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METAPHORICAL AND METONYMIC MODIFICATION OF PRECEDENT UNITS IN NEWSPAPER HEADLINES

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Abstract: Precedent units encompass established idioms, proverbs, citations from canonical works, and names of historical or mythological figures that are deeply embedded in the collective memory of a specific nation or society. In journalistic discourse, these units are strategically employed within headlines to provide immediate cognitive impact and enhance the emotional-expressive resonance of the text. Consequently, the semantic analysis of precedent units represents a significant area of inquiry in modern linguistics. This article examines the metaphorical and metonymic modifications of precedent units within the context of media discourse.

Keywords: precedent units, journalistic discourse, semantic shift, semantic modification, metaphor, metonymy, emotional expressiveness, pragmatic function.

Annotatsiya: Pretsedent birliklar — muayyan xalq, jamiyat vakillari uchun juda yaxshi tanish bo'lgan, milliy xotirada muhrlangan tayyor iboralar, maqollar, mashhur asarlardan iqtiboslar, tarixiy shaxslar yoki afsonaviy personajlarning nomlaridir. Gazeta sarlavhalarida ular o'quvchi e'tiborini darhol tortish va matnga hissiy-eksperessiv bo'yoq berish uchun qo'llanadi. Shu nuqtayi nazardan, tilshunoslikda pretsedent birliklarning semantik tahlili muhim ahamiyat kasb etadi. Ushbu maqolada pretsedent birliklarning metaforik va metonimik modifikatsiyasi haqida so'z borgan

Kalit so'zlar: pretsedent birliklar, publisistik matn, ma'no ko'chishi, semantik modifikatsiya, metafora, metonomiya, hissiy bo'yoqdorlik, pragmatik vazifa.

Аннотация: Прецедентные единицы представляют собой устойчивые фразеологизмы, паремии, цитаты из канонических произведений, а также имена исторических личностей и мифологических персонажей, зафиксированные в коллективной памяти и обладающие высокой степенью узнаваемости в рамках конкретной лингвокультуры. В газетных заголовках данные единицы выступают инструментом аттракции внимания реципиента и средством придания тексту экспрессивно-стилистической тональности. В связи с этим семантический анализ прецедентных феноменов является актуальным направлением современной лингвистики. В статье исследуются механизмы метафорической и метонимической модификации прецедентных единиц в публицистическом дискурсе.

Ключевые слова: прецедентные единицы, публицистический текст, перенос значения, семантическая модификация, метафора, метонимия, эмоционально-экспрессивная окраска, прагматическая функция.

Introduction

In modern mass media discourse, one of the most important communicative tasks is to convey information in a concise, expressive, and impactful form. Newspaper and online headlines, in particular, play a crucial role in attracting the reader's attention, previewing the content of an article, and expressing the author's evaluative attitude. For this reason, journalists and publicists widely employ various expressive linguistic devices, among which precedent units occupy a special place. Precedent units are culturally significant references such as historical events, famous personalities, mythological images, literary characters, proverbs, and set expressions that are firmly embedded in the collective memory of a speech community. They activate background knowledge and associations already stored in the reader's mind, making it possible to communicate complex meanings in a brief and vivid form.The use of precedent units in media headlines is often associated with their metaphorical and metonymic modification. In this process, a precedent unit retains its original historical or cultural meaning while being adapted to a new communicative context. As a result, a semantic bridge is created between the original and the new context, generating a strong connotative and pragmatic effect. For example, Watergate scandal, RMS Titanic, Icarus, Gargantua and Pantagruel, and Pandora's Box are frequently used to figuratively describe political, economic, and social developments.From the perspective of Cognitive Linguistics, metaphor and metonymy are regarded as fundamental conceptual mechanisms of human thought. They enable people to understand complex phenomena through familiar and culturally salient images. Therefore, the metaphorical and metonymic modification of precedent units should be viewed not only as a stylistic phenomenon but also as a complex linguo-cognitive process that reflects the interaction between language, thought, and culture.The relevance of this topic is determined by the increasing use of intertextual and linguocultural devices in contemporary media discourse. The employment of precedent units enhances the emotional impact of information, conveys implicit evaluation, and encourages readers to interpret texts more deeply. At the same time, the metaphorical and metonymic transformation of these units has not yet been sufficiently systematized, especially in comparative studies based on French and Uzbek media materials, which makes this research scientifically significant.

The aim of this study is to identify the metaphorical and metonymic modification of precedent units in newspaper headlines and to analyze their semantic transformations and pragmatic functions. Particular attention is paid to the denotative and connotative layers of meaning, their role in activating cultural memory, and their emotional and evaluative influence on the reader.

The findings of this research contribute to a deeper understanding of the role and functions of precedent units in media discourse, clarify the conceptual nature of metaphor and metonymy, and enrich ongoing studies in Semantics, Pragmatics, stylistics, and linguocultural studies.

Precedent units' metaphorical and metonymic modification is the process by which existing cultural codes are transformed through figurative devices in newspaper headlines, generating new meanings. This modification preserves the original semantics of precedent units while adapting them to a new context and creating additional layers of meaning.

Metaphorical modification is the transfer of a precedent unit from its original semantic domain to a completely different sphere, resulting in a relationship of similarity between the original and the new meanings.

«L'État, ce Gargantua avide» – Gargantua and Pantagruel features Gargantua as a greedy giant. In this headline, the state is criticized as an excessively large and voracious system that consumes resources. François Rabelais's humanistic humor is transformed into political satire.

«La boîte de Pandore du Brexit» – According to Greek mythology, Pandora opened a forbidden mysterious box, releasing evils, suffering, diseases, and misfortunes into the world. In

this headline, the expression refers to the numerous problems and unforeseen consequences associated with Brexit.

«Le Titanic de la finance» – RMS Titanic, the largest ship of its time, ended in disaster. In this headline, it symbolizes the collapse of the financial system.

«La tempête parfaite sur les marchés» – A meteorological term denoting the convergence of several factors that produce catastrophic consequences. In this context, it portrays the economic crisis as an inevitable natural disaster that has escaped human control.

Metonymy is not merely a stylistic device but a fundamental cognitive and linguistic mechanism that influences how people process, organize, and communicate information. Its significance extends across linguistics, literature, branding, artificial intelligence, and cognitive science. As research continues to explore the role of metonymy in meaning construction and conceptual organization, it becomes increasingly evident that this phenomenon occupies a central place in human thought and shapes both everyday language and the broader cultural and intellectual landscape.

Metonymic modification occurs when one part of a precedent unit represents the whole, or the whole represents a part, producing a new meaning through relations of contiguity.

Metonymy Based on Precedent Place Names

"What does Tashkent say about this?" – The reference is not to the city itself, but to the political leaders and institutions located in Tashkent.

«La route de la soie version 2.0» – The historical Silk Road, once associated with caravan trade, is used to represent contemporary geopolitics. The addition "2.0" emphasizes technological modernization.

Metonymy Based on Precedent Events

"What did not happen during Independence" – "Independence" is used metonymically to denote a historical period rather than the event itself.

«Le modèle suédois en question» – Refers to a specific socio-political model associated with Sweden.

«Un nouveau Watergate français?» – Watergate scandal serves as a precedent event symbolizing political scandal and abuse of power.

Metonymy Based on Literary and Cultural Names

"G'afur G'ulom resounded on the stage" – The reference is not to the writer himself, but to his literary works and artistic legacy. G'afur G'ulom

«Un Shakespeare de la finance» – William Shakespeare is used to describe an outstanding strategist in finance.

«Le Mozart de la programmation» – Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart symbolizes extraordinary talent in programming.

«Le Picasso de la cuisine» – Pablo Picasso represents innovation and creativity in culinary art.

«Icare de la haute finance» – Icarus, who flew too close to the sun and fell because of his pride, symbolizes the inevitability of financial collapse caused by excessive ambition.

«Le nouveau Père Noël de l'Élysée» – Santa Claus retains its positive associations, suggesting that the president promised generous benefits and "gifts" in his speech at the Élysée Palace.

Pragmatic Functions of Modification

The pragmatic functions of precedent unit modification include:

- Expressing complex concepts concisely – **«Watergate»**
- Intensifying emotional impact – **«Titanic»**
- Conveying implicit criticism – **«Gargantua»**
- Attracting the reader's attention – **«Icare»**

Conclusion

In conclusion, the metaphorical and metonymic modification of precedent units activates several mechanisms in newspaper headlines: transferring a precedent unit from its original domain to a new sphere, expressing a large amount of information through a concise cultural reference, and activating the reader's cultural memory. The interaction between the original and the new context gives rise to a third meaning. This process encourages readers not only to receive information but also to analyze it critically and to recognize intertextual connections.

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