REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN

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ABSTRACT

of the dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

PRAGMATICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF BREXIT WORDS AND EXPRESSIONS IN THE MODERN BRITISH MEDIA TEXTS

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GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE WORK

Relevance of the topic and degree of its development. Modern political, economic, and social processes have a direct impact on language development, its lexical composition, and its communicative potential. In this respect, the Brexit process, which resulted in the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the European Union, has been one of the significant events influencing the development of contemporary English. During the period preceding the referendum and in the subsequent stages, new terms, neologisms, metaphorical expressions, and evaluative lexical units emerged in public and political discourse, a considerable number of which were widely disseminated through the British media. Newspapers, television, and social media have functioned not only as means of transmitting information but also as major communication platforms that have contributed to the formation, dissemination, and consolidation of new linguistic units in everyday speech.

Neologisms that emerged in connection with Brexit, such as *Brexiteer, Remoaner, Bregret, Regrexit,* and *Brexiting*, as well as terminological combinations such as *soft Brexit, hard Brexit,* and *no-deal Brexit*, represent clear examples of changes occurring in the lexical system of the English language. These lexical items not only express new political realities but also reflect particular ideological positions, emotional attitudes, and evaluative connotations. A comparison of the linguistic devices employed in tabloid and broadsheet newspapers, in particular, demonstrates that the same event can be presented through different discourse strategies and for different pragmatic purposes. Therefore, the study of the semantic, pragmatic, and functional characteristics of Brexit-related terminology, the functions these lexical items perform in media discourse, and their impact on everyday language constitutes a relevant area of research in contemporary lexicology, pragmatics, discourse analysis, and media linguistics.

Brexit discourse has attracted considerable attention from international researchers in recent years. The theoretical foundations of political and media discourse, the linguistic expression of

ideology, manipulative strategies, and the functions of metaphors have been extensively examined in the works of scholars such as N.Fairclough, T.A. van Dijk, R.Wodak, P.Chilton, J.Charteris-Black, A.Bingham, C.Williams, and A.Musolff. Their studies have established an important theoretical framework for understanding how political discourse is constructed through linguistic means and how media texts contribute to the formation of public opinion. A.Mammadov, A.Budagova, G.Allahverdiyeva, B.Asgarova, A.Mehbaliyeva, M.Monsumova, and E.Zeynalov have also conducted extensive research on media discourse and its lexical and grammatical features.

Research devoted to Brexit has addressed the topic from a variety of perspectives. J.Simpson and N.Startin, F.Zappettini, M.Henscke, and S.Bauhovitz have examined the impact of social media on the course of the referendum campaign and on the formation of public opinion. K.García Caselles and Y.Karavayeva have explored the formation of the word *Brexit* as a lexical unit and its use in the English language.

The linguistic aspects of Brexit discourse have also been the subject of extensive research. G.Lalić-Krstin has analysed the processes of formation and functional characteristics of neologisms that emerged as a result of Brexit. N.Silaški and T.Durović have identified the characteristics of journey metaphors used in political cartoons, while V.Broz has examined the representation of Brexit in the British press from the perspective of corpus-based critical discourse analysis. The volume *Discourses of Brexit*, edited by V.Koller, S.Koff, and F.Miglbauer, examines Brexit discourse from a range of theoretical and methodological perspectives.

Although the studies discussed above cover various aspects of Brexit from the perspectives of political communication, media discourse, social media, metaphors, neologisms, and corpus linguistics, a comparative investigation of the semantic, pragmatic, and functional characteristics of Brexit-related terms used in different types of British newspapers, the identification of the functions performed by these terms in media discourse, and a comprehensive

examination of their impact on everyday language have not yet been fully addressed.

In Azerbaijani linguistics, systematic research into the linguistic aspects of Brexit remains quite limited. Existing studies have focused predominantly on political and economic issues, while the terminology, neologisms, metaphors, and pragmatic features emerging in British newspaper discourse have not received sufficient comprehensive attention. The present dissertation is intended to address this research gap. The study comparatively analyses the semantic, pragmatic, and functional characteristics of Brexit-related terms used in British *tabloid* and *broadsheet* newspapers, while also identifying the processes through which these terms are formed and the functions they perform in media discourse. The findings are expected to have both theoretical and practical significance for scholarly research in contemporary English lexicology, pragmatics, discourse analysis, media linguistics, and translation studies.

The object and subject of the research. The object of the research consists of words and expressions formed in connection with the Brexit process. These expressions, which were previously regarded mainly as political terms, have over time entered general usage and have begun to appear widely in both written and spoken media. From this perspective, analyzing how these words and expressions are used across different types of media – particularly newspapers, television, online news portals, and social networks – is of particular importance.

The subject of the research, in turn, is the systematization of Brexit-related words and expressions used in media sources and the examination of their pragmatic functions. Key areas of the study include how these expressions are shaped in context, for what purposes they are used, and how they influence the listener or reader.

Purpose and objectives of the research. The aim of the research is to identify new words and expressions reflecting the process of the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the European Union in newspaper and magazine texts in which the process was extensively discussed. To achieve this aim, the following objectives have been established:

– to examine the historical stages in the development of the British media;

– to analyse British media discourse and language;

– to investigate the historical developments that contributed to the Brexit process;

– to examine the impact of newly emerging words and expressions related to the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the European Union, as found in media texts, on the lexical repertoire of the English language;

– to explain the dual meanings expressed by Brexit-related words and expressions. Particular attention is paid to how these expressions are formed in context, for what purposes they are used, and how they influence the listener/reader;

– to identify positive words and expressions related to Brexit in newspapers and articles published within British media discourse;

– to identify and explain the negative words and expressions used in newspapers and articles that portray the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the European Union as a negative step;

– to provide examples of words and expressions used as persuasive devices in British newspapers and television channels that supported the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the European Union;

– to analyse the words and expressions used in newspapers and magazines that, following the referendum on the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the European Union, sought to influence public opinion and shape perceptions of Brexit.

Research methods. To address the objectives of the study, descriptive, critical discourse analysis, comparative, and functional analysis methods and techniques were employed. The descriptive method enabled the investigation of relevant historical developments. It also facilitated the presentation of theoretical information, the chronological description of historical events, and the systematic organisation of these events according to their chronological sequence.

The main provisions of the defense:

– The strong influence of the British media and its role in shaping and driving processes within society have made it a significant object of analysis in both political discourse and media discourse studies;

– The analysis of deixis and deictic elements in British media discourse contributes to clarifying the pragmatic features of media texts;

– The study of the concept of "Brexit" and semantically related speech patterns that have emerged in connection with this concept necessitates lexical and semantic analysis;

– The representation of Brexit in the British press has resulted in stylistic differences between *tabloid* and *broadsheet* newspapers, particularly in terms of their respective spheres of influence and approaches to the topic;

– The analysis of texts related to Brexit in *tabloid* and *broadsheet* newspapers reveals differences in lexical, syntactic, and discourse-level elements, which constitute key components of linguistic corpora;

– The concept of Brexit, drawing on contemporary social and political processes, contributes to the formation of new micro-concepts on the basis of an established lexical model (e.g., *Grexit* and *Fixit*);

– Lexical and phraseological units associated with the concept of "Brexit", as well as word combinations with corresponding semantic meanings, function as key carriers of meaning in media discourse;

– Brexit-related words and expressions in British media sources function as means of persuasion;

– Brexit-related words and expressions in British media sources function as means of influence.

The scientific novelty of the research. The scientific novelty of the dissertation lies in the comprehensive investigation of the lexical and pragmatic changes generated by the Brexit process in British newspaper discourse. Within the framework of the study, Brexit-related terms used in *tabloid* and *broadsheet* newspapers are

comparatively analysed, and their semantic, pragmatic, and functional characteristics are identified.

The scientific novelty of the research is reflected in the following propositions:

– Brexit-related terms and neologisms are systematised in terms of their semantic, pragmatic, and word-formation characteristics, and their role in enriching the lexical repertoire of contemporary English is determined;

– The communicative and pragmatic functions of Brexit-related terminology in British newspaper discourse are comprehensively examined, and their significance in influencing readers and shaping public opinion is identified;

– Brexit-related terminology used in *tabloid* and *broadsheet* newspapers is comparatively analysed, and the similarities and differences observed in term selection and linguistic strategies across different types of media are identified;

– The persuasive, manipulative, and ideological functions of linguistic devices used in newspaper texts are analysed from a pragmatic perspective, and the communicative functions performed by terminological units in media discourse are determined;

– The processes of formation, patterns of use, and impact on everyday communication of new words and expressions that emerged as a result of the Brexit process are investigated, and their contribution to the development of neologisms in contemporary English is established;

– The scholarly conclusions derived from the research systematically generalise the functional characteristics of Brexit terminology in British media discourse and provide new research material for the fields of contemporary English lexicology, pragmatics, and discourse analysis.

The dissertation provides a comprehensive investigation of the pragmatic characteristics of lexical and phraseological units related to Brexit used in media discourse. The study identifies the ideological positioning, evaluative, persuasive, and manipulative functions of words and expressions used in Brexit discourse. Brexit-

related linguistic units in British media texts are comparatively examined, and their pragmatic differences are identified.

Theoretical and practical significance of the research. The theoretical significance of the research lies in the fact that its findings may contribute to enriching existing theoretical knowledge in the fields of pragmatics, discourse analysis, media linguistics, and political communication. The results obtained in the study may serve as a theoretical basis for future research into political discourse, media discourse, and problems of pragmatic linguistics.

The practical significance of the research is determined by the potential application of its findings in the teaching of English, translation, media language, political discourse, pragmatics, and lexicology at higher education institutions; in the development of relevant textbooks and teaching materials; and in future scholarly research on Brexit and media discourse.

Approbation and application. The main findings of the dissertation have been presented at national and international scientific-practical conferences. The materials and results of the research have been reflected in scholarly articles published both in Azerbaijan and abroad.

The name of the organization where the dissertation work was carried out. The dissertation was conducted at the Department of Languages of Azerbaijan Tourism and Management University.

The total volume of the dissertation with a sign including a separate volume of the structural units of the dissertation. The dissertation consists of an Introduction, three chapters, a Conclusion, and a list of references. The Introduction comprises 7 pages and 11968 characters; Chapter I comprises 45 pages and 87271 characters; Chapter II comprises 37 pages and 74160 characters; Chapter III comprises 51 pages and 101397 characters; and the Conclusion comprises 3 pages and 4250 characters. The total length of the dissertation, excluding the list of references, is 279046 characters.

MAIN CONTENT OF THE RESEARCH

In the **Introduction** to the research, the relevance of the topic is substantiated, and information is provided on the scientific novelty of the research, its aim and objectives, methodological foundations, approbation, and application.

The first chapter of the dissertation, entitled **"Media Discourse and Brexit,"** provides an overview of the concept of Brexit in media discourse. Brexit was not merely a political decision; it was also an information struggle that divided British society into two broad camps. The media stood, quite literally, at the forefront of this struggle

Significant stylistic differences were particularly evident between *tabloid* and *broadsheet* newspapers in the British press. Tabloid publications such as *The Sun*, *Daily Mail*, and *Daily Express* relied heavily on emotional headlines and simple, forceful language. In their coverage, the European Union was often portrayed as an obstacle to Britain's freedom. By contrast, broadsheet newspapers such as *The Guardian* and *The Times* covered Brexit from a more in-depth, analytical, and critical perspective, paying particular attention to its economic and legal implications. During the Brexit period, the language used by the media also underwent considerable change. New expressions and terms began to emerge, including *Brexiteer*, *Remoaner*, *Project Fear*, and *Regrexit*.

These words were not merely associated with Brexit; they also indicated which side of the debate individuals supported and what kind of worldview they identified with.

All these developments demonstrated that the media is not merely a mirror reflecting events; in some cases, it can also play an active role in shaping and promoting particular interpretations of those events. Throughout the Brexit process, the British media contributed to shaping public opinion. Various strategic means were employed to achieve this purpose. At different times, the media generated fear, offered hope, provoked anger, or created confusion.

This phenomenon once again demonstrates that language is not merely a means of communication – it is also a form of power. This

power is exercised can have an impact on the lives and choices of individuals and society as a whole.

The first paragraph of Chapter I, entitled ***"General Information on British Media Discourse,"*** provides information about Britain and the historical development of its media. Scholars such as M.Conboy, B.McNair, B.Franklin, K.Williams, and J.Chalaby have conducted research into the stages of development of British journalism, the linguistic features employed by tabloid newspapers, and the structure of news texts. From the second half of the nineteenth century onwards, newspapers targeting different audiences began to emerge in the British press. Newspapers such as *The Guardian* (1821), *The Economist* (1843), *The Daily Telegraph* (1855), and *The Financial Times* (1888) distinguished themselves through analytical articles, political commentary, and economic reporting, thereby contributing to the development of quality journalism. The British press includes broadsheet newspapers regarded as serious journalism, such as *The Times*, *The Guardian*, and *The Financial Times*, as well as tabloid newspapers, sometimes referred to as "popular" or "sensational" newspapers, such as *The Sun*, *Daily Mail*, *Daily Mirror*, and *Daily Express*. Newspapers may openly express their political affiliations and, in some cases, encourage their readers to support particular political parties[1].

Broadsheet newspapers tend to rely on fact-based reporting and longer, more complex sentences. Their articles generally present information in a relatively clear and detailed manner and make greater use of complex words and phrases. Greater attention is usually devoted to domestic and international news. In terms of structure, broadsheet headlines tend to be longer and more informative, whereas tabloid headlines are generally shorter, more striking, and designed to occupy a prominent position on the page. Images also occupy a significant amount of space in tabloid

[1] Bingham, A., & Conboy, M. Tabloid Century: The Popular Press in Britain, 1896 to the Present. – Oxford: Peter Lang, – 2015. – 258 p.

newspapers. Broadsheet newspapers, meanwhile, often contain dedicated supplementary sections[2].

K.Williams notes that whereas broadsheet newspapers tend to favour analytical coverage of political and economic issues, tabloid newspapers make more extensive use of emotional language, sensational headlines, and visual devices[3]. A.Budagova, examining English-language media texts from a functional perspective, demonstrates that media language is not merely a means of transmitting information but also performs specific communicative, pragmatic, and evaluative functions[4]. Tabloid newspapers, such as *The Sun*, *Daily Mail*, and *Daily Express*, are characterised by emotional, provocative, and, in many cases, exaggerated expressions. By using simple and concise sentences, they encourage readers to respond to events emotionally. Typical features of tabloid newspapers include short sentences, elliptical structures, the active voice, strong verbs, and syntactic compression adapted to headline conventions. In broadsheet newspapers, by contrast, complex sentences, subordinate clauses, cause-and-effect constructions, passive constructions, and explanatory syntactic structures are used more extensively.

From the perspective of M.Monsumova's approach, the analysis of media texts should take into account not only their lexical and grammatical features but also their communicative purpose, context, potential impact on the audience, and social function[5]. Words and expressions selected in media discourse may not only convey information but also serve to present particular events and individuals in either a positive or negative manner, shape public attitudes, and legitimise a particular position.

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[2] Jucker, A.H. Social Stylistics Syntactic Variation in British Newspapers. – Berlin – New York: Mouton de Gruyter, – 1992. – 297 p.

[3] Williams, K. Read all about it! A History of the British Newspaper /Abingdon: Routledge, – 2010. – 320 p..

[4] Budagova, A.M. Functional Study of English-Language Media Texts: /Abstract of the Dissertation for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Philology/ – Baku, 2017. – 25 p.

[5] Monsumova, M. Key Concepts in Media Discourse Studies. // Azerbaijan University of Languages (AUL), Scientific News, – 2021. N.1, – p.31-37.

B.Asgarova notes that an informative approach is manifested in broadsheet newspapers through the organisation of information units on the basis of various syntactic and semantic relationships. In broadsheet discourse, information is elaborated through more complex syntactic structures, while cause-and-effect relationships and factual details are presented in a coherent and systematic manner.

Van Dijk notes that topics, or macro-level structures, are reflected in news headlines because headlines identify the overall connection or semantic unit of a discourse. While readers of tabloid newspapers are accustomed to emotive language, readers of broadsheet newspapers tend to be more familiar with analytical language. Headlines in broadsheet newspapers are generally longer and more informative, whereas tabloid headlines tend to be shorter and designed to occupy a prominent position on the page. Images also occupy a significant amount of space in tabloid newspapers.

In broadsheet newspapers, headlines are commonly followed by a *lead*, that is, the introductory section presenting the main information. This is followed by the main body of the article and, in many cases, sections devoted to commentary and advertisements. Whereas broadsheet headlines tend to be relatively straightforward and accessible, tabloid headlines are generally more extravagant, striking, and sensational. Instead of lengthy sentences, headlines frequently consist of concise and compressed noun phrases. For example, the tabloid headline *"Bank Girl Killer Clues"* is used instead of the more explicit broadsheet-style formulation *"Clues to the Killer of the Girl who Worked in a Bank."* The first headline conveys the idea concisely through a complex noun phrase, whereas the second example provides a more expanded presentation of the meaning through the relative clause introduced by the pronoun *who*. Short sentences, elliptical structures, the active voice, strong verbs, and syntactic compression adapted to headline conventions are characteristic of tabloid newspapers. Broadsheet newspapers, on the other hand, make greater use of complex sentences, subordinate clauses, cause-and-effect constructions, passive constructions, and explanatory syntactic structures.

Thus, broadsheet newspapers such as *The Guardian*, *The Times*, and *The Financial Times* generally employ language that is more neutral, analytical, and closer to academic vocabulary. They structure events, provide space for different perspectives, and encourage readers not merely to receive information but also to reflect on it. This type of discourse is more strongly oriented towards an educated and professionally engaged readership, including politicians, academics, economists, and students.

The second paragraph of Chapter I, entitled ***"British Media Discourse as an Indicator of the Impact of the Brexit Process on Contemporary English,"*** examines the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the European Union, that is, the Brexit process, and its impact on the English language. Brexit not only resulted in the reconfiguration of international legal and economic relations but also brought about significant transformations in domestic public opinion, political relations, and media discourse. The word *Brexit* is a neologism formed by blending the words *Britain/British* and *exit*. Its primary meaning refers to the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union[6].

The Brexit process entered the legal and political sphere through the referendum held on 23 June 2016. According to the referendum results, 51.9% of voters supported leaving the European Union, while 48.1% voted to remain within the organisation. This result led to profound social and political divisions within the United Kingdom and marked the beginning of a new phase in the system of international relations[7].

A number of new words were also formed, including *Brexiteer* (an active supporter of Brexit), *Brexiter* (a supporter of Brexit), *Brexity* (characteristic of or associated with Brexit), *Brexitism* (the ideology or political approach associated with Brexit), *Brexthrough* (a breakthrough or period of progress following Brexit), and

[6] Fontaine, L. The early semantics of the neologism BREXIT. // Functional Linguistics, – 2017. Volume 4, Article 6. Springer. – p.1-15.

[7] David Bailey & Leslie Budd. The Political Economy of Brexit: [Electronic resource]. – 2017. URL: https://www.agendapub.com/resources/pdfs/chapters/Sample_PoliticalEconomyofBrexit.pdf

Brexitology (the systematic or scholarly study of Brexit). A substantial proportion of the words formed on the basis of *Brexit* have been created through the process of blending. This word-formation process involves combining parts of two different words to create a new lexical unit[8]. For example, the term *Brexodus* (*Brexit* + *Exodus*) refers to the departure of people and companies from the United Kingdom following Brexit. The words *Regrexit* (*regret* + *Brexit*) and *Bregret* (*Brexit* + *regret*) denote feelings of regret following the Brexit decision. *Brexiety* (*Brexit* + *anxiety*) is used to express anxiety associated with Brexit, while *Brexeconomics* (*Brexit* + *economics*) refers to the economic consequences of Brexit. In addition, *Breturn* (*Britain* + *return*) is a newly coined neologism expressing the idea of the United Kingdom returning to the European Union.

Numerous words and terminological combinations have also been formed on the basis of the term *Brexit* through the process of compounding. These include *Hard Brexit, Soft Brexit, No-deal Brexit, Brexit deal, Brexit Day, Brexit vote,* and *Brexit negotiations*. Such terms have been used to describe various political, legal, and economic aspects of the Brexit process.

The newly emerging words and expressions can be classified into a number of micro-concepts. These include political and strategic concepts, such as *Regrexit* – regret over the Brexit decision; *rejoiner* – a person who wishes to rejoin the EU; *remoaner* – a derogatory term for an opponent of Brexit; *Brexodus* – the departure of people and companies from the EU; and *Breturn* – the desire for Britain to rejoin the EU. Another category comprises emotional and identity-related concepts, including *Brexiety* (*Brexit* + *anxiety*) – anxiety associated with Brexit; *Bregret* (*Brexit* + *regret*) – a feeling of regret over Brexit; *Brexhaution* (*Brexit* + *exhaustion*) – the perception of Brexit as a prolonged and exhausting process; and *Brextremist* (*Brexit* + *extremist*) – a term referring to individuals who adopt uncompromising, inflexible, or extreme positions on Brexit. The third category consists of economic and trade-related concepts,

[8] Lalić-Krstin, G., & Silaški, N. From Brexit to Bregret: An account of some Brexit-induced neologisms in English. English Today, – 2018. 34(2), – p.3–8.

such as *Brecession* (*Brexit + recession*) – the notion that Brexit may contribute to economic recession; *Brexonomics* (*Brexit + economics*) – the impact of Brexit on the economic situation; *Brexflation* (*Brexit + inflation*) – the association of Brexit with inflation; and *Brexport* (*Brexit + export*) – the negative impact of Brexit on exports. Finally, media- and culture-related concepts include *Brexicon* (*Brexit + lexicon*) – the distinctive place occupied by Brexit-related vocabulary within the lexical repertoire of English; *Brexspeak* – language and discourse associated with Brexit-related negotiations; and *Brexploitation* (*Brexit + exploitation*) – the exploitation of Brexit for economic or commercial purposes. These lexical formations demonstrate that Brexit has not only generated terminology referring directly to a political process but has also contributed to the emergence of a broader network of semantically and pragmatically related lexical units in contemporary English.

Chapter II is entitled **"The Impact of Brexit on the Lexical Composition of Contemporary English."** The first paragraph of this chapter, entitled ***"Positive Words and Expressions Used in Connection with Brexit,"*** examines lexical units that emerged in Brexit discourse either as newly coined forms or through the combination of existing words with new meanings, thereby assigning positive evaluative and emotional connotations to the Brexit event.

Positive words and expressions in Brexit discourse are intended to associate the event with freedom, sovereignty, economic benefits, national pride, and future opportunities. V.Katermina and N.Salovyova (2019) note that the neologism *Brexit* can acquire different meanings in different contexts, including positive axiological meanings[9]. Word-formation processes such as blending, affixation, and compounding play an important role in the formation of new Brexit-related words. One of the main positive terms referring to Brexit supporters is *Brexiteer*. This term expresses the political identification of Brexit supporters and, in certain media contexts, is

[9] Катермина, В.В., & Соловьева, Н.С. Аксиология неологизма Brexit в англоязычном массмедийном дискурсе. // Актуальные проблемы филологии и педагогической лингвистики, – 2019. № 3, – с.103–111.

associated with determination, patriotism, and the defence of national interests.

The ideas of sovereignty and independence are conveyed through expressions such as *Global Britain, Sovereign Britain, Take Back Control, Free Britain,* and *Brexit freedoms*. These expressions reinforce the idea that Britain could develop into a more independent and globally oriented state following its departure from the EU. The expression "Take back control," which represents the rhetoric of national sovereignty, became the central slogan of the *Vote Leave* campaign in 2016. It was particularly prominent in right-leaning tabloid and broadsheet newspapers such as *The Sun, Daily Mail,* and *The Telegraph*. The headline *"Britain will take back control its borders for the first time in decades after we quit EU, Theresa May vows"* illustrates this usage.[10] Here, the expression *take back control* possesses considerable pragmatic force and creates a strong emotional resonance among readers by invoking the idea of reclaiming the right to govern. The expression performs both a vocative and a mobilising function.

Lexical units such as *Brexit bonus, Brexit dividend,* and *Brexit opportunity* foreground the potential economic advantages associated with Brexit. Expressions such as *Brexoptimism* and *A New Dawn for Britain,* meanwhile, foster an optimistic attitude towards the future by presenting the post-Brexit period as a new stage of opportunity and development. The expression *"A new dawn for Britain"* functions as a hopeful metaphor and appeared frequently in headlines in newspapers such as *The Daily Telegraph* and *The Times* on the day of the referendum. In the expression *"Friday morning news briefing: Brexit Day – 'dawn of a new era',"* the metaphorical construction *new dawn* creates a positive vision of the future[11]. It presents Brexit as the restoration of a future that had been taken away. From a linguistic perspective, the expression is both poetic and ideologically charged.

[10] Alain Tolhurst. "Britain will take back control its borders for the first time in decades after we quit EU, Theresa May vows" // The Sun. – 2018, 2 October

[11] Danny, Boyle."Friday morning news briefing: Brexit Day - 'dawn of a new era". // The Telegraph. – 2020, 31 January.

National identity and patriotism are reflected in expressions such as *Red, White and Blue Brexit, Believe in Britain,* and *Our proud nation*. These lexical units associate the concept of Brexit with Britain's national values, history, and traditions of statehood. Thus, positive lexis in Brexit discourse primarily consists of words and expressions conveying sovereignty and freedom, economic benefits, an optimistic vision of the future, national identity, and pro-Brexit identification. These lexical units contribute to the positive framing.

Among the new words that emerged in connection with Brexit, *Bremain, Bregret, Regrexit, Brexitannia, Breturn, Brextremist, Brexhaustion, Brextension, Bremoaner, Remoaner, Rejoiner, Brexity, Brexiteering,* and other lexical units occupy an important place. *Bremain* denotes Britain's remaining in the EU, while *Bregret* and *Regrexit* express regret over the Brexit decision. *Breturn* refers to the idea of Britain returning to the EU. Expressions such as *Brextremist, Bremoaner,* and *Remoaner* are primarily used to assign negative evaluations to opposing groups or individuals. *Brexhaustion* refers to the fatigue resulting from the Brexit negotiations, whereas *Brextension* denotes the extension of the Brexit process.

Expressions such as *No-deal Brexit, Hard Brexit, Brino, Dirty Brexit, Botched Brexit,* and *Blind Brexit* were also widely used in Brexit discourse. *No-deal Brexit* refers to withdrawal without an agreement, while *Hard Brexit* denotes a more complete and stringent severing of relations with the EU. *Brino* refers to the concept of "Brexit in name only." *Botched Brexit* describes the unsuccessful handling or implementation of the Brexit process, whereas *Blind Brexit* refers to withdrawal from the EU without the future terms and conditions having been clearly established.

In addition, terms such as *Brexit uncertainty, final say, hard border, Article 50, Eurosceptic, Euromyth,* and *Project Fear* reflect various political, legal, and ideological aspects of Brexit. In particular, *Project Fear* has been associated with attempts by both the Leave and Remain campaigns to influence voters by appealing to fear and anxiety. Metaphors also played an important role in intensifying negative connotations in Brexit discourse. The metaphor *"Brexit is a disaster"* encourages Brexit to be perceived as a

dangerous and crisis-generating event. Expressions such as *Brexit turmoil*, *Brexit fallout*, and *Brexit chaos* foreground notions of political instability, negative consequences, and disorder. *Economic Armageddon*, in turn, presents the economic consequences of Brexit in an extremely dramatic manner. Other important metaphorical models include *"Brexit is war"* and *"Brexit is an illness."* Within the *war metaphor*, words such as *battle, fight, victory, defeat, attack, defend*, and *opponent* are used to conceptualise political confrontation. Within the *illness metaphor*, words such as *sickness, fatigue*, and *fever* contribute to the representation of Brexit as a problem or crisis.

Overall, the formation of new words through blending, conversion, and affixation is particularly notable in Brexit discourse. Forms such as *Bregretter, Bremainer, Brexity, Brexiting, Brexited*, and *Brexiteering* express different political and emotional meanings associated with the concept of Brexit. Metaphorical expressions, meanwhile, enable Brexit to be represented in terms of disaster, war, illness, chaos, and crisis, thereby reinforcing its negative evaluation.

The 2016 referendum held in the United Kingdom on leaving the European Union functioned not only as a political but also as a discursive watershed. The term *Brexit* subsequently became central not only to political debate but also to linguistic and media discourse. Throughout this process, numerous negatively charged expressions, metaphors, and neologisms emerged in political rhetoric, media discourse, and public debate. This section aims to analyse the principal forms of negative lexis used in Brexit discourse, including metaphors, political labels, satirical expressions, and the rhetoric of fear.

1. Metaphorical Negativity: The Discourse of Chaos and Danger Metaphors frequently used in media coverage of Brexit were employed to emphasise the uncertain, potentially disastrous, and uncontrollable nature of the process. Expressions such as *"cliff-edge Brexit," "crash out of the EU," "economic Armageddon,"* and

"Brexit chaos" were particularly prominent and were deliberately used to represent withdrawal from the European[12].

2. Political Labelling: "Enemies of the People" and "Traitors." In the tabloid press, particularly *The Daily Mail*, *The Sun*, and *The Daily Express*, political figures who opposed Brexit were labelled with negatively charged terms such as "traitor," "saboteur," and "enemy of the people." These expressions are typical examples of populist rhetoric and are regarded as discourse strategies that intensify political polarisation[13].

3. Neologisms and Satirical Lexis: The neologisms that emerged during the Brexit period also reveal the negative orientation and ironic character of the discourse. Expressions such as *"Brexshit"* (*Brexit + shit*), *"Regrexit"* (*regret + Brexit*), *"Brextremist"* (*Brexit + extremist*), and *"Boomer Brexit"* represent public dissatisfaction, criticism of radicalism, and intergenerational conflict. These lexical items were widely used in media discourse and on social media platforms.

4. The Rhetoric of Fear: Catastrophising the Future: Campaigns referred to as *"Project Fear"* can be regarded as part of the use of fear rhetoric in the media. Potential threats such as economic crisis, international isolation, and limited prospects for young people were emphasised through expressions such as *"brain drain," "loss of rights,"* and *"food shortages."*[14]

This rhetoric was particularly prominent in broadsheet newspapers such as *The Guardian* and *The Financial Times*. By contrast, broadsheet newspapers – including *The Guardian*, *The Financial Times*, and *The Independent* – generally adopted a more analytical, balanced, and reflective approach. Headlines such as *"Brexit would weaken Britain's global influence"* and *"EU is not perfect, but it protects workers' rights"* foregrounded rational arguments and proposals for compromise rather than relying

[12] Charteris-Black, J. Metaphors of Brexit: No Cherries on the Cake? – Palgrave Macmillan, – 2019. – p.289

[13] Wodak, R. The Politics of Fear: What Right-Wing Populist Discourses Mean. – Sage, – 2015. – p.137-140

[14] Koller, V., Kopf, S., & Miglbauer, M. Discourses of Brexit. – Routledge, – 2019. – 251 p.

primarily on fear-based rhetoric. The language employed by these newspapers can therefore be characterised by a pragmatic rhetoric that encourages readers and voters to reflect critically on the issues involved.

Chapter III is entitled **"Brexit-Related Words and Expressions as Means of Persuasion and Influence."** This chapter examines the means of persuasion and influence employed in Brexit discourse. The first paragraph of Chapter III, entitled ***"Brexit-Related Words and Expressions in British Media Discourse as Means of Persuasion,"*** analyses linguistic patterns used in Brexit discourse.

Political discourse largely relies on the persuasive and manipulative functions of language. During the campaign, the *Leave* side brought long-standing issues relating to sovereignty and immigration to the forefront. By contrast, the *Remain* campaign failed to develop an equally positive and persuasive strategy in favour of remaining in the EU. One of the reasons for this was that these themes had not been sufficiently or comprehensively developed by the media and politicians in previous periods.

"The Will of the People" – The expression *"the will of the people"* was used extensively to emphasise democratic legitimacy. Brexit supporters placed the concept of "the will of the people" at the centre of their discourse in an attempt to legitimise the decision to leave the EU. However, as a key component of populist discourse, the term presents the will of the political majority as a universal and uncontested truth. Linguistically, the expression *"the will of the people"* refers to an impersonal and abstract concept without identifying a specific subject, thereby lending it a sense of universality and authority[15].

"Brexit means Brexit" – Popularised by Theresa May, this expression is semantically lacking in substantive content; however, in a political context, it conveys a message of determination and an unwavering commitment to a position. The slogan is used in political

[15] Chilton, P., & Schäffner, C. Politics as Text and Talk: Analytic Approaches to Political Discourse. – John Benjamins Publishing, – 2002. – p.1-45

rhetoric to create an impression of certainty and stability, aiming to discourage questions or doubts among readers and listeners[16].

"Get Brexit done" – Used as a central slogan in Boris Johnson's election campaign, this expression simplifies complex and long-term political processes, reflecting public fatigue and the desire for change. It represents political simplification and an appeal for a definitive outcome, seeking to inspire hope and a willingness to take action among the audience.

"Take back our borders" and *"Defend British jobs"* – These expressions frame immigration in the context of national security and economic well-being. Such language reinforces the polarisation between "us" and "them", serving the strategy of *othering*, whereby outsiders are portrayed as separate from or distinct from the national community. This rhetoric seeks to intensify fears and concerns about immigration while foregrounding ideas of nationalism and sovereignty[17].

The second paragraph of Chapter III, entitled ***"Brexit-Related Words and Expressions as Means of Influence in British Media Discourse,"*** examines the ways in which public opinion has been shaped and transformed under the influence of the media.

The topic of Brexit became a major discursive instrument in the British media for shaping public opinion. The words and expressions employed in this discourse were not used solely to transmit information but also to present political positions persuasively and to influence the direction of public opinion.

Neological Terms and Political Labelling – Terms such as *"Brexiteer"* and *"Remainer"* became widely used in political campaigns. The term *"Brexiteer,"* in addition to functioning as a means of identification for supporters of Brexit, contributed to intensifying political polarisation. Such terms were repeatedly used

[16] Cameron, D. "Brexit means Brexit": Discourse analysis of a political slogan. // Journal of Language and Politics, – 2016. 15(4), – p.523-543.

[17] Hawkins, R., & Milford, D. Media, Migration and Public Opinion: UK Press Coverage and Its Impact. – Routledge, – 2018.

in *The Guardian* and served to highlight the distinction between opposing political positions[18].

Emotional Loading and Stereotyping – Emotional loading and stereotyping are particularly evident in Brexit-related expressions used by tabloid newspapers, especially *The Sun* and *Daily Mail*. Expressions such as *"EU invasion"* and *"swarm of migrants"* create an atmosphere of fear and threat. Such lexical choices can generate feelings of apprehension and anxiety among readers[19]. Tabloid newspapers, including *The Sun*, *Daily Mail*, and *Daily Express*, generally supported the pro-Brexit position and relied extensively on emotional, polarising, and fear-based rhetoric. Expressions such as *"Migrants flood Britain," "Breaking point,"* and *"We want our country back"* employed metaphors and hyperbole to construct images of danger and threat and to reinforce the opposition between *"us"* and *"them"*. The EU's alleged control over aspects of everyday life – for example, claims such as *"EU to ban kettles, toasters..."* – was presented in an exaggerated manner, thereby contributing to increased public resentment towards governance from Brussels.

Metaphorical Language and Symbolism – Metaphors such as *"taking back control"* and *"freedom fight,"* frequently used in *The Daily Telegraph*, symbolised ideas of national freedom and sovereignty within Brexit discourse. Such metaphorical expressions presented complex political processes in a simplified and rhetorically powerful form, thereby producing a strong emotional impact on readers[20].

Polarisation and Othering Strategies – The discourse of *"us"* versus *"them"* polarisation is particularly evident in media representations of Brexit. Expressions such as *"EU diktat"* and *"Brussels bureaucrats"* construct the European institutions centred in Brussels as a negative image or external authority. Through such linguistic representations, the media contributed to the reinforcement of anti-European and nationalist sentiments among sections of the

[18] Brexiteers and Remainers: The language of Brexit. // The Guardian, – 2016.
[19] Hawkins, R., & Milford, D. Media, Migration and Public Opinion: UK Press Coverage and Its Impact. – Routledge, – 2018.
[20] Taking back control: The rhetoric of Brexit. // The Daily Telegraph. – 2016

public. The research demonstrates that both sides – the supporters and opponents of Brexit – employed a range of linguistic and discourse strategies, including emotionally charged expressions, metaphors, neologisms, the construction of enemy images, *"us versus them"* polarisation, and rhetorical questions. Hyperbolic and polarising expressions particularly observed in tabloid newspapers, as well as metaphors intended to generate public fear and mobilisation – such as *"migrant waves," "Brussels diktat,"* and *"take back our sovereignty"* – can be regarded, from a pragmatic perspective, as examples of manipulative discourse. Although broadsheet newspapers generally adopted a more neutral and analytical tone, they also employed subtler rhetorical devices to influence readers' perceptions and guide their interpretation of Brexit-related issues.

Manipulative Language and Statistics – During the 2016 referendum campaign, the claim that *"£350 million a week will go to the NHS"* became widely circulated. It was subsequently demonstrated that this claim had been presented without the necessary contextualisation. This type of manipulative rhetoric not only appealed to voters' emotions but also contributed to public misinformation.

National Self-Praise – This strategy involves the positive representation of the country and its national values, with particular emphasis on national identity, historical achievements, democracy, freedom, and human rights. The strategy is intended to construct a positive national image within political discourse and to strengthen feelings of national pride among the audience. In Brexit discourse, this strategy was employed particularly to foreground Britain's strength, independence, democratic traditions, and capacity for self-government. Through such representations, Brexit was framed not merely as a political or economic decision but also as an expression of national identity and self-determination.

The main scientific findings and **conclusions** derived from the research conducted in this dissertation can be presented as follows:

1. British media is distinguished by its strong historical foundations and rich journalistic traditions. Newspapers such as *The*

Times, The Guardian, The Daily Mail, The Sun, The Daily Express, and *The Daily Mirror* have played an important role in addressing and shaping public issues. Broadsheet and tabloid newspapers represent two contrasting positions within British public discourse. Tabloid or popular newspapers have predominantly employed emotional, simple, concise, and attention-grabbing linguistic devices. Broadsheet or quality newspapers, by contrast, have generally interpreted the same events in a more analytical and fact-based manner, placing greater emphasis on their political and economic contexts.

2. The term *Brexit*, formed through the combination of the components *Britain/British* and *exit*, has contributed to the formation of words and expressions that conceptualise various political, economic, social, and emotional dimensions of the Brexit process. It has also generated a range of lexical units associated with different micro-concepts, including emotional responses, economic consequences, media, and culture, such as *Regrexit, Bregret, Brexodus, Brexiety, Brexonomics, Brexflation, Brexport,* and *Brexploitation*.

3. Word-formation processes such as *blending, affixation, compounding,* and *semantic transformation* have played an important role in the development of Brexit-related lexis. In particular, the combination of the *Brexit* component with various words and expressions has resulted in the emergence of new nominative and evaluative lexical units.

4. Positive Brexit-related neologisms and lexical combinations can primarily be classified into the following semantic-pragmatic categories: *sovereignty and control; economic development and new opportunities; optimism and confidence in the future.* Expressions such as *Global Britain, Take Back Control, Sovereign Britain, Brexit opportunities,* and *Set Britain Free* reinforce the idea of sovereignty, democracy, and national political self-determination. Lexical units such as *Brexit dividend, Brexit bonus,* and *bespoke deal* associate Brexit with economic gains, new opportunities for cooperation, and the possibility of pursuing an independent economic policy. Expressions such as *A New Dawn for Britain, Bright Future,* and

Freedom to Thrive represent the post-Brexit period as a stage of progress, development, and prosperity.

5. Lexical units and expressions carrying negative connotations were particularly widespread in Brexit discourse. Expressions such as *Hard Brexit, disorderly Brexit, bad Brexit, damaging Brexit, disruptive Brexit, cliff-edge Brexit, Brexit turmoil, Brexit chaos, Brexit fallout, Brexit deadlock, Brexit mayhem,* and *broken Britain* contributed to the representation of the political process as risky, unstable, potentially catastrophic, and destructive.

6. Metaphorical framing structures play a significant role in the negative representation of Brexit. The concept of Brexit has been combined with lexical items associated with *war, disaster, illness, chaos, journey, **and** natural phenomena,* thereby generating conceptual metaphors and intensifying both positive and negative emotional associations with the political event. For example, lexical units such as *disaster, crisis, fallout,* and *cliff-edge* conceptualise Brexit according to a *disaster model**;*** words such as *battle, fight, victory, defeat, attack,* and *defend* construct a *war model*; while terms such as *trauma, fatigue,* and *fever* conceptualise Brexit through an *illness model.*

7. Brexit discourse has brought political terminology and examples of everyday media language into closer interaction. Expressions such as *Brexitometer, Brexitology, Brexitophobia, Brexit uncertainty, final say, second referendum, hard border, smart border,* and *regulatory alignment* carry specific political meanings but have also become part of media discourse accessible to and widely understood by a broader readership.

8. With regard to persuading audiences and shaping public opinion, the *Leave* and *Remain* campaigns promoted different political positions and employed distinct discourse strategies. Among the principal newspapers supporting the *Leave* position were *The Daily Express*, followed by *Daily Mail*, *The Sun,* and *The Telegraph*. The *Leave* campaign employed a range of persuasive strategies, including a Eurosceptic approach, the use of inclusive and exclusive language based on the *"we–they"* opposition, the *problem–solution model* (*lost control–regain control*), economic arguments, emotional

appeals to patriotism, positive transformation (*renewal–change*), and delegitimisation through representations of the EU as an *"undemocratic Brussels machine."*

9. Conceptual metaphors such as *container, war/invasion, shackles, journey,* and *marriage/divorce*, employed in the speeches of political figures including Nigel Farage, Boris Johnson, David Cameron, and Jeremy Corbyn, played an important role in enhancing the persuasive power of Brexit discourse. These metaphorical models enabled complex political relations and processes to be represented through more familiar conceptual frameworks, thereby increasing their rhetorical and persuasive impact.

10. The rhetoric of fear and danger in political discourse, represented through lexical items such as *threat, invasion, fight, disaster, risk, damage,* and *danger*, as well as the *"number game"* strategy – through which large figures relating to migration, employment, and social benefits were presented in ways capable of generating public anxiety – contributed to the manipulative potential of Brexit discourse. The *polarisation strategy***,** particularly the construction of oppositions such as *British people versus migrants* and *Britain versus the European Union*, further intensified social division. Similarly, metaphorical framing through expressions such as *flood, wave, invasion,* and *tsunami*, when associated with the Brexit process and migration, contributed to the construction of threat and danger. The negative representation of political opponents and competing positions further strengthened the pragmatic and manipulative force of Brexit discourse.

The main theoretical provisions and practical suggestions of the dissertation work are reflected in scientific articles and the abstracts of scientific-practical conferences:

1. Pluralingualism and multilingualism in sociolinguistic studies // The 2nd International Scientific Conference of Young Researchers dedicated to the 95th anniversary of the birth of National Leader Heydar Aliyev, – Baku: Baku Engineering University, – April 27–28, – 2018, – p.1593–1595.
2. Positive Words and Expressions Used in Newspaper Discourse in Relation to Britain's Withdrawal from the European Union (Brexit) // The 3rd International Scientific Conference of Young Researchers dedicated to the 96th anniversary of the birth of National Leader Heydar Aliyev, –Baku: Baku Engineering University, – April 28–29, – 2019, – p.1495–1497.
3. British media discourse as an indicator of the influence of Brexit process to modern English language // Proceedings of the 1st International Scientific and Practical Conference Scientific paradigm in the context of Technologies and Society Development. – Geneva, Switzerland, – 18-19 November, – 2021, – p.292-296.
4. The British Press and Its History // – Baku: "Science and education", Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences, Institute of Manuscripts named after M. Fuzuli, Philological Issues, – 2022. No. 5, – p.314–322.
5. The Language of British Media Discourse (Based on Newspaper Sources) // The 6th International Scientific Conference of Young Researchers dedicated to the 99th anniversary of the birth of National Leader Heydar Aliyev, – Baku: Baku Engineering University, – April 28–29, – 2022, – p.1353–1355.
6. Metonymies Related to Brexit // The 7th International Scientific Conference of Young Researchers dedicated to the 100th anniversary of the birth of National Leader Heydar Aliyev, – Baku: Baku Engineering University, – April 28–29, – 2023, – p.1906-1908.

7. Ideological Division and Linguistic Diversity in the British Press // – Baku: Journal of Baku Engineering University. Philology and Pedagogy, – 2023. Volume 7, Number 2, – p.223-230.
8. The Process of Britain's Withdrawal from the European Union (Brexit) and Its Impact on the English Language // – Baku: "Science and Education", Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences, Institute of Manuscripts named after M.Fuzuli, Philological Issues, – 2024. No. 7, – p.226–232.
9. The Brexit discourse and its influence to the modern English language. // The 1st International Scientific and Practical Conference "Philology of the Future We Are Creating: Trends, Meanings, Priorities." – Moscow: Moscow International University, –Marth 21, – 2025, – p.101–106.
10. Brexit terms and their use in the British media // – Baku: International Scientific Research Journal, – 2025. Volume 5, Issue 1, – p.22–25.
11. Metaphorical strategies in Brexit discourse // Norwegian Journal of Development of the International Science, – 2025. №156, – p.76-80
12. Words and phrases related to Brexit as persuasive tools in British media discourse. // Colloquium-journal, – 2025. №50(243), – p.131-134.
13. The Pragmatic Features of Negative Words and Expressions Used in Relation to Britain's Withdrawal from the European Union (Brexit) // – Baku Journal of Baku Engineering University, "Philology and Pedagogy", – 2025. Volume 9, Number 1. – s.55-64

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