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#### THE UNFORESEEN INFLUENCE OF BREXIT ON THE STATUS OF ENGLISH IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

As a result of the UK 2016 referendum on Britain’s membership of the European Union Leave supporters won by 52 % with more than 30 million people voting. Thus the British government headed by Theresa May was set to tackle awesome problems which the country faced with its departure from the European Union ending a 44-year political and economic union. However, one should remember that in the 2016 referendum Northern Ireland and Scotland voted to remain. The greatest uncertainty associated with leaving the EU is that no country has ever done it before so no one can predict the exact result. As the clock keeps ticking to the March 29 2019 deadline the British government and the leaders of the European Union are increasingly pressed to tackle and settle scores of issues related to Britain’s departure from the European Union. However, one challenging

aspect which many seem to disregard is that Great Britain will no longer have the right to control the choice of the national language into which the European bodies translate. Today every member state of the European Union has the right to have documentation translated into their national language and the European Union is proud of its linguistic diversity being the largest translation organization in the world with the staff using English for most political, scientific publications.

With the departure of the U.K. English would cease to be official in the EU because of a lack of English-speaking countries. The Republic of Ireland named Irish as a national language though indeed only about 50 thousand Irish citizens converse daily in the Republic of Ireland, mainly in its western regions. However, with Britain's departure from the European Union English would lose its status as an official language in the European Union. Before 1973 when Britain joined the Common Market French was the dominant language in the Common Market. This situation remained until the Scandinavian countries joined the Common Market choosing English as their official language in the late 1990s. The process was further consolidated when the Eastern European countries chose to use English making it the dominant language in Europe. France today with Britain leaving the European Union would opt to see the French language restore its previous status. One should also remember that France was a founding member of the EU. Within this context France's tough attitude towards Britain would not be favourable concerning the traditional status of English.

Another important aspect which one should bear in mind is to be aware of the difference between the status of an official language and a working language. Hence in the new context no English translation would be available or accepted at the meetings and other languages of the member states may claim to be working languages in published documents. In the United Nations there are 6 official languages but only English and French are working languages. To keep English as an official language would require agreement by all member states. However, there is a regulation regarding the official languages of the European Union made in 1958, which did not exclude English as being one.

As regards the desire of continental Europeans to speak English, those employed by the EU have to an increasing extent found English to be their natural choice of working language, and it is now the case that the vast majority of meetings throughout Europe are conducted in English and the majority of written documentation is produced in English. The tradition to speak, read and write English is an integral component of globalization. Europeans, following the Chinese and others in Asia, have chosen English as their preferred language of communication, especially among the youth.

Over the past 20 years there has been a movement for greater use of English in the European Union. UK membership in the Union does not have any substantial influence on the decision among continental Europeans to use English. People in Europe have found, through English, an opportunity to communicate with others from throughout the world and like the Chinese and others in Asia, chosen English as their preferred foreign language. The youth in Europe are

attaining proficiency in English at an unprecedented rate. In this context there is no reason to assume that the growing popularity of English within the European Union will decline in the post-Brexit era. They will, moreover, become more dependent on the translation services and more importantly, they will no longer find their use of English under scrutiny from “native-speakers”. Thus English will evolve in much the same manner as other second-language varieties with greater influence from the community of mother tongues. Such processes are already underway, and they will accelerate when the British leave the European Union. The very processes that make possible the emergence of a second-language variety will be more pronounced without the presence of Language One users. The American-English spelling variant may be deemed to be more preferable. It is quite likely that the Europeans, like the Americans in their early history, and later, the Australians in the 1980s will decide to make their own dictionaries. However, concerning educational standards at schools Brexit will have a lesser impact due to a decline in the usage of British English as compared to American English. Moreover, because of difficulties with work/residence permits for British subjects the number of British citizens living in Europe would decline which could affect British English as a standard.

Given all above it is noteworthy to refer to an interesting dissertation submitted by Anthony Dimitri Policastro for defence in 2017 at Padua University (Italy) devoted to the present topic of discourse: Status of English in the European Union after Brexit. One may fully agree with the author’s final conclusion: “Concerning the EU, the use of English as a procedural language concerns its use as a lingua franca rather than a dominant vernacular” [1].

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## ОТДЕЛЕНИЕ ЦЕРКВИ ОТ ГОСУДАРСТВА: УНИКАЛЬНАЯ СИТУАЦИЯ В США

Первая поправка к Конституции Соединенных Штатов Америки, принятая в 1791 году как важнейшая часть Билля о правах, гласит: «Конгресс не должен издавать ни одного закона, относящегося к установлению религии либо запрещающего свободное ее исповедание, либо ограничивающего свободу слова или печати, или право народа мирно собираться и обращаться к правительству с петициями об удовлетворении жалоб» [1]. Основываясь