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NONCE WORDS OR OCCASIONALISMS AND THEIR ROLES IN THE NOVEL “FIFTY SHADES OF GREY” BY EL JAMES

The article is devoted to the research of the usage of nonce words and their roles in the novel “Fifty Shades of Grey” by the American writer EL James. Nonce words or occasionalisms are considered as a special expressive literary means used by some contemporary authors for description of certain personalities, actions, events, phenomena etc. These are the words or word combinations which, as most linguists used to think, will never be included in any dictionary of the normative English language. Some scientists regard them as so called “individual word-building”, “author’s neologism”, “a word-impromptu” or “a self-made word”, “a one-day word”. The others consider nonce words or occasionalisms as a very productive modern neologisms formed in a somehow unusual way: not by means of connecting the stem of one word with a certain part of another word but connecting full words with each other with the help of a hyphen, in some cases as many as 5-6 words. Not only detached construction, but also fragmentation of syntactical models, peculiar, unexpected ways of combining words, especially the gap-sentence link and other modern syntactical patterns are freely introduced into present-day American prose.

EL James uses nonce words, the gap-sentence link and other modern syntactical patterns for description of the inner world of the main character of the novel, a young girl with philological education and rather touching nature. By means of occasionalisms the author tries to show the storm of momentary feelings in the girl’s soul. These constructions help the readers to better understand what is going on in the girl’s heart there and then.

In the article 27 examples of nonce words are researched and an attempt is made to classify them according to their roles in the narration.

Key words: *neologism, nonce words, occasionalisms, linguistics, expressive means, literary discourse.*

Introduction. The novel “Fifty Shades of Grey” by EL James was published by Arrow Books Random House Group in 2012 and in a very short period of time has become a world best-seller. It has been translated into many languages, and in 2017 a film was shot on its plot. The novel has regained such a wide popularity not only because of its content, but also as a vivid example of the life style of young Americans in the modern world. The book is crammed with the signs of the first decade of the XXI century: different families with adopted children, free relationships of the youth, wide usage of computers, communication via e-mail, etc. In the reference on the book it is written that “romantic, liberating and totally addictive, this is a novel that will obsess you, possess you, and stay with you forever” [7].

As for the author of the novel we know that EL James is a former TV executive, wife and mother of two children. Since early childhood she dreamed of writing stories that readers would fall in love with but put those dreams on hold to focus on her family and career. She finally plucked up the courage to put pen

to paper with her first novel “Fifty Shades of Grey”. She is also the author of “Fifty Shades Darker” and “Fifty Shades Freed” [7].

In this article we are going to research not the plot of the novel or its characters, but the language of this literary product from the viewpoint of word-building and style. It is a wonderful example of modern American literary prose written by a woman. We are especially interested in the usage of so-called nonce words, or occasionalisms, as the book contains plenty of them. The abundance of nonce words differentiates this novel from many other American literary works of the same period of time. Sometimes it seems the book stands aside from the usual literature process in the USA, and may be because of this it attracted so much attention on the part of both readers and critics.

Analysis of relevant researches. According to *New Webster’s Dictionary and Thesaurus of the English Language* “nonce word is a word coined for a particular occasion and not accepted into general usage” [10, p. 682]. A nonce word (*from Middle English “for the once”*) is a word coined or used for a special occa-

sion. A compound construction made up for a particular occasion is sometimes called a *nonce compound*. As Thomas Kane notes, nonce compounds are usually hyphenated. They are distinct from the conventional compounds we all use, like *teenager or school-boy* [8]. Actually *nonce words* and *nonce compounds* most frequently appear in public style especially in periodic when authors of newspaper articles want to attract the attention of their audience to some events, actions or phenomena. As a kind of a neologism such words exist in the language during a certain period of time when the events, actions or phenomena they were coined for, remain popular. As soon as the people's interest towards such events, actions or phenomena "fades" the nonce words denoting them disappear. They cannot be found in any dictionary, they are simply "lost in the time".

As a stylistic device nonce compounds are not widely used in modern literary discourse but can be found in Lewis Carroll's books of tales. The poem "Jabbenwocky" by Lewis Carroll is full of nonce words of which two "clortle and galumph", have entered into common use. Both L. Carroll's books about Alice contain plenty of nonce words; this fact had made them rather difficult for translation into other languages. Very often nonce words are used by actors and comedians for the sake of humor because they attract the public attention and make people laugh.

Lorenzo Fabian states that nonce words remain on the outskirts of the literary language and not infrequently remind us of the writers who coined them. They are created to designate some insignificant subjective idea or evaluation of a thing or phenomenon and generally become moribund in the course of time. They rarely pass into the language as legitimate units of the vocabulary, but they remain in the language as constant manifestations of its innate power of word-building [9]. Not only detached construction, but also fragmentation of syntactical models, peculiar, unexpected ways of combining words, especially the gap-sentence link and other modern syntactical patterns are freely introduced into present-day American prose.

Having analyzed scientific works of Ukrainian linguists we found out that O.Turchak considers "occasionalisms" to be the words which are present in speech of one person or some people but have no chances to be reproduced in modern literary language [5, 6]. G.Vokalchuk notes that as there are different opinions concerning the linguistic nature of this phenomenon, it is rather problematic to give an exact explanation of their appearance and functioning. The

researcher states that every nonce word has its author and is characterized by such indications: depending on the context, expressiveness, irregularity, novelty [1, 2]. Sometimes the author's name is forgotten but the word exists. O. Styshov underlines that occasionalisms are often called "individual word-building", "author's neologism", "a word-impromptu" or "a self-made word", "a one-day word" [4]. We agree with "a self-made word" but have some doubts as for "a one-day word". When G.Salindger in the novel "The Catcher in the Rye" (1952) used the occasionalism "David-Copperfield's-trifle" translated by Rita Rite-Kovalova as "Давид-Коперфілдівська-муть" for characteristic of the routine school life, the young people especially students started using it to call everything meaningless, routine, boring. This occasionalism stopped to be used, disappeared from the language when those young people grew up, their priorities had changed and new nonce words appeared in the English language.

And only in 2012 when the novel "Fifty Shades of Grey" by EL James was published readers saw the same word-building. We consider such complicated constructions as nonce words or occasionalisms and are planning to research them in this article.

The term "occasionalism" in linguistics appeared at the end of the previous century; the absence of the definition of this notion from the viewpoint of the language in *The New Webster's Dictionary and Thesaurus of the English Language*, 1992 shows that this word was used for definition of "the doctrine that mind and body are separate entities which interact only by the intervention of God" [10, p. 693]. Nowadays there is no exact definition of "occasionalism" as scientists use it in their researches according to their own needs but they mostly share the opinion that such words and free word combination would hardly ever be included in dictionaries.

The aim of the study is to find and research the nonce words/occasionalisms in the novel "Fifty Shades of Grey" by EL James and describe their role in literary discourse.

The tasks of the research are:

- to characterize the nonce words as a kind of neologisms in the system of expressive language means;
- to find different kinds of nonce words and give examples of their use in the novel for performing different roles in expressing feelings.

Methods of research. To carry out the tasks the following methods of research were used: analysis of scientific publications on the subject of the research in order to clear out the level of the problem's work

out; content-analysis of the novel's text; classification of the nonce words according to their role in the text; generalization of the peculiarities of nonce words usage in literature discourse.

Research Findings. Having agreed that nonce words/occasionalisms are a kind of neologisms, Ukrainian linguists share the idea of some foreign researchers who consider occasionalisms/nonce words to be vivid examples of free word-building in modern literature.

Newly coined words, i.e. those which designate newly-born concepts are named terminological neologisms. Words coined because their creators seek expressive utterance are named stylistic neologisms. They are mainly coined according to the productive models for word-building in the given language. Most of the literary-bookish neologisms are built by means of affixation and word compounding. Words can acquire new meanings when they are used in combinations not yet registered in a language as a system. It is a well known fact that any word, if placed in a strange environment, will acquire a new shade of meaning.

It is worth mentioning that in the novel *"Fifty Shades of Grey"* the narration is done on the part of the first person singular, i.e. the main character Anastasia Steele, a fourth-year university student studying literature and journalism. Her relationships with a young businessman Christian Grey compose the novel's plot. "Unworldly and innocent, Ana is shocked to find she wants this man. And, when he warns her to keep her distance, it only makes her want him more" [7]. "Grey is tormented by inner demons, and consumed by the need to control. As they embark on a passionate love affair, Ana discovers more about her own desires, as well as the dark secrets Grey keeps hidden away from public view..." [7].

In the process of reading the novel a special attention was paid to the excessive usage of the strange many-components constructions which cannot be observed in books by any other American or English modern authors. The other fact is that of all characters of the novel only the main personage Anastasia Steele uses such nonce word constructions. To be more precise, the author of the novel inserts these newly formed word combinations in the speech of this girl. There are no occasionalisms or nonce words in the speech of Christian Grey, the other main character of the book. Why? What did the author want to show her readers by this fact?

Looking for the answers to these questions we made a list of 27 nonce words/occasionalisms from the novel and tried to explain their role in the narration.

From our point of view in some cases such hyphenated constructions/nonce words allow the author to save time and efforts for description of feelings as these occasionalisms are very vivid and reproduce the person's emotions quickly and precisely (positions 1, 2). Using such constructions the author demonstrates us that Anastasia Steele has a so called "sense of the language", as a philologist she rather quickly forms her thoughts by means of minimum words. (*Here and further on we innumerate the pages of the book without referring to its number in the references*).

1) "...I no longer have to endure the sight of her *pink-flannel-with-too-many rabbits PJs*" [p. 22];

2) "...I just haven't met anyone who ...well, whom I'm attracted to, even though part of me longs for the fabled trembling knees, *heart-in-my-mouth, butterflies-in-my-belly* moments" [p. 24].

The usage of the word "smile" in different word combinations demonstrates the process of Anastasia's first falling in love with Christian and later slightly critical attitude towards him: from *odd, dazzling, oh-so-smug, heart-stopping to Christian Grey-patented, full-blown* (positions 3, 11, 13, 16, 19, 27 from our list).

3) "He smiles his *odd I've-got-a-whooping-big-secret* smile" [p. 47].

11) He smiles his *dazzling head-cocked-to-one-side* smile... [p. 152].

13) "It was good, Kate. Very good, I think," I say quietly, trying to hide my *embarrassed-tell-all* smile [p. 158].

16) He smiles his *dazzling toothy-all-Hispanic-American* smile, and I can't be angry with him anymore [p. 182].

19) He smiles that *oh-so-smug-private* smile of his, holds the champagne bottle up, and pauses [p. 254].

27) He gives her the *heart-stopping, Christian Grey-patented, full-blown, no-prisoners* smile [p. 418].

Sometimes it seems it's Christian's *smile* that has fifty shades of Grey, and those shades are deliberately used by the author for characterizing him as a personality.

Then we systemized the occasionalisms with the word *look*: positions 10, 14, 17, 18, 21, 22, 23 from our list.

10) He certainly does not look like the *multi-multimillionaire-billionaire, whatever-aire*, in these clothes [p.149].

14) She cocks her head at me and raised her eyebrows in a *what-do-you-think-stupid* look [p. 160].

17) She crosses her arms and taps her foot with a *what-are-you-complaining-about* look on her face [p. 199].

18) They slide over to my face with a *when-were-you-going-to-give-me-this-new* look [p. 242].

21) He gives me a *don't-be-ridiculous* look [p. 312].

22) My subconscious nods sagely, a *you're-finally-worked-it-out-stupid* look on her face [p. 338].

We regard these examples as a revealing of the girl's spontaneous thoughts and feelings towards other people. In positions 14, 17, 18, 21, 22 these occasional many-word constructions are used in the role of an attribute to the word *look* for better expressing Anastasia's attitude to what was going on.

Examples in positions 4, 5, 9, 15, 24, 25 are used by the author to show the girl's *self-irony* as her ability to critically assess the situations in her relationships with her partner, friends and other people. Supposedly the author of the novel highly values *self-irony* as an ability of a person to critically appreciate the situations and attitude towards them.

4) "I've never considered it a good idea to date the boss's brother, and besides, Paul is cute in a wholesome *all-American-boy-next-door* kind of way, but he is no literary hero, not by any stretch of the imagination" [p. 34].

5) "Do I need a visual reminder of the beautiful Christian *I-Don't-Want-You* Grey?" [p. 52].

8) It's suede, like a small *cat-o-nine-tails* but bushier... [p. 99].

9) Okay, I understand the pleasing bit, but I'm puzzled by the *soft-boudoir-Elizabethan-torture* setup [p. 100].

15) I recall his gentle banter this morning at breakfast, his joy at my delight with the helicopter ride, him playing the piano – the sweet, *soulful-oh-so-sad* music [p. 163].

24) I'll sign your contract. And it's a *spur-of-the-moment* decision [342].

25) I nuzzle up against him, eyes closed, my nose at his throat, drinking in his sexy *Christian-and-spiced-musky-bodywash* fragrance, my head on his shoulder [p. 356].

Mentioning Miss Anastasia Steele's campus roommate *Kate Kavanakh* and her role in Anastasia-Christian relationships the author EL James also uses compound nonce word constructions: see positions 6, 7, 23.

6) Kate is excited as she heads into the kitchen for our *exams-are-finished-hurrah* champagne [p. 54]. She has the *most-un-Kate-like ridiculous* grin on her face...

7) Christian follows me into the living-room, and in spite of her *I've-been-having-a-good-time-all-night* grin, Kate eyes him suspiciously [p. 83].

23) I flush, and Christian glares at her in a *butt-out-of-this-Kavanakh* kind of way. Even Kate wilts under his stare [p. 341].

For characteristic of Christian Grey the following occasionalisms are used: positions 12, 20, 26.

12) He gives me a *don't-be-stupid* stare [p. 155].

20) Generous, *over-the-top-bastard*, isn't he? [p. 301]. "So you're not going to punish me?" "No, I'm an *in-the-moment* kind of guy [p. 306].

26) He seems very keen, says I'm his – but that's just part of his *I-must-own-and-have-everything-now* control freak Dominant self, surely [p. 383].

In our opinion the compound constructions with nonce words/occasionalisms used by EL James in the novel "Fifty Shades of Grey" have no chances to be placed in any dictionary as they are characteristic of the author's own literary style and were coined to better describe the main personages and their thoughts, feelings, attitudes. They can hardly be used in any other context: ironic, jargon, non-normative or even vulgar. These constructions with nonce words/occasionalisms will in most cases stay as indicators of a certain personalities and events which young people were interested in at the beginning of this century. They are the markers of some literary novelties that provoked disapproving reaction in society but just now they attract readers because of their newness, extraordinary usage which briefly and exactly convey the author's attitude towards the described events, characters or phenomena.

Conclusions. Detailed analysis of 27 examples of the usage of compound constructions with nonce words/occasionalisms in the novel "Fifty Shades of Grey" by EL James gives the right to make a conclusion that they are a special kind of neologisms coined by the author for many reasons:

- to better characterize the main personages of the book;
- to make the narration more attractive for the young people;
- to show the development of the relationships between the main heroes in their successiveness;
- simply to play with the words in order to make them be more expressive.

The author proved to be rather creative in coining such compound nonce words/occasionalisms constructions highly appreciated by readers as they demonstrate the flexibility of the English language, its expressiveness and inclination towards unusual usage. The novel is considered as a vivid example

of so called “female” prose – bright, emotional, independent.

Evaluating the prospects for further research it is necessary to mark that the next two parts of the novel – “Fifty Shades Darker” and “Fifty Shades Freed” by the same author are waiting for their turn to be researched and we are going to do this in order to see how successive EL James is in her devotion

to coining compound nonce words. We’d like to see whether the main character Anastasia Steele continues to use compound nonce words in her speech or with coming of age she prefers using the normative English language.

We also consider that in Ukraine we are lack of linguistic researches devoted to creating and disappearing of nonce words.

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Гришкова Р. О. ОКАЗІОНАЛІЗМИ ТА ЇХ РОЛЬ У РОМАНІ «П’ЯТДЕСЯТ ВІДТІНКІВ СІРОГО» (авторка EL JAMES)

Стаття присвячена дослідженню так званих *nonce words*, що в україномовному переладі позначаються як «оказіоналізми» в романі EL James «П’ятдесят відтінків сірого». Оказіоналізми розглядаються як спеціальні експресивні засоби, що використовуються сучасними авторами для опису певних дійових осіб, явищ, подій тощо. Це слова чи словосполучення, які, на думку багатьох учених-лінгвістів, ніколи не ввійдуть до словників нормативної англійської мови. Одні дослідники вважали їх прикладами «індивідуального словотвору», «авторським неологізмом», «словом-експромтом», «словом-саморобкою», «словом одного дня». Інші науковці розцінюють оказіоналізми як продуктивний сучасний неологізм, утворений у дещо незвичайний спосіб: не за допомогою з’єднання основи одного слова з певною частиною іншого, а шляхом поєднання одне з одним цілих слів, що пишуться через дефіс. Інколи в такий спосіб поєднуються 5–6 слів. Не тільки окремі конструкції, але й фрагментовані синтаксичні моделі, особливі, несподівані способи поєднання слів, зв’язки в реченнях з пропусками слів та інші сучасні синтаксичні зразки представлені в сьогоденній американській прозі.

EL James використовує оказіоналізми, зв’язки в реченнях з пропусками слів та інші сучасні синтаксичні моделі для відтворення внутрішнього світу головної дійової особи роману, молодої дівчини, яка вивчає літературу й журналістику, та має вразливу вдачу. За допомогою оказіоналізмів авторка намагається зобразити бурхливі почуття дівчини в моменти близькості з іншим героєм роману – молодим бізнесменом, ялий обтяжений власними проблемами і звик усе контролювати.

У статті розглянуто 27 прикладів оказіоналізмів та зроблено спробу класифікувати їх відповідно до їхньої ролі в романі.

Ключові слова: неологізм, оказіоналізм, лінгвістика, засоби виразності, літературний дискурс.

Дата надходження статті: 19.11.2025

Дата прийняття статті: 10.12.2025

Опубліковано: 30.12.2025