



## INTERPRETATION OF THE CONCEPT OF "PRECEDENT" IN MODERN LINGUISTICS

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**Abstract:** In this article, we consider the interpretation of the concept of "precedent" in the modern Russian language, provides an overview of scientific works covering various aspects of precedent units, describes and characterizes thematic groups of precedent phenomena.

**Keywords:** precedent text, precedent statement, precedent name, precedent situation.

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According to the researchers, when studying *precedent*, it should be borne in mind that in modern linguistics it is not considered a phenomenon of a purely cognitive nature, and therefore its study cannot currently be called one of the fundamental areas of cognitive science. Nevertheless, if we take into account the current trend towards the expansion of interdisciplinary connections in linguistics, one can see the theory of precedent as one of the components of the cognitive-pragmatic paradigm. At the same time, The linguoculturological, ethnopsycholinguistic and textual aspects of precedent should not be ignored. In order to answer the question about the place of the theory of precedent in the structure of modern cognitive linguistics, it is important to know the directions of the latter's development. Z. D. Popova and I. A. Sternin distinguish five main areas of cognitive science: culturological, linguoculturological, logical, semantic-cognitive, and philosophical-semiotic. In almost each of these directions, the basic unit is considered *to be the concept*, which the authors understand as "mental education, which is the basic unit of a person's mental code." However, it should be noted that the concept is not the ultimate object of linguocognitive science. According to the researchers, within the framework of the general cognitive approach, it is important to distinguish between conceptual and cognitive analysis, and if the former establishes a system of features inherent in linguistic The second aims to establish the specific structures of knowledge behind it. According to linguists, it is conceptual analysis that is the main one in the study of precedent, since the study of this phenomenon is carried out at the intersection of linguoculturological, logical and semantic-cognitive directions. At the same time, according to V. V. Krasnykh, the study of precedent in linguistics should be carried out within the framework of the linguo-cognitive approach. It involves the analysis of both the speech and cognitive aspects of the communication process, and also allows us to study the structures that reflect the main features of the so-called "mental-lingual complex" of the linguocultural community. Such structures are precedent phenomena, which are units of the implementation of precedent relations.

It should be emphasized that *precedent phenomena, according to V. V. Krasnykh, are "the main components of the national cognitive base – a set of knowledge and ideas possessed by representatives of a particular national, linguistic, and cultural community."* There is no doubt



that the phenomenon of precedent is of a cognitive nature. However, if the beginning of the active development of the cognitive paradigm in linguistics was in the last decades of the 20th century, the consideration of the issue of "repetition" from the point of view of the interaction of texts has a deeper history. Researchers of the "textual" side of this issue believe that any verbal text is not so much a new structure as a system of modified quotations borrowed from previous communicative experience. In particular, back in the 1920s, M. M. Bakhtin developed the idea of "someone else's word", saying that "a text lives only in contact with another text", that the author of a text is in constant dialogue with already created texts, which are potentially known to its addressee. On the basis of his ideas, the concept of intertextuality was formed, developed by Y. Kristeva, who believes that "a text is built as a mosaic of quotations", that it is "a product of absorption and transformation of some other text". B. M. Gasparov, who has a similar point of view, understands the interaction of texts as follows: "All our linguistic activity, both the speech we create and the speech we perceive, is permeated with blocks of quotations from previous linguistic experience." B. M. Gasparov's theory was one of the first in Russian linguistics to directly touch upon the cognitive side of the repetition of linguistic means in different texts. However, even earlier, Y. N. Karaulov began to develop a conceptual apparatus that is used today to consider precedent. In developing the concept of linguistic personality, he touched upon the topic of precedent texts, meaning by them "texts that (1) are cognitively and emotionally significant for a particular person, (2) have a suprapersonal character, i.e., are well known to the wide environment of this person, including his predecessors and contemporaries, and, finally, those (3) which are repeatedly referred to in the discourse of a given linguistic personality." Later, such researchers as V. V. Krasnykh and D. B. Gudkov began to develop the theory of precedent within the framework of ethnopsycholinguistics and linguoculturology, transferring the development of this theory from a purely textual to a cognitive channel.

The theory under consideration received a certain basis that separated it from the doctrine of intertextuality: the precedent text lost its fundamental role and stood on a par with such units of precedent as *a precedent name, statement and situation*. The very distinction between a precedent name as a concept with a set of certain features behind it, and a situation as a concept describing a set of stereotyped or, conversely, unique actions, having some symbolic meaning for a native speaker, represents a turn towards a conceptual analysis of the structures used in speech. At the same time, the generic concept for the listed units at the present stage of the development of the theory is the concept of a precedent phenomenon.

A precedent phenomenon is a system consisting of cognitive structures, based on precedent both at the level of consciousness and directly linguistically, and built on the fact that the precedent has a certain importance for the author and can potentially be recognized by the recipient.

It should be noted that, although, as mentioned above, the study of precedent is not yet recognized as one of the main areas of cognitive linguistics, it is possible to single out aspects of cognitive research that are in one way or another related to the field of study of the theory of precedent. For example, among the theories that could theoretically be considered part of the linguo-cognitive approach, within the framework of which precedent phenomena are considered, we can single out the theory of conceptual metaphor, developed by J. S. Smith. Lakoff and M. Johnson. According to the authors, metaphor is not only a rhetorical device, but also the most largely metaphorical process of thinking. In other words, metaphor in cognitive terms is the interaction of the so-called source sphere and the target sphere: the result of



metaphorical projection is that the conceptual elements of the first sphere, based on the experience of interaction with the surrounding world, pass into less cognitively ambiguous elements, which, in turn, form the second sphere. At the same time, D. B. Gudkov says that it is not the cultural phenomena themselves that are stored in a person's memory, but the ideas about them that exist in consciousness. These ideas form the cultural space as a form of cultural existence in human consciousness. Cultural space is nationally determined, since elements occupy a special position in a particular cultural space. At the same time, the consciousness of an individual communicant has its own system of knowledge and ideas, the structure of which can differ markedly from the structure of the cultural space. It can be called an individual cognitive space. A part of the knowledge and ideas that form an individual cognitive space may be inherent in a number of people connected by a common profession, religion, age, etc. This common and not necessarily nationally determined set of ideas can be defined as a collective cognitive space. If the cultural space is a kind of reflection of culture in the consciousness of a person, then the concept of the cognitive base is broader, which can be characterized as "a certain structured body of knowledge and ideas possessed by almost all members of a particular linguistic and cultural community." To show the relationship between the concepts of the cognitive base and the precedent phenomenon, we can cite the words of V. V. Krasnykh that the basis is formed by cognitive structures, which are a kind of "building material". Precedent phenomena, in turn, are elements of the cognitive base, give it a particular configuration, and are stored in it in the form of aggregates of cognitive structures. In this way, cognitive structures simultaneously form two more complex structures of different orders: the cognitive base and the precedent phenomenon. However, it should be clarified that the cognitive base does not include specific representations of precedent phenomena that would reflect the full range of characteristics of the precedent, but invariants of existing and possible representations. In the terminology of V. V. Krasnykh, in order to be included in the cognitive base, precedent phenomena must receive a perceptual invariant. D. B. Gudkov, in turn, calls such invariants nationally determined minimized representations. From this we can conclude that precedent phenomena as such are not components of the national cognitive base. The cognitive base is formed by invariants (or nationally determined minimized representations). It should also be noted that an individual's cognitive space should include both the invariant stored in the cognitive base and the person's own representation, which may differ markedly from each other. Thus, precedent phenomena as constructs do not exist either in reality or in human consciousness. They are structures that can potentially be "unfolded" from the condensed representations stored in human memory, without being units that fully reflect real phenomena. As already mentioned, the cognitive base contains invariants of precedent phenomena, which, stored in human consciousness in the form of intertwined cognitive structures, can be verbalized in the course of communication. Thus, it can be argued that even during the creative process of generating a text, the use of a precedent phenomenon (i.e., its verbalization) is not in itself creative. This is explained by the fact that in memory the structures that make up this phenomenon are stored in a state that is already ready to be reproduced in speech. A communicant can modify the verbalized version of these structures of modern science and education, but not completely, since the main criterion of precedent is the recognizability of the source of precedent. In this regard, the words of V. V. Krasnykh are indicative that the complex of cognitive structures behind the precedent phenomenon is represented by linguistic (knowledge of verbal form) and phenomenological (knowledge of a phenomenon or situation)



structures. Accordingly, both types of structures are inherent in the precedent name and the statement, while the precedent situation and the text are characterized by phenomenological structures. However, in all cases, linguistic structures are involved in the actualization of the precedent phenomenon. It is obvious that the systematization of phenomenological structures is not the same in different linguistic and cultural communities. Some phenomena that are precedential for one community do not become part of the cognitive base at all for another. In this regard, we can talk about the existence of a certain nationally determined algorithm that predetermines which elements become part of the cognitive base, and which are evaluated as insignificant.

Thus, it can be concluded that the theory of precedent has the right to be considered one of the possible directions of research within the framework of cognitive science, despite the fact that this theory is not always recognized as part of the modern cognitive linguistic paradigm, which is probably due to the need for an interdisciplinary, and not only cognitive, approach to the study of the problem of precedent. It can also be concluded that within the framework of already existing directions in cognitive science, for example, the theory of reference or metaphor, it is not possible to study the concept of precedent: it is necessary to study this issue separately, within the framework of a broader linguocognitive approach using conceptual analysis. This approach includes linguocultural theory, in the context of which precedent has already been studied and continues to be studied.

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