

The powerful role of words describing Brexodus

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ABSTRACT: This paper aims at highlighting the Brexodus phenomenon from a linguistic point of view, carrying out an investigation about the main terminology adopted by the UK and US online press to explain the leaving of businesses from the UK after Brexit. A linguistic study can highlight how many new words have been coined since the beginning of Brexodus, when the first rumours about Brexit started in 2012. In fact, several Brexit-related new words have been created, such as Irexit, Italeave, Scoxit, Swexit, Merkelexit and Megxit, but also pre-existing words have an important role in describing Brexodus, especially because of their negative connotation. Surely, words have had a powerful role in describing Brexodus, because they are the main vehicles that have made Brexodus known worldwide. These words are not simply “descriptive words”, but powerful terms which are able to transmit the sense of loneliness and fear of so many businesses in the UK.

Keywords: Brexodus, Negative connotation, New words, Terminology.

1. Introduction

Economic and social trends and changes in the world are often important, not only because of the positive and negative effects they can produce on inhabitants and countries, but also because these changes are frequently described by the online press giving origin to new words, which rise in order to distinguish a particular historical event. It is a matter of fact that, after their early use, these words become entries of our vocabularies and make up the bulk of terminology by which that particular event will be recounted and remembered in a positive or a negative way, thus creating a picture of both such an event and its country involved, that is widely shared with and shown to the rest of the world.

In this context, the main purpose of this paper is to describe and analyze how an important recent choice of the United Kingdom — namely Brexit — has led to a related phenomenon — called Brexodus — whereby many foreign companies

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