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## Turkish loanwords in the language and minds of young Croatians (based on survey research)

Turczyzmy w języku i świadomości młodych Chorwatów  
(na podstawie badań ankietowych)

### Abstract

The presence and status of Turkish loanwords in modern Croatian are issues that have not been described in detail in the scholarly literature to date. When this topic was addressed, it was usually in a broader context, particularly in discussions concerning so-called Serbisms. The focus of this article is on the attitudes of young Croatians towards Turkish loanwords. To investigate this issue, a survey was conducted, which was completed by 589 respondents born and residing in Croatia. The opinions of young Croatians regarding the phenomenon of borrowing from foreign languages and especially the use of specific Turkish loanwords were compared with corpus data and information provided in dictionaries and language guides. The research revealed a high level of tolerance among young Croatians towards foreign borrowings, including those from Turkish. Moreover, contrary to the prescriptive recommendations formulated in dictionaries and language guides, respondents use Turkish loanwords on a daily basis, and consider some native synonyms to be artificial and marked.

**Keywords:** Turkish loanwords, Croatian language, language borrowing, linguistic purism

### Abstrakt

Obecność i status turczyzmów we współczesnym języku chorwackim to zagadnienia, które nie zostały do dzisiaj szczegółowo opisane w literaturze naukowej. Jeśli już temat ten był podejmowany, to najczęściej w szerszym kontekście, przy okazji opisu tzw. serbizmów. Przedmiotem niniejszego artykułu jest stosunek młodych Chorwatów do zapożyczeń z języka tureckiego. W celu zbadania tego zagadnienia posłużono się ankietą, którą wypełniło 589 respondentów urodzonych i mieszkających w Chorwacji. Wypowiedzi młodych Chorwatów dotyczące samej koncepcji zapożyczenia z języków obcych, a przede wszystkim stosowania konkretnych turczyzmów, zestawione zostały z danymi korpusowymi oraz z informacjami zamieszczonymi w słownikach i poradnikach językowych. Badania pokazały dużą tolerancję młodych Chorwatów w stosunku do obcych zapożyczeń, także

z języka tureckiego. Ponadto ankietowani, wbrew normatywnym zaleceniom obecnym w słownikach i poradnikach, stosują turcyzmy na co dzień, a niektóre rodzime ekwiwalenty uważają za formy sztuczne i nacechowane.

**Słowa kluczowe:** turcyzmy, język chorwacki, zapożyczenia z języków obcych, puryzm językowy

## 1. Introduction

In his classic study *The analysis of linguistic borrowing* (1950), Einar Haugen defines borrowing as “the attempted reproduction in one language of patterns previously found in another” (quoted in Hoffer 2002: 5). For Uriel Weinreich (quoted in Hafez 1996: 2) borrowing is the transfer or introduction of foreign elements from one language to another, which further alters the recipient language’s patterns. In the aforementioned work, E. Haugen posits that all languages engage in borrowing, albeit without the consent of the lender, and any attempt to “purify” the language of foreign elements is baseless (quoted in Hoffer 2002: 5). Contrary to the words of the American linguist, the endeavour to cleanse a language by implementing a purist language policy is fairly common. George Thomas characterises linguistic purism as:

...desire on the part of the speech community [...] to preserve a language from, or rid it of, putative foreign elements, or other elements held to be undesirable (including those in dialects, sociolects, and styles of the same language). It may be directed at all foreign elements but primarily the lexicon (Thomas 1991: 12).

In many countries, this purist stance also extends to Turkish loanwords, the focus of this article. The status of Turkish loanwords in the Balkans has been the subject of many scholarly works, ranging from general overviews of the problem (Kazazis 1972; Friedman 1978) to detailed studies devoted to specific languages: Bulgarian (Gadjeva 2008; Stamenov 2011), Macedonian (Friedman 2002), Romanian (Wendt 1960) or Greek (Mackridge 2014). Therefore, it seems only natural to explore this phenomenon in the context of Croatian.

First and foremost, it is important to note that the vocabulary analysed in this article may be challenging to define precisely. For instance, the terminology used with reference to the lexical items under discussion is not agreed upon, the most popular names being *orijentalizam* ‘orientalism’ and *turcizam* ‘Turkicism’. This study sides with Dalibor Brozović (2000) in adopting the latter term, because – unlike *orijentalizam* – it explicitly indicates that a given lexeme entered Croatian directly from Turkish, regardless of its earlier history. In fact, some of the relevant Turkish etymons

are neither native in that language nor borrowings from other Oriental languages, but originate in, for example, Greek.

Another point of contention is the exact meaning of the term *turcizam* in Croatian. According to the Croatian Turkologist Ekrem Čaušević it refers to a specific variety of Turkish (i.e. *bosanski turski*) that developed on the basis of the dialects of Western Rumelia and the Balkans. It was used by Muslim settlers who migrated from Bosnia to Croatian territories from the 16th century onward and should be distinguished from spoken Ottoman Turkish of that same period. Consequently, the idea of a direct Turkish influence on the Croatian populace should be dismissed (quoted in Vranić, Zubčić 2013: 106, 111).

Lastly, in Croatian linguistic literature, the Turkish-derived forms under discussion here have frequently been misidentified as loanwords from Serbian, which is an indirect consequence of the fervent enforcement of a purist language policy targeting foreign/Serbian elements in Croatian, particularly prominent in the 1990s.

Among the relatively few contemporary Croatian studies concerned with this very topic,<sup>1</sup> one should certainly mention a brief article by D. Brozović (2000) which proposes a classification of Turkish loanwords in Croatian into three categories, the most relevant to this research being the third category: c) words that are not used on a regular basis and possess stylistically neutral native synonyms, such as *barjak* and *sevdah*.<sup>2</sup> A similar three-part typology was proposed in the Croatian lexicon *Hrvatska enciklopedija* (HE), where category b) encompasses a similar type of loanwords, albeit the HE authors consider these lexical items as clearly belonging to regional dialects and slang, e.g. *dušman*, *kusur*. It is specifically this class of Turkish loanwords – as opposed to stylistically neutral words and those conveying Muslim/Oriental exoticism – that has been, and continues to be, the principal focus of linguistic

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<sup>1</sup> The first significant study of Turkicisms in Croatian appeared during the time of the Independent State of Croatia (Esih 1942). To date, Abdulah Škaljić's work (1966) remains highly regarded in the countries of the former Yugoslavia, although it understandably concentrates on the common Serbo-Croatian language. Škaljić emphasised that within Croatian territories, Turkish influence was predominantly evident in Dalmatia, Lika and Slavonia, regions where the Shtokavian dialects are spoken (Škaljić 1966: 12). After 1991, several articles discussing Turkish loanwords in Croatian appeared, yet these primarily focused on non-standard varieties (Andrić 2003; Juraga 2010; Velić 2019), aspects of phraseology (Vranić, Zubčić 2013) and the occurrence of Turkicisms in 18th-century literature (Kostanjevac, Tomas 2010). Moreover, Milan Nosić compiled a comprehensive vocabulary of Turkish loanwords in Croatian (Nosić 2005).

<sup>2</sup> The remaining categories are: a) stylistically neutral words lacking a native synonym, or possibly possessing one that is polysemous or stylistically marked, e.g.: *čarapa*, *šećer*; b) words referencing Oriental/Islamic culture, such as *Bajram* and *baklava* (Brozović 2000).

purists' efforts. According to Maciej Czerwiński the objective is a form of specific, uncoordinated micro-scale language policy (language planning) implemented – particularly vigorously in the 1990s – by Croatian linguistic purists through the publication of numerous language guides, dictionaries highlighting differences between Serbian and Croatian, monographs and scholarly articles (Czerwiński 2005: 91, 256). Along with language purism, which M. Czerwiński identifies as an element of the Croatian national ethos (2005: 50), the impetus for targeting Turkish loanwords has been linked by Robert D. Greenberg and Vladimir Anić to the deliberate rejection of Oriental terms by Croatians, particularly by Croatian prescriptivists. According to Greenberg, this stems from the need to emphasise the position of the Croatian language in the Central European context and thus securing a stronger European identity for the whole Croatian nation<sup>3</sup> (2005: 152). V. Anić (quoted in Czerwiński 2005) bemoans the fact that Croatians, unique among Slavic nations for having direct historical interactions with the Oriental, Germanic and Roman cultures, have unfortunately negated a portion of this heritage.

## 2. Data and method

As previously mentioned, the actions of Croatian purists were not uniform, resulting in unequal targeting of “stylistically marked” Turkish loanwords. Additionally, these efforts did not impact all functional styles of Croatian to the same extent. Particularly noteworthy is how these actions influenced informal speech, especially among the youth, thus motivating the focus of this article. The research methodology employed to examine the attitudes of young citizens of Croatia (those born between 1985 and 2004)<sup>4</sup> towards selected Turkish loanwords involved conducting a survey. The collected data was compared with prescriptive reference works: contemporary Croatian dictionaries (ŠONJE; ANIĆ; VRH), language guides and dictionaries of language differences from the 1990s (BRO; KRM; ŠIM; HJS) and the early 21st century (PROT; MAT; HMCĆ; OPA). This approach aimed to analyse the relationship between actual language use and the norms imposed from above. To assess the language usage, two Croatian online linguistic corpora were

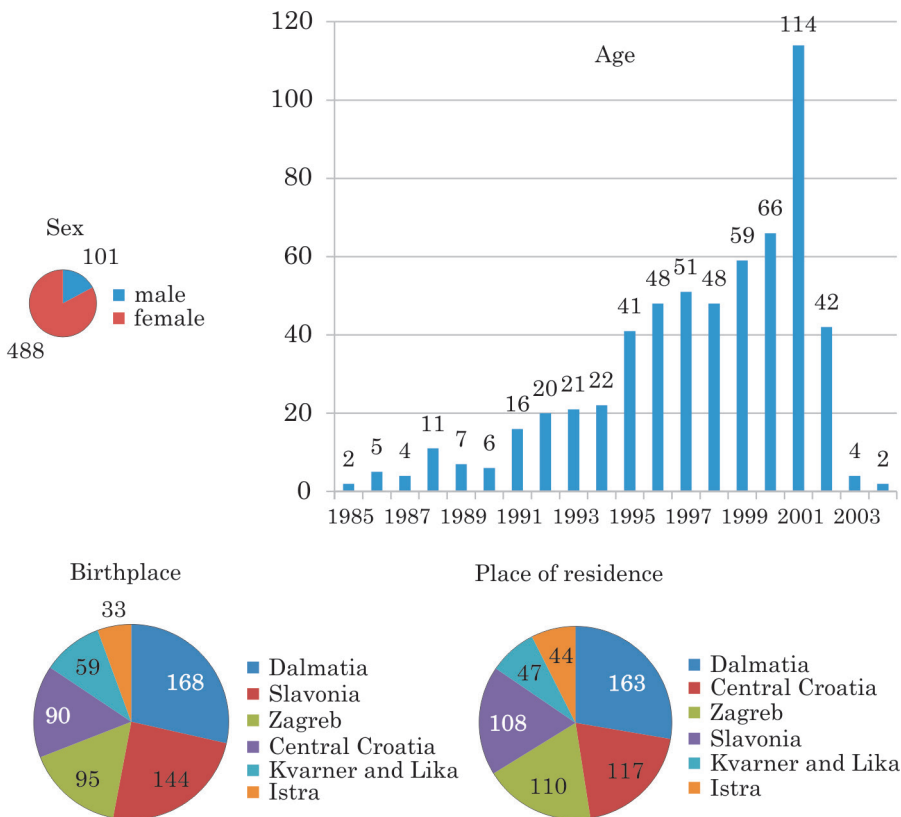
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<sup>3</sup> According to Marija Turk, language purism has a longstanding tradition in the Croatian language, and resistance to borrowing has been present since the beginning of Croatian literacy (Turk 1996: 68).

<sup>4</sup> The choice of 1985 as the cut-off date is particularly significant because this generation was the first to receive their school education in the newly established Croatian state.

consulted, namely the Croatian Language Corpus (HJK) and the Croatian National Corpus (HNK), as well as the Czech comparative corpus (IC). These were subdivided into smaller corpora, primarily according to the functional styles they represent. Previous research has led to the hypothesis that the opinions of young Croatsians on the use of particular Turkish loanwords' might not correspond with their status as defined in dictionary compilations and language guides. The study helped verify this hypothesis.

The survey was conducted from January 8 to 13, 2021, using a Microsoft Forms survey template on the Office 365 platform. To recruit young respondents, 14 Croatian Facebook groups were contacted, predominantly comprising students residing in dormitories in major university cities such as Zagreb, Split, Rijeka, Zadar, Karlovac and Pula. Ultimately, the study considered the responses of 589 young individuals born between 1985 and 2004, who permanently reside in the Republic of Croatia and represent virtually all regions of the country (a detailed overview of the data is presented below).



The survey was divided into three parts. In the first segment, respondents were asked to assess the frequency of their use of certain synonyms, including Turkish loanwords, on a five-point scale (1 – never, 2 – rarely, 3 – sometimes, 4 – often, 5 – always). Additionally, they had the option to provide comments detailing the contexts or meanings in which they use the specific variants. The terms under investigation were selected based on the prescriptive sources and the Croatian language corpora mentioned earlier. Ultimately, the survey encompassed the following 16 sets of synonyms (with the 19 Turkish loanwords highlighted in bold): *badava* – *džaba/džabe* – *mukte* – *besplatno*, *but* – *butina* – *natkoljenica* – *stegno* – *bedro*, *ćošak* – *kut* – *ugao*, *dućan* – *prodavaonica* – *trgovina*, *dugme* – *puce* – *gumb*, *đon* – *potplat*, *jorgan* – *pokrivač* – *poplun*, *kusur* – *izvratak* – *ostatak*, *marama* – *rubac*, *maramica* – *rupčić*, *mušterija* – *klijent* – *kupac*, *nišaniti* – *ciljati*, *pare* – *novac*, *siledžija* – *nasilnik*, *šamar* – *ćuška* – *pljuska*, *uhapsiti* – *uhititi*.<sup>5</sup> The second segment of the survey examined the general attitude of young Croatians towards loanwords, including Turkish ones. Again, a five-point scale was utilised (1 – I definitely disagree, 2 – I mostly disagree, 3 – I neither agree nor disagree, 4 – I mostly agree, 5 – I completely agree) to examine the respondents' agreement or disagreement with the following three statements: "I care about the purity of the Croatian language"; "Loanwords corrupt the Croatian language"; "Turkish loanwords should be eliminated from the Croatian language." The third and final segment of the survey was optional, offering participants an opportunity to provide broader commentary on the subject.

### 3. Results

#### 3.1. Attitude of young Croatians towards loanwords

Let us begin our discussion of the survey results with the second segment, which explores young Croatians' perceptions of language purism as perceived by young Croatians. Unsurprisingly, the general statement, "I care about the purity of the Croatian language" garnered the most support, although it still elicited a relatively ambivalent response from the youth, as indicated by a mean rating of 3.01. However, the narrower statement, "Loanwords corrupt the Croatian language" was more contentious (mean rating: 2.29), and there was a clear objection to the purist assertion that "Turkish

<sup>5</sup> For information on Turkish etymons and the meanings of individual Turkicisms, see the Appendix at the end of the article.

loanwords should be eliminated from the Croatian language” (mean rating: 1.67), a statement implicitly endorsed by Croatian language guides (HJS: 290; PROT: 105). Overall, young Croatians display a consensus regarding linguistic purism, with minimal regional variation in attitudes. A slight deviation was observable at the county level. For instance, respondents from Varaždin County expressed much less concern for language purity (mean rating: 2.52), and demonstrated greater tolerance for loanwords by rating the second statement relatively low (1.92). Conversely, feedback from individuals in Vukovar-Srijem County (mean rating of the first statement: 3.38) and the Primorje-Gorski Kotar County (mean rating of the third statement: 2.03) indicated the opposite stances.

A lenient attitude towards foreign loanwords, especially Turkish ones, was further illustrated in responses to the third segment of the survey, where the respondents could most comprehensively articulate their views on the topic. Many seized this opportunity to highlight the positive aspects of borrowing from other languages. They frequently pointed to the historical significance of this phenomenon and the coexistence of Croatians with other nations, including its linguistic aspects, e.g.: “Turkish loanwords, like Germanisms, Italianisms, etc., are part of the Croatian language, and I therefore believe that in no way should they be completely removed from the language, as they are part of Croatian history.”<sup>6</sup> Another comment touched upon the concept of the Balkan identity and criticised Croatians’ compulsion to emphasise national differences linguistically at all costs: “Turkish loanwords are characteristic of the Balkans, and there is nothing wrong with having such words in our language as well. We Croats definitely exaggerate the use of certain words in our effort to distinguish ourselves [our language – P.F.] from Bosnian or Serbian, for example.”<sup>7</sup> Some responses contrasted widely accepted and fully integrated Turkish loanwords with English loanwords, which are consistently regarded negatively: “I care about the purity of the language especially regarding Anglicisms. I don’t worry too much about Turkicisms; moreover, they are so ingrained in the language that most often I don’t notice them at all!”<sup>8</sup> Additionally, there were forthright comments emphasising the absurdity of purist endeavours: “Changing the language because of foreign words is utter foolishness.”<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Woman, birthyear: 1995, birthplace: Karlovac County, current residence: Lika-Senj County, education level: higher education.

<sup>7</sup> Man, 1997, Sisak-Moslavina County, city of Zagreb, currently studying.

<sup>8</sup> Woman, 2000, Dubrovnik-Neretva County, Dubrovnik-Neretva County, currently studying.

<sup>9</sup> Woman, 1989, Istria County, Istria County, higher education.

### 3.2. Scope and the context of use of the Turkish loanwords

The first segment of the survey offers the most comprehensive insights into how Turkish loanwords function in the everyday communication of young Croatians, addressing the extent and context in which individual lexemes are used. The general findings of this study allow us to divide the analysed words into three categories:

- 1) Turkish loanwords which are used considerably less often than their most popular, usually native, synonyms: ***badava* (2.75)**, ***mukte* (2.04)** rather than *besplatno* (4.13); ***but* (2.67)**, ***butina* (2.16)** – *bedro* (4.09) – *natkoljenica* (2.42), *stegno* (1.04); ***mušterija* (3.03)** – *kupac* (3.97) – *klijent* (2.83); ***nišaniti* (2.15)** – *ciljati* (4.32); ***siledžija* (2.03)** – *nasilnik* (4.08); ***uhapsiti* (2.70)** – *uhititi* (3.95);
- 2) Turkish loanwords which are used considerably more often than their synonyms: ***don* (4.26)** – *potplat* (1.60); ***marama* (4.37)** – *rubac* (1.65); ***maramica* (4.78)** – *rupčić* (1.73); ***šamar* (3.58)** – *pljuska* (2.39), *čuška* (1.53);
- 3) Turkish loanwords which are used with a similar frequency to their most popular synonyms, typically differing in meaning or stylistic markedness: ***džaba/džabe* (3.62)** – *besplatno* (4.13); ***čošak* (3.22)** – *kut* (3.77) – *ugao* (1.96); ***dućan* (3.85)** – *trgovina* (3.48) – *prodavaonica* (1.63); ***dugme* (2.76)** – *gumb* (3.27) – *puce* (1.55); ***jorgan* (3.31)** – *pokrivač* (3.05) – *poplun* (2.81); ***kusur* (3.60)** – *ostatak* (3.73) – *izvratak* (1.01); ***pare* (3.62)** – *novac* (4.06).

The following section of the study provides an in-depth examination of individual Turkish loanwords belonging to groups 2) and 3).<sup>10</sup>

#### 3.2.1. Turkish loanwords used considerably more often than their synonyms

This group includes four out of the 19 Turkish loanwords included in this survey. As the survey reveals, among all the examined words, the one most frequently used by young Croatians is *maramica* ‘handkerchief/tissue’ (mean rating: 4.78). However, prescriptive texts rate this Turkish loanword substantially lower than its native synonym *rupčić*, which is relatively rarely

<sup>10</sup> Due to the limited scope of this article, group 1 will not be discussed here. Furthermore, the borrowings included in that category merely corroborate the assertions made by Croatian prescriptivists and, as such, are of lesser interest from the point of view of our topic.



used in the spontaneous communication of young people (1.73). Moreover, some respondents mentioned that they only use *maramica* either humorously or in formal situations.<sup>11</sup> The lesser status of *maramica* is evident in two (ŠONJE: 572; VRH: 707) out of the three dictionaries examined, where its entry merely refers the reader to the native counterpart *rupčić*, to be found on a different page. A similar approach can be observed in various language guides, which predominantly aim to enforce an uncoordinated, purist linguistic policy. Among the eight such sources consulted, as many as four (BRO: 275; KRM: 190; HJS: 806; HMC: 196) deem *rupčić* preferable. Similar to the survey findings, online language corpora show that in actual language usage the Turkish loanword *maramica* prevails over the native term. This is observed in newspaper texts (HJK: 69% of all results; HNK: 64.5%), as well as in legal and administrative texts published in the official gazette (NN: 84%). The only source that stands in contrast to these is the subcorpus of literary texts, where the preference is reversed (HJK: Turkish loanword – 25.5%,<sup>12</sup> IC: 33.5%).

Examining *marama* ‘shawl/scarf’, a more basic form related to the previous one, yields similar results, although there are some divergences between the two. In this case, the degree of language planning is even more substantial: all three analysed dictionaries (ANIĆ; ŠONJE: 572; VRH: 707) view this Turkish loanword as secondary to *rubac*. Nevertheless, as many as six guidebooks consider the former to be inferior (BRO: 275; KRM: 190; HJS: 806; PROT: 108; MAT: 244; ŠIM: 134). The discrepancy between formal prescriptive recommendations and actual language usage is apparent in the corpora, where *marama* is more frequently used in newspaper texts (in both the HJK and the HNK at 79%) and in legal and administrative texts (NN: 75%). The popularity of the Turkish loanword over the native form is also evident from the survey results among young Croatians, where *marama* (4.37) outranks *rubac* (1.65). Some survey responses additionally indicate that: a) *marama* typically refers to women’s clothing, whereas *rubac* pertains to men’s; b) if *rubac* is worn by women, it is usually by older women who dress traditionally; c) *marama* often denotes a headpiece, while *rubac* denotes a piece of fabric used for blowing one’s nose.

The next analysed loanword, *don* ‘heel’, differs from the previously two examples: two dictionaries and three guidebooks consider it an inferior option

<sup>11</sup> Some respondents differentiate depending on the material from which the handkerchief is made: *maramica* for those made of paper and *rupčić* for those made of fabric. This distinction contradicts the latest edition of the Croatian dictionary, where *rupčić* is described as being made from either fabric or tissue paper (VRH).

<sup>12</sup> This figure pertains to literary texts written between 1991–2008.

(ŠONJE: 230; KRM: 142; ŠIM: 37) or a regional term (ANIĆ; HJS: 514). In the corpora it appears much less frequently than its native synonym *potplat*, e.g., in the HJK (newspaper texts), the Turkish term appears in 22% of cases, and the native form in 78%; in the IC (literary texts), the percentages are 13% and 87% respectively. Given this, the survey results are surprising, with *don* scoring a mean value of 4.26 and *potplat* only 1.6. The far greater popularity of the Turkish loanword among respondents may result from the use of idioms that they mentioned in the surveys, such as *Boli me don!* ‘I don’t give a damn’ and *Don obraz* ‘a thick-skinned, unscrupulous person’, which do not have counterparts based on native synonyms. Moreover, as in the case of the previously discussed doublets, respondents emphasised the formality of the native form.

The last Turkish loanword which is used by young people more readily than its native synonyms is the expressive lexeme *šamar* ‘a blow to the face’ (3.58), although its dominance over *pljuska* (2.39) and *čuška* (1.53) is less pronounced. These ratings pertain to the entire country, whereas a breakdown by region shows considerable usage differences. Individuals born in Vukovar-Srijem County and Dubrovnik-Neretva County use it much more frequently (4.42 and 4.27, respectively) than the national average. While only one dictionary considers the Turkish loanword a marked term (ŠONJE: 1214), five guidebooks describe it as an inferior, stylistically marked option (BRO: 516; KRM: 288; ŠIM: 226; HJS: 1416; PRO: 111). Furthermore, there is a mismatch with regard to this triplet between spoken and written corpus data. In newspaper texts in particular, the Turkish loanword is much less often used than the native term *pljuska*, with the respective frequencies of 22.5% against 77% in the HJK, and 15.5% against 81.5% in the HNK. Interestingly, some respondents noted a significant difference in usage between the two most frequent variants: *šamar* in a more literal sense and *pljuska* in a more metaphorical or abstract sense. Croatian dictionaries do not make this distinction.

### 3.2.2. Turkish loanwords used with a similar frequency to its most popular synonyms, typically differing in meaning/stylistic markedness

This category encompasses 7 out of the 19 analysed Turkish loanwords. Even though they are grouped together, they represent a diverse collection in terms of status, peoples’ attitudes towards them and their place within the standard language.

The examples discussed above demonstrate that the high popularity of a Turkish loanword among young Croatians does not necessarily imply its recognition by prescriptivists or even its prevalence in corpora representing different functional styles. This observation is further exemplified by the Turkish-derived lexeme *jorgan*, the most common word for ‘bed cover’ (mean rating: 3.31).<sup>13</sup> While it outranks its native synonyms *pokrivač* (3.05) and *poplun* (2.81), it is not featured at all in the most recently published Croatian dictionary (VRH), whereas in two others, it is labelled as regional (ANIĆ) or colloquial (ŠONJE: 418). Language guides are somewhat more tolerant, with only two (BRO: 206; HJS: 676) recommending a “preferred” variant. However, in online corpora, the Turkish loanword, in its original meaning, appears very rarely, with the HNK being the only corpus where its frequency exceeds 15%, unlike its synonyms. With regard to semantic nuances, some young respondents pointed out that *jorgan*, unlike the other two terms, denotes a kind of bed cover, which, due to its thickness, is predominantly used during winter, a detail not noted by dictionaries. Comments also suggest the formal nature of *poplun* and *pokrivač*, with the latter also having a broader meaning.

The next Turkish loanword, *dućan* ‘shop’, shares a similar profile with its predecessor: in V. Anić’s dictionary, it is labelled as a regional form, and in the most recent Croatian dictionary (VRH: 237), as a colloquial term, whereas it is considered an inferior variant in the three language guides (ŠIM: 35; HJS: 503; HMĆ: 160). Meanwhile, its popularity among the respondents (mean rating: 3.85)<sup>14</sup> is comparable to that of its synonym *trgovina* (3.48), and it notably outweighs *prodavaonica* (1.63), which is promoted by prescriptivists. Unlike *jorgan*, *dućan* exhibits a much higher frequency in corpora, especially in literary texts, e.g. in HJK with a frequency of 62% it outranks *trgovina* (32%) and *prodavaonica* (6%). The survey results highlight certain semantic nuances for this triplet: many respondents consider *dućan* to be an informal term for a smaller shop or convenience store, primarily offering food, in contrast to the larger-scale *trgovina*. However, the comments rarely acknowledge the derived meaning of *dućan*, namely ‘business, market’, predominantly featured in newspaper text corpora, e.g.

<sup>13</sup> In this case the respondents’ birthplace considerably influences language use: those from Osijek-Baranja County employ the Turkish loanword far more frequently (4.6) than the national average.

<sup>14</sup> The popularity of this Turkish loanword is also subject to significant regional variation. It achieved the highest rating among respondents born in Zadar County (4.94), whereas it is rarely used by those from Dubrovnik-Neretva County (2.27).

in collocations such as *dućan oružja* ‘weapon market’, *zatvoriti dućan* ‘to close a business’, *nogometni dućan* ‘football market’ (HJK).

Another Turkish loanword, *ćošak* ‘corner (of a street, room)’, is used by young individuals slightly less often (3.22) than the native term *kut* (3.77), but considerably more often than another variant, *ugao* (1.96). Notably, in regions such as Vukovar-Srijem County, *ćošak* is used much more frequently (4.19), depending on the respondents’ birthplaces. Interestingly enough, all three examined dictionaries rank *ćošak* lower than the native synonyms, and the Turkish loanword is considered inferior to them by half of the language guides (BRO: 75; ŠIM: 29; HJS: 454; PRO: 106). This can be attributed to differences in semantic scope, as *ćošak* covers a more extensive range of meanings, including those of *ugao* and *kut*, which refer to external and internal side of the convergence of two surfaces respectively, with *kut* also denoting ‘area, territory’ or ‘hidden place’ (VRH: 640–641, 1601). Corpora certainly do not provide detailed usage data on the Turkish loanword, because this lexeme is only marginally present therein. On the other hand, given the considerable popularity of the lexeme, the survey provides us with information about the scope and the most common contexts of its usage. Some respondents emphasise that it is the default variant, commonly used in casual, everyday situations, e.g., with reference to a street corner.

The triplet *dugme* – *puce* – *gumb* is more semantically consistent than the previous set, as the words denote a button and secondarily a push-button. Although Turkish *dugme* is considered a neutral form in Croatian dictionaries, five guidebooks (BRO: 103; KRM: 140; ŠIM: 35; HJS: 503; PRO: 106) adopt a purist perspective, favouring other, more “preferable”, variants. However, unlike *ćošak*, *dugme* is well-represented in various corpora including newspaper texts (frequency in the HJK: 44%<sup>15</sup>; in the HNK: 45%), legal and administrative texts (frequency in the NN: 36%), and classical literature translations of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (frequency in the IC: 52%). Given this, the relatively large popularity of *dugme* indicated by the survey results (mean rating: 2.76) is not surprising. Furthermore, although it ranks lower than the Hungarian loanword *gumb* (3.27), it is much more prevalent than the native variant *puce* (1.55), which is promoted by language guides. *Dugme* is particularly popular in Slavonia, including Osijek-Baranja County (mean rating: 4.39) and Brod-Posavina County (4.12), whereas it is rarely used by individuals from northwest Croatia, including residents of Međimurje County (1.5) and Varaždin County (1.54). Some survey responses suggest a semantic distinction, with *dugme* referring to a button on an article

<sup>15</sup> Obviously, the numerous mentions of the band name *Bijelo dugme* have been omitted.

of clothing and *gumb* denoting a push-button on a machine or device, such as a telephone or printer.

The last three Turkish loanwords presented here, *kusur*, *džaba/džabe* and *pare*, are clearly stylistically expressive, which means that despite their considerable popularity, with mean ratings around 3.6, they are often overshadowed by their stylistically neutral native synonyms.

The first word, *kusur*, is deemed of lower status than its most popular native synonym *ostatak* in two dictionary sources (VRH: 640; ŠONJE: 522), whereas five guidebooks (BRO: 246; KRM: 182; ŠIM: 121; HJS: 768; PRO: 108) propose neutral substitutes for it, primarily *izvratak* and *sitniš*. It is crucial to note the polysemy of *kusur*, although *ostatak* exhibits even greater semantic diversity. Thus, while *kusur* primarily means ‘change (with reference to money)’ and ‘a little over’, e.g.: *pedeset i kusur godina* ‘fifty something years’, and *ostatak* means ‘rest, remainder’ in a number of contexts, the comparison is simplified when focusing solely on the common meaning ‘change (with reference to money)’, although this simplification is not always feasible and may be easier when discussing the corpus data than in the case of the survey. Corpus analysis shows that the native form predominates over the Turkish loanword, even within this more specific context. Conversely, the survey indicated that *kusur* is not eclipsed by *ostatak* (mean ratings: 3.6 and 3.73, respectively), but what has to be taken into consideration is that the young respondents may view both terms as polysemous, reflective of their diverse contextual uses. Again, the Turkish loanword is most commonly used in Slavonia, especially in Vukovar-Srijem County (mean rating: 4.35), but also enjoys popularity in Dalmatia, including Dubrovnik-Neretva County (4.33) and Split-Dalmatia County (4.26). Despite the polysemous character of the two terms, survey responses from these regions strongly suggest that *kusur* mainly refers to ‘change (with reference to money)’ and *ostatak* encompasses a wider range of meanings, senses and collocations. Importantly, the second native term, *izvratak*, frequently mentioned in prescriptive texts, is virtually unknown to young Croatians, rendering it an artificial construct created by linguists.

In the set *badava – džaba/džabe – mukte – besplatno*, only one of the three Turkish loanwords, namely *džaba/džabe* (mean rating: 3.62), rivals the popularity of the native synonym. The high ranking of the Turkish loanword seems more understandable upon considering its multiple meanings: besides ‘free, for free’, it can also denote ‘cheap’ and ‘in vain’. On the other hand, the term *besplatno* is used solely in financial contexts, as indicated in the latest edition of the Croatian dictionary (VRH), where the Turkish loanword is categorised as casual or colloquial (*razg.*). It is described somewhat

differently in V. Anić's lexicon, as a dialectal form, while J. Šonje directly suggests the preferred term *besplatno* (ŠONJE: 228). Interestingly, only three language guides (BRO: 107; ŠIM: 36; HJS: 511) consider the Turkish loanword as an inferior option, suggesting that it is not viewed by language purists as a significant threat to the stylistically neutral native term. This conclusion is corroborated by the corpus statistics, where, especially in the narrow meaning of 'for free', the native form *besplatno* dominates across all functional styles. Returning to the survey, the respondent's birthplace seems to have little bearing on the usage of this particular Turkish loanword. As previously mentioned, *džaba/džabe* is polysemous, leading to varied contexts of use, and the term does not always imply that something is available free of charge. Thus, young people frequently employ it with the meaning 'in vain', or 'very cheap', while some only use it in the mildly offensive phrase *nema džabe ni u stare babe* ('Nothing is for free').

The final Turkish loanword to be discussed, *pare*, despite having only one meaning, 'money', shares the same mean frequency as *džaba/džabe*. Its classification in dictionaries also mirrors that of the previously mentioned loanword: in two lexicons (ANIĆ; VRH: 1019) it is labelled as jargon (*žarg.*), while another (ŠONJE: 802) suggests the preferred term *novac*. *Pare* is not particularly favoured among language guide authors, as it is featured in only one (HJS: 1035). Its occurrence in corpora is minimal and it is rare irrespective of the text type. In contrast, survey results indicate frequent use of this Turkish loanword by young individuals in everyday contexts. Similar to *džabe/džaba*, the word appears in colloquial and expressive contexts, and its use is largely independent of regional differences, although respondents who are most inclined to use this term come from central and southern Dalmatia (Split-Dalmatia County with a mean rating of 4.26, and Dubrovnik-Neretva County – 4.11).

#### 4. Conclusions

The aim of the conducted survey was to study the perspectives of young Croatians on Turkish loanwords. The results allow us to draw a number of conclusions. The initial hypothesis, suggesting that there is a significant discrepancy between normative data on Turkish loanwords and their actual use as reflected in the respondents' statements has been confirmed. Young Croatians display tolerance towards loanwords, including those of Turkish origin, with puristic tendencies being rare, regardless of the region. A considerable proportion of the analysed Turkish loanwords are

regularly employed in the language of young people, and are often preferred over native synonyms, although this usually applies to expressive/informal usage. The respondent's birthplace does play a role for some loanwords: lexemes of Turkish origin are most frequently used by individuals from Slavonia (Vukovar-Srijem County and Osijek-Baranja County), as well as Dalmatia (Dubrovnik-Neretva County and Split-Dalmatia County), and least by those from Međimurje County. In conclusion, the linguistic practices of young Croatians do not correspond to the purist norms presented in prescriptive texts and language guides, with the popularity of Turkish loanwords in everyday communication often greater than what online corpora suggest. Moreover, both survey results and corpus data indicate that, in a number of cases (*don – potplat*, *marama – rubac*, *maramica – rupčić*, *dućan – prodavaonica*, *dugme – puce*), it is not the Turkish-derived terms but their native alternatives that are stylistically marked, which contradicts lexicographical claims. In view of these findings, it would be appropriate to reevaluate existing classifications, e.g. by expanding D. Brozović's (2000) category a) of Turkish loanwords, namely stylistically neutral words lacking a native synonym or possibly possessing one that is polysemous or stylistically marked. Furthermore, the group of 19 Turkish loanwords examined in this survey should certainly be augmented with additional examples to provide a more comprehensive perspective on the status of such vocabulary in contemporary Croatian language use.

### List of Abbreviations

- ANIC – Anić V. (2003): *Veliki rječnik hrvatskoga jezika* [CD-Rom]. Zagreb.
- BRO – Brodnjak V. (1991): *Razlikovni rječnik srpskog i hrvatskog jezika*. Zagreb.
- HE – *Hrvatska enciklopedija – Mrežno izdanje*. Zagreb, <<https://www.enciklopedija.hr/Natuknica.aspx?ID=62738>>, accessed: 31.10.2022.
- HJK – *Hrvatski jezični korpus*. Zagreb, <<http://riznica.ihjj.hr/philologic/Cijeli.whizbang.form.hr.html>>, accessed: 31.10.2022.
- HJS – Barić E. et al. (1999): *Hrvatski jezični savjetnik*. Zagreb.
- HMĆ – Hudeček L., Matković M., Čutuk I. (2012): *Jezični priručnik Coca-Cole HBC Hrvatska – hrvatski jezik o poslovnoj komunikaciji*. Zagreb, <<http://www.gfos.unios.hr/images/jezicni-prirucnik-coca-cole-hbc-hrvatska-02-2012-1.pdf>>, accessed: 31.10.2022.
- HNK – *Hrvatski nacionalni korpus*. Zagreb, <[http://filip.ffzg.hr/cgi-bin/run.cgi/first\\_form](http://filip.ffzg.hr/cgi-bin/run.cgi/first_form)>, accessed: 31.10.2022.
- IC – Rosen A., Vavřín M., Zaslina A.J. (2022): *Korpus InterCorp – čeština, verze 14 ze 31. 1. 2022*. Praha, <<https://kontext.korpus.cz/>>, accessed: 31.10.2022.
- KRM – Krmpotić M. (1992): *Jezični priručnik*. Zagreb.
- MAT – Matković M. (2006): *Jezični savjetnik*. Zagreb.
- NN – *Narodne novine. Hrvatski nacionalni korpus*. Zagreb, <[http://filip.ffzg.hr/cgi-bin/run.cgi/first\\_form](http://filip.ffzg.hr/cgi-bin/run.cgi/first_form)>, accessed: 31.10.2022.

- PROT – Protuđer I. (2003): *Hrvatski u šaci*. Split.  
 ŠIM – Šimundić M. (1994): *Rječnik swišnih tuđica u hrvatskomu jeziku*. Zagreb.  
 ŠONJE – Šonje J. (2000): *Rječnik hrvatskoga jezika*. Zagreb.  
 VRH – Jojić Lj. (ed.) (2015): *Veliki rječnik hrvatskoga standardnog jezika*. Zagreb.

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### Survey Sources (Facebook)

Anketalica – Podijeli svoju anketu  
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Veleučilište u Šibeniku 2020/2021

## APPENDIX

Turkish loanwords included in the survey

Turkish loanword	Turkish etymon	Native synonym(s)	Meaning
<b>badava</b>	<i>bedava</i>	<i>besplatno</i>	‘free, for free’, (‘cheap’)
<b>but</b>	<i>but, bud</i>	<i>natkoljenica, stegno, bedro</i>	‘thigh’, ‘upper leg’
<b>butina</b>	<i>but, bud</i>	<i>natkoljenica, stegno, bedro</i>	‘thigh’, ‘upper leg’
<b>čošak</b>	<i>köse</i>	<i>kut, ugao</i>	‘corner (of a street, room)’
<b>dućan</b>	<i>dükkyan</i>	<i>prodavaonica, trgovina</i>	‘shop’
<b>dugme</b>	<i>düğme</i>	<i>puce, gumb</i>	‘button’, ‘push-button’
<b>džaba/džabe</b>	<i>caba</i>	<i>besplatno</i>	‘free, for free’, (‘cheap’, ‘in vain’)
<b>don</b>	<i>gön</i>	<i>potplat</i>	‘heel’
<b>jorgan</b>	<i>yorgan</i>	<i>pokrivač, poplun</i>	‘bed cover’
<b>kusur</b>	<i>quşur</i>	<i>izvratak, ostatak</i>	‘change (with reference to money)’, (‘a little over’)
<b>marama</b>	<i>mahrama</i>	<i>rubac</i>	‘shawl/scarf’
<b>maramica</b>	<i>mahrama</i>	<i>rupčić</i>	‘handkerchief/tissue’
<b>mukte</b>	<i>müft</i>	<i>besplatno</i>	‘free, for free’
<b>mušterija</b>	<i>müşteri</i>	<i>klijent, kupac</i>	‘customer, client’
<b>nišaniti</b>	<i>nişan</i>	<i>ciljati</i>	‘to aim’
<b>pare</b>	<i>para</i>	<i>novac</i>	‘money’
<b>siledžija</b>	<i>silâ + -ci/-çi + ja</i>	<i>nasilnik</i>	‘bully’
<b>šamar</b>	<i>şamar</i>	<i>ćuška, pljuska</i>	‘a blow to the face’
<b>uhapsiti</b>	<i>hapis</i>	<i>uhititi</i>	‘to arrest’