

PRECEDENT PHENOMENA:
THE ROLE OF CULTURAL REFERENCE IN DOSTOEVSKY'S NOVEL *DEMONS*

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ABSTRACT

The thesis addresses the questions of precedent phenomena (culturally specific language units) functioning in a literary text. Analyzing Dostoevsky's novel *Demons*, the research demonstrates precedent phenomena as a tool that may serve multiple purposes in a literary work. This idea is defined in terms of direct and palimpsest functions. Precedent phenomena used in direct functions reflect people's needs to describe present situations, influence their interlocutors, highlight their belonging to a certain group or make their speech more elaborate. Simultaneously, fulfilling one of these direct functions, precedent phenomena may serve for other purposes at the level of author-reader communication. Whenever a character uses a precedent phenomenon to animate the conversation the author defines him as a member of a certain group or makes fun of him.