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TO THE PROBLEM OF DEFINITION OF 'OCCASIONALISM' AMONG THE BASIC NOTIONS OF NEOLOGY

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The article highlights the relationship between the notions 'occasionalism', 'potential word' and 'neologism' based on selected criteria. It also outlines a place of occasionalism among other notions of neology. Scientific researches concerning the interpretation of these notions are analyzed on this basis the traditional, integrated and differentiated approaches to the study of occasionalisms have been defined.

Key words: occasionalism, potential word, neologism, innovation, new formation.

Никитченко К. П. До проблеми визначення "оказіоналізму" з-поміж основних понять неології. У статті досліджується взаємовідношення понять "оказіоналізм", "потенційне слово" та "неологізм" на основі виділених критеріїв та з'ясовано місце оказіоналізму серед інших понять неології. Проаналізовано наукові розвідки щодо тлумачення цих понять, на цій основі виділено традиційний, інтегрований та диференційований підходи до їхнього вивчення.

Ключові слова: оказіоналізм, потенційне слово, неологізм, інновація, новотвір.

Никитченко К. П. К проблеме определения "оказионализма" среди основных понятий неологии. В статье исследуется взаимоотношение понятий "оказионализм", "потенциальное слово" и "неологизм" на основе выделенных критериев и выяснено место оказионализма среди других понятий неологии. Проанализированы научные исследования относительно толкования данных понятий и выделено традиционный, интегрированный и дифференцированный подходы в их исследовании.

Ключевые слова: оказионализм, потенциальное слово, неологизм, инновация, новообразование.

Introduction. People love the opportunity to create new words. Newspapers and magazines hold competitions for 'words that should be in the language but aren't' [16, 233]. They do some creative, even bizarre things with vocabulary, from time to time, and a fascinating topic in lexicology is to examine just what they get up to. The general term for a newly-created lexeme is a *coinage*; but in technical usage a distinction can be drawn between *occasionalisms* (or nonce words) and *neologisms* [15, 132].

The purpose of this article is in systematic grounding of scientific achievements regarding the notion 'occasionalism' and the notions 'potential word' and 'neologism' basing on selected criteria. The task is also to find the place of 'occasionalism' among other notions of neology such as 'innovation' and 'new formation'.

Discussion. Analyzing the relationship between the notions "occasionalism", "potential word" and "neologism", E. I. Hanpira said the following: "The oldest of these notions is a neologism. In literary studies only it still exists. And yet...this one term is not enough to describe the variety of facts related to the emergence of new words" [12, 153].

Neologisms (the term comes from Greek "néo", meaning "new", and "logos", meaning "speech, utterance") are "words that have appeared in a language in connection with new phenomena, new concepts ... but which have not yet entered into the active vocabularies of a substantial part of the native speakers of the language" [22, 225].

© Nykytchenko K. P. To the problem of definition of 'occasionalism' among the basic notions of neology

The problem of neologisms in the English language is researched by numerous linguists and philologists, such as I. Arnold, V. Eliseev, R. Fischer, I. Galperin, C. Gauker, M. Janssen, O. Jespersen, A. Metcalf, M. Mostovyi, P. Newmark, E. Rozen, V. Zobotkina and others.

Investigation. The Ukrainian philologist professor M. Mostovyi states that “there are no clear criteria for defining a neologism as a linguistic phenomenon” [10]. For example, J. Algeo defines neologisms as new-coined words or new senses of an existing word that are constantly being introduced a language, often for the purpose of naming a new concept. According to A. Rey, neologism is a “unit of the lexicon, a word, a word element or a phrase whose meaning, or whose signifier – signified relationship, presupposing an effective function in a specific model of communication, was not previously materialized as a linguistic form in the immediately preceding tag of the lexicon of the language. According to the model of the lexicon chosen, the neologism will be perceived as belonging to the language in general or only to one of its special usages; or as belonging to a subject – specific usage which may be specialized or general” [19, 77].

An *occasionalism* is “a linguistic form which a speaker consciously invents or accidentally does on a single occasion” [13, 711]; it is a lexeme created for temporary use, to solve an immediate problem of communication. Such words are usually referred to as ‘occasional’ or ‘nonce-words’.

Occasionalisms tend to be solely invented, as in the case of words like “*fluddle*”. Someone attempting to describe the excess water on a road after a storm was heard to call it a *fluddle* – she meant something bigger than a *puddle* but smaller than a *flood*. The newborn lexeme was forgotten (except by a passing linguist) almost as soon as it was spoken. It was obvious from the jocularly apologetic way in which the person spoke that she did not consider *fluddle* to be a ‘proper’ word at all. There was no intention to propose it for inclusion in a dictionary [15, 132]. As far as she was concerned, it was simply that there seemed to be no word in the language for what she wanted to say, so she made one up, for the nonce. In everyday conversation, people create nonce-words (occasionalisms) like this all the time. Sometimes occasionalisms are called ‘author’s neologisms’ which form the less explored group of innovative lexical units. The function of such words is a language game with a dimension of nonsense, and consequently intentional approaching to children language. But for the authors this is a process of experimentation and a source of creative linguistic pleasure [6].

It is customary to distinguish one more type of coinages: *potential words*. **Traditionally**, they are differentiated as follows: neologisms are new words in the language, potential words are words that are created (but not yet fixed by the tradition of word usage) or can be modeled via productive rules and occasionalisms are words the formation of which is affected by violation of certain word-formation laws.

However, such an interpretation of the phenomena in question, in our opinion, does not allow to distinguish between the notions clearly as occasional words are formed following not only unproductive, but also productive rules. This raises an imbalance between terminological interpretation of occasional and potential words [9]. In fact, there is no consensus among researchers in the interpretation of occasional and potential words which in various works are defined and correlated differently.

According to the **integrated approach**, the proponents of which are N. G. Babenko, I. Degtyar, G. Honcharenko, V. V. Lopatin, O. H. Lykov, A. Ohanesian, I. Uluhanov, G. Stepanov, occasional and potential words are not distinguished.

In our view this position is most convincingly formulated by G. Stepanov, who is sure that potential words are a part of occasionalisms and their distinction is absolutely groundless as occasionalisms and potential words completely coincide. It should be noted that in the works of the above-mentioned linguists advocating the allocation of occasionalisms though the differentiation of the latest for the different types is available. For instance, V. V. Lopatin and O. H. Lykov under the general title “occasionalism” understand two groups of words – potential and individual-author’s words.

A similar opinion is shared by N. G. Babenko, who distinguishes different occasional degrees: 1) occasionalisms of the first degree – standard potential words; 2) occasionalisms of the second degree – partly non-standard formations, with deviations from the word-formation rules that do not generate difficulties of semantic interpretation; 3) occasionalisms of the third degree – purely occasional words that is nonstandard formations, semantic interpretation of which is quite complicated [1, 84]. A Slovak linguist and the founder of Slovak occasional school Klara Buzássyová also maintains this point of view and offers to allocate three groups of occasionalisms: 1) normal potential words that appear in the language quite naturally; 2) individual words; 3) “random words” that violate the word-formation rules.

A fundamentally different, **differentiated approach** to understanding the notions of neology is suggested by O. A. Zemska, E. I. Hanpira, R. Hohenhaus et al. the essence of which is in opposing a potential word to an occasionalism.

A potential word, according to O. A. Zemska, is the realization of word-formation rules. An occasional word is a violation of these rules. Both notions are capable of entering into the active vocabulary, although this possibility is not the same. In the first case, the words themselves seem to punch their way into the active vocabulary and in the second case there is a possibility, but it is far less than that of the first case because occasionalisms are very difficult to enter into the active life of the language. Typical occasionalisms and typical potential words are opposed to each other, but they may converge – that is “a borderland in which the entity, endowed with features of both potential and occasional words” [4, 238]. This implies that some words can be understood both as potential and occasional ones.

Elucidating the essence of the concept of “*potential words*”, the researchers raised the question of expediency and necessity of the notion as such. Focusing on the semantics of the words, J.V. Koloyiz denies the need to highlight potential words among coinages. The researcher maintains that the combination of components *potential* (from fr. *potentiel* – hidden, perhaps) and *word* (isolable meaningful element of the language) is devoid of any logical sense. Any new speech formation is not potential but a real word that denotes a certain concept and has its material form of expression which establishes specific semantics [5]. O. A. Habynska, emphasizing the artificiality of the notion “potential word”, says: “If the word is not created yet and only “may be”, respectively, the word does not exist, there is only the possibility of its formation” [2, 35]. This confirms the fact that there is no need to differentiate the potential words among speech coinages. A similar view is supported by O. V. Rebriy on the basis of structural, functional and semantic analysis.

The summary of elaborations on this issue (N. O. Belova, T. E. Ehoshyna, O.H.Lykov, R. Y. Namytkova, O. A. Zemska et al.) shows that to distinguish the notions “occasionalism”, “potential word” and “neologism”, one must take into account 12 key criteria, including novelty, belonging to the language or speech, expressiveness, the purpose of creation, creation / reproducibility, word-building and derivation, context-dependence, relevance laws of language, already created word the one that has yet to occur, individual identity, involvement in dictionaries and nominative optionality.

The novelty is one of the key criteria that sets occasionalisms apart from neologisms. Neologisms are not new in the absolute sense that occasionalisms are. Rather, the status of neologism is the next stage in the life of a word, namely when it begins to be recognized as itemfamiliar and catches on in the usage of other speakers. Neologisms are thus only new in a relative sense, diachronically, from the point of view of the lexicon. They should therefore rather be described as ‘young listemes’ [17; 21]. So the novelty of neologisms disappears in some time and extraordinary and unfamiliar perception of occasional elements is their distinctive feature.

The novelty of potential words is usually invisible. If sometimes they seem to be new, this novelty can be feigned, as it is impossible to determine when a particular word was used for the first time [4, 228].

The criteria of belonging to the language or speech can be outlined in the frames of dichotomy 'language-speech' marked by F. de Saussure. A neologism is a fact of language [11] such as *image, marketing, toxicomania*. Potential and occasional words are the facts of speech that are not included into the language [12, 154].

Derivation is not a mandatory feature of neologisms as they can be created using both word-building means and non-derivative words, for example, borrowings from other languages. As for occasionalisms, there are two approaches to their study: lexical and word-building. The proponents of lexical approach believe that an occasionalism is any word that is not included in the dictionary, both a derivative and non-derivative. In accordance with the word-building approach, occasional and potential words are always derivative, they are contextual derivatives, "formed by the speaker in the speech when required" unlike systemic derivatives constructed "in strict accordance with the word-building laws of the language" and "fixed in the explanatory and other dictionaries" [7, 357]. In our study, we follow the second of these approaches.

Neologisms as the facts of language are not tied to any context and can be used separately. Speaking about potential words, we can also say that there is the slightest existence of context-dependence. Potential words are generally clear, even when used isolated because the meaning of the derivative is derived entirely from the sum of the meanings of its constituents [4, 228]. Occasional words are created in speech directly for particular situation so they are bound to a particular context or a specific speech situation and are often confusing out of context which they beget [8, 19].

One of the major differences between occasional and potential words is relevance laws of language. Potential words are created via productive rules, and in creating occasionalisms violation of certain word-building rules takes place.

It is also worth mentioning the criterion 'already created word the one that has yet to occur. Occasionalisms and neologisms are real lexical units which are created and adopted in speech, and even became a part of language (neologisms). But the reverse is the case with potential words, of which there are two types: 1) actualized potential words which are created, but not attached to traditional usage; 2) nonactualized ones which are provided by word-building capabilities of language but cannot really appear [12, 154].

According to P. Hohenhaus 'nonce-formations' are somewhat 'in between' actual words and possible words: once attested, i.e. having (had) physical reality, they are clearly not (or no longer) merely possible, but nor do they 'exist' in the sense of being part of the lexicon – which is the usual understanding of the notion of 'actual word' [17]. In fact, their existence is typically maximally short-lived: limited to a single occurrence only.

It is important to admit that every neologism has its own author (individual identity). However, if we know the authors of occasional units, the creators of neologisms remain unknown.

Being disposable lexical units, occasionalisms are no dictionary entries. The same applies to potential words. Neologisms, as linguistic units that are widely spread, are fixed in the dictionaries of new words and meanings, or dictionary appendices/appendages.

Though nobody ever expects occasionalisms to be used again, "some people feel so strongly about the value to the human race of their coinages that they use them as much as possible in the hope that one day they will get into the dictionary. The words that are most likely to have this happen are those which are invented several times independently" [16, 234–235].

While the main function of common words (including neologisms) is nominative, the main function of occasionalisms is expressive and descriptive. Serving a mandatory attribute of occasionalisms, expressiveness can be of two kinds: ungerent (which manifests itself only when using the words in a particular context) and inherent (which is inherent in the word). The expressiveness of occasionalisms is of inherent /intrinsic character [8] because of unaccustomed perception and due to special concentration of content.

Dwelling on the purpose of creation, it should be noted that a neologism is used to describe a new concept unlike occasionalism, one of the leading criteria for determining which is the functional

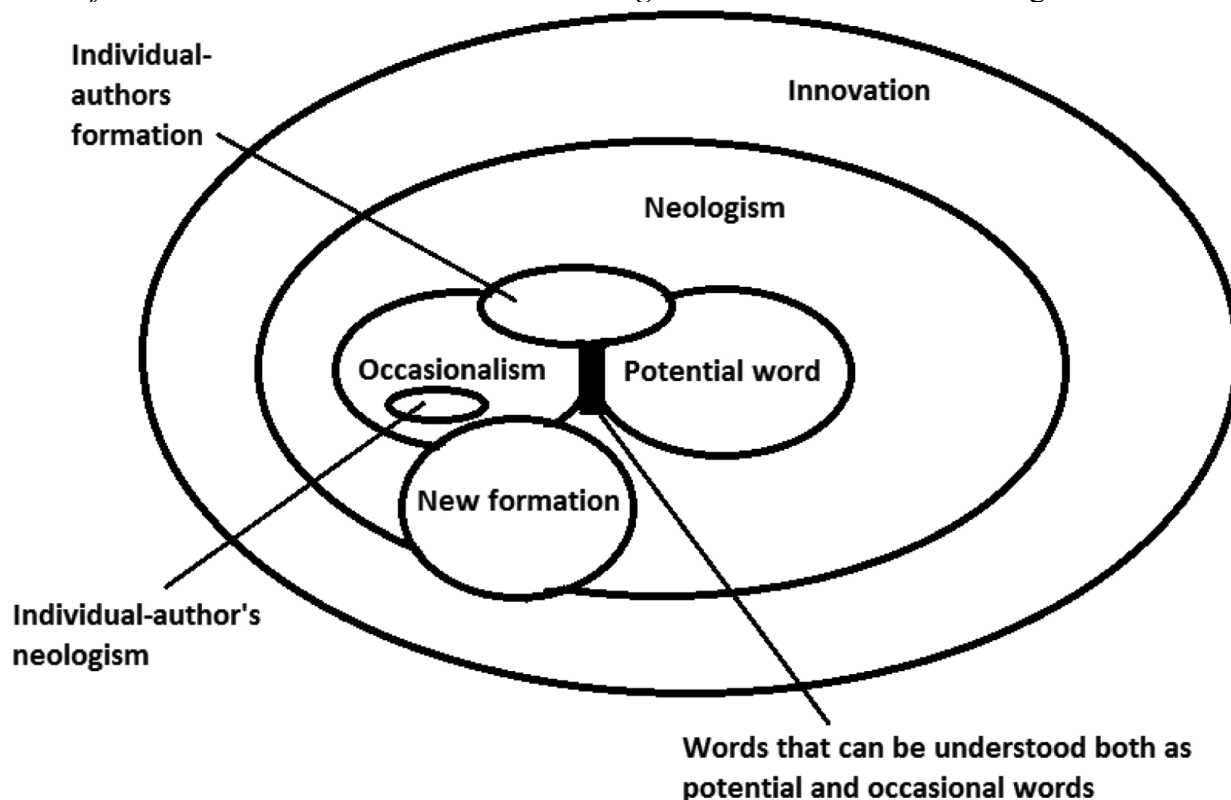
expendability and the fact that they do not get wide distribution and as a result are not included into the language. Neologisms are socially significant words, the need for which is social and caused by the needs of all linguistic community, while the emergence of occasionalisms is caused by the will of the individual in a particular act of speech [3, 95].

The property of reproducibility is the main characteristic feature of canonical words; property of creation is the main characteristic feature of occasionalisms. There is a difference between true reproducibility of canonical words and the feigned one of occasional words that we, following O. Lykov, call *reiteration*.

It should be noted that nonce formations have occasionally come to be adopted by the community – in which case they cease, by definition, to be “nonce” (forms used “for the (n)once”) and become neologisms”. A formation may be institutionalized in the language of one speaker’s (subset of a) speech community, but may be perceived by an ‘outsider’ listener as a nonce-formation, even though it wasn’t one from the speaker’s point of view – and vice versa, i.e. a speaker may form a nonce-formation (from his/her perspective) but it may already be part of a listener’s lexicon. Such uncertainties may apply mostly to nonce-formations which have only begun the transition to the status of neologism. A large proportion of nonce-formations, however, never even make it this far [20].

The problem of neologisms raises apart from distinguishing occasionalisms, potential words and neologisms. The object of neology, a new word, has several nominations: innovation, novation, new formation, neologism, neonomination etc. Operating such notions as innovation, new formation and neologism as synonyms, we should admit that it is impossible to equate them. The term “*innovation*” is used in order to denote new phenomena at all levels of language. The term “*new formation*”, according to O. Kosovych, can be equivalent to the term “*innovation*”, but is not equivalent to the term “*neologism*” [6, 73–74]. On the one hand, the last one turns out to be wider as not only new formations (lexical) but also borrowings from other languages and words with new meanings belong to neologisms. On the other hand, not every new formation is neologism.

The correlation between these notions along with “*occasionalism*”, “*potential word*”, “*individual-author’s formation*” and “*individual-author’s neologism*” is shown in the following scheme.



Picture 1. Correlation between terms “innovation”, “new formation” and “neologism”.

Conclusion and perspective. In conclusion we can say that under *neologisms* we admit some stable innovative elements which entered into communication of some group of people; *potential words* are words that are created (but not yet fixed by the tradition of word usage) or can be modeled via productive rules and the meaning of which is derived entirely from the sum of the meanings of their constituents; while *occasionalisms* are understood as words or meanings of words, invented to meet the needs of a particular occasion in order to catch the reader's attention, shock or provoke, create hidden meanings (semantic condensation) and express the author's evaluation.

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