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**CHILDREN’S LITERATURE AS A SOURCE OF PRECEDENT  
PHENOMENA IN RUSSIAN MEDIA**

Irina Naumova (a)\*  
\*Corresponding author

(a) Chelyabinsk State University, Chelyabinsk, Russia, ira\_naumova@mail.ru

***Abstract***

The article deals with the precedent phenomena use from the sphere-source "Children's literature" in the Russian Federation mass media for the purpose of carrying out the discourse, contextual, linguistic and cognitive analysis of semantics and functionality of case phenomena. The author uses the descriptive method of a research including such techniques as observation, cognitive interpretation and classification. The practical material of the article is selected by means of continuous selection method. The author pays special attention to pragmatics use of precedent phenomena and considers methods of implementation of purposes of publicists by means of this phenomenon. The results of this work can be applied in culture-oriented linguistics practice, rhetoric and stylistics, in the research of questions connected with national and cultural features of modern Russian society, and also some aspects of cross-cultural communication. The precedent phenomena from the sphere-source "Children's literature" are an effective means of realization of various author's ideas, means of strengthening of their expressivity, emotionality and estimation.

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## 1. Introduction

Interest in the study of precedence in modern linguistics has not ceased to be relevant for more than thirty years. The theory of precedent phenomena appears and is actively developing since the term "precedent text" has been introduced in the scientific terminology and conceptual linguistic apparatus by Yu. Karaulov in 1986. It should be noted that scientific works in this field are constantly updated.

### 1.1. Investigation of precedence in linguistics

A precedent phenomenon is a cultural sign, clearly reflected by representatives of a national community and demonstrating its national and cultural characteristics. Precedent phenomena "and intellectualize the presentation, form new meanings, introducing the events of current life into the general historical and current context" (Smetanina, 2002, p. 123).

From the point of view of cognitive linguistics, precedent phenomena are considered as knowledge, "which a person acquires in the previous cultural experience, serve as a means of updating the so-called" eternal images "that stimulate the emergence of certain stable associations in perception" (Olizko, 2002, p. 36).

In this paper, we consider the precedent phenomena from the source area of "Children's Literature" in the Russian media and refer them, according to the classification proposed by V. Krasnikh, "to the national-precedent phenomena that are known to any average representative of a national-lingua-cultural community and are included in the national cognitive base" (Krasnikh, 2003, p. 136). A prominent role in determining of one's precedent scope belongs to the literary works one has acquired in his or her childhood. "The precedent phenomena are necessarily wide-known among the native speakers of a certain language, which is due to the fact that the source texts form the "cultural minimum", are included in the school curriculum and may also be known by hearsay" (Zhaeva, 2013, p.335). At the same time some literary works might become a kind of challenge for some readers. "Literary discourse brings certain complexities to the concept revealing hidden levels at which the precedent phenomena may function. It opens a new perspective for understanding these culturally specific language units" (Zolotarev, 2014, p.48). According to Ierusalimskai's and Kartashova's, observations, language game based on the precedent phenomena in the Internet communication is often built on the texts from commercials, winged words, popular song lyrics, movies, titles of well-known books, **children's books**, quotes from various official documents, phraseology (Ierusalimskai, et. al. 2015, p. 294).

## 2. Problem Statement

Despite the only certain aspects of a large-scale presence of a large number of publications devoted to the above issues, they cover phenomenon identified by Yu. Karaulov as precedence (Karaulov, 1986, p. 105). We not only share this point of view, but also consider pragmatics use of precedential phenomena and methods of implementation of purposes of publicists by means of these phenomena.

## 3. Research Questions

We have selected the precedent phenomena from the sphere-source "Children literature" used by the Russian mass media. Russian media widely use the names of children's literature in their original form in the headlines of publications. Such headlines increase the expressive and emotional potential of the problem described. Thus, the use in the metaphorical sense of the title of the tale of K.I. Chukovsky "Fedorino grief" in a publication devoted to the

disastrous outflow of the population from the Republic of Karelia sets a negative comical attitude towards the head of the republic in the emerging situation. Ex.:

**"Fedora's grief"** of the Karelian Governor (www.mustoi.ru, 06/02/2017)

It is not accidental, in our opinion, the author's choice falls precisely on this work. The title of the work "Fedora's grief" evokes in the minds of the reader of the association that everything suddenly comes to a chaotic movement in the world, all objects hurry to leave their places. The one who is responsible for everything that happens must change in all parameters to stop this chaos. The author of the publication sees an analogy in the processes taking place in the republic and the work of K.I. Chukovsky.

Using the title of a poem for children "What is good and what is bad?" by V.V. Mayakovsky from the "Complete Works: Vol. 13" as a precedent phenomenon in the context of the analysis of the priority of domestic and external socio-political problems in Russia, the success of the solution of which is provided by the activities and decisions of state bodies, is aimed at pointing out the lack of an objective attitude, and most importantly, clarity in the approaches to solving these problems on the part of the country's leadership.

The title of V.V. Mayakovsky's work has an antithetic meaning, which gives a composite backbone to it. The pragmatics of the work is to achieve an educational effect and is achieved by using contrasting images, simple speech structures, unconstrained intonational patterns. The usage of the title of the article "What is good and what is bad?" in the text of the publication is pitched at the implicit author's show, that he has got a critical view towards the political course of the country's leadership and understands what is really *good* in the country and what is really *bad* in it. Ex.:

*And before the elections there was only an external view of what is good ... what is good and what is bad on the foreign arena that comes from the President's Administration* (A. Krasovsky, "Special Opinion", r/s "Ekho Moskvu", 30/08/2017).

Using the name of the poem for children written by S.Ya. Marshak "Here is what is scattered" in its original form helps directly point out the problem that the publication highlights. The precedent title is included in the first component of the title and is aimed at attracting and retaining the attention of the reader. The general comic character of Marshak's work tends to perceive the nature of the title of the publication as a game. The name of a serious diagnosis, multiple sclerosis, foregrounds the theme of the publication. The word combination with a partially substantivized adjective *brain-scattered* is distributed over two independent components of the title, which partially blurs the negative associations of readers that can be associated with this diagnosis, and the game character of the first component mitigates negative feelings that can be caused by the theme of publication. Ex.:

***That's what brain-scattered. The "youngest" of sclerosis*** (L. Yudin, "Arguments and Facts", 08/07/2017)

We believe that the practice of using the precedent names of works of children's literature by mass media is connected, first of all, with the realization of the emotional-evaluative and gaming intentions of the authors of publications. It should also be noted that the process of using the precedent names of works of children's literature adds attractiveness and advertising to publications, since these names and related stories are firmly entrenched in the cognitive and associative baggage of the reader.

The names of the characters of children's literature are also widely used by Russian media and are regarded by us as precedent anthroponyms. These names of characters of children's literature or heroes are the grate essence for precedence. "In order to understand the question of a hero as a phenomenon of human culture, it is necessary to rely on the best known works dedicated to this topic" (Hrchkova, 2017, p. 42).

The precedent anthroponyms from the source area "Children's Literature" are used by Russian mass media in metaphorical senses. This process, described by the theory of the conceptual metaphor of J. Lakoff and M. Johnson, consists in the "transfer" of the integral conceptual structure, actualized by some word in the consciousness of native speakers, rather than an isolated name (Lakoff, et. al., 1990, p. 129).

In E. Nakhimova's view, precedent anthroponyms are metaphorical in nature and "the basis for such metaphors are the signs characterizing the activity (creativity) of the name bearer, the products of his activity (creativity), merit, character traits, appearance, style and manner of creativity, events, the time period associated with the bearer of the name, and many other signs" (Nakhimova, 2011, p. 86).

The precedent anthroponym from the children's poem by S.Ya. Marshak *brain-scattered from the Basseynaya street* is used as a negative comparison. In the context of discussion of one of the candidates (Pavel Grudinin) for the presidency of Russia in the radio program, the personal qualities of the candidate are opposed to the image of a comical, completely maladjusted person. Such a vein allows the dialogue to acquire a vivid expression of speech and remove the officiality, the mandatory presence of which is dictated by the topic of the discussion. **Ex.:**

*This person (P. Grudinin) does not look like a **brain-scattered from the Basseynaya street**. This is a very specific, businesslike and clear person with clear views. I think that he is able to consolidate both the left and many liberals, too. This is a real European politician, the first for a long time in our country* (M. Shevchenko, "Ekho Moskvu", 11/01/2018).

The satirical mood of the publicists towards the current US president is conveyed by metaphorical comparison with the main character of the first political pamphlet for preschoolers "Mister-Twister" written by V.V. Mayakovsky. **Ex.:**

*Trump is not a graduate of Eaton, it's a caricature of **Mr. Twister**." We are talking about the hero of the poem of the Soviet poet Samuel Marshak, where an American millionaire Mr. Twister is portrayed, an arrogant businessman who experienced a culture shock getting acquainted with Soviet reality. The expert believes that a big role in such an outrageous behavior of Trump is played by the TV he watches every day* (A. Bratersky, "The Amoral Person: How the Media Demonize Trump", [www.gazeta.ru](http://www.gazeta.ru), 17/12/2017).

The precedent anthroponym *Mr. Twister* has a twofold characterological function: on the one hand, the precedent anthroponym points to a person who is out of his coordinates and, as a result, looks extremely comical, on the other hand, due to the author's hyperbolized approach to describing the wealth of the hero, the concepts compared to him acquire the image of the only central element of a certain system, where everything is totally dependent on it and unquestioningly obeys it. **Ex.:**

*The state in Russia is an all-round monopolist. It's like **Mr. Twister**: "**Dealer and banker, owner of factories, newspapers, steamships**." It owns the Academy of Sciences, oil rigs, aircraft building, monasteries, innovations in IT, cattle, the Moscow Metro* (M. Goryunov, "Do Volunteers Need State Attention?", [www.takiedela.ru](http://www.takiedela.ru), 05/12/2017).

In both cases, the precedent anthroponym gives a direct psychological characteristic to the analyzed political realities, and the rhyme of its two components adds the expressiveness to it.

The precedent anthroponym *Uncle Stepa* from the poem for children written by Mikhalkov "Uncle Styopa Militiaman" (the second poem from a series of poems about Uncle Styopa) is used as a metaphorical nomination for an official, junior commanding staff of law enforcement bodies and is included in the heading of the publication on contemporary Russian internal affairs bodies. In the first component of the title appears a lexical item *corruptor*, resulting in a rhyme to the original title of the work - "Uncle Stepa - militiaman." Anthroponym *Uncle Styopa* is a

product of the Soviet era, as well as militia. The reform of the Russian militia, which inherited all the dogmas of the Soviet militia, began after a series of high-profile crimes and corruption scandals committed by militiamen. The pragmatics of using this precedent anthroponym is aimed at characterizing the internal affairs bodies as a structure that Russians are not yet ready to trust, whatever the structure is called. **Ex:**

*Uncle Stepa is a corrupt official: the deputy minister of the Ministry of Internal Affairs offered to trust the police officers* (O. Boguslavskaya, [www.mk.ru](http://www.mk.ru), 04/06/2017)

A number of precedent anthroponyms from the fairy-tale novel of A.N. Tolstoy's "Golden Key, or The Adventures of Buratino" is used in a critical publication about monetary fraud in some Russian savings banks. The precedent anthroponyms of *Alice the fox*, *Basilio the cat*, are contextual antonyms to the precedent anthroponym of Buratino, which, connected with the epithets *naive* and *with wooden brains*, acquires additional emotiveness and appraisal. In all three cases there is a reference to the personal-intellectual qualities of the heroes of the tale-story, which provides an original presentation of critical author's arguments about the stated problem and reinforces the reader's final views about this problem. **Ex.:**

*A very personal opinion: only naive **Buratino** with wooden brains can trust his money for **Alice the fox and Basilio the Cat*** (Ya. Gonchar, "Son'ka - the golden hand", [www.arsvest.ru](http://www.arsvest.ru), 18/01/ 2017).

There are cases of the use of precedent anthroponyms from the source "Children's Literature" in the context of the similarity of the issue covered in the publication and the type of the literary character job. The precedent anthroponym *Duramar* is included in the first component of the title of the publication, thereby actualizing the way of the unusual earnings - the breeding of leeches. The precedent anthroponym *Duramar* combined with the financial term *business* gives the game character to the title and fully contributes to the informative and advertising function of it. **Ex:**

*Duremar business: how to make money by opening a leech farm* ([www.sobesednik.ru](http://www.sobesednik.ru), 17/06/ 2017)

The precedent anthroponyms *Bastinda* from the fairy tales written by A.M. Volkov, "The Wizard of the Emerald City" and "The Seven Underground Kings" and the old woman Shapoklyak, the main antagonist of the series of E. Uspensky's children's books about Cheburashka and Gena the Crocodile, are used as a metaphorical comparison to the political figure in the context of analyzing the results of the presidential elections in the United States. Both precedent anthroponyms refer to one person - Hilary Clinton, US presidential candidate and enter into a relationship of synonymy. It should be noted that the degree of their expressive color is not the same. A universal Internet encyclopedia with free content "Wikipedia" gives the following characteristics to these two characters: "Bastinda was the most dangerous villain of the Wizard of the Emerald City. She also had a vile, nonsensical character (<https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bastinda>); The old woman Shapoklyak arranges cruel pranks over the innocent inhabitants of the city. <...> Shapoklyak is gradually on the path of correction, <...> despite her tricks, she is an intelligent and even a noble old woman ([https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Starukha\\_Shapoklyak](https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Starukha_Shapoklyak)). Taking into account these characteristics, we understand that the author of the publication, using these precedent anthroponyms, accept from the desire of giving a special expressive stylistic color to the situation analysis and expresses the hope that the degree of harm from Hillary Clinton, will be less in case of her defeat in the presidential election. The author's metaphorical refocusing of Hillary Clinton, the wicked sorceress Bastinda, to another one, less dangerous and harmful, Shapoklyak, is accompanied by one more metaphorical refocusing: *Hillary's assistants — apartment complex managers*. Thus, the author uses the so-called operating to the fall, putting the ironic meaning in the organization of Hillary Clinton campaigning.

Another author's vein is well worth to discuss with regard to the usage of the precedent anthroponym *Bastinda*. The phrase "the lady of flying monkeys" enters into a synonymous relationship with *Bastinda* based on a common denotation. This synonymous phrase organically integrates into the playful phraseological unit *the monkey with a grenade*, expands it, and the lexical addition *nuclear* enlarges its semantic capacity and expressiveness. Ex.:

*It is possible to talk about the decisive military advantage of the US led by Hillary Clinton, if she would become the president of the United States as punishment for the sins of the human race, only in case you are hammered <...> It will be necessary for her assistants to retrain to the apartment complex managers, and most to **Bastinda** — to the old lady **Shapoklyak**. She is no piece of cake either, but still better than the lady of flying monkeys with nuclear grenades in the hands* (A. Brodsky, "USA: Is Bastinda changing to Shapoklyak?", REGNUM, 02/01/2017).

#### 4. Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of our long-term scientific and practical activities is carrying out the discourse, contextual, linguistic and cognitive analysis of semantics and functionality of precedent phenomena in the Russian mass media taken from children's literature.

#### 5. Research Methods

The practical material of the article is selected by means of continuous selection method. In order to identify the scope and characteristics of the precedent phenomena from the sphere-source "Children's Literature" the descriptive method of a research is used. It also includes such techniques as observation, cognitive interpretation and classification. The significance of this method is beyond doubt in the development of theoretical and methodological approaches to the problem of precedence.

#### 6. Findings

The paper presents the best examples of the precedent phenomena usage in publications we selected, issued during the last decade.

#### 7. Conclusion

Thus, the appeal of the Russian media to the precedent phenomena from the source area "Children's Literature" is quite frequent. It is an effective means of actualizing the author's intentions of different kind, a means of enhancing the expressiveness and emotionality of the publication material.

The precedent names of children's literature works, found in the headlines of publications, are aimed at giving them a game character, advertising and reader appeal, which contribute to the more effective implementation of header functions. According to our observations, language game based on the precedent phenomena in the Internet communication is often built on the texts from commercials, winged words, popular song lyrics, movies, titles of well-known books, **children's books**, quotes from various official documents, phraseology.

The precedent anthroponyms from the source-area "Children's Literature" by way of a metaphorical comparison provides an explication of the psychological characteristics of facts described in publications. The precedent anthroponyms can be refocused to certain political personalities. This process equally affects the precedent names both negative and positive heroes.

Being a clear reflection of the national mentality, children's literature is an inexhaustible source of precedence, which is easily recognized and understood by any reader.

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