

PERAET 2021**International Scientific Conference «PERISHABLE AND ETERNAL: Mythologies and Social Technologies of Digital Civilization-2021»****MOTIVATIONAL POTENTIAL OF OCCASIONALISMS FOR
NEWSPAPER READING**

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Natalya.Vodolazhchenko@novsu.ru**Abstract**

The article is devoted to identifying the potential of occasionalisms in creating motivation for reading the press among students studying English. Brevity, authenticity, and accessibility are named as the advantages of newspaper articles over texts of other styles in teaching a foreign language. Among the difficulties characterizing the texts of this style, specific vocabulary and grammatical constructions, as well as culture specific concepts, clichés, etc. are identified. Factors that have displaced conscious habit of regular reading of the press are the following: growing volume of information and pace of life, lack of time. As an incentive to create motivation for reading, we consider as the most efficient the use of the element of gamification and creating connection between positive emotional response in students and reading a newspaper. We presume another factor which provides massive opportunities in the field of education as it is and in working out a conscious habit of reading newspapers regularly is the availability of the Internet resources and total digitalization. The article describes the experiment devoted to the formation of interest in reading newspaper articles in students. As a result of the experiment, it was revealed that decoding of occasional vocabulary creates a certain game element in educational process and provides necessary positive emotional response and can be used to form students' motivation to read newspaper articles.

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1. Introduction

Reading is one of the most important ways to master a foreign language as it acts simultaneously in two qualities - as a goal and as a means of teaching. Kovaleva (2018) notes that “reading the press not only optimizes the achievement of practical and educational goals, but also helps to increase the level of motivation for mastering a foreign language” (p. 11). In the ranking of the 10 most effective ways to learn a foreign language, reading the press is second only to personal experience in the country of this language (Zaharov, 2013).

Newspaper articles have a number of advantages over other text sources. First, periodicals promptly react to events taking place in the world, containing the latest information which helps to broaden the reader's awareness. According to Voronova (2021), promoting the habit of reading newspapers regularly contributes to personality development, improves critical thinking and information selection skills.

Speaking about the benefits of newspaper reading for language learning it is worth mentioning that newspapers offer articles on a wide variety of topics allowing readers to increase vocabulary in different spheres. Textbook texts are limited to the topic and are not updated for several years. According to Babadzhan (2009), “no textbook is capable of providing such an increase in vocabulary” (p. 43). Secondly, it is obvious that popular teaching practices are certain to include authentic contexts. Newspaper articles are usually written by native speakers. This makes them a reliable source of authentic texts written in a modern language, so reading these texts subconsciously teaches to write properly. In addition, newspaper publications are rather short texts, read in one go without losing interest. Another important advantage of periodicals is their availability as publications are generally posted on the Internet. It seems that in conditions of total digitalization and partial transition to a remote mode of work and training, this factor will play an important role in actively attracting periodicals and Internet resources to the needs of the educational process. Melikov and Skorodumova (2021) underline the fact that what a modern specialist is expected to master is the skill of searching for something new for which the Internet is the paramount facilitator. They also put emphasis on the dominant role of self-education which as we see it goes in line with reading newspapers and using electronic resources. T. Bruns (2020) highlights the role of mass media in forming occasionalisms and points out that the Internet enhances the potential of press publications being not only a medium of information but a generator of new words. Korovina et al. (2018) confirm that the use of Internet technologies for educational purposes can develop cognitive abilities, improve language and problem-solving skills, creating a favorable learning atmosphere. Semenovskikh et al. (2021) also point out that educational process based on problem-solving activity raises motivation in students. Motivation is the crucial ingredient of successful second language learning (Lamb, 2017). Inspired by the possibilities of digitalization in the field of education Vasiliev et al. (2014) introduce the notion of “a blended learning” which implies a combination of traditional classroom education and the use of electronic educational resources. This educational approach is to a great extent founded on independent practical activity of students. Shlyapina (2016) approves of this integration of different methods of education and points out another benefit of “blended learning” which doesn't only

encourage students to work by themselves but also assists in tailoring learning for each student's needs and pace.

2. Problem Statement

Despite the listed advantages of periodicals, accustoming to regular reading always offers certain difficulty. One of the problems is that the habit of reading is no longer as popular and wide-spread as it used to be, having been supplanted by such realities of modern life as an ever-increasing pace, large amounts of information, changes that require great flexibility of consciousness and adaptation, and, of course, more leisure opportunities than ever before. Another problem is that the newspaper style differs significantly from both educational and fictional texts. Newspaper language is saturated with political vocabulary, realities, and clichés, it employs specific grammatical constructions. In addition, newspaper texts are varied by topic which requires mobilization of vocabulary from different spheres of life.

Another difficulty is that reading requires self-reliance, consciousness and awareness from a student. The Internet has made the press accessible; however, the majority of students do not manifest deep interest in reading periodicals. Thus, the teacher's task is to kindle students' interest. Any creative and cognitive activity needs interest and involvement. Motivation is necessary to generate interest in a task or a lesson. High scores, respect of teachers and fellow students is not an absolute driving force. Along with motivation Vrabcová et al. (2019) consider critical thinking, culture oriented learning and intercultural sensitivity as the most relevant competences necessary for foreign language learning. Galinha and Ricardo (2018) see motivation as a path to higher academic success while linking interest to greater satisfaction from the learning process. Positive emotional background is also believed to affect motivation and result in higher effectiveness. Pedditzi and Spigno (2018) relate positive emotions with the feeling of self-efficacy which builds interest to the task and motivation to work. Students need to be given the opportunity to realize a positive emotional attitude while working with the text and connect it with the process of reading a newspaper article, while focusing on the satisfaction they receive from the achieved result.

The use of newspapers in the process of learning foreign languages has been the subject of intensive research. A variety of methodological approaches and exercises are offered focusing on mediatexts. We, in turn, aim to consider how useful such lexical units as occasionalisms can be in learning a language and instilling an interest in reading.

3. Research Questions

- Do you read English newspapers on-line or otherwise?
- What helped understand the meaning of the occasionalisms which were not obvious at first glance?
- What ways of occasionalisms formation have you come across?
- Does the occasionalism deciphering make reading the press more interesting?

4. Purpose of the Study

The main goal of this study is to find ways to motivate students to read newspapers as one of the methods of mastering a foreign language. When setting this goal, we were guided by consideration that newspaper publications are not just one of the accessible ways to obtain information, but also provide students with authentic texts on the wide range of themes. 80% of the students who took part in the experiment confirmed that they are not in the habit of reading newspapers. Due to this fact one of the objectives is to study the potential of such a layer of lexis as occasionalisms in attracting student's attention to reading media texts.

5. Research Methods

For this study, we selected articles from the Daily Mail containing occasional words. Students were given the task to familiarize themselves with these articles through browsing and search reading. They had to find occasionalisms and try to understand their meaning without reading the whole of the article. Then, in case the meaning of the lexical unit was not clear, the students were supposed to read the article carefully in order to define the meaning and identify the way of occasionalism formation. In case the occasionalism actualized a certain reality, they had to find out which particular reality was involved. To do this, students might need various Internet reference sites. A questionnaire was also compiled to find out whether the students read newspapers in English and whether tasks with gamification elements can stimulate them to read the press.

6. Findings

Russian and foreign linguists and teachers have repeatedly turned to newspapers as a means of mastering a foreign language. As a result of a thorough study of newspaper texts' teaching potential various exercises were developed which aimed at improving all types of reading (skimming, scanning, search for detail) which differ in the purpose of using the text. The exercises aim at mastering various skills when working with text, but they do not form a conscientious habit that can gradually develop into a need to read newspapers.

We believe that in order to develop the habit of reading newspapers regularly, it is necessary to use activities characteristic of students' age and interests, i.e. their curiosity and love for games. Besides, contemporary mediatexts should encourage and reinforce patterns of language use (Jones, 2021). The results showed that gamification improved significantly all aspects of student engagement (behavioral, emotional and cognitive). Young people willingly participate in quests, quizzes, solving riddles, so some educational activities can be based on this inclination. We see rich opportunities in using such a phenomenon as occasional lexis.

Occasionalism (from Lat. occasionalis - accidental) is an individual author's neologism created according to the existing word-formation models and used exclusively in the given context, as a lexical means of artistic expression or language play (Rosental & Telenkova, 1976). The emergence of new occasionalisms is an ongoing process and provides an inexhaustible source for study and decoding, since

such words are rarely recorded in dictionaries, not only because of their novelty, but also due to their short life nature, as they quickly lose their relevance. Budagov (2012) explains their emergence:

by the contradiction between its capabilities in each historical era and the growing desire of people to express their thoughts and feelings more adequately, stylistically more diverse and logically more accurate. The press always strives to achieve the maximum expressive and perlucative effect, as a result of which it fully activates the possibilities of the language, including word-formation ones. (p. 17)

We consider this factor potentially useful in creating an element of a game when working with occasionalisms and forming motivation for reading the press.

The articles selected for the experiment contained occasionalisms mostly in the headings, which function is to advertise. With the help of a catchy headline, an author seeks to attract attention, arouse curiosity, and provoke desire to read the article. Occasionalisms in headlines attract attention by their unusual nature and bright emotional coloring.

In the offered articles, the authors used various methods of creating occasionalisms. On the one hand, this formation diversity was to demonstrate the possibilities of word creation, whereas, on the other hand, to complicate the students' task when looking for a way to decode a new word. So, the following ways of forming occasionalisms were found: compounding, i.e. addition of two conventional units (remain + maniac = remainiac, woman + manifesto = womanifesto), inter-word overlap, when the end of one word is the beginning of the next (scanxiety, trashion), abbreviation (BeBa), creating an acronym (GOAT), affixation (inshedible, pre- polluted), conversion (when a proper noun is used as a verb - Harvey Weinstein), homonymy based on homophones (bluemin ', beeliever, mane / main), paronymy (brex-down, holi-dye).

The study was conducted among juniors and seniors majoring in Linguistics. They were offered 60 articles from the Daily Mail. Its materials are not overloaded with complex specific vocabulary or complicated grammatical constructions. Since the students specialized in translation techniques, their main task was to translate all the occasionalisms. Some of them were easily deciphered; others required reading the entire article to understand the meaning. At this stage our goal was to awaken students' interest and lead them to make their own choice in favor of reading. The students were also asked a number of questions to make them reflect on the process and stimulate awareness in their approach to work.

When asked if they read the press in English, 55% of all students answered negatively, 25% of the students answered affirmatively. 20% of students replied they barely read the English press, only if required. So, in fact, 75% of the participants had no habit of reading foreign newspapers systematically.

When questioned if they were able to decipher the meaning of occasionalisms without reading an article or searching the Internet, 100% of students answered that they failed to complete the task. In part, the interpretation of the new vocabulary units caused difficulties due to the authors' word play. Besides, the students were not familiar with the events of cultural, social and political life abroad which also made it hard to understand the new words. Therefore, when asked what helped to decipher the meanings of occasionalisms, 75% of students answered that they had to look through the article, and, in addition, turn

to Internet resources for explanations of the realities. Only 25% of students were able to understand the meanings of new words basing on how they were created. Almost all the students succeeded in identifying the exact ways occasionalisms were formed in. Compounding, affixation and paronymy were named as the prevailing ones.

The students were offered to find an adequate way of translating occasional vocabulary. They did the task at home, later presenting their works in class. This stage took place in a positive atmosphere of collective creativity and involvement. All students took active part in the discussion of the proposed translation options. They found this task challenging. The most accessible way of translation was description, in which the word play, emotions and the humorous effect were lost. Nevertheless, attempts were made to preserve the unusual nature of such vocabulary in Russian translation, for which such methods of creating new words as affixation, composition, onomatopoeia, and replacement were used. The students employed creativity when minting their own new words to translate the occasionalisms; they managed to offer some adequate translation options maintaining the humor and the implied meaning.

As a result, when asked whether reading newspapers would now be more attractive, only 12% of the participants answered negatively, while the remaining 88% agreed without hesitation that deciphering occasionalisms turned out to be an interesting language skills training, and the search for the suitable variants of occasionalisms translation has become an exciting process. The students admitted that this type of work requires more effort, imagination, creativity, carries a certain gamification element and is not only a learning process, but also, to a large extent, entertainment.

7. Conclusion

A study of the potential of occasionalisms in building motivation for reading newspapers in English among students was conducted. As these lexical units have no dictionary definitions, deciphering their meanings involves the participants in a kind of an educational game. Understanding the meaning of occasionalisms is greatly facilitated by the fact that they are built according to word-formation models already existing in the language; at the same time, these new words often create a play upon words, which presents certain interest for decoding. It is this quality of occasionalisms that can be used to attract students to work with newspaper articles, and the search for options for an adequate translation of occasional words into Russian allows one to demonstrate one's creativity. The results of the survey showed that occasionalisms are potentially fruitful material for creating motivation in students to regularly read the press.

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