



## PRECEDENT STATEMENTS AS A MEANS OF EXPRESSIVENESS IN NEWS STYLE

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**Abstract.** The article is devoted to the study of precedent statements in news style and their role in the creation of expressive and interpretative media texts. The paper considers precedent statements as culturally significant verbal units that activate background knowledge and enrich the semantic structure of a news message. It is argued that such statements are widely used in headlines and lead paragraphs to create evaluative overtones, attract the audience's attention, and establish intertextual links. The article concludes that precedent statements are an important instrument of stylistic influence in journalistic discourse and contribute to the transformation of factual news into culturally marked communication.

**Key words:** precedent phenomenon; precedent statement; news style; intertextuality; headline; media text; expressiveness.

**Introduction.** Modern journalism increasingly demonstrates that news style is not limited to neutrality and factuality. Alongside the informative function, news texts also perform interpretative, persuasive, and expressive functions. One of the most effective tools that support these functions is the use of precedent statements.

A precedent statement is a quotation, phrase, slogan, aphorism, or expression that is well known to members of a linguistic and cultural community. Such statements are reproduced in communication because they contain stable meanings and evoke widely shared associations. In news discourse, they are frequently transformed, abbreviated, or alluded to in order to adapt them to a current event.



The relevance of the topic is explained by the increasing presence of precedent statements in contemporary news materials, especially in headlines, political reporting, and online journalism. Their use demonstrates the intertextual and culturally loaded nature of media language. The purpose of this article is to examine the stylistic and communicative features of precedent statements in news style.

**Literary review.** Theoretical approaches to precedent phenomena are grounded in the study of intertextuality, cultural memory, and discourse pragmatics. Intertextuality is understood as the relation between texts through quotation, allusion, transformation, and reference. Within this framework, precedent statements are viewed as verbal units that preserve cultural and ideological significance.

Scholars emphasize that precedent statements can perform several functions. They may structure the author's position, intensify evaluation, and create a sense of solidarity with the audience. Since such statements are rooted in collective memory, they act as effective triggers of associations and cultural meanings.

In media discourse, special attention has been paid to transformed precedent statements. Journalists often modify well-known expressions in order to fit a current topic while preserving recognizability. This makes precedent statements an especially productive device in headline construction and publicistic writing.

**Material and methods.** The material of the research consists of English-language news texts selected from newspapers, online magazines, and digital news platforms. The sample includes headlines and short news passages in which precedent statements are used either in original or transformed form.

The research employs qualitative content analysis, contextual interpretation, and stylistic analysis. The selected examples were classified according to the source of the precedent statement, the degree of transformation, and the communicative



function it performs in the news context. Special attention was paid to evaluative and expressive meanings produced by such statements.

**Results and discussion.** The study demonstrates that precedent statements are an effective means of expressiveness in news style. Their use allows journalists to condense complicated meanings into compact verbal forms and to connect current events with already known cultural formulas. For example, when a headline transforms a phrase such as To be or not to be into a political or economic context, the result is both informative and stylistically marked.

One of the most frequent functions of precedent statements is attention-grabbing. Since they are familiar and recognizable, they attract the reader's interest and make the headline more memorable. Another important function is evaluative. By using a transformed quotation or slogan, the journalist introduces an emotional or ironic perspective without expressing it directly.

Precedent statements also serve a persuasive function. They guide the interpretation of the reported event by framing it through a culturally loaded expression. In this case, the statement acts as a ready-made interpretative formula. This demonstrates that news discourse often reflects reality not directly but through culturally mediated models.

Another significant feature is transformation. In most journalistic contexts, precedent statements are not reproduced literally. Journalists replace one or more components, shorten the original phrase, or adapt its grammar to current events. This transformation creates novelty while preserving the allusive effect.

At the same time, precedent statements require cultural competence from the recipient. Their full meaning can only be decoded if the audience recognizes the original expression. Therefore, these units reveal the strong dependence of media discourse on shared linguistic and cultural knowledge.



**Conclusion.** Precedent statements represent an important stylistic resource in modern news discourse. They enhance expressiveness, introduce evaluative meanings, and strengthen the intertextual character of media communication. Their use in news style demonstrates that journalistic language is not only informative but also interpretative and culturally marked.

The analysis shows that precedent statements are especially effective in headlines and other strong positions of the text, where brevity and impact are essential. Their communicative success depends on the reader's ability to recognize the source expression and reconstruct its associative meaning. Future studies may investigate the translation of precedent statements in international journalism and their transformation in online media communication.

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