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EVALUATION OF BREXIT PHENOMENON IN SLOVAK AND ENGLISH MEDIA TEXTS

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Abstract: The article focuses on the analysis of the evaluation of the Brexit phenomenon in Slovak and British media. Evaluation of different outer world's fragments is a significant part of human cognitive activity. It has been proved that the evaluation of Brexit depends on socio-cultural stereotypes and is realised by the usage of various tropes and figures of speech, which are different in Slovak and English media texts.

Key words: Brexit, evaluation, evaluative utterance, context, tropes, figures of speech.

1. Introduction

The mass media has a significant role in contemporary democratic society as the major channel of communication. Media is considered as the "mirror" of the modern society, it is the media, which shapes our lives. The population relies on the news media as the chief source of information and the base, on which they formulate their opinions, judgments, values, and voting decisions.

The role of media is very important in a modern society. At present with the introduction of Internet-services, even a common man is being exposed to international knowledge (Pravdová 2017b: 617-624). There is no doubt that media is becoming more and more essential in our life (2019: 4-12; Happer & Philo 2013: 321-336; Škripcová 2017; Vivian 2012; Wimmer & Dominick 2013). Society is influenced by media in different ways. It is the media for the masses that helps them to receive information about a lot of things and also to form views and make conclusions regarding various issues. It is the media, which keeps the people updated and informed them about current affairs and the business world (Hudíková 2017: 133-140). Thus, mass media can be considered tools for the transfer of information, concepts, and ideas to the readers, listeners, or the viewers.

It is common knowledge that the most widespread platforms for mass media are newspapers, magazines, radio, television, and the Internet. The newspaper enlarges the general knowledge of the people (Manovich 2001). Newspapers are considered to be a source of information, which is highly genuine and successful in the providing of timely information to the audience (Pravdová 2017a: 53-63). Another attractive quality of the newspaper is that it presents wide-ranging information, which is not available on any other resource of media.

It must be noted that newspapers have been scrupulously studied from different angles: structure and composition (Wodak & Busch 2004: 105-123), typology (Казак 2014: 65-76), concepts and categories (Володина 2003; Добросклонская 2008), and language means (Конюшкевич 2016: 93-104).

Nevertheless, there are certain gaps in investigating the role of the evaluation category, which occupies one of the central places in the newspaper text. In this respect, the role of context and functioning of stylistic means in the creation, realization, and interpretation of the appraisal of different social phenomena in media texts should be mentioned. The topicality of this piece of study is determined by the fact that evaluation

is as a kind of cognitive activity, as in epistemological terms, any cognitive act, which expresses the attitude of the speaker to the object described, that is, contains an act of evaluation.

In the proposed conception, evaluation is viewed in the light of social and cultural studies of journalistic texts. Evaluation of the text is undoubtedly formed on the basis of socio-cultural stereotypes. Evaluating a certain object, the speaker relies on the one hand, on his attitude toward him, and on the other hand, on stereotypes about this object and its place in the world picture of values (Tameryan et al. 2019: 1716-1722).

The **subject** of the discussion is an assessment of Brexit in Slovak and English newspaper texts.

2. Methodology

The **purpose** of this article is to identify the main factors (sociocultural and language) that affect the assessment of Brexit phenomenon in Slovak and British media and determine one or another of its evaluative signs.

The **material**, which is subjected to analysis, was a selection of approximately 300 fragments of texts from the Slovak media portals (www.aktuality.sk, www.hlavne spravny.sk, www.pravda.sk, www.sme.sk) and the English media portals (www.reuters.com, www.theguardian.com). The criterion of the selection was the existence of evaluative words in the fragments.

The **methodology** applied in the study is based on the fundamental points of Evaluation theory, which presents essential notions for linguistic analysis. Focusing primarily on the semantic peculiarities of evaluation, this theory expands the boundaries of the analysis with text semantics (Арутюнова 2012; Вольф 2009; Byessonova 2012: 7-14). It means that all aspects of text (register, mood, participants with their communicative purposes, and cognitive systems) become very important for the study

of creating and marking evaluation (Кухаренко 2018; Bigunova 2019: 4-5; Partington 2017: 196-201). In this respect, the theoretical viewpoint essential to the study is also the pragmatic approach to evaluation analysis highlighting the role of extralinguistic knowledge in utterance interpretation and the principles that limit its use as well as the context types for evaluation.

This research involved a variety of methods. A descriptive method, by which we mean a set of research techniques that allow one to move from particular observations to generalizations and conclusions is widely used; contextual and presuppositional analysis, allowing to detect the influence of the role structure of the communication situation, social factors on the communicative semantics, and functional features of utterances with evaluative words and phrases (Dijk 1977: 19; Kachru 2008; Kecskes 2013). Speech act analysis is used while studying the pragmatic characteristics of utterances containing evaluative concepts (Bigunova & Kolegaeva 2019: 7-22).

Our paper is structured as follows: firstly, we will present the theoretical description of the evaluation category in linguistics in general. Then, we will report briefly on the results of some previous works dealing with analysis of the evaluation in the light of social and cultural studies of journalistic texts. Finally, we will provide and comment on our findings concerning the specificity of estimation of the Brexit phenomenon in Slovak and English newspapers, before making some concluding remarks and suggestions for future research.

3. Evaluation and values

Evaluation is a vital aspect of a person's everyday life. Evaluation by its nature is anthropocentric, which means that the contents of evaluation reveal individual nature and depend on the values and axiological standards of a person (Селіванова 2010: 525).

It is known that the quintessence of the category of evaluation is clarified by the theory of value orientation of an individual's activity and consciousness, and the scope of its characteristics embraces all that is given by the physical and mental nature of a person, their being and feeling. We evaluate others and are assessed in accordance with our actions and words. All objects and things of reality perceived by a human being have a definite value in his/her mind, that is, they may be evaluated (Воркачев 2006: 106).

Evaluation is defined as a speaker's objective or subjective attitude to certain objects, things, phenomena that are explicitly or explicitly expressed by language means (Приходько 2016: 17). As Bigunova rightly points out evaluation can be classified into positive, negative, and neutral kinds (2019: 7). So, it cannot be neutral. If an individual claims a neutral position, they express hidden negative appraisal.

It should be stressed that the specific quality of evaluation is its selectivity. The person's mind constantly extracts and stores those features of reality that are important to the individual from the evaluative point of view. There is no doubt that one and the same thing can be of great importance to one person and of no interest to another (Breeze & Olza 2017; Martin & White 2005). If a certain object has not affected a person's spiritual sphere, no appraisal will be formed either in thought or in speech. The evaluative moment is nothing but a person's mental process held on the subject of statement (perception, understanding, synthesis, conclusion, etc.), which is an evaluation in its broadest sense.

All environmental phenomena perceived by man have a certain value in our minds, that is, they can be evaluated. According to Arutyunova, the nature of the evaluation always corresponds to the nature of man, because we evaluate only "what is needed (physically and spiritually) to man and to mankind" (Арутюнова 2012: 181).

People evaluate their past and present, the appearance and behaviour of the individual, the shape and size of various subjects, things, duration and frequency of events, the

degree of complexity of tasks, etc. Evaluative interpretation of circumstances and subjects is one of the most important types of mental-speech activity in the everyday life of an individual. As a result, objective reality is viewed by an individual from the point of view of its evaluative character – good and evil, truth and falsehood, justice and injustice, benefit and harm, beauty and ugliness (Bednarek 2009: 146-175).

Evaluation is based on the logical notion of "value". Genesis of the concept of "value", if we resort to reconstructing it on the basis of the etymology of the words it is named, fixes in it at least three fundamental elements: the characterization of the external properties of objects and things as phenomena of evaluative attitude to them; psychological qualities of the person as a subject of this attitude; relationships between people, their communication, due to which values gain a generalized meaning.

Value is a positive or negative property of the objects of the surrounding world for the speaking community. This significance of these properties is determined not by the objects' features as such, but by their role in the life of an individual language speaker and in the life of the speaking community in general.

There are universal values (common to all mankind, peculiar to individual communities) and individual ones. Being a concentrated expression of the experience of the vital activity of a particular social community values form a certain system, which an individual as a member of this society adheres to in the process of self-evaluation.

It is well known that the notion of value determines the essence of a person, and the system of values is an attribute of human consciousness that guides their activity. Value orientations, which can be both collective and individual, are not something established once and for all. Changes in cultural attitudes often lead to transformation in the system of values (Гибатова 2011: 132). The definition of the evaluative component of a language unit not only reveals the place of a designated phenomenon in the value

system, but also makes a diagnostic contribution, designed to identify the evaluative status of a person and society as a whole at one of the moments of their existence or in their development.

Personal values are an individual reflection of group or universal values. They are somewhat diverse in different people, due to the interpretation of their content and the shift of emphasis. The selection, appropriation, and assimilation of social values by an individual are mediated by their social identity and the values of the small contact groups referenced to them.

The subject of evaluation acts in these cases as a mental or physical receptor, evaluating event, situation, and object in different ranges: ethical evaluation (embarrassing, humiliating, sinful), emotional (boring), intellectual (foolish), utilitarian (meaningless, late), and psychological (difficult, easy, not easy, wise) (Byessonova 2012: 9). It emphasizes the most important feature of the semantics of evaluative words, their diffuse meaning, primarily due to the ability to represent evaluation in terms of different grounds.

4. Evaluation as the source of evaluative utterances in newspapers

The category of evaluation is a rather popular object of linguistic study. As a linguistic category, it attracts the attention of many scientists (Бігунова 2017; Вольф 2009; Панасенко 2019; Приходько 2016; Bednarek 2009; White 2015).

A lot of contribution has been made to the study of the semantic and cognitive nature of evaluation (Арутюнова 2012; Приходько 2016; Kovecses 2004; Martin & White 2005). Some researchers studied the functional and pragmatic aspects of positive and negative types of evaluation (Halliday & Matthiessen 2014; White 2016) as well as the importance of their realization in different types of discourse (Ananko 2017; Breeze & Olza, 2017; Myroniuk 2017; Samokhina & Pasyuk 2017; Thompson & Alba-Juez 2014).

However, it is impossible to study it perfectly, confining only to narrow-linguistic researches, especially regarding the subject of our study. As scientists stated other, primarily sociocultural facts, need consideration. In particular, McConnell-Ginet (1982) in her discussion of the word *good* notes that this adjective is too broad in meaning and can be used in various contexts. Thus, extralinguistic knowledge should be used to understand it correctly.

The assessment draws special attention in the light of sociocultural studies of journalistic texts, which, according to the reasonable comment of Makarov, are of considerable interest to language researchers nowadays (Макаров 2003: 101). It is the texts of the media that are the source of sociocultural information today and, according to many researchers, act as a model of the national-cultural specificity of speech communication, as a "portrait of the speech epoch", a fragment of national culture, which gives a fairly complete picture of political, economic, and sociocultural processes (Басовская 2005: 229; Богуславская 2004: 34). In addition, journalism is primarily interested in what is most relevant today and the most important at the moment.

The essence of its activity is the evaluation of the actual state of events and the introduction of this evaluation into the mass consciousness. So, any journalistic text contains appraisal as its main feature. As, Eco notes: "... (with the exception of the weather forecast) objective information does not exist and cannot exist. Even with the pedantic separation of the commentary from the piece of information, their selection and placement at the page include an implicit judgment" (Эко 1998: 49).

The evaluation is always socially determined, because its interpretation depends on the norms adopted in a particular society. Social interests and fashion, prestige, and discredit form and deform assessments. In addition, as Plotnikov rightly claims:

"under the conditions of civilization, a whole system of methods and means is being created designed to increase the effectiveness of estimation – besides the qualitatively specified (political, legal, and others) norms, ideas and ideals, rules and standards, principles and laws play the same role at the present time" (1998: 633).

Evaluative and emotional connotations may be the result of correlation with cultural attitudes (rules of conduct), stereotypes, and background knowledge (Желтухина 2020: 68-73; Токарев 2003: 58; Hudíková 2014: 161-169). Thus, evaluation is a sociocultural category, a characteristic feature of a journalistic text. The specificity of its manifestation is conditioned by various factors.

In present-day media studies, it is generally accepted that the authors of articles resort to different linguistic means of expressing evaluation (Hunston 2011), because their main functions in the media are not only the designation of new concepts, but also giving an additional characterization to any subject or phenomenon, as well as conveying the author's attitude to the event described. Thus, these means are axiologically marked, i.e. they can express a certain positive or negative assessment of what is happening.

5. Historical and social context of Brexit

Brexit means the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union and the political process connected with it (Brexit 2017). It represented and characterized the peak of many fundamental narratives within the United Kingdom that ended in a referendum and the exit from the European Union.

The process of UK withdrawal from the European Union, called Brexit (from fusion of the English words Britain and exit), is one of the most highlighted and discussed events over the past few years. We are witnessing the formation of a new stage of international relations between the UK and other countries of Europe (Дьякова 2019: 28-29). No wonder the analytics and experts in various fields of economic, socio-political, and cultural life make their predictions on how Brexit will affect the lives of

inhabitants of the UK, Europe, and the rest of the world and how this process changes the role of the United Kingdom on the world arena.

The Leave campaigns were aimed at the identification of Britishness as individuality and in regaining independence from the European Union. They appealed to the public through pathos and outline the European Union negatively and unconstructively. In stark contrast to the Leave campaign, the Remain campaign, led by Prime Minister David Cameron, sought to unify a divided conservative party as well as to convince the British people that remaining in the European Union was the right move for Britain (Shing 2016).

The study of the socio-historic narrative is an interesting topic as the United Kingdom has had an ambivalent relationship with the European Union. The Leave campaign was able to confirm victory in the referendum due to their employment and appellation to sorrow in the voters. They were able to do this by gaining the public opinion of the European Union and related issues of dissatisfaction and solely frame the European Union as the performer of their problems. This was based on an ambivalent historical relationship with the European Union and a feeling of national identity that was controlled by the Leave sides to persuade the voters to break free of the binds of the European Union (Brexit 2017).

The Leave campaign focused on reactivating the underlying cultural narrative of Euroscepticism, which has been reinforced in the United Kingdom through decades of political rhetoric and public discourse. They activated emotions within the voters by appealing to national pride as well as the danger of losing their independence and used rhetoric, which consisted of "native vs foreign" as scare tactics when addressing the community (Veltri et al. 2019: 18-31).

They posed a complicated problem to the public asking them whether they wanted Britain to have its own set of laws and control over the country and if they did not act

in response by voting Leave, then they were considered to be enemies of Britain. Leave outlined the European Union as a whipping boy for the difficulties of the country because of immigration and lack of sovereignty and presented exit from the European Union as the solution to the crisis (Shing 2016).

The above mentioned confirms the urgent necessity to study the phenomenon of Brexit in broad perspective, because such researches fully reveal not only the social but also the linguistic significance of this notion (Morozova 2017: 250-256).

6. Specific features of the evaluation of Brexit in Slovak media

Undoubtedly, the problem of Britain's exit from the European Union was widely highlighted in Slovak newspapers because this process affected not only state relations, but also the economic situation of the country. But in most cases it is of positive character.

This section presents a general overview of the evaluation of Brexit as described in Slovak newspapers.

First of all, it must be noted that what is important for the life of society has a high nominative density in the language worldview. Moreover, the process of understanding reality by the cognizing subject is accompanied by an emotional and evaluative perception of what is happening, while what is important is assessed. This testifies to the fact that the higher the axiological potential of a word is, the more important is the role of a given phenomenon in society.

The process of Great Britain's exit from the European Union can rightfully be considered as an event of world historical character. Its impact on the economic and social development of the countries of European Union cannot be overestimated (MacShane 2016).

Here is an example of a positive evaluative judgement, which proves Slovak people's belief that nothing will change for them after Brexit:

(1) Sk. *Slovensko bude mať pri týchto rokovaniach svoje priority. "Komfort stotisíc Slovákov, ktorí žijú v Británii. Aby sme získali záruky, že v zásade naďalej budú môcť pracovať a študovať v krajine a využívať výhody, ktoré dnes majú ako občania EÚ. Druhou dôležitou vecou je obchod... Chceme pri dohode o voľnom obchode udržať beztarifnú a bezcolnú spoluprácu. Práva občanov a obchod určite budú prioritou pre všetkých. Neviem si predstaviť opak.* ("Brexit: Hodiny d'alej tikajú"). January 31, 2020.

– Eng. 'Slovakia will have its priorities in these negotiations. The comfort of hundreds of thousands of Slovaks living in Britain. To ensure that they can, in principle, continue to work and study in the country and benefit from the benefits they enjoy today as EU citizens. The second important thing is trade... We want to maintain a tariff-free and duty-free cooperation in a free trade agreement. Citizens' rights and trade will certainly be a priority for all. I cannot imagine the opposite'. ("Brexit: The clock continues to tick"). (<https://spravy.pravda.sk/europska-unia/clanok/540841-brexit-hodiny-dalej-tikaju/>)

Analysis of the appraisal of Brexit in Slovak newspapers shows that lexemes with evaluative meaning are widely used to demonstrate the attitude of the people to this phenomenon:

(2) Sk. *Brexit môže mať aj benefičné následky, napríklad v rámci pohybu pracovnej sily pre Poľsko.* ("Ako sa brexit dotkne členských štátov Európskej únie). February 1, 2020. – Eng. 'Brexit can also have beneficial consequences, for example in the context of the movement of labour for Poland'. ("How Brexit will affect the Member States of the European Union"). (<https://www.aktuality.sk/clanok/760555/r-whitman-po-brexite-dojde-k-zmene-rovnovahy-medzi-malymi-a-velkymi-statmi/>)

Here the usage of the adjective *beneficial*, which semantic structure contains positive evaluation semes 'advantageous', 'favourable', helps to express the positive assessment of Brexit and its importance for the social life of the countries of the European Union.

The assessment is created in the evaluative utterance and is implemented by different language units. It is the word that acts as the sign, in which the values of society are fixed (Ananko 2017: 128-137). To illustrate this statement here is the saying of London's Mayor Sadiq Khan, in which he declares an approval of the idea of Brexit:

(3) Sk. *Občanov krajín EÚ žijúcich v Londýne by rád uistil, že zostávajú váženými priateľmi a členmi jednej rodiny.* ("Londýnsky starosta Khan je zdrvený z odchodu Británie z Únie"). January 31, 2020. – Eng. 'He wants to reassure EU citizens living in London they remain valued friends and members of one family'. ("London's Mayor Khan is crushed by Britain's departure from the Union"). (https://www.aktuality.sk/clanok/760486/londynsky-starosta-khan-je-zdrveny-z-odchodu-britanie-z-unie/?AT=wgt.hp_hp-spravodajstvo-najcitanejsie.c.x...B)

The support of Britain's departure is conveyed to the audience by means of the phrase *valued friends*, the constituents of which have positive meaning.

The next fragment serves to display positive assessment of the analysed phenomenon, which, according to the Slovak press, will pave the way for new constructive processes in the life of European countries:

(4) Sk. *Stretnutie Priateľov kohézie v Portugalsku bolo podľa premiéra symbolické. Konalo sa v prvý deň, keď už európska 27 nemala za stolom zástupcu Veľkej Británie. Samit, ktorý hovorí o tom, ako si jednotlivé krajiny majú navzájom pomáhať, je tak podľa Pellegriniho aj akousi "odpoveďou" na brexit.* February 1, 2020. – Eng. '(Pellegrini: Cohesion policy must continue to have a privileged position in the EU)').

According to the Prime Minister, the meeting of the Friends of Cohesion in Portugal was symbolic. It took place on the first day when the European 27 no longer had a

representative of Great Britain at the table. According to Pellegrini, the summit, which talks about how individual countries should help each other, therefore a kind of "answer" to Brexit'. ("Pellegrini: Politika súdržnosti musí mať v EÚ naďalej výsostné postavenie"). (<https://spravy.pravda.sk/svet/article/541027-pellegrini-politika-sudrznosti-musi-mat-v-eu-nadalej-vysostne-postavenie/>)

The overall estimating tone in this statement is created due to the noun *friend*, the verb *help*, which are characterized by positive meanings.

While analyzing Slovak media it is to be noticed that there are articles, which contain evaluative language resources expressing negative evaluations of Brexit. It is common knowledge that evaluative language means are often used to express negative characteristic of the events described. It can be explained by the fact that people are more sensitive to negative than to positive news (Юсупова 2018: 62-67):

(5) Sk. *Po odchode Británie z EÚ nie je čo oslavovať a slzy nám nepomôžu. Brexit nás pozýva hľadať cesty k tomu, aby sa takéto zložité situácie už neopakovali. "Osobne chcem pre návrat dôvery v politiku služby a zadosťučinenie spravodlivosti urobiť všetko," uviedla Lexmann. ("Slovensko má štrnástich europoslancov, do funkcie nastúpi Lexmann")*. February 1, 2020. – Eng. 'After Britain's departure from the EU, there is nothing to celebrate and tears will not help us. Brexit invites us to look for ways to ensure that such complex situations do not happen again. "Personally, I want to do everything to regain confidence in policy of service and satisfaction on justice," Lexmann said'. ("Slovakia has fourteen MEPs, Lexmann takes office"). <https://domov.sme.sk/c/22315797/slovensko-ma-strnastich-europoslancov-do-funkcie-nastupi-lexmann.html>)

In this example, we observe a negative assessment of Britain's leaving the European Union, which is produced due to the expression *complex situations*, the first element of which has the negative semes 'complicated', 'intricate'. The usage of the negative

pronoun *nothing* and the particle **not** in the phrase *there is nothing to celebrate and tears will not help us* emphasizes the negative sense of the entire fragment.

Our analysis of Slovak newspapers allows us to conclude that a lot of evaluative language means are to be found while depicting public opinion on current problems connected with Brexit (White 2016: 77-96):

(6) Sk. *Podiel Veľkej Británie na nemeckom exporte aj importe sa v priebehu brexitovej krízy výrazne znížil. "Podobný vývoj nastal aj v nemeckom importe, keďže podiel Veľkej Británie sa zmenšil zo 4,25 percenta na 3,75 percenta," dodal Braml. Ide iba o obchod s tovarmi, bez zahrnutia služieb. "Avšak zdá sa, že politická neistota sa znižuje a scenár brexitu bez dohody sa stáva menej pravdepodobný. Obchod by z toho mal v budúcnosti profitovať," poznamenal Braml. ("Obchod medzi Britániou a Nemeckom zaznamenal pokles").* January 31, 2020. – Eng. 'Great Britain's share of both German exports and imports are decreased significantly during the Brexit crisis. "A similar trend occurred in German imports as the UK's share fell from 4.25 percent to 3.75 percent," Braml added. It is only a trade in goods, not including services. "However, political uncertainty seems to be diminishing and a Brexit scenario without agreement becomes less likely. Trade should benefit from this in the future," Braml said'. ("Trade between Britain and Germany recorded a decline"). (<https://ekonomika.sme.sk/c/22315538/obchod-medzi-britaniou-aa-nemeckom-zaznamenal-pokles.html>)

Language means with negative colouring make obvious those difficulties and problems, which countries of the European Union will face in different fields of economy (here in trade).

In the course of dealing with the research data, we identify segments of texts where appraisal is neutral or ambivalent, as it seems at first glance. Such pieces of writing can stir up mixed approaches to the assessment of the situations or events described and can be properly understood only within the framework of context.

Bearing all this in mind, we are to examine and define the interrelation and interconnection of the context and evaluative utterances.

The majority of linguists are unanimous in the fact that there is a close link and correlation between the evaluative statement and the context (Fedoriv 2016: 1-36; Kecskes 2013). They also pay attention to the difference between positive and negative contexts (Косериу 2010).

Modern linguists (Коллегаева 2017: 36-43; Kachru 2008) emphasize the dynamic connection between the meaning of a word and its context. Context provides an opportunity to expose its concealed potential. Words encode previous experience and past contexts of the use of a given word or expression. In the communication, the old collides with the actual. The actual communicative meaning is created as an effect of a collision in the coded lexical units of the "old", prior contexts, and the actual situational context, in which this statement is used. The individual contexts of the speaker and hearer, fixed in the same words based on private knowledge or in the same linguistic terms, often vary.

Our consideration of the context is grounded in its pragmatic understanding, because "the notion of pragmatic context is a theoretical and cognitive abstraction of a variety of physical, biological, and other situations" (Dijk 1977: 19). The pragmatic context presents information on the conditions, under which not only the statement is perceived, but also gives rise to prospects regarding the possible purposes of the participants, and hence, relatively possible speech acts that can be carried out under this state of affairs. In other words, the pragmatic context, which serves to convey the meaning of the utterance in speech, is created by a set of secondary contexts: linguistic, stylistic, paralinguistic, situational, cultural, and psychological.

It is within the framework of the pragmatic context that the transition in the exploit and awareness of the utterance from the level of meaning to the level of sense, in particular

pragmatic, takes place. Understanding of this sense by the addressee is qualified as an awareness of the utterance (Moroshkina 2019: 245). This approach to understanding the context is relevant, as for the study of the implementation of the evaluative potential, knowledge of all conditions under which it occurs is necessary.

To illustrate the above mentioned thoughts let us consider the following example:

(7) Sk. *Pri príležitosti brexitu sa uskutoční aj výjazdové zasadnutie Johnsonovej vlády v meste Sunderland na severovýchodne Anglicka. Voliči z tohto mesta v roku 2016 v referende veľkou väčšinou hlasov podporili odchod Británie z EÚ. V kampani pred decembrovými parlamentnými voľbami, v ktorých konzervatívci získali veľkú väčšinu hlasov, sa Johnson zaviazal zaoberať sa problémami, ktoré v regiónoch, kde žijú prívrženci brexitu, spôsobila globalizácia. Sľuboval investície do verejných služieb a infraštruktúry a "povznesenie" celej krajiny. "Nie je to koniec, je to zrod novej éry, v ktorej už neakceptujeme, že vaše životné šance, životné šance vašej rodiny, by mali závisieť od toho, kde ste vyrastali," píše sa vo vyhlásení. ("Johnson: Brexit je začiatom novej éry v živote všetkých Britov"). January 31, 2020. – Eng. 'On the occasion of Brexit, there will also be an external meeting of the Johnson government in the city of Sunderland in the north-east of England. In 2016, voters from this city voted in favour of Britain's departure from the EU by a large majority. In a campaign ahead of the December parliamentary elections, in which the Conservatives won a large majority, Johnson pledged to address the problems caused by globalization in the regions, where live supporters of Brexit. He promised to invest in public services and infrastructure and "elevate" the whole country. "It's not the end, it's the birth of a new era in which we no longer accept that your life chances, your family's life chances, should depend on where you grew up," the statement said'. ("Johnson: Brexit is the beginning of a new era in the lives of all British people"). (<https://www.hlavnespravy.sk/johnson-brexit-zaciatom-novej-ery-zivote-vsetkych-britov/2036771>)*

This fragment shows how the context that can be considered neutral, changes the mark of the evaluation of the utterance. Boris Johnson's speech does not express visible assessment of the process of the United Kingdom's departure from the European Union. The positive estimation is formed in this case by a number of the statement components. The lexeme *favour* undoubtedly has evaluative sense and its positive evaluative character is perceived more vividly due to the phrase *life chances*, which contributes to the appearance of positive evaluative impulses in this statement. The antithesis *it is not the end, it is the birth of a new era* increases the concentration of negative evaluation of the situation.

In the following contexts, we observe the effect of the contextual influence on the transformation of the evaluative perspective of the utterance:

(8) Sk. *Mayovej sa však nepodarilo dohodu o odchode vyrokovanej s predstaviteľmi EÚ presadiť v britskom parlamente ani na tretíkrát, a tak po jej rezignácii prebral zodpovednosť bývalý starosta Londýna, minister zahraničných vecí a popredná osobnosť v kampani za brexit Boris Johnson. Prvým februárovým dňom sa začína 11-mesačné prechodné obdobie, počas ktorého budú pre Britániu aj naďalej platiť európske pravidlá, no nebude už musieť prispievať do rozpočtu EÚ. Kľúčovým bodom je vyrokovanie obchodnej dohody medzi oboma stranami. Ak sa tak nestane, Veľká Británia opustí EÚ bez dohody. ("Veľká Británia oficiálne vystúpila z Európskej únie"). February 1, 2020. – Eng. 'However, in the British Parliament, Mrs. May failed to enforce agreement about exit from the EU negotiated with officials from EU not even for the third time, so after her resignation, Boris Johnson, the former mayor of London, the Secretary of State and a leading figure in the Brexit campaign, took responsibility. The first day of February marks start the 11-month transition period, during which European rules will continue to apply to Britain, but Britain will no longer have to contribute to the EU budget. The key point is the negotiation of a trade agreement between the two parties. If this does not happen, the United Kingdom will leave the EU without an agreement'. ("United Kingdom officially left the European*

Union"). (<https://www.hlavnespravy.sk/velka-britania-oficialne-vystupila-europskej-unie/2038379>)

In this utterance, we notice an objective characteristic of the procedure of the exit, expressed with the help of the verb *fail*, which creates a negative tone. The peculiarity is precisely in the fact that an epithet *leading*, which usually expresses a positive characteristic of a phenomenon or object, is used here to convey a negative evaluation. This information is reinforced by the last sentence, which has negative particle and is a covert threat in its form.

Based on the analyzed corpus we extracted instances where language units expressing positive and negative estimations of Brexit were observed. These fragments include appraisers with only positive semes in their semantic structure, and appraisers with only negative evaluative semes. Interacting within the context, such utterances contribute to the ambivalent characteristic of the events and phenomena depicted. To demonstrate the work of this kind of appraisal the following example is worth considering:

(9) Sk. *Brexit je zlyhaním Európskej únie," napísal v stredu na twitteri Guy Verhofstadt, europoslanec za liberálnu frakciu Obnovme Európu, ktorý pri rokovaniach o britskom odchode zastupuje Európsky parlament. Preto si Británia vybudovala povest' krajiny, ktorá bráni väčšej federalizácii Únie. Ešte pred referendom o brexite sa ďalšie výnimky snažil vyrokovať premiér David Cameron, v podobnom duchu sa v minulosti vyjadrovala aj Margaret Thatcherová. Odchod Británie môže viesť aj k tomu, že Európa si bude musieť vybudovať lepšiu sieť zahraničných diplomatických zastúpení, lebo sa nebude môcť spoliehať na tie britské."Výzvy, ktorým teraz Európa čelí, a príležitosti, ktoré môže využiť, sa brexitom nemenia," napísala na twitteri v posledný deň britského členstva predsedníčka Európskej komisie Ursula von der Leyenová. "S Britániou chceme mať najlepšie možné vzťahy, ale nikdy nebudú také dobré ako členstvo". ("Briti brzdili väčšiu integráciu. Európska únia bez nich bude inou"). January 31, 2020. – Eng. 'Brexit is a failure of the European Union," wrote on*

Twitter Guy Verhofstadt, MEP for the Liberal Faction Let's Relaunch Europe, who represents the European Parliament in the negotiations on Britain's departure on Wednesday. That is why Britain has built a reputation as a country that prevents greater federalization of the Union. Even before the referendum on Brexit, Prime Minister David Cameron tried to make further exceptions, and Margaret Thatcher made similar statements in the past. Britain's departure may also lead to Europe having to build up a better network of foreign diplomatic representations, as it will not be able to rely on the British ones. "Brexit does not change the challenges Europe is now facing and the opportunities of which it can take advantage," wrote Commission President Ursula von der Leyen on Twitter on the last day of British membership. "We want to have the best possible relationship with Britain, but they will never be as good as membership". ("The British obstructed greater integration. The European Union will be different without them"). (<https://svet.sme.sk/c/22315524/brexit-eu-britania-odchod-zmeny-europska-unia-von-der-leyen.html>)

Describing the state of affairs regarding Brexit, the author resorts to words with both negative evaluation (*failure, prevent*) and positive (*advantage, the comparative and superlative degree of adjective good*), which, interacting within the boundaries of the context, determine its ambivalent perception. It must be noted that they perform the function of an epithet in this fragment. The contradictory qualification of Brexit here is also emphasized by the last sentence of the utterance, which is a simile and contributes to the author's dual attitude to the phenomenon described.

Thus, three types of estimation of Brexit (positive, negative, and ambivalent) can be observed in Slovak media. One of the decisive factors for understanding the evaluation is background knowledge, which makes possible the right perception of the events illustrated.

Journalistic style is characterized by maximal level of speech openness. Its typical feature is stylistic omnivore, "fusion of elevated and low, old and new, permitted and

forbidden, official and informal, public and every day, oral and written communication" (Кормилицына 2015: 24). The manifestation of these properties is the product of a constant search for more and more new means of expression.

Stylistic figures are formed as a pragmatically motivated deviation from the norm. Partly we have already touched upon stylistic devices used in Slovak media. Now we are going to analyse them in detail.

The study of the newspaper articles revealed that the epithet is widely used as a means of descriptiveness:

(10) Sk. *Myslíme aj na Spojené kráľovstvo a jeho obyvateľov, ich tvorivosť, vynaliezavosť, kultúru a tradície, ktoré boli podstatnou súčasťou tapisérie Európskej únie.* ("Von der Leyenová, Michel a Sassoli o budúcnosti EÚ: Aj po brexite vyjde slnko"). January 31, 2020. – Eng. 'We are also thinking of the United Kingdom and its people, their creativity, ingenuity, culture and traditions, which were an essential part of the European Union's tapestry'. ("Von der Leyen, Michel and Sassoli on the future of the EU: The sun will rise after Brexit"). (<https://www.hlavnespravy.sk/der-leyenova-michel-sassoli-buducnosti-eu-aj-brexite-vyjde-slnko/2037678>)

In this statement the epithet *essential* adds to the expressiveness of the text and emphasizes the author's point of view, which contains a positive assessment of Brexit.

Often this trope is used to create the required atmosphere and draw attention to the quality attribute of the phenomenon portrayed (Волобуев 2013: 46-49) as in the following example:

(11) Sk. *Odchod Spojeného kráľovstva z Európskej únie predstavuje pre tento blok "radikálnu zmenu", uviedol v piatok hovorca nemeckej kancelárky Angely Merkelovej.* ("Brexit je pre Európu radikálnou zmenou, odkázala Merkelová"). January 31, 2020. – Eng. 'The departure of the United Kingdom from the European Union is a "radical change" for the bloc, a spokeswoman for German Chancellor Angela Merkel said on

Friday'. ("Brexit is a radical change for Europe, Merkel bequeathed"). (<https://svet.sme.sk/c/22315234/merkelova-brexit-je-pre-europu-radikalnou-zmenou.html>)

This statement is reinforced by the use of the epithet *radical*, which without any doubt emphasizes the author's position in the assessment of Brexit.

Another trope, which occurs in Slovak newspapers, is the simile. The most important mark of the simile is an element of unexpectedness, novelty, originality:

(12) Sk. *Vystúpenie z EÚ je výhodné. Urobme všetko pre to, aby sa bruselský totalitný projekt rozsypaný ako domček z kariet.* ("Bez diktátu z Bruselu a Berlína. Okamura vyzýva na búranie EÚ, ako to len ide"). January 31, 2020. – Eng. 'Leaving the EU is advantageous. Let's do everything we can to get the Brussels totalitarian project scattered like a house of cards'. ("Without the dictates from Brussels and Berlin. Okamura calls for the demolition of the EU as much as possible"). (<https://www.hlavnespravy.sk/bez-diktatu-bruselu-berlina-okamura-vyzyva-buranie-eu-ide/2037168>)

This dynamic simile (Ковалевская 2009: 80-85) illustrates changes that happen to the object of comparison, i.e. with the Brexit process.

The study of linguistic phenomena proves that simile reveals the content of an event or an object due to the fact that a journalist tries to create a vivid and memorable image of what is represented:

(13) Sk. "Pokúšať sa dosiahnuť viaceré obchodné zmluvy súčasne je ako hrať trojrozmerné šachy," vyhlásila Jill Rutterová, výskumná pracovníčka think tanku *Changing Europe* v Londýne. ("Británia chce rýchlo obchodnú dohodu s EÚ"). February 1, 2020. – Eng. ' Trying to get further trade agreement at the same time is like playing three-dimensional chess,' said Jill Rutter, researcher at the Changing Europe think tank in London'. ("Britain wants a trade agreement with the EU quickly").

<https://spravy.pravda.sk/ekonomika/clanok/540990-britania-chce-rychlo-obchodnu-dohodu-s-eu>)

Here we observe a bright illustration of the most significant features of the evaluation of Brexit expressed with the help of its comparison with a game of chess.

The metaphor occupies an important place in the journalistic arsenal of active means of influencing the reader. In the analyzed articles, metaphors are actively and productively used as a means of verbal expressiveness, increasing the informative value and imagery of the message using associations caused by a figurative use of the word (Дрога & Фуникова 2016: 283):

(14) Sk. *Pre Európsku úniu (EÚ) je dôležité, aby nepálila mosty. V súvislosti s odchodom Spojeného kráľovstva z EÚ to pre TASR uviedlo opozičné hnutie Sme rodina. ("Podľa Sas odchod Veľkej Británie z EÚ nie je dobrou správou pre Slovensko")*. January 31, 2020. – Eng. 'It is important for the European Union (EU) not to burn bridges. In the context of the United Kingdom's departure from the EU, this was stated by the opposition movement We Are Family for TASR'. ("According to Sas, leaving Britain in the EU is not good news for Slovakia"). <https://www.hlavnespravy.sk/podla-sas-odchod-velkej-britanie-eu-nie-dobrou-spravou-slovensko/2037743>)

In this utterance the conceptual metaphor (BRIDGE = CONNECTION) (bridge = connection) is based on the associative correlation between the United Kingdom and the European Union, which is embodied in the images of a bridge and of family (Morozova 2017: 250-283; Prihodko & Prykhodchenko 2018: 164-203).

So, tropes in newspaper texts are one of the main tools of knowledge about social and political phenomena. In newspaper texts, they help to convey people's attitude and evaluation of the events.

The functioning of the figures of speech is aimed at creating the expressiveness of the statement. However, their structuredness and ordered interconnection of components also contribute to the manifestation of the logical relationships of speech units. A statement within the framework of a figure of speech is perceived as an integral logical formation in the text (Василькова 2012: 55). Thus, stylistic figures used in Slovak media serve both the expressive and logical-informative tasks of the author of the text, naturally subordinate to the communicative intentions of the publicist.

The study of Slovak media texts demonstrates that the most frequently used are the following figures of speech: parallel constructions, inversion, enumeration, rhetorical questions.

Syntactic parallelism is understood as a figure of repetition, consisting in the construction of a speech unit, in which "the second part mirrors the first" (Цин 2017: 245):

(15) Sk. *Bez voľného pohybu osôb nemôže existovať voľný pohyb kapitálu, tovaru a služieb. Bez rovnakých podmienok pre životné prostredie, prácu, dane a štátnu pomoc nemôže byť prístup na jednotný trh najvyššej kvality. Ak nie ste členom, nemôžete si zachovať výhody členstva* ("Británia odchádza z Európskej únie, ale zostáva súčasťou Európy, zdôraznili jej najvyšší lídri"). January 31, 2020. – 'Eng. Without the free movement of persons, there can be no free movement of capital, goods and services. Without a level playing field for the environment, labour, taxes and state aid, there can be no access to the single market of the highest quality. If you are not a member, you cannot retain the benefits of membership'. ("Britain leaves the European Union but remains part of Europe, its top leaders emphasized"). (<https://svet.sme.sk/c/22315107/von-der-leyenova-michel-a-sassoli-mali-spolocne-vyhlasenie-k-brexitu.html>)

Parallelism expresses the appraisal of the consequences of Brexit for the countries of the European Union. The presence of enumeration in the second sentence strengthens the positive evaluation of the outcomes of this process.

Another figure of speech, which is used to depict the position of Brexit, is inversion:

(16) Sk. *V kampani pred decembrovými parlamentnými voľbami, v ktorých konzervatívci získali veľkú väčšinu hlasov, sa Johnson zaviazal zaoberať sa problémami, ktoré v regiónoch, kde žijú prívrženci brexitu, spôsobila globalizácia. Sľuboval investície do verejných služieb a infraštruktúry a "povznesenie" celej krajiny.* ("Brexit je začiatkom novej éry v živote všetkých Britov, hovorí Johnson"). January 31, 2020. – Eng. 'In a campaign ahead of the December parliamentary elections, in which the Conservatives won a large majority, Johnson pledged to address the problems caused by globalization in the Brexit region. He promised to invest in utilities and infrastructure and to "uplift" the whole country'. ("Johnson: Brexit is the beginning of a new era in British life"). (<https://svet.sme.sk/c/22314827/brexit-je-zaciatom-novej-ery-v-zivote-vsetkych-britov-hovori-johnson.html>)

The phrase *in a campaign ahead of the December parliamentary elections*, which is placed at the beginning of the utterance, attaches to the statement an emotional colouring, enhances the dynamism of the narrative, and increases the positive evaluation of Brexit.

There is an interesting example of the combination of different stylistic means used for the description of the situation concerning Brexit:

(17) Sk. *Nemôžeme sa dostať do pasce súčasného stavu a rezignácie, "napísal v marci v komentári pre Guardian., Keď čelia veľkým globálnym krízam, občania sa často pýtajú: Kde je Európa? Čo robí Európa? Pre nich sme sa stali len spoločným trhom bez duše.* ("Briti brzdili väčšiu integráciu. Európska únia bez nich bude inou") January 31, 2020. – Eng. 'We can't get trapped by the status quo and resignation,' he wrote in

March in a comment for the Guardian. "When faced with major global crises, citizens often ask: Where is Europe? What does Europe do? For them, we have only become a common market without a soul'. ("The British hindered greater integration. The European Union will be different without them"). (<https://svet.sme.sk/c/22315524/brexit-eu-britania-odchod-zmeny-europska-unia-von-der-leyen.html>)

Rhetorical questions serve here to intensify the role of metaphor (that is grounded in the hidden simile), which is the last sentence of this statement. Moreover, they add to the positive emotional evaluation of the Brexit process.

So, evaluative and stylistic resources used in Slovak media are proven methods to achieve the required goal, which is to form necessary addressees' opinion about Brexit.

7. Specific features of the evaluation of Brexit in the British media

This part presents a general overview of the evaluation of Brexit as described in British newspapers.

It should be noted that the British media traditionally elucidates events in the most objective manner. However, with regard to events unfolding in their own country, having a national scale, it is difficult to talk about objectivity, as such. On the one hand, the media makes every effort to provide reliable, objective information, and on the other hand, it transmits certain values. Thus, the information presented in the media is rarely neutral; it always carries a definite assessment (Клушина 2008). Nevertheless, and even in this case, the British media value their reputation and try to convey objective information to the reader.

The study of the assessment of Brexit is carried out on the traditionally distinguished quality press in Britain: "The Guardian.com" and "Reuters.com".

The reason for choosing "The Guardian.com" is its left-centre political and value orientation. Its readers are left-thinking UK citizens who have a negative attitude towards Brexit. It is therefore interesting to interpret the political situation on the part of this media after the UK's withdrawal from the European Union.

The motive for choosing "Reuters news agency" is its conservative right-wing political and value orientation. Although the Agency endorses the values of objectivity, it is known that its management and editors have a right-wing perception and evaluation of events. We assume that Reuters has never openly criticized the UK's withdrawal from the European Union. It retains the objectivity status of a news agency. That is why the analysis and interpretation of value attitudes will be interesting.

It is curious that, according to the results of the referendum, British opinion on the issue of leaving the European Union was divided almost equally. This fact permits us to presume that like in Slovak newspapers three types of assessment of Brexit (positive, negative, and ambivalent) will be observed in British newspapers.

The following fragment demonstrates that the British approved of departure from the European Union:

(18) Eng. *"But the British government was determined to treat the moment as a chance to drive home an optimistic vision of the country's future. Cabinet ministers met in Sunderland on Friday in a symbolic gesture of their plan to "level up" regions outside London – with many tweeting pictures of themselves on public transport en route. According to an official readout, Johnson opened the meeting by telling them the UK was "turning a page on the division of the last three and a half years and going full steam ahead to bring the nation together". ("Boris Johnson promises Brexit will lead to national revival"). January 31, 2020. (<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2020/jan/31/boris-johnson-promises-brex-it-will-lead-to-national-revival>)*

The positive tone in this context is formed due to the usage of phrase *an optimistic vision*, which includes the positive evaluative adjective *optimistic*. The last sentence owing to the metaphors used adds much to the positivity of the utterance.

The next example also deserves to be discussed:

(19) Eng. *"A group of Brexit Party members of the European Parliament left the building in Brussels in high spirits, cheering and waving Union Jack flags as a kilted Scottish bagpiper played. "Today we celebrate the beginning of our independence," Ann Widdecombe told onlookers before she and the group headed to the railway station to take the Eurostar to London". ("EU seeks to put brave face on Brexit day, warns UK of costs of divergence"). January 31, 2020. (<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-britain-eu-leaders/eu-seeks-to-put-brave-face-on-brexit-day-warns-uk-of-costs-of-divergence-idUSKBN1ZU10L>)*

The approval of Brexit is expressed here by means of lexemes with positive evaluative meanings (*high, cheer, independence*) and the simile *in high spirits, cheering and waving Union Jack flags as a kilted Scottish bagpiper played* intensifies affirmation of the elevated character of this statement.

In this connection, we would like to present and analyze the following example:

(20) Eng. *"Demonstrators will be gathering on the South Bank in London to protest leaving the EU. During the protest, called Shine a Light Through the Darkness, participants will shine torch lights in a recognition of the detrimental effects they say Brexit will have on the NHS and workers' rights. Similar demonstrations will take place in Brighton and Bournemouth". ("Brexit day events: What is happening in the UK on 31 January? (Protest at the London Eye)". January 31, 2020. (<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2020/jan/31/brexit-day-events-what-is-happening-in-the-uk-on-31-january>)*

This fragment is an example of negative estimation of Brexit. The pessimistic qualification of consequences for Britain after the exit from the European Union is created here by the words with negative meaning (*protest*) and word combination *detrimental effects*, which act here as an epithet.

Researchers in the field of axiology have repeatedly noted "the asymmetry between the sectors of positive and negative evaluation" (Марченко 2018: 138), explaining this, first of all, by the fact that, firstly, everything negative is experienced more acutely, and therefore has a greater level of verbalization, and, secondly, most persons are inherently conformist, manifested in the passive acceptance of a negative assessment. However, in modern society, any event, especially a political one, is always presented with a predetermined, definite mark of appreciation.

The following statement proves it:

(21) Eng. *"Tonight, the UK will leave the European Union. That will be a moment of profound sadness for many of us across the UK. And here in Scotland, given that it is happening against the will of the vast majority of us, that sadness will be tinged with anger," she said". ("Joy and sadness: How the world is reacting on Brexit Day"). January 31, 2020. (<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-britain-eu-reaction/joy-and-sadness-how-the-world-is-reacting-on-brexite-day-idUSKBN1ZU0YZ>)*

So, Scottish Minister Nicola Sturgeon's speech confirms that Brexit and everything connected with it today are associated with such concepts as PAINFUL CONDITION, DISASTER, INEVITABILITY, CATASTROPHE, and CRISIS.

The study of the evaluative potential requires analysis of such important aspects as the influence of the context on the formation of the evaluation in the utterance.

The present study draws on the notion of context because, as in the analysis of Slovak newspapers, it helps to determine the mark of appraisal. The context provides

information on the conditions, under which not only the statement is understood, but describes expectations concerning the probable objectives of the interlocutors, and therefore, those utterances that can be used in this or that situation (Bara 2010; Toolan 2013).

Consider the following expression:

(22) Eng. *"Dacian Cioloș, a former prime minister of Romania who leads Emmanuel Macron's Renew group in the European parliament, said that Brexit had brought the relationship between the UK and EU to "a low moment".*

"Nevertheless, I am confident that both the EU and the UK will find the best agreement to collaborate in the future," he said. "As in any relationship, this agreement must be balanced and doors have to be opened on both sides. The extent to which the EU can be open and make concessions will depend strongly on the extent to which the British government will be willing to cooperate. But, obviously, a deal can never be as good as EU membership". Brexit may be done in one respect, but in many others it has a long way to go". ("Brexit day one: Johnson goes for broke with hardline trade deal"). February 1, 2020. (<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2020/feb/01/brexit-day-one-johnson-pledges-no-concessions-to-eu>)

In this fragment the politician tries to avoid expressing his negative attitude to Brexit. He even uses words and word combinations with positive meaning (***the best agreement, to cooperate***). The negativity of the entire context is programmed by the use of the phrase ***a low moment***, which serves rather to express the intensity of the evaluation than to qualify its character. The simile ***a deal can never be as good as EU membership*** also contributes to the appearance of negative-evaluative impulses in the semantic structure of the words that make up this utterance.

Here is another example that illustrates the impact of context on the mark of evaluation:

(23) Eng. *"I opposed Brexit with every fibre of my political being. I still deeply regret it, politically and emotionally... But Brexit is happening, and our attitude now should*

be to strive to make the best of it; to approach it with determined optimism, not looking over our shoulders in unrequited longing for what was". ("Joy and sadness: How the world is reacting on Brexit Day") January 31, 2020. (<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-britain-eu-reaction/joy-and-sadness-how-the-world-is-reacting-on-brexit-day-idUSKBN1ZU0YZ>)

In this utterance the negatively coloured words *opposed*, *regret* are used to enhance the pragmatic effect of the positive evaluation. This becomes possible due to the fact that the positive context indicates the unreasonableness of the addressee's disturbance, which is expressed in the last sentence of Tony Blair's speech.

The referendum, which was held in the UK in 2016 on the issue of leaving the European Union, split the country into two camps: each side took a tough, irreconcilable position.

And this fragment where ambivalent evaluation is presented confirms this indisputable fact:

(24) Eng. *"For proponents, Brexit is a dream "independence day" for a United Kingdom escaping what they cast as a doomed German-dominated project that is failing its 500 million population. Opponents believe Brexit is a folly that will weaken the West, torpedo what is left of the United Kingdom's global clout, undermine its economy and ultimately lead to a more insular and less cosmopolitan set of islands in the northern Atlantic". ("Brexit day: Britain quits EU, steps into transition twilight zone"). January 31, 2020. (<https://www.reuters.com/article/uk-britain-eu-union/brexit-day-britain-quits-eu-steps-into-transition-twilight-zone-idUSKBN1ZU003>)*

It can be assumed that the negative assessment of Brexit presented in the media is a consequence of the policy of large-format publications, which from the very beginning intentionally began to form a negative attitude of readers towards this phenomenon, despite the fact that half of the UK supported the country's exit from the European Union and estimated it positively. The processes of integration and globalization have

become an integral part of the economic system of any country, so the exit of one state from the existing economic and political unions inevitably affects the world economy and politics as a whole. In the modern political and economic world, any attempt at separation is met by hostility.

So, as in Slovak media three types of evaluation of Brexit (positive, negative, and ambivalent) can be observed in British newspapers. It is obvious that evaluation is created, realized and can be interpreted only within the frame of context.

According to many researchers (Малярчук-Прошина 2015: 89-94; Hood 2010), one of the main features of the language of the media is the presence of social appraisal. This is due to the pragmatic function of media texts, designed primarily to influence the addressees. The language of journalism reflects the urgent problems of the life of modern society with the help of a wide range of assessment tools. The active use of evaluative means in the language of the media is determined by various factors, including the removal of censorship and the search for new expressive means for newspaper texts.

The appraisal characteristic of media texts determines the existence of special language means for the implementation of the assessment. Such means, providing the pragmatic effect of a journalistic text, are manifested at the lexical and syntactic levels.

The most frequently used tropes in the British media are to be mentioned. In analysed English newspapers the epithet is often used:

(25) Eng. *"The prime minister toasted the moment with English Sparkling wine in Downing Street, which was illuminated by a red and blue light show, as were government departments along Whitehall, and parliament square was decked with union flags for the historic day; but Big Ben did not bong, contrary to the hopes of ardent Brexiters"*. ("Boris Johnson promises Brexit will lead to national revival").

January 31, 2020. (<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2020/jan/31/boris-johnson-promises-brexit-will-lead-to-national-revival>)

The adjective *ardent*, which performs the function of the epithet, reveals the ironical characterization of opponents of the withdrawal from the European Union. Moreover, negative attitude to opponents is emphasized by the derivative *Brexiter* from the neologism *Brexit* that has a negative connotation (Катермина & Соловьева 2019: 106).

Often epithets are used to portray positive emotional descriptions of a certain object or event as in the following fragment:

(26) Eng. "*Happy Brexit Day! ... At last the day comes when we break free. A massive victory for the people against the establishment....11 pm tonight marks the point of no return. Once we Leave, we will never rejoin the European Union. Time to celebrate*". ("Joy and sadness: How the world is reacting on Brexit Day"). January 31, 2020. (<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-britain-eu-reaction/joy-and-sadness-how-the-world-is-reacting-on-brexit-day-idUSKBN1ZU0YZ>)

Optimism and joy about leaving the European Union are emphasized by epithets with the positive meanings *happy* and *massive*. In addition, an exclamatory nominative sentence *Happy Brexit Day!* is also involved in the creation of a positive character of the statement.

The simile, which acts as a means of likening one object to another according to a certain attribute in order to establish resemblances or differences between them, is also quite frequently met in British newspapers:

(27) Eng. "*Boris Johnson now faced a challenge of colossal dimensions: to recover the unity of a country divided between those who see Brexit as a liberation, and those who consider it a tragedy and a historical error*". ("Britain is retrenched on its island': Europe's papers react to Brexit day"). February 1, 2020.

(<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2020/feb/01/britain-retrenched-island-europe-papers-react-to-brexit-day>)

Here we observe the functioning of similes, which demonstrate the contradictory approaches to Brexit.

This trope is used to express feelings of anxiety and apprehension about the future of Europe:

(28) Eng. *"Now the future of the Eurostar is uncertain. The service was seen as a symbol of a Europe without borders, but it has failed to meet expectations – especially in terms of passenger numbers". ("Last train to Europe: All aboard the Eurostar as Britain bids goodbye"). February 1, 2020. (<https://www.reuters.com/article/uk-britain-eu-tunnel/last-train-to-europe-all-aboard-the-eurostar-as-britain-bids-goodbye-idUSKBN1ZU36U>)*

The most important technique in journalism is a metaphor, the essence of which is to transfer the name and properties of one object to another according to the principle of their similarity.

Based on the analysis of the articles, we can conclude that the particular expressiveness, accuracy, and emotionality are given by sustained metaphors, in which the metaphorical image is realized in several phrases or sentences:

(29) Eng. *"Nearly four years after the Brexit vote, Britain has left the European Union, closing a rancorous chapter in the country's history and beginning another viewed by some with optimism and others with dismay". ("Boris Johnson promises Brexit will lead to national revival"). January 31, 2020. (<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2020/jan/31/boris-johnson-promises-brexit-will-lead-to-national-revival>)*

In this statement metaphor is created due to the implicit comparison of exit with hostile enemy. The negative meaning is strengthened by the antithesis *by some with optimism and others with dismay*, which conveys the people's stance to Brexit.

It goes without saying that metaphors also belong to productive means of expressing the situation of the split of British society into "friends" and "strangers" in analytical articles. The actualization of the conceptual metaphor (FAMILY=DIVORCE) is significant. The authors of Brexit publications regularly refer to such images as family disorder or divorce:

(30) Eng. *"So on "Brexit Day", some will celebrate and some will weep – but many Britons will do neither. Many are simply happy that more than three years of tortuous political wrangling over the divorce are over"*. ("Brexit day: Britain quits EU, steps into transition twilight zone"). January 31, 2020. (<https://www.reuters.com/article/uk-britain-eu-union/brexit-day-britain-quits-eu-steps-into-transition-twilight-zone-idUSKBN1ZU003>)

The parallel drawn between a family facing divorce and the situation, in which Great Britain exit from the European Union, is intended to emphasize such implicit meanings as the existence of close relations between the European Union and the United Kingdom and the pain of their separation, as well as the inevitability of terrible consequences.

Thus, analysis of newspaper articles on Brexit reveals a number of stylistic tools that are used in British political discourse during the period of aggravation of social relations.

The analysis of British newspapers shows that, as in Slovak media, the most frequently met are: parallel constructions, inversion, enumeration, rhetoric questions, and antithesis.

Parallel constructions may be viewed as a purely syntactical type of repetition for here we deal with the reiteration of the structure of several successive sentences (clauses), and not always of their lexical "flesh" (Мархасев & Зайцева 2010: 25):

(31) Eng. *"In Parliament Square, site of hoarse slanging matches for the past four years, the crowds on both sides were thinner on Friday night, at least before the Farage rally got going. The leavers were beaming, proud in their sweatshirts bearing the slogan: Job Done. They believe spring is coming. The remainers were wrapped up against the cold, braced against a January night, which, to them, felt like the bleakest midwinter"*. ("That was Brexit: The mad energy of A Midsummer Night's Dream, but lasting three and a half years"). January 31, 2020. (<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/jan/31/brexit-midsummer-nights-dream-politicians>)

Certainly, parallel constructions illustrate the different position of the British to Brexit. The usage of antithesis (*the leavers, the remainers*) makes it more vivid.

Linguists also draw attention to such a stylistic figure of speech as inversion, typical of the media, which is known as emphatic construction. Inversion is aimed at attaching logical stress and additional emotional colouring to the surface meaning of the utterance:

(32) Eng. *"In our diplomacy, in our fight against climate change, in our campaigns for human rights or female education or free trade we will rediscover muscles that we have not used for decades. The power of independent thought and action," he said.*" ("Boris Johnson promises Brexit will lead to national revival"). January 31, 2020. (<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2020/jan/31/boris-johnson-promises-brexit-will-lead-to-national-revival>)

Inversion presupposes a reply with more certainty than the normative sentence. It is the assuredness of the speaker of the positivity concerning the exit from the European Union that constitutes additional information, which is brought into the statement by

the inverted word order. Enumeration and nominative sentence provide the intensification of the speaker's belief in the appropriateness of his actions.

No less common is the use of a rhetorical question. This figure of speech stands out among narrative sentences both intonationally and structurally, introducing an element of surprise into the speech and thereby enhancing the expressiveness of the utterance:

(33) Eng. *"Reflecting on the lessons of Brexit, European Commission President von der Leyen told broadcaster ARD: "We must stand up for Europe, otherwise at some point we won't have it any more". "Europe must deliver on the biggest questions - that's what we need the European level for," she added. "How will we address climate change? That is the 'European Green Deal' issue. How will we deal with digitalisation? I want us to have a concept for migration that is sustainable, effective but also human". ("Now EU must deliver, Commission chief says on Brexit day"). January 31, 2020. (<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-britain-eu-vonderleyen/now-eu-must-deliver-commission-chief-says-on-brexit-day-idUSKBN1ZU2V3>)*

Rhetorical questions express here anxiety and apprehension regarding the future of Europe. The change of intonation breaks the monotony of the intonation pattern and revives the attention of the listeners.

8. Conclusions

The results of this study show that evaluation as a sociocultural attribute of a journalistic text turns out to be a multifaceted category. The concept of "evaluation" has become an integral part of the conceptual apparatus of modern linguistics, which clearly demonstrates the fact that it is impossible to examine a language without resorting to its primary purpose, its "creator", carrier, user, specific linguistic personality, a person.

Analysis of publications on the Brexit referendum reveals a number of language tools that are used in Slovak and English newspaper texts within the period of exacerbated

social relations and differences. In general, it can be concluded that a political discourse abounds with language means that explicitly realize opposition FOR – AGAINST Brexit.

The results obtained confirm the idea that the correlation between the evaluative utterance and the context helps understand the evaluative utterances encoded in the presuppositions of the communication that are the speaker's communicative intentions associated with their epistemic state.

The examination of stylistic means employed in Slovak and English media texts is determined by the conditions of communication. If the desire of the author is to rouse the audience and to keep it in suspense, he will use special tropes and figures of speech. The most frequently met are: epithets, similes, metaphors, parallel constructions, inversion, enumeration, rhetoric questions, and antithesis. Furthermore, stylistic means are closely interwoven and mutually complementary thus building up an intricate pattern.

It must be noted that the function of these stylistic means in the estimation of Brexit is different. In Slovak media they serve to form positive attitudes to this phenomenon. In British media these stylistic means demonstrate the ambivalent attitude of the British towards Brexit, which is primarily conditioned by the political orientation of the analysed newspapers.

The study shows that three types of appraisal of Brexit (positive, negative, and ambivalent) can be observed in both Slovak and British media. One of the significant reasons for understanding the evaluation of this phenomenon is background knowledge, which makes possible the right and profound awareness and perception of the events displayed.

As a concluding remark, further research connected with the evaluation of other political and social phenomena would have great potential.

Notes

The translation of Slovak examples into English is done by Zora Hudíková.

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Résumé

The presented paper highlights the results of a study of the evaluation of Brexit in Slovak and English newspaper texts. Evaluation is distinguished as a cognitive process, which presupposes the use of two kinds of knowledge: the awareness of the evaluated object and the information of the evaluator's own private requirements and needs. Our analysis has proved that a political discourse proliferates with the language means, which clearly realize opposition FOR – AGAINST Brexit. The research shows that in both Slovak media and British media three types of evaluation (positive, negative, and ambivalent) can be observed. The results obtained corroborate the idea that the connection between the evaluative utterance and the context helps understand the evaluative utterances encoded in the presuppositions of the communication that are the speaker's communicative intentions associated with their epistemic state. It has been established that an evaluative utterance is created, realized and can be interpreted only within the context. It has been proved that stylistic means employed in the media are determined by the conditions of communication. If the desire of the speaker is to rouse the audience and to keep it in suspense, he will use various tropes and figures of speech. Furthermore, stylistic means are closely interwoven and mutually complementary thus building up an intricate pattern. It is stressed that the sign of evaluation in the media may be conditioned by various sociocultural factors, among which are the specifics of

the sociocultural space, type of publication, genre specificity of the text, individual features of communicants' worldview. Accounting for these factors, contributes not only to a deep study of the evaluation category, but also to effective communication and the creation of balanced journalistic texts, which, in its turn, will determine information and psychological comfort in society.

Key words: Brexit, evaluation, evaluative utterance, context, tropes, figures of speech.

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