

RUSSIAN CLASSICAL LITERATURE TEXT AS A PRECEDENT PHENOMENON OF THE MODERN MEDIA SPACE

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ABSTRACT

The article is devoted to the functioning features of precedent texts in modern media discourse.

Texts by F.M. Dostoevsky, namely, fiction, journalism and epistolary heritage, served as the research material.

The relevance of the study is explained by the intertextual nature of the modern media space.

The article shows that along with the use of Dostoevsky's precedent texts as signs of high culture, the modern media space also actively manifests the features of the postmodern cultural paradigm. The specifics of the latter include metatextuality, irony, various kinds of transformation, e.g., in headlines, which indicates their game foregrounding.

Special attention is paid, firstly, to various types of intertextuality and ways of precedent phenomena foregrounding; secondly, to their use in various media areas (advertising, urban naming) and genres (interviews, internet blogs, etc.).

The problem of recoding precedent phenomena is considered against the background of the use of signs of high culture as a form of reflection of modern mass consciousness in modern media communication, which is of research interest from an axiological point of view.

Keywords: *precedent phenomenon; media space; F.M. Dostoevsky; transformation; postmodern paradigm*

INTRODUCTION

PROBLEM STATEMENT

The modern media space is intertextual, which is an important characteristic of the culture of postmodernism. Since Russian culture is traditionally considered to be literature-centric, the study of media discourse which uses precedent

phenomena appealing to texts of Russian classical literature seems to be a **topical** task of modern linguistics. Works of classical literature are in demand and are cited, because they touch upon eternal topics that have concerned people at all times [2]. The most cited authors include A.S. Pushkin, N.V. Gogol, L.N. Tolstoy, A.P. Chekhov, F.M. Dostoevsky – the writers who define the world level of Russian literature.

In addition, the relevance of this study is determined by the fact that the precedent phenomena of Russian classical literature are considered in different media genres as a *socio-cultural phenomenon*, which determines its significance from the point of view of cultural linguistics, sociolinguistics and intercultural communication.

The **object** of the analysis is such a kind of precedence as precedent statements in works by F.M. Dostoevsky which are considered in the media heading - the strong position of the text. The study also analyzes the features of their functioning in modern media discourse.

The **aim** of the study is to show that precedent statements function as cultural signs that perform a certain socio-cultural function in the modern media space. This aim defines tasks such as characterizing the significance of precedent phenomena in terms of intertextuality and describing the main precedent models (including transforms) in the heading part of the text.

MATERIAL

The material of the study was composed of media texts of various genres and with different socio-political connotation published in the Russian editions *Izvestia, Kommersant, Novaya Gazeta, Rossiyskaya Gazeta, Nezavisimaya Gazeta, Pravoslavie.fm, Ekho Moskvy, Vzglyad*.

METHODS

The article uses a complex of research methods, including both general research methods of observation, generalization and comparison, and special methods of continuous sampling, contextual analysis, interpretive analysis, linguistic and cultural commenting.

DISCUSSION

INTERTEXTUALITY AND PRECEDENT PHENOMENA

In this article, precedent phenomena refer to integral units of communication verbalized through appeals to the past phenomenon of reality. They possess a

value-based significance in a certain linguistic community, are well known in a given society and constantly used in acts of communication [6].

Being a distinctive feature of modern postmodern consciousness and media space, intertextuality makes it possible to consider precedent phenomena as units that connect the sphere of classical literature and the social and political sphere by means of culturally significant information [1]. In addition, appeals of the media space to recognizable precedent statements from works of Russian classical literature are a means of enhancing the expressiveness, emotionality and axiologiness of the media text [9].

Scholars traditionally single out such precedent phenomena as precedent texts, precedent situations, precedent names and precedent statements [5]. Precedent statements as a kind of precedent phenomena represent a foregrounded sentence stored in the memory of native speakers in a ready-made form and referring to a precedent text or a precedent situation. The prevalence of precedent statements in the media space is explained by the fact that this type of precedent units reflects the specificity of media discourse with its "alternation of standard and expression" to the greatest extent (V.G. Kostomarov).

Precedent statements reach a high degree of foregrounding in the position of the heading, where they are aimed at analyzing and evaluating various phenomena of reality that are discussed in the work (informative function), or simply at attracting the reader's attention. However, they can be the result of literal reproduction (direct citing) or undergo transformation. As a rule, transformation performs an attractive function, enhancing the expression of the heading.

The analysis showed that modern media headings most often feature transformed statements, which can be explained precisely by their ability to express an evaluation, explicitly or implicitly. It is worth noting that such transforms influence the perception of both the entire publication and its individual fragments precisely because they relate to the semantic, structural, or aesthetic organization of the text.

The heading element of the publication is characterized by the destruction of the canonical meanings of precedent statements: *Тварь я дрожащая, или сбегать за хлебом?* /Tvar' ya drozhashchaya, ili sbegat' za khlebom/ 'Am I a trembling creature, or **shall I run for some bread?**' [https://twitter.com/soviet_flag/status/1249971249557757952].

The phrase *Тварь ли я дрожащая или право имею...* /Tvar' li ya drozhashchaya ili pravo imeyu/ 'Am I a trembling creature or do I have the **right...**' refers to the novel *Crime and Punishment* by F.M. Dostoevsky and is the key one in the theory created by the protagonist Raskolnikov and tested by him through murder. However, in the speech practice of native Russian speakers, this phrase has also acquired a jokingly ironic meaning due to it being moved from a

serious, philosophical context into everyday life. This precedent statement receives a reinforced jokingly ironic connotation through the school practice of studying the novel and becomes a phrase of mass culture. Here the destruction of the literary canon leads to the appearance of an evaluative connotation of self-irony, which is axiologically opposed to the prototype of this statement.

Modern media texts are characterized by a tendency towards "polysemantism", which is necessary to achieve both an expressive and an informative functions of the heading [8]. The article *Тварь я дрожащая или право имею?* /Tvar' ya drozhashchaya ili pravo imeyu/ 'Am I a trembling creature or do I have the right...' talks about the dissatisfaction of Internet users with the violation of their rights and also about the limits of the applicability of censorship in the information society [http://www.chaskor.ru/article/tvar_ya_drozhashchaya_ili_pravo_imeyu_32118]. On the one hand, the title retains the syntactic structure and lexical content of the precedent statement. On the other hand, the content of the article foregrounds a new meaning of the phrase, which is facilitated by the polysemy of the word *право* /pravo/: the semantics of *право*₁ "a set of moral norms, rules of conduct" ('law') shifts towards *право*₂ "the freedom, the ability to act, to carry out smth. or use smth. granted by the laws of the state" ('right') [3].

WAYS OF TRANSFORMING PRECEDENT STATEMENTS IN MEDIA HEADINGS

The main ways of transforming precedent statements are truncation, addition of statement components, and lexical substitution [5].

Substitution of components (lexical substitution) is one of the most common ways of transforming precedent statements, which, as a rule, preserves the syntactic structure and changes the lexical content thus engendering a new meaning. However, in some cases it is quite difficult to draw a clear line between transformation and inaccurate quoting: *Всегда есть добро со злом, а поле битвы – сердце человека* /Vsegda est' dobro so zlom, a pole bitvy – serdtse cheloveka/ '**There is always good and evil, and the battlefield is the heart of man**' [<https://pravoslavie.fm/interview/protoierey-dimitriy-smirnov-vsegda/>]. The title of the article contains the phrase uttered by Protoiereus Dimitri Smirnov in his interview to the information and analytical portal *Russkaya Planeta*. This case is likely to be an inaccurate quotation of a statement rather than a transformation: *Ужасно то, что красота есть не только страшная, но и таинственная вещь. Тут дьявол с Богом борется, а поле битвы – сердца людей* /Uzhasno to, chto krasota est' ne tol'ko strashnaya, no i tainstvennaya veshch'. Tut d'yavol s Bogom boretsya, a pole bitvy – serdtsa lyudei/ 'The awful thing is that beauty is mysterious as well as terrible. **God and the devil are fighting here, and the battlefield is people's hearts**' (*The Brothers Karamazov*).

The heading *Поле битвы – сердца зрителей* /Pole bitvy – serdtsa zritelei/ 'The Battlefield is hearts of **viewers**' is an example of a transformed precedent statement with the replacement of the last component, which coincides with the prototypical one in its morphological characteristics [<https://iz.ru/news/551002>]. The substitute word foregrounds the content of the article that touches upon the problems and the ethical code of modern cinema - the quality of domestic cinema, the priorities of the modern viewer. Such a transformation changes the referential correlation without changing the meaning of the precedent statement.

The lexical substitution technique is also used in the heading *Тварь я дрожащая или метро имею* /Tvar' ya drozhashchaya ili metro imeyu/ 'Am I a trembling creature or do I have the **metro**'. It is the heading of an article about the opening of the Dostoevskaya station of the Moscow metro, for the design of which several particularly dark episodes from the writer's works were chosen [<https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/1391398>]. This transformation indicates a critical attitude of the author to the choice of artistic decoration for the metro station.

«Гений»: Тварь ли я дрожащая или править умею /Genii: Tvar' li ya drozhashchaya ili pravit' umeyu/ '*Genius: Am I a trembling creature or do I know how to rule*' [<https://www.kino-teatr.ru/kino/art/pr/4435/foto/59686/>] is a review of the film *Гений* /Genii/ 'Genius', which tells the story of a difficult friendship between two talented people - the playwright of the "lost generation" era Thomas Wolfe and the publisher and editor Max Perkins. On the one hand, the transformation occurs on the basis of the phonetic convergence of words, when an element of the precedent sentence (*имею* /imeyu/ 'I have') is replaced by a phonetically close word (*умею* /umeyu/ 'I can'). On the other hand, it also affects the lexical and grammatical level. The replacement of the noun with an infinitive is accompanied by the foregrounding of homonymy: *править*₁ /pravit'/ "to control using power" ('to rule') and *править*₂ /pravit'/ "to correct a manuscript" ('to edit') [3].

Lexical transformation can be supplemented by **rearranging** the components of the statement: *Наказание без преступления* /Nakazanie bez prestupleniya/ 'Punishment without crime' [<https://novayagazeta.ru/articles/2011/04/14/6065>]. Replacing the conjunction *и* /i/ 'and' with the preposition *без* /bez/ 'without' (replacing equal components linked by a coordinative connection with a word combination with prepositional government) in the title of F.M. Dostoevsky's novel *Преступление и наказание* /Prestuplenie i nakazanie/ 'Crime and Punishment' partially changed the syntactic model of the name, but did not lead to the formation of the necessary meaning. It can be assumed that an article entitled this way talks about a court case, an unfair sentence, while the publication is devoted to assigning a technical defeat to a football team in a match for breaking the rules. However, in the heading *Преступление за наказание* / Prestuplenie za nakazanie / 'Crime for Punishment' the replacement of the conjunction *и* /i/ 'and' with the preposition *за* /za/ 'for' not only changes the syntactic construction, but

also leads to a violation of cause-effect relationships, which is reflected in the content of the article: an eighth-grader shot his parents from his father's gun after being punished for academic failure [<https://iz.ru/news/295458>]. Despite the terrible event discussed in the article, we deem such a heading successful, since it reflects the content of the publication.

Transformations of a precedent statement in the heading can also be intonational-graphic and grammatical: *Тварь дрожащая и право имеющий* /Tvar' drozhashchaya i pravo imeyushchii/ 'A trembling creature **and** the one **having** the right" - this heading is an example of the transformation of a statement according to "grammatical alignment": the personal form of the verb *имею* /imeyu/ 'I have' is replaced by a participle, and the disjunctive conjunction is replaced by a copulative one. As a result of such a transformation, two word combinations of an attributive type connected by a coordinative connection are formed. This homogeneity makes it possible to contrast them in meaning, which is what the article is about. The heading is placed in a serious political context of reasoning about the value of human life, about the right to sacrifice the lives of hundreds of people for the elimination of one terrorist [https://echo.msk.ru/blog/nikolay_kofyrin/2240146-echo/].

The **addition of components** (expansion of the composition) in a precedent statement occurs when one or more new components are added to the original unit. It is these components that the main semantic load falls on: *Красота спасёт мир... наружной рекламы* /Krasota spaset mir... naruzhnoi reklamy/ 'Beauty will save the world... **of outdoor advertising**" [https://re-port.ru/press/krasota_spaset_mir_naruzhnoi_reklamy/].

The phrase *Красота спасёт мир* /Krasota spaset mir/ 'Beauty will save the world' is pronounced in the novel *The Idiot* by F.M. Dostoevsky by different heroes (in the text of the work there is also the variation *Мир спасёт красота* /Mir spaset krasota/ 'It is beauty that will save the world'). As a rule, in speech practice, people understand this expression, which has become an aphorism, in the literal sense, meaning physical beauty. Therefore the phrase has become very popular in the advertising for cosmetics, beauty contests, in the naming of beauty salons (*ООО Красота спасёт мир* - the name of a network of beauty salons; *Красота спасёт мир!* - the slogan of the beauty salon *Lotta*; *Красота спасёт мир, а красоту - правильное питание* /Красота спасёт мир, а красоту - правильное питание/ 'Beauty will save the world, and proper nutrition will beauty' - the advertising slogan of the information campaign to form the priorities of a healthy lifestyle among the population). The example is interesting in that the ellipsis in it is used in the function of a pause before a new component of the statement, thus achieving the effect of surprise, which gives rise to a new meaning, since the word *мир* /mir/ ('world') changes its meaning: *мир*₁ as "everything that really exists on Earth, is manifested in its life" and *мир*₂ as "area, sphere of reality" [3]. This semantic narrowing makes it possible to place the phrase in a mundane context, which is very common in modern advertising (e.g., *Мир обуви*

/Mir obuvi/ 'World of footwear', *Мир кожи и меха* /Mir kozhi i mekha/ 'World of leather and fur', *Красота спасёт мир: креативная бьюти-наружка. Подборка самой креативной наружной рекламы бьюти-брендов* /Krasota spaset mir: kreativnaya b'yuti-naruzhka. Podborka samoi kreativnoi naruzhnoi reklamy b'yuti-brendov/ 'Beauty will save the world: creative outdoor beauty advertising. A selection of the most creative outdoor advertising for beauty brands [<https://www.sostav.ru/publication/krasota-spasyot-mir-kreativnaya-byuti-naruzhka-24060.html>]; *Красота спасёт мир, или почему реклама в бьюти-блогах выгодна любому бизнесу* /Krasota spaset mir, ili pochemu reklama v b'yuti-blogakh vygodna lyubomu biznesu/ 'Beauty will save the world, or why advertising in beauty blogs is beneficial for any business' [<https://blog.webartex.ru/reklama-v-byuti-blogax/>].

Precedent statements in media headings are generally one of the ways of expressing the author's assessment of a phenomenon or event, create the illusion of a dialogue between the author and the addressee, often forming a certain public opinion [7], [4]. That is why, as our analysis has shown, modern media discourse often feature headings that contain juxtaposition or opposition: *Красота не спасёт мир...* /Krasota **ne** spaset mir.../ 'Beauty will **not** save the world...' [<https://www.pravda.ru/science/1142684-kavay/>]; *Простите, Федор Михайлович»: никакая красота не спасёт этот мир* /Prostitute, Fedor Mikhailovich: nikakaya krasota ne spaset etot mir/ 'Sorry, Fedor Mikhailovich: no beauty will save this world/ [https://zen.yandex.ru/media/worldwide_press/]. In the last example, we witness not only an implicit, but also an explicit dialogue.

Truncation of a precedent statement involves omission of one or more of its components: *Тварь ли я дрожащая* /Tvar' li ya drozhashchaya/ 'Am I a trembling creature?' – an article by the journalist and political scientist Maksim Shevchenko about the Breivik phenomenon (named after the Norwegian terrorist who killed several dozen and injured several hundred people). Truncation of the second part of the precedent statement has not changed its semantics, because it is assumed that the addressee has sufficient linguistic competence and knows the quote [10].

Besides, truncation may be accompanied by a change in the modality of the statement or the grammatical form of the predicate, which introduces additional shades of meaning: *Красотой спасёмся?..* /Krasotoyu spasemsya/ 'Will we be saved by beauty?..' [<https://foma.ru/krasotoyu-spasemsya.html>]; *Тварь дрожащая?* /Tvar' drozhashchaya/ 'A Trembling creature?' [<https://www.svoboda.org/a/26962010.html>].

Of course, the listed ways of changing precedent statements do not exhaust all cases of transformation, which can appear in a variety of combinations: *Почему и от чего спасёт мир красота?* /Pochemu i ot chego spaset mir krasota/ 'Why and from what will beauty save the world?' [<https://rus.stackexchange.com/questions/40353/>].

CONCLUSION

The material analyzed shows that texts of Russian classical literature with a world status, in particular those of works by F.M. Dostoevsky, are in big demand in the modern media space, characterized by such an ontological feature as total interdiscursiveness. Its literary component is an important part of the Russian media. This is explained by the peculiarities of the Russian national consciousness, which perceives Russian literature, especially that of the 19th century, as an unquestionable value.

The relevance of precedent statements (as one of the types of precedent phenomena) is explained by their syntactic formedness, completeness and predicativity. Besides, their transformations typically preserve the syntactic structure of the phrase. The most common type of transformation is lexical substitution of varying degrees of complexity, which makes it possible to express a new meaning. In a strong heading position, such a transformed quote will certainly attract attention, performing not only an informative, but also an attractive function. This attraction is not only the result of the play often inherent in headlines. It is axiological, that is, aimed at evaluating people and events. At the same time, the depth of evaluativity depends both on the problematics of the article and on the need of the addressee to indicate his or her position. Often, such transformations become headings of publications on social issues and even of advertising publications, less often of political ones.

The use of precedent statements in the context of general irony or everyday jokes, which is typical for modern media texts, often becomes a means of self-irony and author's self-analysis.

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