

**PRECEDENCE AS A BASIC CATEGORY OF PAROEMIOLOGICAL  
DISCOURSE (ON EXAMPLES OF RUSSIAN, ENGLISH AND GERMAN  
LANGUAGES)**

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**ABSTRACT**

The article is devoted to the analysis of paroemias from the point of view of ethno-hermeneutics and ethno-psycholinguistics. Main attention is drawn to the precedence as the most important characteristic of the paroemiological discourse. The authors analyse precedent phenomena, view precedent situations in paroemiological units.

Precedence as an essential feature of the paroemiological discourse plays an important role in accumulation and retranslation of ethno-cultural information, serving as a certain indicator of national and cultural traditions, different kinds of occupation, historical events, some individuals' society life contribution.

Modern scientists distinguish different types of precedent phenomena: precedent text, precedent statement, precedent name, precedent situation, precedent text reminiscences. Precedent phenomenon can be characterized as a well-known to all representatives of the national and linguo-cultural community event, which is always followed by "some idea of it..." or an invariant of its perception, that makes all the appeals to the precedent phenomenon "transparent", understandable, connotationally coloured.

Many researchers, during investigating "external scale" of precedent phenomena, distinguish society-precedent, nation-precedent and universal precedent phenomena. From this point of view it is fairly to treat paroemias as nation-precedent phenomena that take an important role in creating national-cognitive foundation of ethno-cultural society. The analysis of paroemiological description coverage of stereotyped everyday situations allows to consider national space of precedence, which have been formed in the centuries-old process of individual's assimilation of interaction with the environment experience, his socialization and reflexion. Paroemias acquire the status of precedent phenomena due to prolonged setting of "rules of behaviour" in a folk speech practice, obtaining the features of regularly used and set phrases in the everyday discourse.

**Keywords:** precedence, precedent situation, paroemias, paroemiological discourse, ethnolinguistic consciousness.

## INTRODUCTION

Precedence is the thing of great interest for the modern researchers as it plays the role of the definite indicator of significance of national and cultural traditions, different kinds of occupation, cultural and historical events, some individuals' society life contribution. The aim of the present article is to demonstrate a special role of the precedence in the procedure of ethnocultural information memorization and transferring on examples of Russian, English and German paroemias.

We think that, paroemiological constructions represent steady interpretationally evaluative statements, which embody a great cognitive national experience, combining the results of previous phases of cognitive activity – empirical cognition of the surrounding world and conceptual comprehension of the received information by representatives of certain ethno-cultural society. On the phase of the secondary conceptualization, which is characterized by a high level of subjectivity, a person acts as a carrier of the system of individual knowledge, opinion and valuation. It allows considering him as surrounding and inner world interpreter, who uses language as a material bases for the interpretation.

The most important part of general worldview is reflected in the paroemiological worldview in the form of cliché linguistic constructions, ethnocognitive analysis of which allows to identify semantic constants in the national-linguistic consciousness. Paroemias as a verbal-stereotyped way of human behavior regulator represent nation-traditional form of display of watchfulness, didacticism, reflexivity in a human society. Double fracture of the paroemiological worldview – at first in a national-specific consciousness, and then in a linguistic area – discloses to the researchers different nuances of conceptualization and representation of knowledge about the surrounding and inner world of the concrete ethnocultural societies representatives. In connection with this fact, conducting paroemiological research in a comparative aspect is represented as the most perspective in terms of comparison of national paroemiological worldviews in different linguocultures, revealing universal and unique features in linguistic creation of paroemiological texts and comparison of various national conceptual systems, reconstruction of which is possible due to linguo-cognitive analysis of paroemiological material.

National paroemiological worldview origin is caused by the national perception of paroemiological statements, paroemiological texts during regular usage of them in everyday discourse. Also it is caused by occurrence of certain associations, images, symbols etc., which are based on the phenomenological knowledge and characterized by stability and publicity. Representing a verbalized form of national conceptual worldview, paroemias contain important information about cognitive nation's activity, nation-linguistic ways of cumulative experience structuring, as well as, information about value conceptions of a certain ethnocultural society. Hermeneutic analysis of precedent texts, represented in paroemiological constructions, allows not only to understand deep meaning of paroemiological statement, but also to trace variational opportunities of paroemias usage in various everyday situations, reveal communicational tactics of persuasion in paroemiological discourse.

Along with universal features of reflection of extralinguistic reality, there are nation-specific traits in linguistic worldview of different ethnocultural societies. Engagement of common cognitive mechanisms in the process of categorization and

conceptualization of informational continuum, surrounding a person and existing in him, explains the presence of universal traits in a national concept and, therefore, in national linguistic worldview. At the same time, variational vision of worldview, taking into account differences in geographical, historical, social, cultural conditions of some ethnocultural society existence, causes the presence of specific features, as well as lacunas, that is a consequence of the world's and a person's peculiarities, and reflects plasticity, mobility, polivariability of worldview.

A well-known American literary critic and philosopher K. Burke claimed that people tend to note that some social situations are regularly repeated, being in some way a pattern, that is why people try to find names for them. In other words, social structures cause "type" situations – hardly distinguishable kinds of public relations of competition/cooperation. The names of this "type" situations do not emerge as a result of "idle curiosity", but due to the fact that these situations are important for the man's welfare, so every name contains some instruction, hint (what to expect, what to beware of etc.) [1]. According to U.N. Karaulov awareness of the precedent phenomena, "is an indicator of belonging to a certain epoch and its culture" [2]. Krasnich claims that precedent phenomena are characterized by "predictability" of valent relations to certain events, phenomena and are kept in man's mind in the form of frame-structures [3].

Analysis of modern literature showed that it is accepted to distinguish different types of precedent phenomena: precedent text [2, 4], precedent statement [5], precedent name [6], precedent situation [3], precedent text reminiscences[7]. Detailed analysis of the listed terms in the works of V.V. Krasnich [3] allows to present more clearly the hierarchy of system ties of precedence, in which precedent phenomenon is considered as a gender notion, and other terms (precedent text, precedent statement, precedent name, precedent situation, precedent text reminiscences) are considered as aspectual notions inside categoric space of precedence.

The fact that national tokens belong to the system of language and speech, as well as consideration of them as syncretic language structures, displaying properties of either language sign or text, allows to refer them to both precedent statements and precedent texts simultaneously. National token, being considered a precedent statement, has the features of a discourse unit (informativeness, situativity, interpretativeness, intentionality, coherence). Displaying precedent texts, paroemias are characterized by polypropositivity, complex sign structure, the sum of meaning of which is not equal to its sense. Relevance of consideration of paroemias as texts is conditioned on their sense relatedness, unified logical and compositional structure, autonomy of usage and communicative orientation.

Nevertheless, paroemiological text is a specific text, having a range of special properties, peculiar to folklore compositions: anonymity, unappealability, semantic compactness, oral way of text contents transfer, strong ties with national and cultural traditions, high level of cliché, firmness of semantic and syntactical structure, secondary text formation character, orientation on human behavior modeling [8], [9], [10].

It is also necessary to note that, on the one hand, tokens send us to the definite precedent situation, which is verbalized in a brief form as a situational name, nominalization / nominalized construction or anthroponym. On the other hand, paroemias, acting as a canonical statement, represent precedent basis for forming new statements with their

own “statement algorithm” (V.V. Krasnich). We speak about paroemias as canonical statements on the assumption of wide treatment of canon as generally accepted rules or regulations [11].

Among the most frequently described precedent situations in the texts of national tokens are propositional names, nominating times of year, nature events, agricultural and other works performing processes, names of saints, for example, in the Russian language:

*Spring* – set fire to snow, play with gorges; As it snows, and as *snow* lies, so summer tells to grain-grower about the harvest; From *Petrov's day* – red *Summer*, green *haymaking*; *Early sowing* from *Egorye*, *central* - from *Nikola Veshniy*, *late* – from *Ivan Predtechy*; On *Pahomiy* – late *sowing of oats and wheat*; *Varvara paves*, *Savva* sharpens nails, *Nikola* fastens;

in the English language:

If the grass do grow in *Janiveer*, it grows the worse for all the year; If *Candlemas Day* is cold and clear, there'll be two winters in that year; If *March* comes in like a lion, it will go out like a lamb; A wet *May* brings a load of hay; If *St Paul's day* be fair and clear, it does betide a happy year. But if it chance to snow or rain, then will be dear all kinds of grain;

in the German language:

*Barbara* clad in *white* dress foretells fine summer-time; If it rains a lot in *August*, it won't be the good for wine (blessing). When *Simon Juda* looks, trees are growing and grass is mowing. The weather on the day of *Saint Peter* is beautiful; one ought to view the cabbage and pea and others. ♣

Moreover, precedent cases in tokens can be connected with the certain vital cases, specific actions and also with national customs, traditions. We will give an example of paroemiologic reflection of precedent cases in a work of art of a Russian author:

“Some time later, little or much, I felt touch of a bony but warm hand on my forehead – everything in my consciousness responded to this touch, something tickled my forehead, face, it waned in my mouth, - I licked my lips and smiled. – *Thursday salt!* – The best miraculous “grannies” remedy. *Salt, which is consecrated on a great Thursday, before Easter!* A pack of such salt is kept in the corner behind the icon, but have you forgotten about the prayer, which is created during it...?” [12].

Adducted fragment illustrates the depth of background knowledge, connected with the precedent name *Thursday salt*. According to the facts of explanatory dictionary of living great Russian language of V.I. Dahl, salt, “burnt in great Thursday with lees of kvass”, got the name *Thursday salt* and considered as effective means of all diseases [13]. As a rule, such salt was kept under roofing. Thus, the set of associations, prompted in the consciousness of addressee as a precedent name *Thursday salt* is extremely broad and connects conception of recipient with the various kinds of information.

The following token used in American calendar points at precedent characteristics of winter months, peculiar to the climate of America:

“Though February is notoriously associated with floods, as in the appellation ‘February fill-dyke’, it is statistically one of the driest months of the year.” [14].

In the following fragment of the work of Achleitner, behavior of one of heroes of novel is also explained owing to referring to superstitious mark, action of which is based on explaining of certain precedent actions. Particularly, superstition runs, that one ought to have a handkerchief at the court, which is used to tie up the chin of the dead. If you wipe the face with the help of this handkerchief, this case will not be lost and the judge will not be able to pronounce sentence, till the knot is untied:

“Emaciated figure of Windschwenters applied through the door, holding a handkerchief in his right hand and from the first step on the way to the chancery he dried his face with triumphal particularity. Ehrenstrasser was alerted; the temperature did not arise the necessity to dry sweat from the face. The judge might think unintentionally about superstitions, which existed in many different variations and were used specially before trial procedure.

For this reason Ehrenstrasser paid special attention to the behavior of this peasant. *After Widschwenter dried his face he was encouraged, then he tied a knot on the handkerchief, which he hold tight in his hand...*” [15]. Thus, projection of ethnolinguistic consciousness on semantic expanse of language and language of tokens, in particular, finds its reflection in specific, for every separately taken nation, way of nomination of subjects/phenomenon of reality, finding form of set sayings, presenting “revelation of national life philosophy” and reflecting cognitive experience of interaction with environment.

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