

PAPER

OCCASIONALISMS AND NEOLOGISMS IN LITERARY AND LINGUISTIC CONTEXTS: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Saliyeva Shakhlo Saidaliyevna^{1,*}

¹Assistant teacher at Kokand State University

*shakhlo.rakhimova.84@mail.ru

Abstract

This study investigates the phenomena of occasionalisms and neologisms within the Uzbek language, emphasizing their role in literary expression and lexical innovation. While both represent newly created words, occasionalisms are context-bound, individually crafted units used primarily for stylistic and expressive purposes, whereas neologisms gradually integrate into the general vocabulary. Analysis of Uzbek literary texts, particularly the works of Nazar Eshonqul, alongside English literary examples, demonstrates how occasionalisms enrich discourse with creative, expressive, and semantic novelty. The research highlights the distinctions, overlaps, and literary significance of these lexical phenomena.

Key words: language development; occasionalism; neologism; lexical innovation; word formation; stylistic expression; linguistic creativity; speech phenomenon; vocabulary dynamics

Introduction

In Uzbek linguistics, scholars such as S. Toshaliyeva and O. To'xtasinova have analyzed the distinctions and overlaps between these phenomena. Occasionalisms provide valuable insight into the creativity of individual authors, while neologisms reflect broader lexical trends. Literary examples, particularly the works of Nazar Eshonqul, illustrate how occasionalisms enrich

narratives with unique and stylistically expressive vocabulary. Furthermore, comparative examples from English literature demonstrate that this phenomenon is universal, reflecting the interplay between individual creativity and the language system across cultures.

This study aims to investigate the characteristics, functions, and stylistic significance of occasionalisms and neologisms, exploring their role in both literary and linguistic contexts. By

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examining both Uzbek and English texts, the research highlights how authors use lexical innovation to create meaning, evoke emotions, and expand the expressive power of language.

Materials and Methods

In linguistics, just as archaic words, dialectal expressions, and phraseological units are studied, words carrying new meanings are also actively examined. Occasionalisms and neologisms belong to this group of lexical innovations. Although both phenomena are associated with novelty, they differ in their linguistic status and function. Uzbek linguistics has devoted significant scholarly attention to these categories.

Researcher S. Toshaliyeva emphasizes that the distinction between occasionalism and neologism can be understood through two oppositional frameworks: usuality versus occasionality, and old versus new lexical status. Usual words belong to the established vocabulary of modern Uzbek and function as stable elements of the literary language. Occasional words, by contrast, are not part of the shared lexical system; they are created by an individual speaker or writer in response to a specific communicative need and are typically confined to a particular text.

Both usual and occasional words may initially possess a sense of novelty. However, the key distinction lies in their acceptance and integration. Usual words are capable of entering the general lexicon, while occasionalisms remain restricted because they may not be widely adopted by the speech community. Only words accepted and repeatedly used by speakers become permanent elements of the vocabulary.

O. To'xtasinova further highlights that one defining feature of occasionalisms is their authorship. While both neologisms and occasionalisms originate from creative linguistic activity, neologisms gradually lose their novelty and become normalized. Occasionalisms, however, remain speech-bound units that typically appear once or within a limited context.

Writers often introduce occasionalisms in literary works to achieve expressive or stylistic effects. Such creations demonstrate linguistic creativity and authorial mastery. Nazar Eshonqul

is one Uzbek writer whose prose illustrates this phenomenon vividly. His occasional formations are unique and not found in other literary works.

Uzbek Literary Examples and Analysis

"Sen bu ruhlar qabristonidan nelar izlayapsan?!"

The phrase "ruhlar qabristoni" functions as an occasional metaphorical construction. Traditional expressions refer to physical burial spaces, but this innovative pairing evokes a symbolic dimension, suggesting emotional or spiritual remnants. Its stylistic power lies in semantic expansion beyond conventional lexical boundaries.

"...meni kuyning kundasida qatl et!" The expression "kuyning kundasi" merges musical imagery with execution symbolism. This unusual combination intensifies emotional resonance and demonstrates how occasional formations can reshape conceptual associations.

"...ko'z milkarida paydo bo'lgan ko'zyoshlar..."

The phrase "ko'z milki" extends anatomical terminology metaphorically. By transferring the notion of "gum" to the eye, the writer heightens sensory imagery and emotional immediacy

"...shon-shavkatning suyaklari..."

Here, prestige and glory are conceptualized as skeletal remains. This occasional metaphor conveys the fragility and impermanence of social status.

"...har qanday xonaki muhabbatdan voz kechish..."

The adjective "xonaki" attached to "love" produces semantic tension. Love, typically abstract and boundless, is framed as domestic or confined, emphasizing artistic sacrifice.

Occasional word formation is equally visible in English literature, where writers stretch linguistic norms to produce stylistic innovation. Lewis Carroll — "slithy" (Jabberwocky) A blend of slimy and lithe, the word creates vivid imagery without prior lexical existence. Its meaning emerges entirely from context.

James Joyce — "scrotumtightening" (Ulysses) A compound formation conveying intense discomfort. The expressive effect depends on creative morphological expansion.

Dr. Seuss — "nerd" (If I Ran the Zoo) Initially an invented label, it later entered mainstream vocabulary — illustrating how occasionalisms may evolve into neologisms.

Anthony Burgess — hybrid slang in A Clockwork

Orange Words like ultraviolence amplify semantic intensity through unconventional formation. These examples demonstrate that occasionalisms serve as tools of conceptual innovation, emotional amplification, and stylistic distinctiveness across literary traditions.

Results and Discussion

The comparative analysis reveals that occasionalisms function as markers of linguistic creativity independent of language boundaries. In both Uzbek and English texts, such formations reshape semantic expectations, enrich imagery, and intensify emotional expression. While neologisms aim for lexical permanence, occasionalisms emphasize momentary stylistic impact. Their interpretive power depends on context, authorial intent, and reader engagement.

Ultimately, occasionalisms illustrate the elasticity of language — the ability of speakers and writers to transform linguistic resources into expressive innovations. Literary discourse remains a primary environment where such experimentation thrives.

Criterion	Neologism	Occasionalism
Definition	A newly created or recently adopted lexical unit that becomes part of the language system	An individually created, context-bound word used for a specific communicative purpose
Linguistic Status	Language unit (belongs to the lexical system)	Speech unit (exists primarily in discourse)
Authorship	May originate from an individual but becomes collective property	Strongly associated with a specific author or speaker
Integration into Vocabulary	Can enter and stabilize in the general vocabulary	Usually does not enter the permanent lexicon
Frequency of Use	Repeated and potentially widespread usage	Typically one-time or limited usage
Norm Compliance	Generally follows productive word-formation patterns	May follow or deliberately violate linguistic norms
Degree of Novelty	Novelty gradually fades as the word becomes familiar	Novelty remains perceptible regardless of repetition
Communicative Function	Names new objects, concepts, or phenomena	Creates stylistic, expressive, or emotional impact
Context Dependence	Understandable without strong contextual support once established	Meaning heavily depends on context
Longevity	Potentially long-term presence in language	Often temporary and text-specific
Stylistic Role	Neutral or terminological over time	Highly expressive and stylistically marked
Example	<i>Internet, blog, emoji</i>	<i>slithy</i> (Carroll), metaphorical author-created phrases

The study of occasionalisms and neologisms highlights the dynamic and creative nature of language. Both phenomena represent lexical innovations, yet they differ fundamentally in their function, integration, and longevity.

Neologisms are language-oriented units that can enter the general vocabulary and gradually become normalized, often losing their initial novelty.

Occasionalisms, by contrast, are context-dependent, individually created units that primarily serve expressive, stylistic, or emotional purposes within specific texts or speech situations.

Analysis of Uzbek literary texts, particularly the works of Nazar Eshonqul, demonstrates how occasionalisms contribute to the richness and originality of literary expression. The examples show that these words are not merely linguistic curiosities; they reflect the author's creative mastery and ability to manipulate language for aesthetic and semantic effect.

Occasionalisms, therefore, offer valuable insight into the intersection of language system and speech practice, revealing how authors innovate within the constraints of existing vocabulary to convey unique meanings and stylistic nuances.

Comparative examination with English literary examples, such as Lewis Carroll's *slithy* or James Joyce's inventive compounds, confirms that occasionalisms are a universal phenomenon in literary discourse. They function as tools of linguistic creativity, expanding expressive possibilities while remaining contextually bound.

Conclusion

In conclusion, occasionalisms play a crucial role in both literary and linguistic studies. They illustrate the interplay between individual creativity and the language system, emphasizing the importance of context, stylistic intention, and semantic innovation. Understanding their characteristics and functions deepens our knowledge of lexical dynamics, the creative potential of language, and the mechanisms through which writers enrich and transform the expressive power of their texts.

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