

# PRECEDENT PHENOMENA: STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONS

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## Abstract

The article discusses the issue of defining and classifying precedent phenomena from the standpoint of an integrated approach. On the basis of the analysis, the definition and main and additional features of precedent phenomena are given, as well as the hierarchy of precedent phenomena is built.

**Keywords:** precedent phenomena, signs of precedent phenomena, hierarchy of precedent phenomena, linguistic personality, theory of precedent.

## Introduction

In recent years, linguistics has developed several main approaches to the study of precedent phenomena. One of them combines the provisions of the theory of linguistic personality and cognitive linguistics. Another approach is based on the achievements of a young branch of linguistics – linguoculturology. Finally, the third considers precedent phenomena from the standpoint of the theory of intertextuality. Despite the fact that such a large number of scientists devote their works to the study of precedent phenomena, it is not yet possible to say with confidence that this phenomenon has been comprehensively studied.

According to Y. N. Karaulov, precedent texts have such main distinguishing features as textbook and reinterpretability. Explaining the concept of the textbook nature of precedent texts, the scientist makes a justified, in our opinion, assumption that the acquaintance of a linguistic person with precedent texts occurs in the process of learning at school and in the process of socialization, since "even if they [precedent texts] are not included in the curriculum of a general education school, even if they have not been studied there, all speakers still know about them in one way or another, – having read them yourself or at least by hearsay" [1]. In this regard, it is necessary to emphasize the importance of awareness of native speakers about precedent texts, since "knowledge of precedent texts is an indicator of belonging to a given era and its culture, while ignorance, on the contrary, is a prerequisite for rejection from the corresponding culture" [1]. However, Y. N. Karaulov also notes the temporal inconstancy of precedent texts. He believes that over time, their basis changes: some precedent texts become outdated, they are replaced by new ones. Y. N. Karaulov also describes another aspect. Discussing the ways of existence of precedent texts, the scientist emphasizes that precedent texts are characterized by a semiotic mode of existence, in which "an appeal to the original text is given by a hint, a reference, a sign, and thus the process of communication includes either the entire text or individual fragments correlated with the situation of communication or a



larger life event; In this case, the entire text or a significant fragment of it acts as an integral unit of designation.

Thus, for Y. N. Karaulov, the main features of precedent texts are:

- 1) significance in the emotional and cognitive aspect;
- 2) textbook (a wide sphere of existence, common knowledge);
- 3) repeated renewability (repeatability);
- 4) reinterpretability (the ability to be embodied in other forms of art, in addition to verbal);
- 5) chronotopic marking (precedent texts belong to a certain era and culture);
- 6) semiotic mode of existence.

The listed features make it possible to quite clearly distinguish precedent texts from texts of other kinds, and they also describe some features of the functioning of precedent texts in the discourse of a linguistic personality. However, not only texts can have a precedent character.

According to D. B. Gudkov, V. V. Krasnykh, I. V. Zakharenko and D. V. Bagaeva, who have made a great contribution to the development of the theory of precedent, there is a number of linguistic phenomena that have a precedential character. Here are the phenomena that scientists define as precedential:

- 1) well known to all representatives of the national-linguo-cultural community (having a superpersonal character);
- 2) relevant in cognitive (cognitive and emotional) terms;
- 3) appeals, which are constantly used in the speech of representatives of a particular national-linguistic and cultural community.

When analyzing the features of the use of precedent phenomena in literary texts, scientists pay special attention to the functions that they perform. For example, the function of evaluation is manifested in the texts of modern fiction especially vividly, and D. B. Gudkov notes that the evaluation expressed with the help of precedent phenomena does not claim to be objective, it is emphatically emotive and subjective. Thus, using a precedent name in the text, the author not only refers the recipient to the precedent situation associated with this name on the basis of an associative connection, but also shows his attitude to a certain act, and also, due to speech economy, conveys the main idea to the reader with the help of a smaller number of language units.

Summarizing the sources we have studied, we will single out the following functions of precedent phenomena:

1. Evaluation function;
2. modeling function;
3. pragmatic function;
4. Password function;
5. aesthetic function;
6. Euphemistic function.

Let's consider them in more detail:



1. **Evaluation function.** Precedent names are an important means of emotional evaluation, they do not pretend to logical completeness, to precise formulation, but clearly express the subjective attitude of the author.

2. **Modeling function.** This is the function of forming ideas about the world in the form of a model. Often this function in the text is performed by precedent names and precedent situations.

3. **Pragmatic function.** This is the function of influencing the addressee. Precedent phenomena set a certain system of values and anti-values, which to one degree or another regulates the behavior of representatives of the linguocultural community, uniting "friends" and opposing them to "them".

4. **Password function.** Precedent phenomena used in speech often serve to reveal the commonality of the mental and verbal base of the author and the reader. The reader, responding to the password named by the author, becomes as if "his own", "initiated". Thus, the reader and the author form a group of like-minded people who understand each other and separate themselves from the "uninitiated".

5. **Aesthetic function.** It is due to the fact that precedent phenomena are perceived as a way of aesthetic assessment of the world, attract attention by an unusual form of expression.

6. **The Lyudic Function.** The use of precedent phenomena often has the character of a kind of language game: the author asks a riddle, and the reader searches for an answer to it. A language game helps to draw attention to the form of the text, making it less formal.

7. **Euphemistic function.** The use of precedent phenomena sometimes helps to soften the statement, make it less harsh, less specific, and also express the necessary information in a non-aggressive form.

Many of these functions are based on the *evaluative nature and contradiction* of the direct and figurative meanings of the words that are part of the transformed precedent text. The noted precedent phenomena reflect the rethinking of eternal values, authorities, standards by mass culture for the sake of momentary meanings. the superficiality of understanding the former and the lack of depth of the latter.

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