

Brexit-discourse: Lexico-stylistic and Translation Aspects



Performed by|

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The purpose of the study is to investigate lexical, stylistic, and translation peculiarities of the Brexit discourse based on the texts of the newspaper “The Washington Post”.

- **The subject matter** of the study is the Brexit discourse. **Its objectives** are linguistic and stylistic markers of the analysed discourse, difficulties of its translation, and use of media material at foreign language



The Brexit discourse is the text deepened in the social and political situation whose characteristic features are communicative intentions of addressees (media texts' authors) to influence the perception and comprehension of the event by recipients, negatively critical tonality of material relation, and specific patterns of verbalising notions.



- *We English are disappearing; we English are being engulfed by outsiders; we need to “Take Back Control,” as the Leave campaign slogan has it; we need to fight back against foreigners/regulations/globalization/modernity or whatever you personally find threatening*
- *Hoping to cauterize the Conservative Party’s long-festering wound, in 2016, then-Prime Minister **David Cameron** succumbed to the plebiscitary temptation, scheduling the referendum that he believed Remain would win.*

*Both **Ms. May** and her **parliamentary opponents** must now make it their overriding priority to avoid that disastrous outcome (The Washington Post, 15.01.2019).*

*Prime Minister **Boris Johnson** had maintained that the five-week suspension was a routine break between parliamentary sessions ahead of the launch of a new legislative program (The Washington Post, 20.09.2019).*

*As expected, the opposition Labour leader, **Jeremy Corbyn**, has called for a vote of no confidence in the government (The Washington Post, 15.01.2019).*

*Meanwhile, two members of her cabinet resigned. One of them was clever, soft-spoken **Dominic Raab**, who had been the Brexit secretary (The Washington Post, 16.11.2018).*

*A statement by European Council President **Donald Tusk** [said the rejected accord](#) “remains the best and only way to ensure an orderly withdrawal (The Washington Post, 15.01.2019).*

- ***Remainers** think Britain’s prosperity depends on its location. **Leavers** think its prosperity, long-term, depends upon its character*
- *In the United Kingdom, supporters of Brexit promoted it as a statement of their country’s strength and independence. But it has achieved the opposite. It has weakened the bonds between our four “home” nations – England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland – and raised again the prospect of the break-up of the United Kingdom*



Newly built lexemes

- **By suffixation.** Наприклад: *The very **Brexitters** who promised a cakewalk are denouncing the result of their own policy* (The Washington Post, 15.11.2018). *If the deal is again voted down, it is highly likely that Parliament would reject the “no deal” position favored by **Brexiteers** the following day* (The Washington Post, 11.03.2019);
- **By prefixation**(*anti-Brexit, pro-Brexit, post-Brexit*). Наприклад: *French customs officers are having a **pre-Brexit** strike at the Gare du Nord in Paris, delaying London-bound trains and demanding extra compensation* (The Washington Post, 13.03.2019);
- **By compounding.** Наприклад: *Since the referendum in 2016, all of the key **Brexit-negotiating** jobs have been held by people who campaigned in favor of leaving the E.U.* (The Washington Post, 13.03.2019);
- **By abbreviation.** Наприклад: *Preparations would extend beyond the Brexit deadline next March, so the European Union would have to agree to postpone **B-Day***



WORD GROUPS

that denote

- The very course of Britain's leaving the EU and its essence (*the entire Brexit process, the whole Brexit, the reality of Brexit, the Brexit vote, the Brexit solution, the Brexit example, the Brexit message, the Brexit deadline*);
- The destructive and crisis nature of the event (*the Brexit crisis, a never-ending Brexit crisis, Brexit debacle, the inherent contradictions of Brexit, Britain's Brexit agonies, the great Brexit drama, the least disruptive Brexit divorce from Brussels, the whole Brexit problem, a Brexit meltdown, the Brexit crackup*);
- Forms of expressing the will and taking decisions by voters and interaction of people (*the state of Brexit talks, the Brexit negotiations, the Brexit referendum, the 2016 Brexit referendum campaign, the Brexit debate (the technical debates of Brexit, debate on Brexit)*);
- Brexit's participants from both sides (*the Brexit camp, anti-Brexit*
- *campaigners, the Brexit hard-liners, Brexit voters, pro-Brexit voters, the Brexit gang, the Brexit Taliban, Brexit ministers, the Brexit crowd, the Brexit purists, brave Brexit campaigners, Brexit negotiator, advocates of Brexit (the Brexit advocates), Brexit's opponents, Brexit proponents, top Brexit standard-bearers*);
- Political forces (*pro-Brexit Conservative backbenchers, the pro-Brexit UK Independence Party (UKIP) and Leave.EU*);
- agreement (*Brexit deal, a Brexit formula, a Brexit accord, the Brexit plan, a no-deal Brexit, the final Brexit deal, Theresa May's Brexit agreement, a negotiated Brexit deal, the 585-page Brexit agreement*);
- Consequences and prospects of the withdrawal (*the post-Brexit future, the Brexit prospect, the effect of the Brexit prospect on Northern Ireland, post-Brexit Irish-Northern Ireland border, post-Brexit beauty contest, Brexit's certain costs, Brexit victory*).



- A choice between huge numbers of dead lambs and huge payouts to sheep farmers is just one example of the turmoil that **a no-deal Brexit** could bring. This week, which has been chaotic in British politics even by recent standards, has made that just a bit less likely. It is the week that Remainers invoked the horror of **a no-deal Brexit** to grab back some control over a Parliament still unable to decide what it wants
- Because the emerging deal is a mess — **a dog's Brexit**, the wags say — it may well be blocked in Parliament
- So, of the 20 percent probability of a clear May win, only half — say, 10 percentage points — leads to **a compromise Brexit**, bringing the cumulative probability of this option to 30 percent
- On Tuesday, the British Parliament rejected, again, **Prime Minister Theresa May's Brexit deal**, an arrangement that would have given Britain a reasonably smooth transition period out of the European Union. It was a deal that pleased no one, but some saw it as a way out of a dilemma

Stylistic devices

- *Britain, famous for its prudence, propriety and punctuality, is suddenly **looking like a banana republic** as it makes reckless decisions, misrepresents reality and now wants to change its own self-imposed deadline*
- *Older citizens, workers and **people** living outside the large cities are terrified of what they see as a German-dominated European **juggernaut**, and voted Out*
- *They want the whole **Brexit saga** to end*



Irony

- 1) *The latest outburst of (metaphorical) fisticuffs came on Thursday when a caucus of May's **pro-Brexit Conservative backbenchers** announced a bid to oust her from the party's leadership (The Washington Post, 16.11.2018).*
- (2) ***May**, who tepidly opposed Brexit before the referendum, has found it nearly impossible to navigate around both the demands of Brexit cheerleaders and the vastly superior negotiating position of the E.U. (The Washington Post, 15.11.2018).*
- (3) *Coupled with a sense that their country — much like themselves — has been disrespected and buffeted by ominous forces, the temptation is to indulge in conspiracy theories, blame outsiders and resort to political nihilism. Soon **leaders don't lead, hucksters emerge to play on fear and instantaneous social media intensifies public mood swings and propagates all sorts of myths.** (Foreigners are stealing our jobs! Free trade is bad!)*



ASSOCIATIVE CONNECTION OF BREXIT

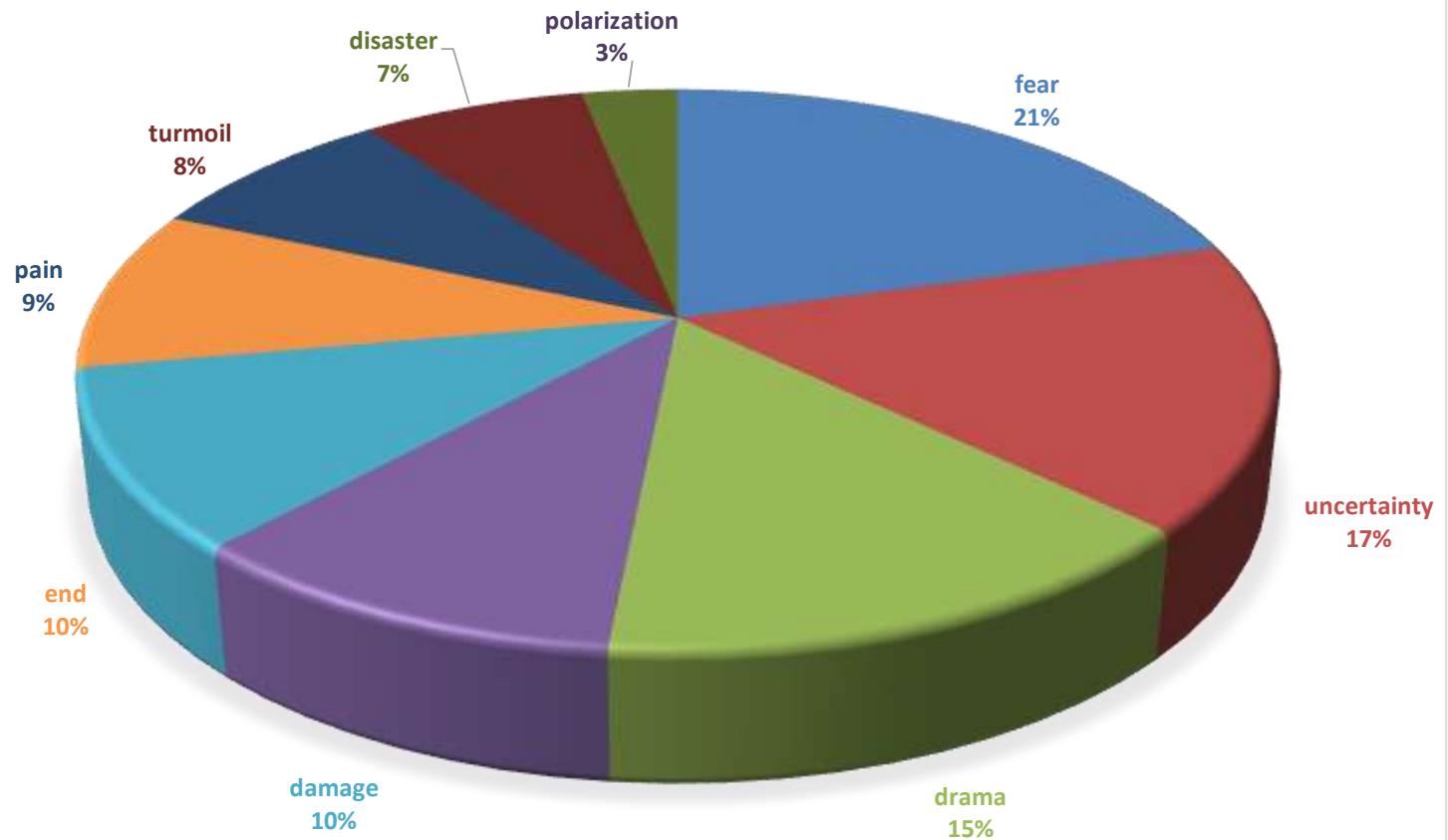
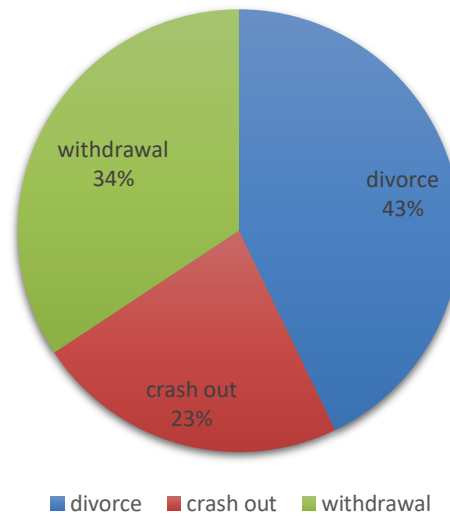




Fig. 1 Britain's leaving the EU



- *Meanwhile, **the mother of Parliaments** has gone mad, the governing Conservative Party shows contempt for business, and its Labour rival has been taken over by **lovers of Karl Marx***
- *It is time for Britain to leave the European Union — **with or without a deal** (The Washington Post, 30.01.2019). In other words, the U.K. stays inside Europe's trading space until ... whenever*





- *Finally, I do realize that it's facile to talk about the impact on a U.S. election that is still many months away, that it's too simple to say "first Brexit, then Donald Trump." <...> If that kind of transformation can take place in the U.K., then it can happen in the United States, too. We have been warned (The Washington Post, 24.06.2016).*
- *Brexit is **a cautionary tale** for Trump supporters (The Washington Post, 27.06.2016).*

THE MAIN DIFFICULTIES OF TRANSLATING THE BREXIT DISCOURSE

- nationally and culturally biased units, e.g. *The threat of a hard Irish border had lingered over Brexit negotiations, with concerns that the violence of **the Troubles** could return if border checks between Northern Ireland and Ireland, which remains an E.U. member, are established* (The Washington Post, Jan. 1, 2021). Загроза жорсткого ірландського кордону затримала переговори з Брекситу через занепокоєння, що може повернутися **тридцятирічний збройний етнічно-політичний конфлікт**, якщо буде встановлено контроль на кордоні між Північною Ірландією та Ірландією, що залишається членом ЄС. Переклад реалії *the Troubles* здійснюємо описово словосполученням **тридцятирічний збройний етнічно-політичний конфлікт**.
- proper names, e.g. *In fact, the way **the UKSC** approached this case suggests that it is aware of this possibility* (The Washington Post, Sept. 20, 2019). Насправді, те, як **Верховний суд Великої Британії** підходить до цієї справи, свідчить про його усвідомлення такої можливості.

THE MAIN DIFFICULTIES OF TRANSLATING THE BREXIT DISCOURSE

- noun clusters, e.g. *Britain's post-Brexit relationship with the E.U.* – відносини Британії з ЄС після Брекситу, *smaller "equivalence" deals* – угоди нижчої вартості, *British Prime Minister Boris Johnson's "get Brexit done" mandate* – мандат завершеного Брекситу Британського прем'єр-міністра Бориса Джонсона, *swapping an "ever-closer union" for "what may be an ever-closer agreement"* – замінюючи ще тісніший союз на можливо ще тіснішу угоду, *to run a "people versus Parliament" campaign* – розпочати кампанію народу проти парламенту
- set expressions, e.g. *He has purged Tory moderates, including two former chancellors and the grandson of Winston Churchill, and declared that he would "rather be dead in a ditch" than ask Brussels for a delay to Brexit* (The Washington Post, Dec. 12, 2020). Він позбувся поміркованих Топі, включаючи двох колишніх канцлерів та онука Вінстона Черчилля, і зробив заяву, що краще **«помре у злиднях»**, ніж попросить Брюссель відтермінувати Брексит.
- headlines of the articles, e.g. *Brexit and Trump: When politicians light xenophobic fires, everybody gets burned.* Брексит та Трамп: Коли політики жартуватимуть зі ксенофобічним вогнем, самі обпечуться.

Ways of translation of the Brexit - discourse

- transliteration, e.g. *As a result, the Conservatives face electoral losses in areas that backed remain, such as the south and southwest, as well as Scotland, where popular Conservative leader **Ruth Davidson** has resigned. To win a majority in the next election, then, the Conservatives must consolidate the leave vote, neutralizing **Nigel Farage's** new Brexit Party and winning towns in Labour strongholds in northern England that voted to leave the E.U.* (The Washington Post, Sept. 18, 2019). Як результат, консерватори зіштовхуються з втратами електорату у тих районах, що підтримують ідею залишатися в ЄС, таких, як південь та південний захід, а також у Шотландії, де пішла у відставку популярна лідерка консерваторів **Рут Девідсон**. Для того, щоб потім завоювати більшість на наступних виборах, консерватори мусять консолідувати на виборах прибічників виходу, нейтралізувавши нову Партію Брекситу **Найджела Фаража** та завоювавши підтримку у містах, цитаделях лейбористів, у північній Англії, які голосували за вихід із ЄС.
- loan translation, e.g. *The new prime minister was able to get his withdrawal agreement through Parliament in January 2020, which resulted in the long-awaited “Brexit Day” on Jan. 31 – when Britain formally **Brexit**. ... брекситувала*
- functional analogies, e.g. *a dog's Brexit – не Брексит, а свинство*

Ways of translation of the Brexit - discourse

- explication, e.g. *So, demography, combined with a new understanding of Brexit's certain costs and myriad uncertainties, could cause 2016's big bang that began Brexit to end with a 2019 whimper of a referendum saying, "Oh, never mind."*
- internal commentaries, e.g. *Corbyn and Farage also get very different popularity ratings from **Leavers** and **Remainers** (The Washington Post, Jul. 23, 2019). Корбін та Фараж також отримали різні рейтинги популярності від ліверів, прибічників виходу, та його противників – ремейнерів.*
- and compensation, e.g. *e.g. But with the mammoth legislation pushed through with little time for deliberation, and the country **focused on the surging** coronavirus pandemic, **the convoluted saga** ended with an air of anticlimax (The Washington Post, Jan. 1, 2021). Але в той час як проштовхували велетенські законопроекти, не виділяючи часу на їх обговорення, а країна **затамувала дихання** через стрімке **поширення** пандемії коронавірусу, **заплутана сага** закінчилась в атмосфері розчарування.*

Work with Media Texts at Foreign Language and Translation Classes



Linguistic competence



Sociolinguistic
competence



MUTUAL
UNDERSTANDING



COMMUNICATION IN A
A GLOBALIZED SOCIETY

The results of the research

- Studying the properties of the Brexit discourse gives the possibility to use its material in the educational process: while learning lexicology and stylistics and practical courses of English and translation.
- The recommendations made as a result of this study have been implemented in two articles published in the scientific journals in 2019 and 2021.
- Further study may lead to the attempts to analyse effective manipulation strategies and tactics of the Brexit discourse, to find out phraseological potential, the pragmatic and semantic load of proper names, headlines to the articles, and pictures to them. They may also consist in determining the means to denote the politicians' role in the event and comparing crisis political media discourses of Great Britain and the USA and foregrounding the evaluation in them (positive, negative, neutral).

HANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION