

UNITS THAT BECAME PRECEDENT PHENOMENA FROM THE WORKS OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

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Abstract. This article is devoted to the linguocultural analysis of linguistic units that originated in the works of William Shakespeare and later became precedent phenomena. Precedent phenomena, one of the current trends in modern linguistics and linguoculturology, are defined as phenomena well known to members of a particular linguocultural community, firmly established in their cognitive base, and repeatedly reproduced in speech. The object of the research is the precedent units formed in Shakespeare's works, and the subject is their linguocultural nature, typology, semantic features, and communicative functions. The article analyzes the history of the development of precedent theory, including the works of Yu.N. Karaulov, V.V. Krasnykh, D.B. Gudkov, and other scholars, as well as research in Uzbek linguistics. The manifestation of Shakespearean units within the types of precedent text, precedent utterance, precedent name, and precedent situation is illustrated through examples. In particular, the transformation of anthroponyms such as "Hamlet", "Romeo", "Juliet", "Othello", and "Iago" into precedent names, the use of phrases like "To be or not to be" as absolute and transformed precedent utterances, as well as the re-embodiment of Shakespearean scenes as precedent situations, are analyzed. In conclusion, Shakespeare's precedent units perform nominative, persuasive, aesthetic, expressive, evaluative, and other functions, are widely used in modern discourse, and have become an integral part of world culture and language.

Key words. Precedent phenomenon, precedent text, precedent situation, precedent name, precedent utterance, anthroponym, linguistics, linguoculturology.

INTRODUCTION

One of the current directions in modern linguistics and linguoculturology is the study of precedent phenomena and the mechanisms of their functioning in different linguocultural spaces. Precedent phenomena are defined as phenomena (situations, texts, sayings, names) that are well known to members of a particular linguocultural community, occupy a firm place in their cognitive base, and are repeatedly reproduced in speech. These phenomena serve as fruitful material for studying the culturally determined nature of linguistic signs, the verbalization of cognitive structures, and various aspects of the linguocultural personality.

The works of William Shakespeare stand out for their unparalleled influence on the development of world culture and language. According to data, he is associated with the first use of over 1,700 words and phrases in the English language – a record unmatched by any other writer. These linguistic units are actively used not only in their own time but also in contemporary speech, demonstrating their precedent status.

The object of this research is the linguistic units that originated in Shakespeare's works and later became precedent phenomena in various linguocultural spaces. The subject is the linguocultural nature, typology, semantic features, and communicative functions of these units. The aim is to provide a systematic description of the precedent units derived from Shakespeare's oeuvre, determine their place in the global linguistic and cultural space, and reveal the specifics of their translation and reception.

MATERIALS AND METHODS



Although the study of the phenomenon of precedence – its formation, preservation, and use, as well as the cross-cultural comparison of results – began in the 1980s, it has now become one of the most pressing topics in modern linguistics. This phenomenon consists of the actualization of linguistic and cognitive units that express a historically established concept related to the culture of a given people within the content of communication and discourse.

The term "precedent" was first used in linguistics in 1987 by Russian scholar Yu.N. Karaulov in his work "Russian Language and Linguistic Personality" (Русский язык и языковая личность), in his research on "precedent text," recognizing it as the most important unit for identifying a person's linguistic personality based on other texts used by communicants in the communication process.[2.216] Subsequently, interest in studying this phenomenon increased, and many scholars began to analyze it from different perspectives. This phenomenon was studied as a personality-identifying and cognitive unit by Yu.N. Karaulov, D.B. Gudkov, V.V. Krasnykh, I.V. Zakharenko, D.V. Bagaeva, Yu.E. Prokhorov, V.G. Kostomarov, N.D. Burvikova, E.A. Nakhimova, N.A. Golubeva, V.L. Latisheva, V.I. Makarov, N.V. Petrova, while scholars such as S.L. Kushneruk, G.G. Shishkin, L.I. Grishaeva studied it as a linguocultural unit, and, in contrast, A.E. Suprun, N.M. Orlova, G.D. Raspaeva, N.V. Inozemtseva, N.A. Kuzmina, A.D. Vasilyev, I.I. Yatsenko, A.A. Yevtyugina, S.S. Chistova studied it as an intertextual unit.

In Uzbek linguistics, N.Z. Akhmadjonov, in his dissertation "Linguopoetic Study of Precedent Names Used in Literary Style," (Badiiy uslubda qo'llangan pretsedent nomlarning lingvopoetik tadqiqi) [17.] revealed the linguopoetic features of precedent names used in literary style, such as fame and symbolism, their role and importance in forming artistic concepts, the functional-semantic features of precedent names used in poetic texts (evoking imagery in the reader, reflecting specific reality) in relation to context, as well as features such as allusiveness, onomastic metaphor, symbolism, sociality, characterizing function, expressiveness, associativity, standard-setting, stylistic, aesthetic, and linguopoetic functions.

Professor A.E. Mamatov, in his textbook "Modern Linguistics" (Zamonaviy lingvistika), uses the term "precedent" as "authoritativeness" (nufuzlilik). According to him, in modern linguistics, precedence (authoritativeness) is the most important feature of additional knowledge in the study of linguocultural units.[14.151]

These scholars played an important role in developing the specific characteristics of all precedent phenomena. In particular, V.V. Krasnykh, who introduced the term "precedent phenomenon" into linguistics in 1997, showed that precedent phenomena should exhibit the following features:

- 1) They must be equally well known to all members of a particular national-cultural community;
- 2) They must be relevant cognitively (understanding) or emotionally (cognition);
- 3) The object of reference must belong to that national-cultural community.[3.124]

In our opinion, the features of precedence put forward by V.V. Krasnykh apply not only to precedent texts but equally to all units representing precedent phenomena.[12.31-40]

Scholars who have studied the essence of precedent phenomena have shown that, according to their scope of use, they have collective, national-ethnic, and universal characteristics, and they have classified them according to structural-compositional aspects as follows:

1. Precedent text (Yu.N. Karaulov, 1986);
2. Precedent sayings (V.G. Kostomarov, N.D. Burvikova, 1994);
3. Precedent name (D.B. Gudkov, 1996);
4. Precedent situation (V.V. Krasnykh, 1997).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION



William Shakespeare's precedent units are widely and actively used in modern discourse, political discourse, mass media, advertising and marketing, the internet and social networks, cinema, music, and other fields. They give texts expressiveness, credibility, and cultural richness.

Anthroponyms that became precedent names in Shakespeare's works: Hamlet, King Lear, Macbeth, Romeo, Juliet and others.

Hamlet – one of the most famous of Shakespeare's characters and one of the names with the highest precedent status. "Hamlet" has become a symbol not only of a character but also of hesitation, reflection, and complex inner experiences.

To what extent was he, Closter Ridley, justified in imposing his taste upon the newspaper's subscribers? Still, was it not for doing so that he drew his excellent salary and his annual bonus, reckoned upon the profits? What about the barber's chair; might there not be a few buttocks for Shillito? But he could go on in this **Hamlet**-like strain all day.[6.93]

I said I wanted to be best man, I said I wanted a church wedding. I went on about it. I started shouting. I came the **Hamlets** a bit. I was drunk at the time, if you must know. [13.39]

Romeo – this name has become a symbol of love and fidelity throughout the world. "Romeo" is perceived as a young man in love, a protector of lovers, an emblem of romantic love. This name is a widespread precedent anthroponym in various languages and cultures.

She has turned my **Romeo** into a sad-eyed Billy Bunter who blinks his passions quietly when no one's looking. Oh, that his too, too solid flesh should melt.[15.103]

His personal feeling that loving Phoebe Wilson was a thing beyond the scope of the most determined **Romeo** he concealed. It could, apparently, be done.[18.57]

Juliet – together with Romeo, this name has also become a symbol of love, fidelity, and tragic destiny throughout the world. The phrase "Roméo et Juliette" is used in languages around the world as a symbol of the story of lovers infinitely devoted to each other.

Sarah glared at him through the window. "And you say Mathilda was evil-minded?" Furiously, she ground into gear. 'Compared with you she was a novice. **Juliet** to your Iago.'[15.68]

Othello – this name has become a symbol of jealousy and envy. "Othello" is preserved in cultural memory as a dark-skinned general who, due to jealousy, killed his closest loved ones and then tragically committed suicide.

But it is when jealousy turns into pathological jealousy, or the **Othello** syndrome as it is now called, that problems begin to surface and treatment becomes necessary.[11]

As we got out of the car I warned Vico not to talk in the Stairwell. 'We don't want the dogs to hear me and wake Mr. Contreras! 'He is a malevolent neighbor? You need me perhaps to guard you?' 'He's the best-natured neighbor in the world. Unfortunately, he sees his role in my life as Cerberus, with a whiff of **Othello** thrown in![20.78]

Iago – this name is a symbol of cunning, duplicity, and evil. Among Shakespeare's characters, "Iago" is known as one of the most evil and treacherous figures.

Politicians who peddle their sincerity between whiles become transparent liars. Men who trade on integrity turn **Iagos**. [19]

She was like some **Iago**. Or some evil guardian angel.[9.87]

Phraseological units that became precedent utterances: "*To be or not to be*", "*All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players*", "*What's done is done*", "*But love is blind, and lovers cannot see*", "*Men at some time are masters of their fates*", and so on.

Shakespeare's contribution to the phraseological fund of the English language is unparalleled. As ethnologist Ernest Weekley noted, "His contribution to our phraseology is ten times greater than that of any other writer in world history to any language." Most of Shakespeare's expressions are so widespread that their author is often forgotten. This is one of



the most important features of precedent phenomena – they become so common that their original source becomes of secondary importance.

When analyzing the types of use of precedent utterances (superficial, deep, systemic), it is necessary to apply another classification consisting of two parts:

- 1) Absolute precedent sayings;
- 2) Transformed precedent sayings.

Absolute precedent sayings – precedent sayings that have undergone no changes and stand out as stable quotations.

Transformed precedent sayings – precedent sayings that have undergone certain modifications but are easily recognizable and recoverable.

For example:

To read, or not to read, novels on a mobile phone. That is the question. [22]

To google or not to google? It's a legal question.[11]

To boycott or not – the new Israeli question.[17]

To drink or not while pregnant? That is the question. [21]

To be or not to be British: That is the question. [21]

All the world's a stage. [21]

The world's a stage – especially classrooms, says school union. [4]

Situations that became **precedent situations**:

“In a balcony scene worthy of a real-life Romeo and Juliet, Charles and Diana crowned their marriage with a passionate embrace.”

In this example, the meeting scene of the two lovers from Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet is re-embodied as a precedent situation.

The death of the mother was the test of the family. Die, Our Daddy, walked away from it and ended up moving between his daughters --' You never noticed him if he didn't speak' -- putting a shilling on the horses, reading anything that came to hand, off on his benders, neglecting all his children and loved and welcomed by all his daughters, a kind of successful King Lear of the Welsh coalfields. Fifty years later, a friend of all the children and a neighbour throughout the years still recalls with awe the way they behaved.[8.7]

In this example, the situation of King Lear with his daughters is re-embodied.

We can observe cinema and music in the transformation of Shakespeare's works into **precedent texts**. Here, Shakespeare's expressions are widely used as names and titles. For example, North by Northwest (Alfred Hitchcock), The Mousetrap (Agatha Christie), Cruel to be Kind (Nick Lowe), Where Eagles Dare (Iron Maiden), Something Wicked (Tupac Shakur) – all of these are based on Shakespeare quotations.

CONCLUSION

Thus, a systematic study of the units that became precedent phenomena from the works of William Shakespeare allows us to draw the following main conclusions:

1. From the perspective of precedent phenomena theory, Shakespeare's units possess full and comprehensive precedent characteristics. They are well known to all members of a particular linguocultural community, occupy a firm place in their cognitive base, and are regularly reproduced in speech.

2. Typologically, Shakespeare's units manifest within all four types of precedent phenomena – precedent situations, texts, utterances, and names. The neologisms and expressions created by Shakespeare, as well as the names of his characters, function at various levels (universal, national, social).

3. Semantically, Shakespeare's precedent units break away from their original context, lead an independent life, and undergo semantic transformations over time (broadening of meaning,



narrowing, metaphorization, metonymization). These transformations are an important condition for their becoming universal precedent phenomena.

4. Functionally, Shakespeare's precedent units perform nominative, persuasive, aesthetic, expressive, evaluative, comic, euphemistic, and person-assessment functions. Their widespread use in modern discourse (politics, mass media, advertising, internet, cinema, music) demonstrates their functional richness and communicative significance.

5. Culturally, Shakespeare's precedent units constitute one of the most important foundational texts of the English linguocultural space and have a significant impact on world culture as a whole. Most of them have risen to the level of universal precedent phenomena, and understanding them does not require deep knowledge of English or English culture.

From this perspective, Shakespeare's contribution to world language and culture is not only the greatest legacy in the history of literature but also an integral part of the system of foundational cultural texts of all humanity. The precedent units created by Shakespeare continue to live a lively and active life in various languages and cultures of the world today.

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