

“Brexit” models in the Russian-language Internet discourse

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Abstract

The paper discusses the linguistic impact of Brexit on the Russian-language Internet discourse as this event has generated a myriad of neologisms in English. The present study aims to identify the composition of Brexit-induced neologisms whose source word is -exit and to describe the features of the reception of the analyzed units at the morphological and word-formation levels in the Russian-speaking segment of the Internet. The subject of the research is an assimilation of the Brexit model in the Russian language. The findings of this study indicate that the features of the reception of -exit derivatives in the Russian language were revealed in the aspect of the morphemization of the -exit component.

Key words: Brexit model, morphemization, exit component, Internet discourse, neologisms

Introduction

At the beginning of the XXI century the lexical system of the Russian language has found some balance, including two main but oppositely directed processes in its development. On the one hand, this is the "learning of the general literary language and the flows of foreign borrowings. On the other hand, the jargonization of the language" (Sklyarevskaya, 2006:5). Nevertheless, the neogenesis of the lexical system of today's Russian is still high, which reflects an exponential growth in the total amount of information received by humans and significantly expands the linguistic space (Kareva, Kochnev, 2006:68). According to Saienko et al. (2019) [...] the media provide the most up-to-date language across a variety of themes. Thus, the process of neogenesis is inexhaustible (Zakhvataeva, 2011) as the words borrowed from other languages and their subsequent assimilation at all levels of the language system are one of the sources of lexical renovation of the contemporary Russian language. Obviously, the novelty of the forms of word loans regards the foreign language vocabulary as so-called "strong neologisms", although the resources of Russian are the major source of neologization.

The juxtaposition of borrowed neologisms and word-formations that appeared on the basis of the Russian language reflects the opposition "own" – "alien", which, according to Kasyanova (2003), "conceptually and conceptualized" distinguishes elements of the foreign language and actually Russian representation of cognitive structures in our linguistic consciousness" (Kasyanova, 2003).

However, it is easy to distinguish between "own" and "alien" when it comes to opposing the Russian new word-formation and borrowing (for example, we clearly distinguish Russian lexemes *“головокружение”*, *“беспроводной”* from borrowed ones such as *“рекрутинг”*, *“супервайзер”*, *“клипмейкер”*). The situation changes if we try to determine the etymology of such words as *“анг्रेйд”*, *“ксерить”*, *“сканировать”*, *“смска”*, *“блокбастер”*, which include foreign language elements and are formed in Russian.

The scholars express divided opinions on this issue. Some propose to consider such cases as "hybrid loan words", while others – to use the terms "semi-borrowing", "partial borrowing" or even refer examples of this kind to Russian word-

formation, consisting of borrowed or with the participation of borrowed morphemes (Cherkasova, 1997:31).

Lexical borrowing is a constant and continuous process due to social factors. According to scientists, it usually follows scientific, commercial and cross-cultural interactions and the related need for new terms to denote new concepts and objects that appear in the course of such contacts. "At the same time, there are turning points in the history of each language, usually caused by serious social changes, when there is a massive influx of foreign words" (Tolmachev, 2015).

An active influx of new borrowings, associated primarily with the processes of globalization and scientific and technological progress, which began in the second half of the 20th century, serve as a strong incentive for the enrichment and expansion of the vocabulary of the linguistic picture of the world as well as "a catalyst for a number of linguistic phenomena" (Prystaiko, 2019:125).

In particular, such phenomena, which characterize the process of borrowing foreign words and their development, can be attributed to the "influence of foreign lexicon on the Russian word-building nests", which opens it up for new borrowings (Petrukhina, 2010). It should be noted that if borrowing has come into the language, which denotes a series of words, united by a common meaning and morphological structure, then borrowings similar to the words of this series are greatly facilitated. For example, the Russian language borrowed the words "джентльмен", "полисмен" in the XIX century and "спортсмен", "рекордсмен" were added to them in the XX century. And a series of words was formed, which has the meaning of a person and a common element *-мен* (Krysin, 1996), which proves the fact that the source language has an initial word-formation model and a more or less extended lexical nest of the corresponding words. The latest borrowings into Russian are those with the element *-фон*, whose formation was initiated by the internationalism of the telephone. The word that came into the Russian language more than two hundred years ago, topped the list of borrowed neologisms in the XXI century – the century of high technologies. These are the borrowings created according to the same model and denoting the types of phone: "смартфон", "андроидфон", "тачфон", "зудлофон", "камерофон", "айфон", etc. The model turned out to be in demand in the framework of the language game, with the help of which modern advertising presents devices for mobile communication: *суперфон*, *экстримофон*, *яблофон*, etc. (Pristajko, 2011), language being a powerful means of communicative influence [...] (Melnichuk et al., 2020).

The need to popularize the knowledge of this terminology is dictated by the change in the technical and economic paradigm and ongoing events in the country's economic, social and political life. Besides, in the era of globalization of all spheres of society's life, challenges still remain in the field of the increased level of mutual understanding and cooperation between representatives of various international organizations, business and economic communities (Kozharinov et al., 2021). Similarly, modern word-formation, "using the morphemic composition of the language, fulfils the order of society to create the names necessary for communication" (Zemskaya, 1997), but "in connection with the actualization of a particular concept, a bulky word-formation group immediately falls into speech" (Belogortseva, 2010) but also shapes thinking and general information culture of a member of the digital society (Soboleva et al., 2020).

Literature review

The contemporary Russian language is characterized by an abundance of loan words, which inevitably leads to the fact that certain structural elements begin to stand out in the lexical series and more or less specific meaning of the selected segments is

formed. According to Sologub, the process of morphemization is the formation of foreign language structural elements as independent morphemes in the Russian language (Sologub, 2002). Loan words morphologically segmented in the source language and similar to word-formation type in the recipient language, with a certain typological similarity of languages, are likely to be recognized by the speakers of the borrowing language not as monoliths, but as segmenting words (Krasilnikova, 1972).

Benczes (2009, 2010) reported on the reasons for linguistic creativity based on metaphorical and metonymical compounding but her classification of the types of motivation underlying the word-formation in English may explain creativity with which Brexit has triggered a myriad of novel forms. Benczes (2009, 2010) identifies compactness of Brexit-induced neologisms as closely related to language economy which, according to Brekle (1978, quoted in Benczes, 2009: 52), allows the speaker 'to minimize the surface complexity of the utterance while at the same time [the speaker] aims to maximize the information that is communicated to the hearer' as well as the speakers of the recipient language.

The morphological shape of a compound gives an account of the type and status of the elements it is composed of. Then, the immediate constituents of a compound are determined so that certain morphemes constitute the modifier and the remaining ones the head. Afterwards, "all composites [...] must be explainable from an underlying sentence whose syntactic relations they mirror" (Marchand, 1969:55). Many foreign language words in already-compounded forms have already been mastered by Russian, while others are on the way to this, and some are just beginning. The latter two, in our opinion, should also include neoplasms with components -gate, -mania, -maker, -exit, etc. The least studied in the given series are words with the -exit (*экзит* / *эксит*) component, which linguists are just starting to analyze, focusing mainly on the Brexit (Брексит / Брексит) nomination. (Prystajko, 2019) "Brexit is so firmly embedded in the English language" ([https:// qz.com/1737484/brexit-is-changing-the-english-language](https://qz.com/1737484/brexit-is-changing-the-english-language)) that its "discourse is key reading for all [...] researchers in language ..." (Koller et al, 2019).

Materials and Methods

The material for our analysis was compiled between 2016 (the time when the word "Brexit" (=Britain's exit) appeared to present day from various sources: Russian-language news media (broadcast and online), social networking sites, blogs and Internet forums.

For this study, besides general scientific methods of observation, comparison, classification and description, we used methods of morphological and word-formation and contextual analysis.

Results and discussion

The purpose of this study is to determine the composition of Brexit-induced neologisms whose source word is *-exit* and to describe the features of the reception of the analyzed units at the morphological and word-formation levels.

Lalique-Christine and Silashki (2018) consider the concept "Brexit" as a model for the formation of other neologisms: "Spexit" and "Itexit", denoting the possibility of Spain and Italy leaving the Eurozone. As mentioned earlier, the neologism "Brexit" itself was formed on the "Grexit" model (Greece+exit). Since the referendum in the UK approached and media coverage created uncertainty, new words appeared in a matter of days to denote hypothetical scenarios in other EU countries: "Auxit" (Austria + exit), "Bexit" (Belgium + exit), "Frexit" (France + exit), "Fixit" (Finland + exit), etc. In some cases, several words appear to denote the same country: "Germexit / Gerxit" (Germany + exit), "Pexit / Portexit / Portuxit / Portugexit" (Portugal + exit) and others (Lalić-Krstin & Silaški, 2018.).

A review of the Russian-language sphere of information in the Internet media make it possible to reveal the following list of words, led by Britain's split, known as Brexit - **Брекзит / Брексит**:

Table 1: Neologisms denoting hypothetical scenarios of other countries leaving the EU, modelled upon Brexit and revealed in the Russian-language segment of the Internet

Grexit	[Greek/Greece+exit]	<i>Грекзит / Грексит</i>
Polexit	[Poland+exit]	<i>Полэкзит</i>
Itexit	[Italy+exit]	<i>Итексит / «италексит»</i>
Germexit/Gerxit	[Germany+exit]	<i>Герксит</i>
Swexit	[Sweden+exit]	<i>Швексит</i>
Frexit	[France +exit]	<i>Фрекзит / Фрексит</i>
Spexit	[Spain +exit]	<i>Спексит / Исексит</i>
Nexit	[Netherlands+exit]	<i>Никзит / Нексит</i>
Czexit	[Czech+exit]	<i>Чекзит / Чехзит</i>
Venexit	[Veneto+exit]	<i>Венексит</i>
Belexit	[Belarus+exit]	<i>Белэкзит</i>
Calexit	[California+exit]	<i>“Calexit” (“Калекзит”)</i>
Whoexit	[Who+exit]	<i>Хуэксит</i>
Merxit	[Merkel+exit]	<i>“Merxit”</i>
Rexit	[Rajan+exit]	<i>Рексит</i>

The list of English neologisms with the -exit component borrowed into the Russian-language Internet discourse (*Брексит, Грексит, Итексит, Нексит, Спексит и Фрексит*) is not complete. In particular, Auxit / Oexit (Austria's possible exit from the European Union), which is actively used in the English-language media, has not been recorded in the Russian-language ones yet.

First Brexit, now Auxit? (<https://www.express.co.uk/news/world/721865/Auxit-Brexit-austria-leave-hans-werner-sinn-eu-brussels-article-50-Maastricht-treaty>).

What next post-Brexit: Frexit, Nexit or Auxit? (<https://www.thedollarbusiness.com/news/what-next-postbrexit-frexit-nexit-or-auxit/48977>).

The degree of morphological assimilation of the Brexit-induced neologisms with -exit component within the Russian utterance is largely determined by their ability to be included in the paradigm of Russian inflection. Indeclinable English words tend to make up for their morphological "inconsistency" by forming Russian composites, which can be considered as an intensification of analytical tendencies in Russian word production. As a rule, foreign-language neologisms of this type in the recipient language keep their original image and indeclinability. Morphological assimilation of -exit derivations demonstrates variants of their indeclinability and graphic Russian language.

78% компаний в Чешской Республике обеспокоены обсуждением так называемого «Чехзит» (Czexit – возможный выход Чехии из Евросоюза), [...] (www.radio.cz/ru/).

Over time, as the Brexit-induced neologisms with -exit component become Russified, they acquire masculine gender nouns and therefore, they start to be declinable. This can be clearly explained by most of the investigated contexts demonstrating the use of -exit derivation from the point of view of Russian inflection: *Незадолго до несостоявшегося "Фрексита" сдулся голландский "Нексит"*. (<https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/3262808>); [...], *то Италия запустит свой*

Итексит. (<https://regnum.ru/news/economy/2425681.html>); Любкой «мягкий» брексит будет означать [...]; Как Брексит изменил путешествия по Великобритании и Европе (<https://www.skyscanner.ru/news/puteshestviia-i-vizy-posle-brexita>).

In the following examples there is a deliberate disregard for the norms of inflection of a foreign language neologism that preserves the original English graphics: [...] по отношению к британскому **Brexit-у**, [...] (<http://mirperemen.net/2016/09/evropa-nacionalnyx-gosudarstv-vozvrashhaetsya-k-sammitu-es-v-bratislave/>); Вслед за **Brexitом** пришел **Merxit** (<https://alternatyva.org/2018/10/29/merxit-obestochyt-evropu/>).

Clearly, the word-formation as a branch of linguistics developed rapidly in the last century and is continuing to develop today (Litovkina, 2018). In our study, the method of formation of -exit derivations and their word-formation potential in the Russian language are of much interest. The concept of the English word “exit” (in Russian means “выход”) participates in the formation of new abbreviated English terms, i.e. included in their composition in full or truncated form and carries the key meaning of the whole word. This concept defines the semantics of linguistic units that we use to express it. At the same time, it includes additional characteristics that are expressed using onomastic components, namely toponyms denoting the names of a number of the EU countries (Prosvirina, 2011).

Derivational analysis showed that in the source languages, the units under consideration are formed mainly by contamination of the names of the EU countries and the word “exit”. The given formula **Br(-itain) + exit = Brexit** illustrates how the term was formed, namely, the stem of the word Britain is truncated to the first two letters - **Br**, and connected to the stem of the word **exit**. Analyzing this term in accordance with the structural classification of abbreviated English economic terms (Kubysenko, 2007), we attribute it to the reduction of the hybrid type (Prosvirina, 2010:147), with the placement of the abbreviated component in the preposition.

Hybrids are partially abbreviated words or phrases that are formed as a result of the addition of a truncated element and a full-valued word or phrase.

The first part of the hybrid abbreviation **Br** is formed by truncation of the final part of the full-valued word, which refers to such a subgroup as the apocope, the semantic meaning of the term being preserved and remaining identical to the semantic meaning of its full-valued variant (Prosvirina, 2010:146).

In most cases, the second component is attached to the first letters (two or one) of the corresponding toponyms, for example, **Brexit (Britain)**, **Grexit (Greece)**, **Itexit (Italy)**, **Frexit (France)**, **Spexit (Spain)**, **Swexit (Sweden)**, **Czexit (Czech)**, **Nexit (Netherlands)**; or to the first part of the name of the state/region ending in a consonant letter: **Polexit (Poland)**, **Venexit (Veneto)**, **Calexit (California)**, **Hunexit (Hungary)**, **Belexit (Belarus)**, which avoids the obscenity and homonymy when adding the -exit component with only one first consonant (ex: **Pexit** instead of **Polexit**, **Vexit** instead of **Venexit**, etc.) (Prystajko, 2019:130).

Among these formations, there is a specific group that has attracted the special attention of some authors and was even given different names: blends, blendings, fusions or portmanteau words. The last term is due to Lewis Carroll, the author of “Alice in Wonderland”. The process of formation is also called telescoping because the words seem to slide into one another like sections of a telescope (Arnold, 1986). The neologisms **Merxit** and **Rexit** are formed in a telescopic way with superposition: in the first case, by connecting the first syllable of the surname with the final part of the word **exit** and imposing **-k-**: **Mer(k) + (e)xit**, in the second case, one can speak about the superposition of the elements **-ex-** (**R- (ex + ex) -it**), and on the formation of a neologism by contaminating the first letter of the name **Rajan** with the component **-exit** (**R (ex) + exit**) (Prystajko, 2019:130).

It should be noted that in the recipient Russian language the Russified neologisms *Чекзит / Чехзит, Итексит / «италексит», Спексит / Исексит, Герксит / Гермексит* have various first letters of the corresponding toponyms. The lexemes *Чекзит, Итексит, Спексит, Герксит* are transliterations of their English-language counterparts (*Czechit, Itehit, Spexit, Gerxit*). The lexemes *Исексит, «италексит»* and *Гермексит* are formed by contamination of the first part of the Russian variants of the toponyms *Ис(пания), Итал(ия)* and *Герм(ания)* with the component *-эксит*. When the addition of *Чехзит* was formed, the first two letters of the second component were truncated: *Чех(ия) + (эк)зит*.

The Russian-language segment of the Internet is actively producing the Brexit-induced neologisms, related to different parts of speech (Table 2).

Table 2: Brexit-induced neologisms, related to different parts of speech and revealed in Russian-language Internet discourse

Part of speech	Brexit-induced neologism	Example
Noun	брексист	[...], поскольку «брексисты» в рядах тори преобладают. (https://russian.rt.com/article/302926-razedinyonnoe-korolevstvo-kak-brexit-raskolol-velikobritaniyu)
	брекситер	Среди других номинантов было такое понятие, как "брекситер" - человек, выступающий за выход Великобритании из Евросоюза. (https://www.tvc.ru/news/show/id/104687)
	брекситить	Очевидно, он <i>брекситит</i> . (https://magazine.skyeng.ru/brexiting/)
Verb	брексануть отбрексить	Англоязычные любят словечки типа брексит и прочие, в русском такой традиции словообразования нет, но зато легко можно <i>брексануть</i> и <i>отбрексить</i> . (https://www.forum-tvs.ru/index.php?act=findpost&pid=6713900)
	брекситнуть	И именно тогда, когда ряд стран задумался, как бы им оттуда половчее "брекситнуть". (https://zn.ua/SOCIUM/lzhedepressiya-.html)
Adjective	постбрекситный	Ранее Банк Англии выдвигал требование, чтобы финансовые организации определились со своими планами на <i>постбрекситный</i> период до середины июля т. г. (https://www.incred.ru/novosti/podgotovka-bankov-k-uhodu-iz-velikobritanii/321051/)
	брекситный	[...] в июне он утвердит <i>брекситный</i> контракт для голосования в Палате общин. (https://zen.me/1pVd93)
	добрекситный	К 2030 г. показатели этой сферы могут упасть на 1-5% ниже базового уровня " <i>добрекситного</i> " производства [...].

	(https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/vyhod-velikobritanii-iz-es-posledstviya-dlya-irlandskoy-respubliki)
брекситовый	«Брексит – это вызов для всех нас, и именно поэтому мы предлагаем <i>«брекситовый резерв на пять миллиардов евро»</i> , – сказал Мишель. (https://www.nachedeu.com > предлагается-выделить-5-)
добрекзитовский	Тем не менее как <i>добрекзитовский</i> альбом «BBF» работает идеально и сообщает о современной Британии, [...] (https://www.the-village.ru/weekend/home-alone/253993-albums?comment_id=18784369)
брекзитовский	Появилось понятие <i>«брекзитовская идентичность»</i> (Brexit identity), которое прилагается к отдельным людям (которые стали именоваться «брекзитеры» и «римэйнеры»), политическим партиям и движениям, да и всему союзу Англии, Шотландии, Уэльса и Северной Ирландии — по отдельности и вместе. (https://liberal.ru/reports/vybory-v-velikobritanii-2019-predystoriya)
брекситовский	Здесь по сей день <i>брекситовский</i> внешний фон определяет все драйверы, отодвигая на второй план выходящую статистику. (https://gerchik.co/analytics/mnenie-eksperta/obzor-valyutnyh-rynkov-ot-viktora-makeeva-08-04-2019)

Conclusion

Our work has led us to conclude that the Brexit-induced neologisms have become almost a common phenomenon of today's Internet discourse, the -exit component itself confidently overcoming the path of morphemization in the Russian language. The UK's June 2016 decision to leave the European Union, referred to as *Brexit*, has had not only a major political, financial and economic impact but also a linguistic one. The Russian-language Internet discourse reveals that the word *Brexit* implements its word-formation potential, acquiring derivatives and developing its own word-formation group in the Russian language. The lexeme *Brexit* is actively involved in the morphemization of the -exit component in the Russian language.

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