

БРИТАНЦЫ И ФРАНЦУЗЫ: ВСЕ ЕЩЕ ЛЮБЯТ НЕНАВИДЕТЬ ДРУГ ДРУГА?

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Отношения между французами и британцами были определены историческими процессами, происходящими в период Средневековья. В наши дни, в современном XXI веке, этот конфликт все еще имеет место быть. Данная острая социальная проблема образует различные стереотипы и предрассудки, которые препятствуют общению людей этих двух национальностей.

Ключевые слова: британцы, французы, социальная проблема, отношения, англоговорящие, франкоговорящие, язык.

BRITISH VS. FRENCH: DO THEY STILL LOVE TO HATE EACH OTHER?

The relationships between the British and the French people were determined by historical processes rooted in Medieval period. Nowadays, in modern XXI century, this tension has still not disappeared. This acute social problem has been creating different stereotypes and prejudices which prevent people of these two nations from communication with each other.

Key words: the British, the French, social problem, relationships, anglophones, francophones, language.

The purpose of the paper is to make certain conclusion in order to understand whether the hatred between the British and the French, which started in High Middle Ages (11th – 12th centuries), has disappeared or not.

The research problems of the paper are to analyze historical background of the problem and to study different modern sources in order to clarify the relationships between the British and the French in terms of emotions they feel towards each other.

The urgency of the research is presented by the lack of such surveys that illustrate emotions and attitude of the British and the French in the 21st century compared to Medieval period.

The following **methods of research** were used: historical method, method of analysis, methods of deduction and induction, method of classification and quantitative method.

The French mark has been seen in the history of England since the Norman invasion, when the Norman duke named William the Conqueror won King Harold in the battle of Hastings in 1066. This watershed moment of the English history has changed English language because there are about 57% loanwords from French language). Moreover, it led to origination and formation of national consciousness of both the British and the French. The Hundred Years' War, which lasted 1337–1453, became the high point of this age long process. For instance, an offensive joke started to be spread after the Battle of Sluys in 1340. It sounded «If the God gave to fish an opportunity to speak, it would speak French as it has eaten a lot of French». The English were celebrating their victory while the indignity of French started. Soon after the beginning of the Hundred Years' War the idea, that British victories demonstrate God's favor to the right side, became widely spread.

The French fully denied releasing English prisoners for ransom during the fourth stage of the war (1422–1453), when National Liberation Movement began to increase in France.

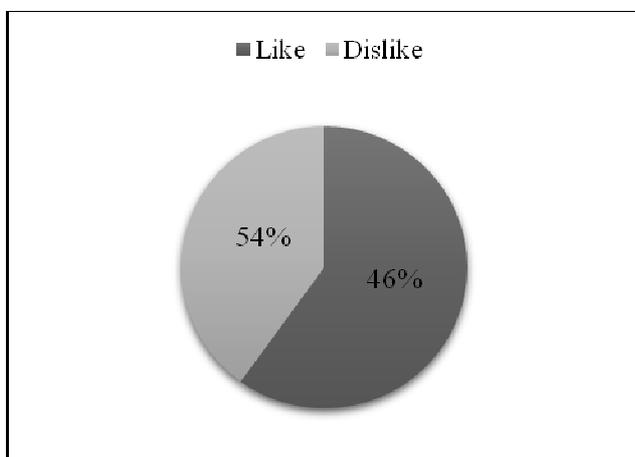
During the Hundred Years' War many significant changes associated with the gradual realization of national identity occurred in English chronicles. It's essential to point out that during this several centuries in English political literature and generally in English language there was still no definite form of terminology, which could express patriotic and national feelings. To identify such obvious for European consciousness of Early Modern Period phenomena like "folk" or "nation" some words with unclear ratio of ethnical and political content are being used, e.g. "gens", "natio", "populus", "people", "nation", "folk"[1].

To analyze modern relationships between people from Great Britain and France, some sources, including surveys, articles and video-lectures from the Internet were studied.

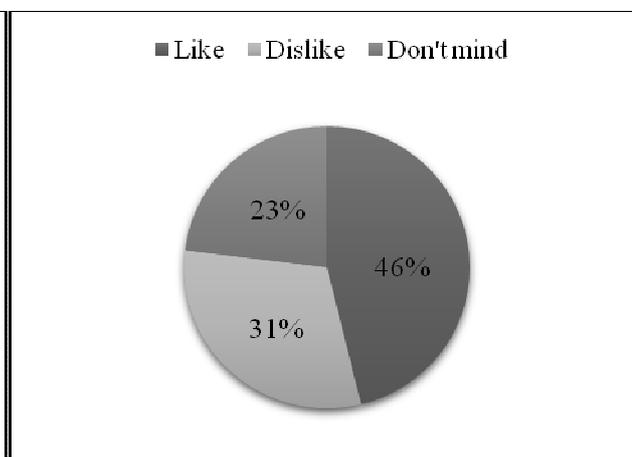
The first source is the survey called «Why do the English hate the French?» which was carried out on the Internet site www.theguardian.com [2] and people still have an opportunity to write their opinion on this question. Mostly all the answers here are from people of British or French nationality. Some of them were from Canada and Italy.

In this research 26 comments on this issue were examined. It worth noting that a lot of the answers about love or hatred are based on personal features of character like sense of humor, national mentality and parts of culture like music, arts and food, here are some excerpts:

- «...they are jealous...»
- «...they need to get a sense of humor...»
- «... rude, arrogant French people everywhere!»
- «...people in England look at me aggressively when they hear me speak French...»
- «...French people are less nationalist...»
- «They are imperialistic frogs.»
- «I admire about France and the French: food, countryside, art, good films and civil disobedience.»
- «They also don't know how to have fun and are boring!»[2].



Pic. 1. The British about the French



Pic.2. The French about the British

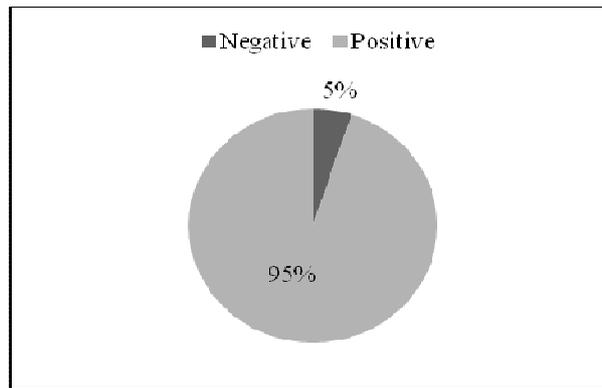
D. Colgan from Colchester, England, points out that nowadays «French and British waste their life hating». Moreover, the British say that the French follow a lot of prejudices according to people from the UK. «...one restaurant I went to actually refused to serve me because I was from England.», says Laura G. from New Castle, England[2]. And people from France even hate the British more, than the British themselves do. It is also noticed, that previous English generation, for instance grandparents, treats the French badly because of the past.

To sum it up, it's partly obvious that people from Great Britain are more committed to the events of past centuries. It means that the British have false perception of the French's attitude to them. There is a phrase in one of the answers which describes this acute social problem in the best way. «French and English is like an old couple. We keep arguing all the time for silly things but because we love each other»[2].

The next source examined was also related to peoples' opinions. There are 2 videos from youtube.com named «What do the French think of British people?» and «What do British people think of the French?»[3][4].

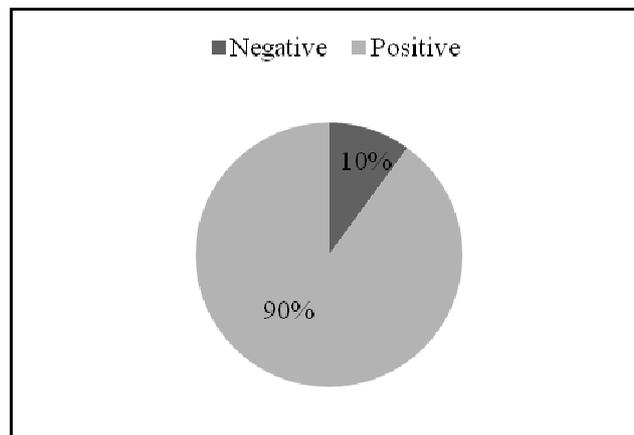
There are 20 respondents in these videos. In general, the situation here is a bit more different than in the previous source. Most of the opinions are positive but with some exceptions.

Firstly, the video about the French's opinion will be described. People were asked about the British features of character, humor, food and music. That's amazing that mostly all answers were positive. Even the British people from the comments under the video are surprised by this. «I was expecting some more negative comments», says one of them. A lot of French note that the British are open-minded and funny. However, it was said that the people from Great Britain are a little cold sometimes and distant. Such deduction is not unusual as such features are fully related to the British national mentality. The cuisine was described as pretty interesting but with small gaps in gastronomy compared to France. There were also no negative comments about music. The French like British music and call it a great and awesome thing [3].



Pic. 3. French people about British people

British people in the second video didn't tell anything negative towards the French. The only comment was about terrible French food. However, other group of people pointed out that French cuisine and eating habits are great. People there are friendly, welcoming, sometimes can be arrogant or rude, with silly sense of humor, but other times they are wonderful. The answers about the language are notable. French are pleased and impressed when foreigners talk to them in French and if the English is spoken, they don't want to maintain the dialogue. Probably it means that the French culture and particularly their language is preserved by the native population. In general, the French are very proud of their nation[4].



Pic.4. British people about French people

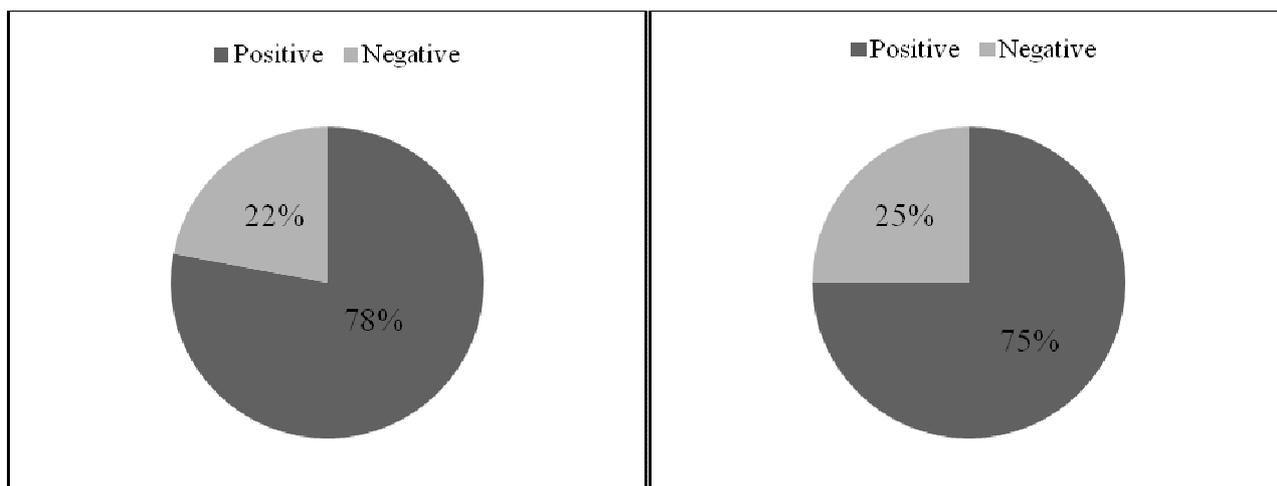
«English is badly pronounced French» said Georges Clemenceau, the French Prime Minister in the XX century.

There is one province in the world where anglophones and francophones have to get along. It is called Quebec and it is situated in the eastern part of Canada. All linguists who once faced with both French and English languages heard of this province.

The roots of Québec's language tensions go all the way back to the Conquest of 1760, when the French colony became a British possession. Merchants, who spoke English language, formed a minority in New France and soon took control of the economy and would seek to impose their will on the French-speaking majority for the next 200 years. The Charter of the French Language, better known as Bill 101, was passed on August 26, 1977. It stipulated that all signs in Québec must be in French, that all children must attend French school, with the exception of children whose parents had themselves attended English school in Québec, and that French was the language of the workplace and of Québec public administration. While Bill 101 generally calmed feelings of dissatisfaction with the language situation in Québec, tension regarding this issue has still not disappeared [5].

As the ages passed by, English and French language had been experiencing hard times. It was like a real linguocultural struggle which takes part even nowadays but not in a very acute form.

According to the survey which was carried out among Quebecers not a long ago, in 2018, by the Canadian sociological institute «Léger Marketing» for the Association for Canadian Studies, here are the following results [6].



Pic. 5. Anglophones towards francophones Pic.6. Francophones towards anglophones

This survey shows that nowadays people are not much concerned about their bilingual and bicultural native land. Moreover, probably these 25 and 12 % of negative views belong to previous generation, which still remembers past events.

However, in May 2021, future reforms were announced by the Quebec government. These reforms will make French the only official language of Quebec but it doesn't mean the displacement of English language [7].

To sum it up, it's difficult to answer all the questions towards British and French relations definitely. Anyway, two neighboring nations shouldn't antagonize each other.

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