



RESEARCH ON OCCASIONALISMS IN CONTEMPORARY WORLD LINGUISTICS

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Annotation.

This article highlights the study of the semantic-pragmatic features of neologisms and occasionalisms that emerge in the process of artistic creativity, as explored by various scholars. The article is aimed at examining and analyzing occasionalisms in modern linguistics, their formation, the peculiarities of their use in texts of different genres, as well as their word-forming and stylistic characteristics.

Keywords: occasionalism, neologism, context, phraseological unit (PU), grammatical norm, derivational norm, semantic norm, transformation, stylistic effect.

Introduction

In modern linguistics, there are numerous scientific studies and works devoted to the investigation of occasionalisms—their formation, the peculiarities of their use in texts of various genres, as well as their word-forming and stylistic characteristics [9]. According to scholars, the main reason for the creation of authorial words is the active enrichment of the lexical stock in the modern language. Occasional words arise not only to denote new realities, phenomena, or concepts that are widespread and significant for an entire society, but also to reflect subtle connotations of individual experiences and moods, and to provide evaluation of certain aspects of reality [6].

Literature Review and Methodology.

One of the most common reasons for creating occasionalisms is explained as “the tendency to convey thought briefly (often a single word replaces an entire phrase, or even a sentence)” [14]; by replacing a phrase with a single word, occasionalisms serve the economy of speech, contributing to its semantic density and expressive richness [3].

Another reason for the creation of new occasional words, according to researchers, lies in “drawing attention to the meaning of a word through its unusual form or in the attempt to assign a new meaning to it” [15], as well as in “revitalizing the unity of form and content of the author’s message” or “creating subtle wordplay in the text.” Through occasionalisms, the author seeks to express his or her attitude toward the described object or phenomenon, to suggest its characteristics, and to provide evaluation [1:14].

The emergence of newly coined lexemes in literary works is determined not only by the desire to create certain emotional connotations, but also by the need to instill trust in the reader. The appearance of occasionalisms in artistic texts may, among other factors, be connected with the necessity to name new realities, concepts, or phenomena for which no established means of expression yet exist in a given language [4]. The creation of such units is considered economical, since it requires less effort than searching for an adequate word or descriptive phrase.

Let us turn to the essence of the term “occasionalism” as expressed in scientific sources. The term *occasionalism* (*occasional word*) was first introduced by N.I. Feldman in his article “*Occasional Words and Lexicography*” (1957), where he defined the phenomenon as follows: “The close connection of makeshift words with the context from which they seem to grow makes them especially apt and expressive in their place, but at the same time, usually prevents them from breaking free of the context and surviving beyond it. This fundamental property distinguishes occasional words from neologisms that become part of the language.” The researcher identifies the following main features of occasional formations: permanent novelty, functioning outside the language system, the presence of an author, close dependence on the context that requires the creation of the occasionalism, and a heightened expressiveness in that specific context [10].

In the article “*Occasional Words and Occasional Word Formation*,” researcher E.I. Khamphira offers the following definition of an occasional word: it is a word created “according to a weakly productive or unproductive pattern, or an occasional (speech) model, for a particular situation, for the purpose of simple communication, or for artistic effect” [13]. In his subsequent work “*Occasional Elements in Contemporary Speech*,” Khamphira introduces the concept of *occasionality*, which, in the researcher’s view, should be understood as “a certain degree to which a speech phenomenon is not predetermined by the language system, producing a degree of unexpectedness for that system” [13:246]. Thus, any manifestation of occasionality can be regarded as an occasionalism. He classifies occasional formations into morphological, syntactic, phraseological, word-formational, lexical, and semantic types.

Uzbek scholar U.A. Safarova, in her study “*Structural-Semantic Aspects of Contamination in Modern French*,” identifies the place of contamination within the system of word and phraseological unit formation in contemporary French, as well as the systemic-semantic aspects of contaminated lexical and phraseological units in the studied language [11:6]. In this work, she outlines eight semantic groups characterizing the most important distinctive features of occasional words under analysis. They are as follows:

1. An occasional word is the realization of the word-formation potential of a given language in speech. Hence, the broadest feature describing an occasional word is its affiliation with speech, since, unlike literary normative words, its presence in a text is not obligatory. Based on this, we may conclude that while normative words belong to the language system, occasional words belong to speech.

2. The most characteristic feature of occasional words is their non-normativity, as they usually arise through the violation of grammatical, derivational, or semantic norms.

3. The most important feature of an occasional word is its one-time functional use. Such words are typically coined by speakers or writers, and therefore occur only once in speech. A completely “new” occasionalism is capable of creating a unique shade of meaning or stylistic effect in a specific speech situation.

4. A distinctive speech feature of occasionalisms is their creation within the act of communication itself—that is, the generation of a new unit during speech. An occasional word is always created anew, reconstructed for each specific instance of use. In essence, its usage is a unique and unrepeatable act of speech.

5. Unlike ordinary normative words, occasionalisms are always marked expressively in speech, since they are units of speech, not of language.

6. As a rule, from a word-formation perspective, all occasional words are derivatives, whereas normative words need not necessarily be.

7. Considering the “simultaneity” of their appearance—the fact that they are created at a given moment and exist only in that instant without subsequent continuation—occasionalisms exhibit the challenging property of synchronic-diachronic fragmentation.

8. In linguistic literature, occasionalisms are usually described as individual formations, which highlights another feature: their belonging to an individual. However, it must be noted that determining the exact author of a particular occasionalism is not always possible [11:6–14].

Undoubtedly, authorial occasionalisms encountered in literary texts are not generally regarded as “authentic,” “living” substandard occasionalisms of contemporary spoken language. However, the study of such newly formed units recorded by authors of modern prose as markers of specific linguistic trends has drawn our attention, since it is precisely occasionalisms—transient, momentary words—that gain the opportunity to exist beyond a single utterance in real communicative contexts.

Another Uzbek scholar, A.B. Akhmedov, in his research on innovative processes in the vocabulary of contemporary German, analyzes the emergence of neologisms and occasionalisms from a semantic-pragmatic perspective based on the laws of gradual development. He demonstrates that innovations arise as a result of the extraordinary influence of social factors on linguistic activity. Newly coined lexical units, according to his findings, are characterized by associative interconnections, complex semantic structures, rhythmic-melodic organization, and susceptibility to occasional modifications, which constitute their principal pragmatic distinctive features [1:3].

It is precisely due to occasional units that the full expressive potential of word-formation is revealed, allowing experimentation with linguistic elements at various levels. “Nevertheless, as a speech fact, an occasionalism is conditioned by the language system itself; it demonstrates and develops the system’s semantic, word-formation, and grammatical capacities, and even predicts the directions of its development” [5]. These highlighted reasons play a major role in the creation of new words in linguistic practice.

Unusual (non-standard) units—often entire words—or non-standard meanings of units created by speakers/writers to express some individual content related to a specific context are regarded as occasionalisms. They are described as “a stylistically motivated deviation from the norm, deliberately created and used” [12].

The main driving factor in creating an occasionalism is the immediate communicative task faced by the speaker [7]. Thus, there arises the necessity to produce a word capable of conveying, in as precise a way as possible, an image, idea, feeling, or concept for which no ready-made analogy exists. Although this may appear paradoxical, or even when the speaker lacks the time (or desire, or opportunity) to select an existing language unit, the creation of an occasionalism proves to be the most economical method of expression.

Thus, when examining the eight key features of occasional words outlined above, the analysis demonstrates that they all reflect the diverse purely speech characteristics of vocabulary, which are also dialectically interconnected.

Researcher A.G. Likov argues that any occasional phenomenon exists potentially and is linked to the internal driving forces of language, which remain unused in the speech practice of a given linguistic-cultural community until a certain moment—namely, the moment of the occasionalism’s creation. According to the scholar, any occasional phenomenon may be viewed, on the one hand, as a speech fact, and on the other, as a contradiction between the language system and its norms [1:73].

O.S. Akhmanova, in her “*Dictionary of Linguistic Terms*,” defines an occasionalism as “a unit unknown to everyone, not corresponding to what is generally accepted, characterized by an individual style, and tied to a specific context of use” [2:284]. She interprets occasionalism as “a word or expression used once by a speaker or writer for a specific situation or context” [2:95].

D. Crystal defines occasional words as lexemes created within a short period of time to fulfill a particular communicative function [8:249].

Conclusion. A number of researchers point out that occasionalisms continue to function as newly created words in the same way as they were originally formed. They are regarded as lexical units that are created and operate only within a specific context, and which cease to function outside of that context. Such words are coined once, “by chance,” and are “semantically and emotionally richer than ordinary, commonly used words.” They “retain their novelty, are perceived as new regardless of the time of their creation,” and serve “only a particular speech situation.”

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