

PRECEDENT PHENOMENA: GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

У статті надано загальну характеристику прецедентним феноменам.

Ключові слова: прецедент, прецедентність, прецедентний феномен, комунікативні прецеденти.

The article presents the general characteristics of precedent phenomena.

Key words: precedent, the precedent, precedent phenomena, communicative precedents.

The theory of the precedence appeared within the theory of intertextuality and covers verbal signs-markers of intertextual interaction and “interweaves” another text into the literary and cultural context.

The precedence is a property of linguistic phenomena, such as a precedent text, a precedent situation, a precedent name, a precedent utterance. The precedent has the character of reference and is generated through the cultural fund of world or national history.

Traditionally, the concept of “precedent” appeared in the field of jurisprudence and was interpreted as a controversy “occurred – has not occurred”. Currently, this term is actively introduced into the cultural and linguistic space, where it is understood as a phenomenon of the primary sample, which is presented for evaluation and comparison for further use to create any secondary phenomenon on the model of the primary.

In this sense, “precedent” is a certain unified image-associative complex, which is important for a particular society and is regularly activated in the speech of the representatives of such a society. It is structured not only by a way of referring to “previous” experience / knowledge, but also by a way of actual acquisition by the recipient of a new, unknown, but original, non-standard representation of a certain essence, phenomenon, fact or event.

Using general scientific methods of synthesis and analysis, we specify that according to D. Gudkov precedents function in the form of exemplary mental, linguistic and speech facts, which serve as a model for the reproduction of similar facts, i.e. they are characterized by imperativeness [2, p. 15]. Imperativeness is understood as the correlation of precedent with other linguistic factors.

The emergence of the linguistic theory of the precedence dates back to the second half of the XXth century. In the scientific achievements of Yu. Prokhorov, Yu. Karaulov, Yu. Sorokin, V. Kostomarov etc. we find the interpretation of the concepts “precedent text”, “precedent statement”, “text reminiscence”, “precedent text reminiscence”. According to the works of V. Krasnych, the precedent include events, phenomena, objects, names, statements: 1) well-known to all members of the national linguistic and cultural community; 2) relevant in cognitive (cognitive and emotional) terms; 3) appeals to which are constantly updated in the language of representatives of the national linguistic and cultural community [3, p. 170].

Among the precedents in the broad sense of the term, scientists distinguish a group of precedents, which appear as precedent phenomena, the so-called “communicative precedents”. The precedent phenomenon is understood as a mental epistemological prototype, which can be considered a model and which helps to solve the communicative problems facing communicators. A.A. Berestova sees in the precedent phenomenon “the nuclear element of the cognitive base of a certain linguistic and cultural community, which has the ability to store information about exemplary facts in a concise form and acts as a model for reproducing such facts, represented and constantly updated in speech, known to all members of this linguistic and cultural community content” [1, p. 4].

Among the main properties of precedent phenomena, we can point out: invariance; axiological marking; reproducibility; cliché; reference.

I. Zakharenko connects the reference of the precedent phenomenon with the so-called “measure” for a certain phenomenon of reality, because native speakers can refer to the collective memory, find there certain names, situations, texts that are similar to the phenomena of reality and, accordingly, can describe them. This thesis is closely correlated with the concept of stereotypes of speech behavior, the tendency of man not to invent something new, but to use ready-made inversions and clichés.

As for the value component of precedent phenomena, it determines the fixation (although for a short time) of precedents in the discourse of native speakers and stimulates their use in speech, although the value component is a relative value, because over time the composition of precedents changes. Based on this, and agreeing with the opinion of R. Nazarova and M. Zolotarev, we believe that precedents, on the one hand, play the role of some “cultural bonds” that bind separate cultural strata and historical epochs into one system. On the other hand, they only reflect the values of reality, personal and social relations, moral priorities, which are characteristic of a particular socio-historical stage and specific to a particular linguistic and cultural community [4]. Axiological labeling, which is expressed in the fixation of a precedent phenomenon of a certain assessment on a scale of “good-bad”, is closely related to the reference: precedent phenomena are certain exemplary examples of characteristics and actions and dictate models of what should or should not be done.

This property of precedent phenomena allows us to conclude that they appear as units of discourse of the linguistic personality, and not as units of the linguistic system as a whole. In this case, precedents are characterized by a rather unstable semantics: for example, the precedent name in different contexts can actualize both the internal qualities of the “precedent personality” and its external attributes [5, p. 274].

R. Nazarova and M. Zolotarev, having built a hierarchy of precedent phenomena, note four layers, which, respectively, include: precedent phenomena, well known in a certain linguistic and cultural community; precedent phenomena known to a large social group (the criterion of such large social groups may be gender, age, social status, profession, religious preferences); precedent phenomena of small social groups (family, work team, company of friends, etc.); individual precedent phenomena that reflect the linguistic consciousness of an individual linguistic personality, its interests and outlook [4, p. 21].

The appearance of precedent phenomena occurs at the individual level (for example, in the case of creating texts that may receive precedent status in the future) or at the level of small groups (in the case of various historical events and situations). Gaining wide popularity, these precedent phenomena have the opportunity to take root in the minds of a large group of people and get the status of national, cultural or civilizational (depending on the breadth of distribution). The stability of the fixedness of precedent phenomena is influenced by many factors, but a value component occupies the dominant place: if the precedent phenomenon reflects a certain phenomenon or fact of reality, which is relevant and valuable for this linguistic and cultural community, it can be long established in the collective memory of native speakers.

Thus, the precedence is a multifaceted concept that requires the generalization of issues that are covered in a number of scientific works of domestic and foreign scientists. The study of precedent phenomena, which are traditionally represented in linguistics by precedent text, precedent utterance, precedent name and precedent situation, shows that they may have different ways of existence, status, form of presentation, their axiological potential; this series of issues is covered in the scientific circles of modern linguistics.

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