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## LEXICAL INNOVATIONS IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE: RESPONDING TO THE DEMANDS OF A DIGITAL MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY

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*The article investigates the evolving nature of lexical innovations in English, emphasising the development and role of neologisms and occasionalisms within various discourses shaped by today's high-tech society. The study examines how new lexical units emerge, develop, and integrate into the language system in response to rapid social, technological, and multicultural changes. It identifies the key "points of growth" where lexical innovations are most prevalent, including science, technology, medicine, politics, economics, advertising, and contemporary fiction. The methodology analyses lexical innovations from many perspectives, including word formation, sociolinguistic, psycholinguistic, typological, multicultural, and cognitive approaches. It reveals that the process of language neologisation has an uneven character, with increased activity in areas where social, political, scientific, and technical developments create new concepts requiring novel lexical representation. The findings demonstrate that lexical innovations emerge through various word-building models, including word compounding, blending, borrowing from other languages, using specialised prefixes, and using different stylistic devices. Particularly notable is the quick development of new terminology in high technology, cybercrime, family relationships, and ecology. The research highlights how conceptual multicultural societal changes, such as the evolution of family structures and technological advancement, drive the creation of new lexical units. The study also examines the role of occasional words in specific discourse domains like economics, politics, and tourism advertising. These context-specific lexical innovations often exhibit high expressiveness and creativity, concisely conveying complex ideas or attracting attention. The article concludes that the constant influx of neologisms and occasionalism reflects the essential adaptability of the English language in maintaining its relevance and meeting the evolving communicative needs of its users while also providing insights into broader social and multicultural transformations.*

**Key words:** *lexical innovations, neologisms, occasionalism, word formation, stylistic devices, multicultural changes.*

**The statement of the problem.** The lexical system of any language (including English) is a living, dynamic formation regularly replenished with new lexical units. The emergence of a large number of lexical novelties in any social sphere is one of the indicators of the dynamics of its development, as speakers of a language, most often without realising it, try to find possible ways of denoting changed or newly emerged material and social phenomena. New words and meanings can be formed unexpectedly in the flow of speech or deliberately created by authors for specific use in the text and later enter the vocabulary of the English language as full-fledged lexical units. This is why the following criteria have been proposed at various times to distinguish neologisms (lexical innovations documented in a dictionary) from occasional words (which are not

recorded in any resources and are used in communication or public discourse): stylistic, lexicographic (absence of the word in the existing dictionaries), psycholinguistic (most informants evaluate the word as new and unusual), denotative (by the time of formation of the object denoted by the word), structural (novelty and unusualness of the used word-formation model), etc. (Kadosh, 2013; Zawada, 2005).

Emerging in the language, new lexical units must contend with the conservatism of native speakers, driven by the desire to maintain the status quo. Consequently, only those new lexical units that do not duplicate existing ones are established in usage, truly fulfilling the role of expressing and solidifying new ideas and concepts, along with newly developed connotations and associations, while filtering out homonymy and similar issues.

**The research aims** to analyse the dynamic nature of lexical innovations (neologisms and occasionalisms) in English, particularly how they emerge and function in different discourses of a digital multicultural society.

**The object of the research** is the lexical system of contemporary English, specifically focusing on new lexical units (neologisms and occasionalisms).

**The subject of the research** – is the patterns, word-building models, and discourse contexts of lexical innovations formation in various spheres of social activity (science, technology, medicine, politics, economics, advertising, etc.).

**The research objectives** are to identify and analyse the main “points of growth” where new lexical units emerge most frequently, examine the various models of word formation of neologisms and occasionalism, investigate the sociolinguistic and multicultural factors influencing the emergence of new lexical units, study the thematic distribution of lexical innovations across different social spheres, and analyse the cognitive aspect of how new lexical units reflect and influence modern speakers’ linguistic and multicultural worldview.

**Presentation of the main material.** Lexical innovations are studied in several areas, including word formation, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, typology, and multicultural studies. Recently, a new focus has emerged: cognitive linguistics. This field explores how language mediates cognition, representation, and the transformation of reality in individuals. Linguists working in this area analyse the underlying structures of knowledge associated with neologisms and occasionalisms and their impact on speakers’ linguistic and conceptual perceptions in the modern world (Zawada, 2005).

Moreover, the process of language neologisation has an uneven character and arises where social, political, scientific, and technical development of society leads to the emergence of new objects in these spheres, for the designation of which the current lexical inventory is incomplete.

The emergence of lexical innovations in the following spheres of social activity is most promising:

- 1) *Science (cold fusion, dark matter, nanotechnology, collider);*
- 2) *Electronics and communication (HDTV, Bluetooth, iPod);*
- 3) *Medicine (in vitro fertilisation);*
- 4) *Politics (Aberdeen-based);*
- 5) *Economics (economically-devastated);*
- 6) *Advertising (divorce-moon);*
- 7) *Fiction (entire-tune-of-town-hallclock-style doorball).*

English has continuously enriched its lexical stock with words from new social fields. We propose the working term “points of growth” to denote cultural and subject areas with a massive emergence and spread of

lexical innovations. “Growth points” arise due to rapid social and cultural changes such as political revolutions, the introduction of fundamentally new technologies, the destruction of existing stereotypes, and the creation of new stereotypes. The increase in the number of occasional words in the English-speaking community is almost continuous.

However, we would like to note that ‘growth points’ are not the primary source of replenishment of the English lexical stock. In addition, there is a mass borrowing of foreign-language units in the language (for example, French at the early stage of aviation development: “hangar,” “chassis,” “Pitot tube”), or the interaction of two national cultures, for example, English and Japanese (for example, the terms “sushi,” “tofu,” “anime”), the interaction of Standard English and different social environment and the appearance of Australian English with its multicultural peculiarities (*forest/woods – bush; desert – outback; very drunk – pissed as a fart; very early – sparrow’s fart; mate – friend; brekkie – breakfast; barbie – barbecue; arvo – afternoon; ta – thank you; Aussie – Australian; footy – football; a flat white – coffee with milk; chalkie – a teacher; joey – a baby kangaroo; Matilda – a backpack; «cooe» – a call used in the outback*) and Aboriginal English that incorporates aspects of Standard English, but speech characteristics and words of the Aboriginal language (*a billy – a metal container to cook a meal on fire; “boil the billy”; a mob – a family of Aboriginal people; (in Br. English a furious crowd of people; a flock of kangaroos); bush, to go bush – to go out, to spend time in the forest, or at the beach; Dream-time – stories that explain the Lore (a religious spiritual codex of beliefs and behaviour for Aboriginal people); Country – a living being, a spiritual unity of environment, people, and land*).

Nevertheless, due to its role in the world’s cultural space, the English language has increasingly been a source of lexical innovations for other languages in recent times. Thus, the words “cringe” – to feel ashamed of someone – and “flex” – to relax or boast – have entered the modern Ukrainian spoken language.

Ideally, the system of lexical nominations provides for imposing a rigid categorical grid on the continuum of denoted objects, independent of spatial, temporal, or any external (subjective) factors. Nevertheless, the initial categorical meaning “blurs” over time, losing its clarity, and “semantic lacunas” appear on its periphery, requiring special lexical denotation. On top of that, the same object can receive different names, conditioned by the point of view of the nominating subject or group, e.g., “terrorists”/ “revolutionaries,” “terrorists”/ “revolutionaries”/ “shahids”/ “freedom fighters.”

When defining a newly created object, some variant names may appear due to “USB stick,” “a memory stick,” “pen drive,” “thumb drive,” “flash drive,” etc.).

As the corresponding object becomes fixed in the social practice, one of the variants gets the advantage, and the others become obsolete. The serious re-categorisation of the concept of “MARRIAGE” in connection with the growth of tolerance in modern English has led to the emergence of ‘points of growth’ in the category “Family.” The initial impetus for it was identifying a new attribute in the basic categorical concept of MOTHER – “a woman who provided the genetic material for the birth of a given child.” Understanding the individuality of this category created such terms as “*biological mother*,” “*donor mother*,” “*surrogate mother*,” as well as “*sperm donor*,” “*donor dad*,” “*gamete donor*,” and others. Moreover, the possibility of artificial gender reassignment has entailed the dichotomy of “biological sex/social sex” as well as a completely new system of concepts and their lexical designations for subjects and their actions that do not fit into the entrenched dichotomy of “male/female.” At the same time, the concept of ‘same-sex marriage’ is lexically represented by such euphemistic terms as “*same-sex union*” and “*domestic partnership*.”

The analysis of lexical innovations in the category “Family” allows us to reveal their deep crisis in the modern USA and Great Britain, as, firstly, the traditional family is more and more often replaced by a “small family” (“*beanpole family*,” “*verticalised family*”); secondly, wives and children are more and more often considered as prestigious property (“*trophy wife*,” “*trophy child*”), which can even be ordered by mail (“*mail order bride*”); thirdly, members of the older generation do not want to deal with grandchildren (“*grannyphobia*”); fourthly, divorce by mutual consent (“*collaborative divorce*,” “*no-fault divorce*”) and subsequent remarriage (“*serial monogamy*”) have become so natural that the former is seen as an occasion for a formal ceremony (“*unwedding ceremony*,” “*divorce ceremony*,” “*marriage wake*”). The latter gives birth to a complex system of relations with former family members (“*ex*,” “*stepwives*,” “*wasband*,” “*hasbeend*,” “*mother-out-law*”).

In the sphere of technical achievements, the most insane growth of neologisms and occasionalism is observed in the category “High Technology”, where the creation of a fundamentally new class of devices gave birth to the category “Computer Technology”, which, equally, formed a whole range of subcategories, including even “Computer-induced diseases”. For example, “*screen sickness*,” “*carpal tunnel syndrome*,” “*repetitive strain injury*,” “*gorilla elbow*,” “*Tetwrist*,” “*Nintendo thumb*,” “*Nintendo epilepsy*,” and “*text message injury*”.

Surprisingly, technological advances are also contributing to the strong development of the category of “Cybercrime” as substantially new targets of criminal attacks and opportunities to commit offences

emerge. The main “growth point” in this category is offences in the information sphere (“*computer crime*,” “*cybercrime*,” “*e-crime*”), including electronic fraud (“*cyberscam*,” “*e-scam*” “*an investment scammer*”), such as “*identity theft*”, the misappropriation of other people’s identification codes. Other novelties include “*carjacking*” and “*stalking*” (including “*cyberstalking*”).

The “growth point” in the conceptual sphere of ecology is connected with understanding the necessity of a careful attitude towards natural resources. One of the leading concepts here is “*recycling*”, which has become the basis for a specific group of neologisms (*recycled*, *recyclable*, *recycler*, *recyclability*), as well as “*zero emission*”, which is used to denote minimal impact on the environment. The quasi-prefix “*eco*” and its cognate “*bio*” have become one of the most ‘popular’ in modern English: ‘eco-prefix’ and ‘bio’ have become one of the most ‘popular’ in contemporary English. Besides, there can also be some reinterpretations of common phrases, such as “*keep cup*” while “*this little mermaid is doing her best to look after the environment*” (The Beast, August 2024, p.8), as well as some clichéd phrases used with allusion to the Bible and personification ‘*Mother Earth is cranky*’ the metaphor ‘dig time’ to describe the urgent environment issues: *It seems like every time we go away, there’s a flood, fire or some other kind of biblical-level-natural disaster. Crazy weather is becoming the new normal – Mother Earth is cranky, and she’s telling us to know it – big time*” (The Beast, December 2024, p. 36).

Special attention is given to classifying the occasional lexicon into thematic groups. After studying the sources in linguistics, we found that modern, occasional British English words are categorised into several thematic groups. We will consider only a portion of them. The most popular and actively developing groups are:

1. *Economy*. The birth of occasionalism in this sphere is because they contain a high degree of expressiveness due to rhetorical morphosyntactic mechanisms in their formal structure, which can be considered a discursive possibility of economic discourse. For example, “*The dream of home ownership – the great Australian dream – is quickly becoming a pipe dream. For younger generations. Without the backing of intergenerational wealth – or the “Bank of Mum and Dad” as it’s often called – it now takes an average of ten years to save for a 20 percent deposit*” (The Beast, November 2024, p. 40). In this textual fragment, the reference to the Great American Dream, which transforms into an unattainable aspiration, along with the term ‘*intergenerational wealth*’ – or the “*Bank of Mum and Dad*” – illustrates the property crisis in modern Australia.

2. *Advertising (in the sphere of tourism)*. Representatives of the advertising sphere are interested in creating occasionalism for several reasons: the desire

to briefly express the main idea, the need for precise expression of thought, and the desire to attract attention to what is written. Since tourist advertising is developing daily due to globalisation, the number of occasional words in this sphere is also growing.

3. *Politics*. The tendency to create and use certain novelties in politics has changed significantly in the spoken English of the XX and XXI centuries. There are over 100 political occasional words, but we will consider just a few.

According to B. N. Sánchez's typology (Sánchez, 2016), economic occasionalisms are divided into the following subtypes according to the mechanisms of their formation:

1. Personalised occasionalism: **'liar loan'** (loan without income verification): *Up to \$500 billion of mortgages on Australian banks' books are based on factually incorrect loan applications – or **liar loans** – and the problem appears to be getting worse despite recent crackdowns on lending standards, according to a report by UBS.* (Sánchez, 2016).

2. Paronomical occasionalism (phonetic wordplay between words with the same sounds and different meanings): **'mark to market'** (revaluation at market value): *Because of an accountancy practice called **"mark to market,"** requiring that assets be listed at their current values, this fact had to be reflected in the companies' balance sheets – so these balance sheets suddenly looked disastrous.* (Sánchez, 2016).

3. Metaphorical occasionalism (describing a word by the term of another because of the similarity between them): **'green shoots'** (signs of economic recovery): *Asked about what the **'green shoots'** were that Vadera was referring to, a Downing Street spokesman said, These are uncertain economic times, and there are pressures on jobs, businesses, and families...* (Sánchez, 2016).

4. Metonymic occasionalism (replacing the given name of an object with one of its qualities or function): **'Tequila crisis'** (referring to the Mexico crisis: in 1994, the devaluation of the Mexican peso caused the collapse of the other Latin American currencies and the financial crisis in the region): *Mexico's tequila crisis is an example of the dangers of borrowing to pay foreign exchange spending.* (Sánchez, 2016).

1. Borrowed occasionalism: **'ersatz capitalism' (pseudo-capitalism)**: *What we have been observing – wage stagnation and rising inequality, even as wealth increases – does not reflect the workings of a normal market economy, but of what I call ersatz capitalism.* (Sánchez, 2016).

2. Mixed occasionalism (combination of two or more lexemes from existing words): *Eurosclerosis (Europe+sclerosis): Most important was the end of major military action in Iraq. This peace dividend has now been priced back into the market. Still, economic*

*reforms in France and Germany have spurred hopes that the **eurosclerosis** which has beset the regions' economies for several years is coming to an end.* (Sánchez, 2016).

Occasionalisms in English tourist advertising are actively formed using the word formation models. For example: *Now it is **grey-cations**: take your grandparents along to have fun together!* (Liberty Travel, 2017). In the above example, we see the blending of the words "grey" and "vocation" to describe a holiday with different generations of the same family. In this case, the first syllable in the word "vocation" has been omitted.

*Watch his **travelogue** about a visit to Beijing and Shanghai which took place between the 27th of August and the 5th of September.* (Liberty Travel, 2017). As we can see from this example, the occasionalism 'travelogue' is used to name a travel documentary video by blending the words "travel" and "blog," where the first letter in the word "blog" is omitted.

Such occasional terms are often based on popular existing words that take on the opposite ironic meaning: *Your marriage is over – but not your friendship? Spend your time on a so-called **'divorce moon' in the Bahamas.*** (Liberty Travel, 2017). In the above example, we can observe the creation of a new phrase from the words "divorce" and "honeymoon," where the element "honey" is omitted, hence creating the antonymic "honeymoon" idiom.

So we can summarise that in English tourist advertising discourse, occasionalisms are used quite often, and the most frequent model of their formation, as was proved by the analysed language material, is blending or word compounding.

Another thematic group characterised by a high concentration of occasionalisms is politics within political discourse. We would like to highlight the speeches of former British Prime Minister David Cameron, particularly regarding the Scottish referendum. In these speeches, Cameron uses specific occasionalisms to convey his message.: *The Scottish government backs the creation of a new **Aberdeen-based** oil and gas regulator but strongly disputes that the combined might of the union is needed to sustain the industry.* (Carrell, 2014). When discussing the leaders of Great Britain, it is clear that their speeches are not filled with neologisms. The British tend to be conservative and prefer not to create new words that might confuse the public.

In contrast, in Australia, publicist discourse features vibrant occasionalisms and phrases used creatively with humour. For example, a red cap with Donald Trump's political motto, a bit transformed: **"Make Coogee Great Again"** on display in Coogee Bay Hotel's Ek'sentrik Cafe (The Beast, December 2024, p. 10). Additionally, the portrayal of Australians' attitudes toward politics is presented in a stylistically colourful and humorous

manner. "As for politics, Australians are a bit 'meh.' **US-style tribalism** has no place in our political persona. Provided that the two main parties keep spouting **the 'jobs and growth' mantra** and delivering low inflation and minimal interest rate levels, **we don't really care**. Property developers can continue **to destroy our living standards**, monopolies can have total control over our spending habits, and mining interests can decimate our eco-system, but **as far as the masses are concerned, it's same-old-same-old**" (*The Beast*, December 2024, p. 10). In this fragment, various political phenomena are described using occasional words and phrases along with stylistic devices, all summed up by the clichéd epithet 'same-old-same-old,' which characterises the current political situation.

Instead, the English language often expands through borrowing from other languages, which then become classified as neologisms. Influenced by extra-linguistic factors such as advancements in high technology, science, and medicine, the rise of multicultural tolerance, and increased environmental awareness, there is a widespread emergence of 'words-minutes' in high technology, cybercrime, family, and ecology. In addition, occasionalism appears in politics, economics, tourism advertising, and other popular social fields.

**Conclusion.** The research highlights the dynamic and ever-evolving nature of the English lexical system, continually enriched by the emergence of neologisms and occasionalisms. These new lexical units indicate the rapid social, multicultural, and technological changes that shape modern digital society. The research identifies

several key "points of growth" where neologisms are most prevalent, including science, technology, medicine, politics, economics, advertising, and fiction. These areas experience a surge in new terminology as they undergo rapid developments, the introduction of innovative concepts, and the need to name novel phenomena. Interestingly, the neologisation process also involves adapting existing lexical units to reflect the evolving understanding of concepts, particularly in family and relationships.

The analysis delves into the various linguistic mechanisms employed in forming these new lexical units, such as word compounding, borrowing from other languages, and using prefixes like "eco-" and "bio-." Together with the creative use of various stylistic devices, allusions, irony, and humour, these strategies enhance language's expressive capacity and effectively capture the zeitgeist of the times.

The prevalence of occasional words in specific discourse domains like economics, politics, and tourism advertising further underscores the language's responsiveness to societal needs. These temporary, context-specific lexical innovations often exhibit high expressiveness and creativity, conveying complex ideas or attracting attention concisely. The constant influx of neologisms and occasionalisms reflects the adaptability of the English language to keep pace with the rapid changes occurring in the social, technological, and multicultural realms. Moreover, lexical innovation is crucial for any language to maintain its relevance and effectively serve the communicative needs of its users.

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## ЛЕКСИЧНІ ІННОВАЦІЇ В АНГЛІЙСЬКІЙ МОВІ: ВІДПОВІДЬ НА ВИМОГИ ДИНАМІЧНОГО СУСПІЛЬСТВА

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Дослідження вивчає динамічну природу лексичних інновацій в англійській мові, зосереджуючись на виникненні та функціонуванні неологізмів та okazіоналізмів у різних соціальних сферах. У роботі розглядається, як нові лексичні одиниці виникають, розвиваються та інтегруються в мовну систему у відповідь на стрімкі соціальні, технологічні та культурні зміни. Дослідження визначає ключові "точки зростання" – сфери, де лексичні інновації є найбільш поширеними, включаючи науку, технології, медицину, політику, економіку, рекламу та художню літературу. Методологія передбачає аналіз лексичних інновацій з множинних перспектив: словотворення, соціолінгвістичного, психолінгвістичного, типологічного та когнітивно-лінгвістичного підходів. Дослідження виявляє, що мовна неологізація має нерівномірний характер, з підвищеною активністю у сферах, де соціальний, політичний, науковий та технічний розвиток створює нові концепти, що потребують лексичної репрезентації. Результати демонструють, що лексичні інновації виникають через різні механізми, включаючи словоскладання, запозичення з інших мов та використання спеціалізованих префіксів. Особливо примітним є розвиток нової термінології у таких галузях, як високі технології, кіберзлочинність, сімейні відносини та екологія. Дослідження підкреслює, як концептуальні зміни в суспільстві, такі як еволюція сімейних структур та технологічний прогрес, стимулюють створення нових лексичних одиниць. У дослідженні також розглядається роль okazіональних слів, або "слів-хвилинок", у конкретних доменах, таких як економіка, політика та туристична реклама. Ці контекстно-специфічні інновації часто демонструють високу експресивність та креативність, слугуючи для лаконічного передавання складних ідей або привернення уваги. Дослідження доходить висновку, що постійний приплив неологізмів та okazіоналізмів відображає адаптивність мови у підтримці її релевантності та задоволенні комунікативних потреб користувачів, одночасно надаючи уявлення про ширші соціальні та культурні трансформації.

**Ключові слова:** лексична інновація, неологізми, okazіоналізми, словотворення, лінгвістична адаптація, соціальні зміни.