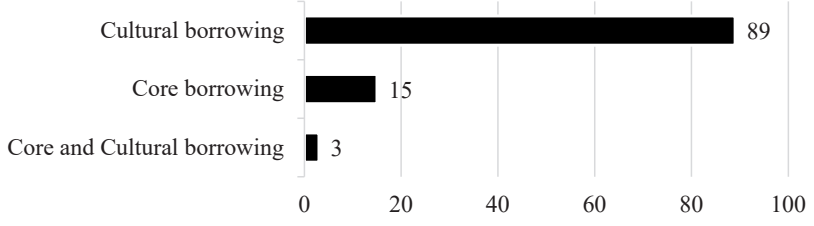


Figure 4. Distribution of loanwords by motivation for borrowing.

Three items (2.8%) were classified as both core and cultural borrowings because they combine general and institution-specific meanings. These include *grafik* and *grafikon*, whose wartime uses were discussed in Section 4.2, and *gruppa*, which denotes both a '(school) group' and a category within Ukraine's three-tier disability classification system (Gazdag 2021: 96–97). These examples illustrate how an established borrowing may acquire a culture-specific meaning while retaining its more general sense.

4.5. Classification by chronological period

Lizanec (1993: 51–54) distinguished between Slavic borrowings adopted before and after 1945, highlighting the growing influence of Russian during the Soviet period. Gazdag (2021: 143) likewise found that most Slavic borrowings in his dataset entered Transcarpathian Hungarian after 1945. Building on this historical perspective, the present study distinguishes three chronological periods reflecting more recent sociopolitical developments.

The pre-Maidan period (before November 2013) includes established borrowings such as *pripiszka* 'military registration certificate'. The Maidan and Donbas war period (November 2013–February 2022) includes *tyituska* 'paid provocateur or hired protester', derived from Ukrainian *мітушка* [*titushka*], itself originating from the surname of Vadym Titushko, whose involvement in violent incidents during the 2013 protests contributed to the emergence of the term. The full-scale invasion period (from 24 February 2022) includes newly documented or more prominent items such as *vidsztrocska* 'deferment from military service'.

The classification is based on available attestations, source publication dates, and the sociohistorical background of individual expressions. Since written attestations may postdate their initial use in spoken language, these categories represent approximate periods of documented use or increased prominence rather than precise borrowing dates.

Of the 107 lexical items, 50 (46.7%) were assigned to the full-scale invasion period, 35 (32.7%) to the Maidan and Donbas war period, and 22 (20.6%) to the pre-Maidan period (see Figure 5). These figures describe the distribution of the collected items rather than differences in borrowing rates. The periods differ in duration and source coverage, and

the data were not collected through uniform sampling. Consequently, the larger number of items associated with the most recent period cannot be interpreted as evidence of a statistically significant increase in borrowing.

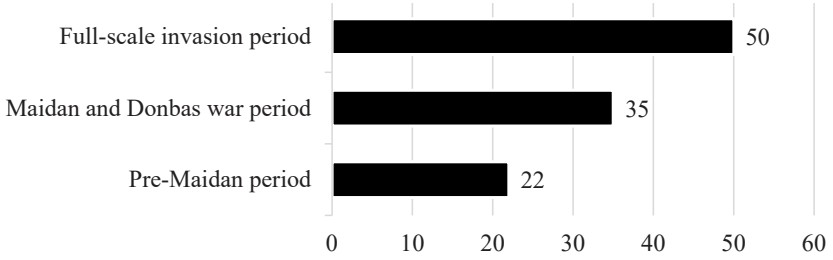


Figure 5. Distribution of loanwords by time of borrowing.

Several earlier borrowings became more prominent in war-related contexts, including *poveszka* ‘draft notice’, *mobilizálás* ‘military mobilisation’, and *vojenkom* ‘head of a military recruitment office’. These items, predominantly of Russian or shared Ukrainian/Russian origin, were already associated with military administration during the Soviet era. Other established borrowings acquired new or more specific meanings, including *grafik* and *grafikon* (see Section 4.2) and *paszportizáció* (see Section 4.7).

4.6. Classification by type of borrowing

The lexical items were classified into eight borrowing types (cf. Benő et al. 2007; Gazdag 2021: 150; Lanstyák 2006; Váradi 2024: 6–7, 2026a: 20–22).

Direct borrowings retain the donor-language form, with or without phonological adaptation. An example is *vojennéj sztán* ‘martial law’, from Ukrainian *воєнний стан* [*voiennyi stan*] ‘martial law’.

Hybrid borrowings combine donor- and recipient-language elements (Haugen 1950: 218–219). For example, *VPO-tanúsítvány* ‘certificate confirming internally displaced person status’ consists of Ukrainian *ВПО* [*VPO*], an abbreviation of *внутрішньо переміщена особа* [*vnutrishno peremishchena osoba*] ‘internally displaced person’, and Hungarian *tanúsítvány* ‘certificate’.

Semantic borrowings involve a new meaning acquired by an existing Hungarian word under donor-language influence (cf. Haugen 1953: 390–391). For instance, *komisszió*, an archaic Hungarian word for 'committee' or 'commission', denotes a military medical commission in the Transcarpathian contact variety.

Stylistic borrowings involve words that are archaic or stylistically marked in standard Hungarian but remain current in the contact variety under Slavic influence. For example, *mobilizálás* 'mobilisation' is reinforced by Ukrainian *мобілізація* [*mobilizatsiia*] and Russian *мобилизация* [*mobilizatsiya*], whereas *mozgósítás* is more common in standard Hungarian.

Formal borrowings involve phonological modifications influenced by the donor-language form. An example is *invalid* 'person with a disability', corresponding to Hungarian *invalidus* and influenced by Ukrainian *інвалід* and Russian *инвалид* [*invalid*].

Calques reproduce donor-language expressions through Hungarian lexical elements. An example is *Tartalékos+*, the Hungarian translation of the Ukrainian military registration application *Резерв+* [*Rezerv+*].

Secondary borrowings are formed by attaching Hungarian derivational suffixes to Slavic stems. For example, *trivogás* 'related to an air-raid alert' derives from *trivoga* 'air-raid alert' (Ukrainian *тривога* [*tryvoha*]) and the Hungarian adjectival suffix *-s*. Both forms are characteristic of Transcarpathian Hungarian, whereas standard Hungarian generally uses *légiriadó* 'air-raid alert'.

Tertiary borrowings contain several Hungarian affixes attached to a Slavic-derived stem. For example, *legruppázva* 'assigned to a disability group' combines the Hungarian verbal prefix *le-*, the borrowed stem *gruppa*, the denominal verbal suffix *-z*, and the adverbial participial suffix *-va*.

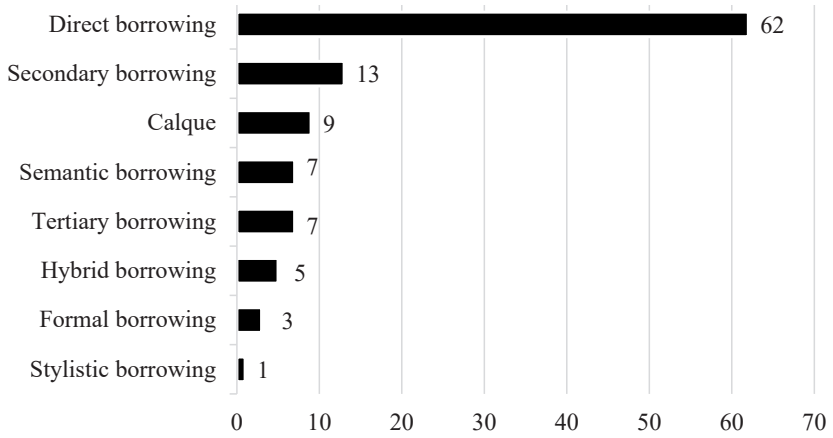


Figure 6. Distribution of loanwords by type of borrowing.

Direct borrowings constitute the largest category, accounting for 62 of the 107 items (57.9%), partly because of the numerous initialisms and acronyms adopted from Ukrainian institutional terminology. Secondary borrowings account for 13 items (12.1%), most of which contain the Hungarian suffix *-s* (e.g., *trivogás*, *gruppás*, *TCK-s*; see Section 4.1).

Some concepts are expressed through both direct borrowings and Hungarian equivalents or calques, including *brony* and *lefoglalás* 'military deferment', and *buszifikáció* and *buszosítás*. Institutional abbreviations may also have translated Hungarian counterparts, as illustrated by *TCK* and *TTSZTK* and their respective derivatives *TCK-s* and *TTSZTK-s*. Calques are also attested in Transcarpathian Hungarian news reporting, where culture-specific Ukrainian expressions are rendered through Hungarian lexical elements. Examples include *megtörhetetlenségi pont* 'Point of Invincibility', modelled on Ukrainian *пункт незламності* [*punkt nezlamnosti*], and *Mennyei Század* 'Heavenly Hundred', based on Ukrainian *Небесна Сотня* [*Nebesna Sotnia*]. Their use is illustrated in the following authentic examples:

(2) *Kijevben az 530* ***megtörhetetlenségi pontnak****, amelyek munkáját a parlamenti képviselők ellenőrizték, a 20%-a zárva volt.* (Source: www.karpataljalap.net, 2 December 2022)
'In Kyiv, 20% of the 530 Points of Invincibility inspected by members of parliament were closed.'

(3) *A **Mennyei Század** hőseinek emlékművét a sportkomplexum melletti térre helyezik át*. (Source: www.karpatalja.ma, 25 January 2022)
'The monument commemorating the heroes of the Heavenly Hundred will be relocated to the square next to the sports complex.'

These examples illustrate the coexistence of direct borrowing and calquing as strategies for expressing war-related concepts in Transcarpathian Hungarian (see Section 2). However, the available data do not allow their relative frequencies to be compared systematically across historical periods.

4.7. Semantic changes

Lexical borrowing may involve changes in meaning, including semantic narrowing, broadening, and shifts in evaluative connotation (Lanstyák 2006: 38). Semantic narrowing occurs when a word acquires a more specialised meaning (Urban 2015: 374). For example, *belső menekült* 'internally displaced person' refers specifically to someone displaced within Ukraine by armed conflict, occupation, or related threats, while *agresszor* 'aggressor' typically designates Russia in Ukrainian wartime discourse. The regional borrowing *komisszió* denotes a military medical commission in the material examined, whereas standard Hungarian generally uses *orvosi bizottság* 'medical commission' or *katonaorvosi bizottság* 'military medical commission'. Although *komisszió* predates the Euromaidan protests of 2013–2014, the available data do not establish when this specialised meaning emerged.

Narrowing may also occur in relation to the donor-language meaning. Thus, *cserha* denotes a consumer group within power-outage schedules, whereas Ukrainian *черга* [*cherha*] also means 'queue' or 'order'. Similarly, *oblik* and *ucsot* refer specifically to military registration in the examined material, although Ukrainian *облік* [*oblik*] and Russian *учёт* [*uchyot*] have broader meanings associated with registration, accounting, and record-keeping.

Metaphorical extension (Dawson & Phelan 2016: 552) is illustrated by *kiborg* 'cyborg', which acquired a positive symbolic meaning referring to Ukrainian soldiers defending Donetsk Airport in 2014–2015, and *ork* 'orc', used pejoratively for Russian soldiers in wartime discourse.

These developments demonstrate how existing lexical items can acquire new meanings and evaluative associations in response to armed conflict.

Other examples involve functional or metonymic extension. *Grafikon*, originally referring to a diagram, is also used for power-outage timetables (see Section 4.2). Similarly, *poszt* may designate a military or law-enforcement checkpoint in Transcarpathian Hungarian, extending beyond its standard meanings of 'guard post', 'duty station', or 'official position' (Váradi & Csernicskó 2025: 118). The loanword *majdan*, originally meaning 'square', developed into a designation for the Ukrainian revolutions of 2004 and 2013–2014 through its association with Kyiv's Independence Square (*Майдан Незалежності* [*Maidan Nezalezhnosti*]) (Csernicskó & Márku 2021: 419).

Evaluative changes include amelioration and pejoration (Dawson & Phelan 2016: 553; Millar & Trask 2015: 37). The loanword *paszportizáció* (Ukrainian *паспортизація* [*pasportyzatsiia*]; Russian *паспортизация* [*pasportizatsiya*]) illustrates how political circumstances may influence evaluative meaning. Following the Second World War, 'passportisation' referred to the introduction of Soviet citizenship and identity documents, sometimes through coercion. In the 2010s, it was associated with the simplified acquisition of Hungarian citizenship and could carry positive connotations. During the Russo–Ukrainian war, however, the term acquired a strongly negative connotation when used for the forced acquisition of Russian citizenship in occupied Ukrainian territories (Pylypenko 2024).

The formal borrowing *invalid* may also carry pejorative connotations. While standard Hungarian *invalidus* traditionally refers to a person unable to work because of a disability, regional *invalid* may also be used insultingly to describe someone perceived as intellectually disabled or incapable of performing a task (Gazdag 2021: 156).

These examples illustrate how established lexical items may develop specialised meanings or new evaluative associations in response to changing sociopolitical circumstances.

5. Discussion

The findings suggest that lexical borrowing in Transcarpathian Hungarian reflects the sociopolitical transformations accompanying

the Russo–Ukrainian war. Ukrainian-derived items predominate in the present war-related dataset (70.1%), contrasting with earlier studies of the broader regional vocabulary, in which borrowings of shared Ukrainian/Russian origin formed the largest category (Gazdag 2021; Váradi 2026a). Although the datasets are not directly comparable, this difference is consistent with the growing institutional prominence of Ukrainian, particularly in administration, education, and military communication.

Changes in institutional terminology further illustrate this relationship. The established Russian-derived *vojenkomát* 'military recruitment office' coexists with newer designations based on Ukrainian *TCK*, while *ucsot* 'military records' occurs alongside Ukrainian-derived *oblik*. Such variation may reflect changes in administrative structures and official language use. However, the present data do not establish whether the growing prominence of Ukrainian-derived terminology corresponds to a broader shift towards Ukrainian in the Hungarian community's everyday language practices. Investigating this relationship would require additional evidence concerning language proficiency, language choice, and borrowing frequency.

The continued use of Slavic borrowings is also noteworthy, given the close geographical, cultural, and linguistic ties between Transcarpathian Hungarians and Hungary. Regional forms may remain conventional and communicatively useful despite the availability of standard Hungarian equivalents, as illustrated by *mobilizálás* alongside *mozgósítás* and *trivoga* alongside *légiriadó*. Their coexistence suggests that lexical choices may depend on communicative context and institutional experience rather than solely on standard-language norms. However, the use of regional borrowings does not necessarily indicate an absence of puristic attitudes or a change in speakers' metalinguistic awareness, neither of which was directly examined.

The predominance of cultural borrowings (89 items; 83.2%) highlights the importance of naming concepts specific to local military, political, and administrative realities. The coexistence of direct borrowings, calques, and Hungarian equivalents also demonstrates the range of lexical strategies available to speakers and Hungarian-language media. Direct borrowings (62 items; 57.9%) and secondary borrowings (13 items; 12.1%) further illustrate the adoption and morphological integration of Slavic-derived expressions. Together with the semantic

changes documented among established borrowings, these patterns suggest that wartime lexical developments involve both innovation and the adaptation of existing vocabulary.

These interpretations remain subject to methodological limitations. The dataset represents a targeted collection of war-related lexical items rather than a representative corpus, while differences in sampling procedures, corpus composition, and possible overlap restrict comparisons with earlier studies. Chronological comparisons are further complicated by unequal period lengths and uncertain dates of initial borrowing. Consequently, the observed distributions cannot establish statistically significant historical changes. Further research using comparable pre-war and wartime corpora, together with sociolinguistic interviews and surveys, would help clarify the relationship between borrowing, language choice, and speakers' attitudes towards regional and standard Hungarian.

6. Conclusions

This study has demonstrated how the Russo–Ukrainian war and its sociopolitical consequences are reflected in the vocabulary of Transcarpathian Hungarian. The 107 Slavic-derived lexical items examined relate not only to military affairs but also to public administration, education, healthcare, energy supply, and everyday life, illustrating the diverse domains affected by the conflict.

Ukrainian-derived elements predominate in the dataset (70.1%), contrasting with earlier studies in which Russian and shared Ukrainian/Russian borrowings were more prominent (cf. Gazdag 2021; Váradi 2026a). This distribution highlights the importance of Ukrainian in contemporary war-related terminology, although it does not establish a broader shift in community language use. The predominance of nouns (71%), direct borrowings (57.9%), and cultural borrowings (83.2%) further indicates the importance of naming culture-specific political, military, and administrative concepts. Ukrainian-derived initialisms and acronyms are particularly characteristic of this vocabulary.

The findings also reveal the continued use and semantic adaptation of established borrowings alongside newer lexical forms. Semantic narrowing, broadening, and shifts in evaluative meaning illustrate

how existing vocabulary may acquire new functions and associations in changing sociopolitical contexts. Although 46.7% of the items were assigned to the period following the full-scale invasion in February 2022, this descriptive distribution does not establish an increase in borrowing rates.

The study is limited by its targeted, non-representative dataset, uncertainty surrounding the dates of borrowing, and difficulties in distinguishing between Ukrainian and Russian donor-language origins. Further research combining comparable diachronic corpora with sociolinguistic interviews and surveys could examine borrowing frequencies, regional and generational variation, language attitudes, and the long-term integration of war-related vocabulary into Transcarpathian Hungarian.

Acknowledgements

Project No. 2025-2.1.1-EKÖP-2025-00029 has been implemented with the support provided by the Ministry of Culture and Innovation of Hungary from the National Research, Development and Innovation Fund, financed under the 2025-2.1.1-EKÖP funding scheme. Contract ID: 2025-2.1.1-EKÖP-2025-00029/54.

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Kokkuvõte. Krisztián Váradi, Andrea Parapatics: Vene-Ukraina sõja mõju sõnavara laenamisele Taga-Karpaatia ungari keele kontaktvariandis. Taga-Karpaatia ungari keele kontaktvariandile on iseloomulik ulatuslik sõnavara laenamine ukraina ja vene keelest. Käesolevas uurimuses käsitletakse Vene-Ukraina sõja mõju Taga-Karpaatia ungari keele sõnavarale, tuginedes 107 sõja ja selle ühiskondlik-poliitiliste tagajärgedega seotud slaavi päritolu leksikaalse üksuse kvantitatiivsele ja kvalitatiivsele analüüsile. Uuritud üksused liigitatakse grammatilise kategooria ja struktuuri, semantilise valdkonna, doonorkeele, laenamise motivatsiooni ja tüübi, kronoloogilise perioodi ning tähendusmuutuste alusel. Tulemused näitavad ukraina keelest pärinevate laenude (70,1%), kultuurilaenude (83,2%) ja otselaenude (57,9%) ülekaalu. Samuti ilmneb ukraina institutsionaalse terminoloogia, sealhulgas akronüümide ja tähtlühendite oluline roll ning slaavi päritolu keeleelementide morfoloogiline ja semantiline kohanemine. Uurimistulemused näitlikustavad, kuidas ühiskondlik-poliitilised muutused kajastuvad vähemuskeele kontaktvariandi sõjaga seotud sõnavaras.

Märksõnad: ungari keele kontaktvariant, sõnavara laenamine, Vene-Ukraina sõda, slaavi laenud, Taga-Karpaatia, Ukraina