THE IMPACT OF THE ORALITY UPON THE VERBAL STRUCTURES USED IN ROMANIAN WRITTEN PRESS

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Abstract

The purpose of the present paper is to illustrate with eloquent examples the way of manifestation of orality within popular or spoken verbal structures used in the written version of the journalistic style. The journalistic style products are materialized both in audio-visual and in written press. The journalistic style products contain a broad and diverse range of elements specific to the spoken version of language. These elements are present both in printed and electronic media and belong to the phonetic level, to the vocabulary or to the grammar of Romanian language. The high degree of accessibility and variation determine us to analyse a diversity of Romanian journalistic texts belonging to the electronic media. Our analysis based on these texts will end up with an inventory of verbal structures specific to spoken language but present in these written texts and dominated by a well-marked oral character. The oral character of the written press is the result of its source and of its main purpose. The source of the journalistic products is the everyday language and the main purpose of these texts is to persuade the various audiences. Thus, the purpose of these written texts is not to be literary, but to be understandable by everyday people.

Keywords:
Verbal structure, Romanian written press, spoken language, orality, written language.

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1. Introduction

Romanian written press tends to use a lot of verbal structures specific to spoken register of the language while the written register generally does not prefer these structures. There are many marks specific to the oral register of Romanian language at the level of Phonetics, Lexicology, Morphology or Syntax. Some of the morphological marks are expressed by the structure of some verbal tenses, and this is the subject we are interested in for this paper. We have chosen for our demonstration seven newspapers which can be consulted on-line and we attached a hyperlink to each quote we have exposed in order to assure an easy access to the context from which we have extracted the illustrative paragraphs. In some situations, the context may be important to understand the preference for a specific construction.

2. The structure of some Romanian tenses used in written press

The press’ language is a diverse and heterogeneous one providing accessibility for a large and mixed mass of people who need to be informed. The differences presented by the publicist style beside the other styles consist of the variety of language existent in each single newspaper where the spoken and the written, the common and the literate interfere and provide a discourse written in a common language understandable by every man in the country. The impact of the orality upon the written press materializes into a more complicated discontinuous style with popular or archaic elements inside of the verbal group. We will speak about these peculiarities of the verbal group used in the language of press in this paper.

2.1. First future tense of the Indicative mood (ro. Indicativul viitor I)

In order to express future actions, the expression of the Romanian future tense implies many structures. The most common structure accepted as literary and used in the written register of the language is the one constructed with the auxiliary a vrea/a voi

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(materialized in the following forms: *voi, vei, va, vom, veți, vor*) and the infinitive as in the examples:

Nu cred că *voi* mai merge la psiholog vreodată. (I don’t think I’ll ever go to a psychologist again.) (DV, 28.03.2015).

În schimbul donațiiei, *vei* primi ghetele kangoo jumps pentru a putea participa la una dintre cele șase sesiuni de mișcare. (In consideration of your donation, you’ll get the kangoo jumps boots for free to be able to participate in one of the six movement sessions.) (AP, 28.03.2015).

România *va trece* la ora oficială de vară în noaptea de 28/29 martie, ora 3:00 devenind ora 4:00. (Romania will move on to the official summer time in the night of 28/29 of March, 3 o’clock becoming 4 o’clock.) (IN, 28.03.2015).

Pe lângă Simona Halep și Monica Niculescu, *vom avea* o sportivă și în proba de dublu. (Beside Simona Halep and Monica Niculescu, we’ll also have a sportswoman in the competition of double.) (A, 28.03.2015).

«Nu vă *veți putea* da seama de ce v-am lăsat eu», spunea Constantin Brâncuși despre creația sa trudelnică și pătimașă. («You’ll not be able to realize what I did let you», said Constantin Brâncuși about his hard working and passionate creation.) (A, 28.03.2015).

Pentru că șefii lor se *vor întoarce* în capitale și *vor zice*: opinia publică vrea să facem ceva, ce facem? (Because their bosses are going to return to capitals and they’re going to say: the public opinion wants us doing something, what are we doing?) (DV, 28.03.2015).

The infinitive preceded by each of the following mobile particles: *oii, aii (ei, ei, oi), o (a), om, ați (eți, iți, oți), or* (these particles are variants of the auxiliary *a voi*), realizes another paradigm for expressing the future tense. The forms of this paradigm are not literary accepted, but they are common in the spoken register of the language as in these examples:

Nu știu ce *or să obțină*, dar totul se va baza pe neseriozitatea noastră. (They don’t know what they’ll get, but everything will found on our unreliability.) (A, 23.08.2014).

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OK, colegii or să spună că nu există nici o uniune de creatori în domeniul dansului care să colecteze banii respectivi. (OK, our colleagues are going to say that there is no union of creators in the area of dancing to collect the money.) (DV, 28.03.2015).

Beside this structure, more frequent in the spoken register seem to be other composed forms constructed with the auxiliary a avea at present tense and the present conjunctive. It is important to mention that these structures are more common for the first and the second person singular and for the third person plural. The other forms specific to the first and the second person plural (avem să lucrăm, aveți să lucreți) and the third person singular (are să lucrezeți) are rather uncommon. Here are some examples chosen to illustrate these facts:

Am să introduc personal un proiect de lege printre colegii mei. (I’m going to introduce a bill to my colleagues, personally.) (AC, 26.07.2014).

Am să te iubesc până la sfârșitul lumii. (I’m going to love you until the end of the world.) (JN, 22.08.2014).

Ați să îl regreți pe Băsescu. (You’re going to regret Băsescu.) (AP, 22.08.2014).

Diferențele de preț la medicamente n-au să dispară. (The price differences of the medicines are not going to disappear.) (TMD, 22.08.2014).

A very common structure of the future used in the everyday spoken Romanian is the one constructed with a mobile element o and the present conjunctive. The mobile element o is constant and invariable. It has the same form for each person and number as it can be seen below:

Îmi doresc, dar nu cred că o să apuc, nici eu, nici copiii mei. (I wish, but I don’t think I’ll get it, nor me neither my children.) (A, 23.08.2014).

Ministrul Educației o să dea o lege prin care cei ce vor lua examenul la facultate, vor fi declarați destul de studenți. (The Education Department will give a law according to which those

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who will pass the admission exam to the faculty, will be avowed students enough.) (AC, 1.08.2014).

Bine că deocamdată nu mai sint... dar mi-e frică de momentul în care o să reapară pe firmament! (It’s good that for the moment they don’t exist... but I’m afraid of the moment when they’ll appear on the firmament!) (DV, 28.03.2015).

O să îl regreti dintr-un singur motiv, acela că eu, dacă ajung președinte, nu fac pact de coabitare. (You’re going to regret him for one single reason, that if I become a president, I won’t make any miscegenation pact.) (AP, 22.08.2014).

Se-ngroașă gluma: a trecut Gâdea în opoziție. Și Ponta o să facă Sinteza zilei. (The worst came: Gâdea has passed to the opposition. And Ponta will make the Daily synthesis.) (DV, 31.07.2014).

O să fie greu la liceu” (It’s going to be hard to the high-school.) (AC, 19.07.2014).

Nu mă mai uit la ştiri, la antena, din cauza ei... cind o s-o schimbe, o să mă uit... îmi transmite angoase! (I don’t watch news anymore, at Antena, because of it... when they’ll change it, I’ll watch... it delivers anxiety to me.) (DV, 28.03.2015).

După ce o să finalizăm discuția cu cei de la CE o să dăm exemple multe publicului larg. (After we’ll have finished the discussion to the ones from CE, we’re going to provide many examples to the audience.) (AP, 3.08.2014).

Dar nu-i nimic, noi o să-l iertăm și o să mergem mai departe, pentru că așa face o democrație adevărată. (But don’t mention it, we’re going to forgive him and we’re going to go forward because this is how a real democracy does.) (DV, 28.03.2015).

Dacă mergeți pînă atunci, sigur o să găsiți o masă liberă. (If you go until then, you will surely find a table available.) (DV, 7.08.2014).

All these forms are used with the same significance of expressing future actions and they alternate in the language of press. There are preferences for each of these alternatively forms, and sometimes there are situations where the writer or the quoted speaker is not consequent and oscillates in choosing between two or more forms as it can be seen in the examples:
Dacă pierde o să- l apăr, dacă câștigă am să- l înjur. (If he loses, I’ll protect him, if he wins, I’ll damn him.) (SS, 22.08.2014).

Ca să vină în ajutorul DNA, țăranii din Olt au declarat că, pe viitor, când își vor mai îngropa decedații, o să aiibă grijă să trecă pe cruce și numele pictorilor care are tablouri acolo. (In order to help DNA, the peasants from Olt have declared that, in the future, when they’ll bury their deceased again, they’ll be careful to note on the cross the names of the painters who have got pictures there, too). (AC, 28.03.2015).

2.2. The presumptive mood (ro. Modul prezumtiv)

Romanian language presents an analytical mood of uncertainty with homonymic forms with some structures of other moods. The perfect tense of this mood presents a paradigm synonym with the paradigm of the second future being constructed with the auxiliary a fi at first future tense and the past participle. The first future of the verb a fi is constructed with the auxiliary a vrea/ a voi and the infinitive. The forms containing phonetic variants of the auxiliary are common in spoken language and we have identified many such constructions in the discourse of press as we show in the following examples:

De ce n-oi fi tras, domnule? (Why would I not have shot, mister?) (DV, 28.03.2015).

E clar... nu e obiectivă și imparțială... n-are școală de televiziune... cum o fi ajuns la <Observator>? (It’s clear... she’s not objective or fair... she hasn’t graduated a school of television... how would she reach to <Observator>?) (DV, 28.03.2015).

Bancnotele acelea, cîte or fi fost, au ajuns, deci, să fie spălate. (Those notes, how many they should have been, they reached, so, to be washed.) (DV, 28.03.2015).

There are also common some forms of the present tense of the presumptive mood without gerund, containing only the auxiliary conjugated for each person and number. These forms are mainly

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7 The auxiliary a vrea/a voi present the same phonetic variants as we have illustrated in 2.1.
9 The present tense form of the presumptive mood is constructed with the same auxiliary a fi at the first future tense and the Romanian gerund. The Romanian gerund is similar to the present participle in English.
common to the spoken register of language but they are also present in the language of press as in the examples:

Măcar de-ar avea voce, dacă tot cîntă... a fi io cam surdă acuma, dar pur şi simplu mă poluează fonic! (If only he had the voice, while he sings... I might be pretty deaf, but he simply contaminates me phonically.) (DV, 28.03.2015).

În regulă, veţi spune; atunci de unde atâtea resurse să vină cu sacul la toţi copiii, că doar sacul ăla n-o fi bugetul acordat asistaţilor social din România? (All right, you’ll say; then where from so many resources to come by the bag to all children, would it not be that bag the budget offered to the social-aided from Romania?) (AC, 28.03.2015).

O fi un preţ, dar nu vrem să-l plătim. (There would be a price, but we don’t want paying it.) (DV, 28.03.2015).

2.3. The compound perfect of the Indicative mood (ro. Indicativul pe perfect compus)

The compound perfect is an analytical verbal tense generally constructed with the auxiliary a avea at present and the past participle as we show below:

După o muncă de 30 de ani a unui profesor din Spania am reuşit să cumpăr de la el coral produs în laborator. (After a thirty year working life of a teacher from Spain, I got to buy from him coral made in the laboratory.) (AP, 28.03.2015).

Cum să nu fii dezamăgit de țara în care te-ai grăbit să te întorci, cu educația desăvârșită de mari profesori ai lumii. (How could you not being disappointed by the country where you have hurried up to return, with the education completed by great teachers of the world.) (DV, 28.03.2015).

Drumul de la agricultura tradițională la industrializarea masivă s-a făcut cu forța și n-a reușit deloc bine. (The way from the traditional agriculture to the big industrialization has been made by force and it hasn’t been a success at all.) (DV, 28.03.2015).

După 25 de ani de importuri de produse și „proceduri“ din Occident, sigur, am ajuns mult mai departe decît eram. (After 25 years of importations of products and „procedures“ from the
Occident, we have surely reached much further than we were being. (DV, 28.03.2015).

În cazul în care ați pierdut o cheie, înlocuiți imediat încuietoarea sau lacătul! (If you lost a key, replace immediately the latch or the lock!) (AP, 28.03.2015).

Simbolic, 2015 lampioane au fost lansate, de Ora Pământului, din Piața Tricolorului din Târgoviște. (As a symbol, 2015 lanterns have been initiated, on the Earth Hour, from the Tricolour Square in Târgoviște.) (AP, 28.03.2015).

This is the literary admitted form, but there is conserved in the spoken language an old Romanian northern specific form of the compound perfect. This structure specific to the northern dialects is constructed with the mobile particle o(r) for the third person singular and plural\textsuperscript{10}. The presence of this archaic structure is observed in the language of Romanian press in order to present the authentic language of the North Romanian people as in the examples:

Poveștile „Amintirilor” au fost scrise «într-o zi în care Nică s-o dus la scăldat și când a ieșit din apă s-o trezit că i s-o furat hainele și s-o înervat și o sărit gardul și o scris Amintiri din copilărie». (The stories of „The Memories” have been written «on a day when Nică went for a swim and when he got out of water he realized that his clothes have been stolen and he got mad and he jumped the fence and he has written Childhood memories».) (AC, 28.03.2015).

Nu atât cât trebuie plătit, că și ăla-i mult, ci faptul că chestia asta s-o pătit deja o dată (...) Deci probabil că nu el o generat-o. (Not how much has to be paid, that being much enough, but the fact that this stuff has already been paid once (...). Thus probably he hasn’t generated it.) (AP, 28.03.2015).

Nu știu câți ani la rând am fost cu Țara Oașului la București, a fost o căldură și le-am fierat de acasă, acolo le-o mai încălziț un pic. Am zis că nu trec, că s-o acrit, da’ când am văzut cum vin oamenii și mănâncă... N-o rămas nomic din ele, așa oameni mâncători n-am văzut, probabil au fost cei mai flămânzi. (I don’t know for how many years I have been with Country of Oas to Bucharest, there was such a heat and I had boiled them at home, and there they have heated them up for a little. I said I’m not passing, because...)

\textsuperscript{10} GALR I (2008): 415.
they should have been soured, but when I saw how people come and eat... There hasn't lasted anything of them, such eater people I have never seen, and probably they were the hungriest people.) (AP, 28.03.2015).

O mai fost moară la Surduc — o ars, o mai fost la Zimbor — o ars, o fost la Românași — s-o prăpădit toată. (There has also been a mill in Surduc – it has been burnt, there has been another one in Romanasi – it has been destroyed.) (AP, 28.03.2015).

Nici accele două clase nu le-am gătat, o venit armata, o fo război, n-o mai fost școală, gata (…) Toți o fugit, o plecat, că aici dacă lucră la om umblă în batjocură cu tine (…) S-o mai schimbat costumul, că nu lasă să puie cânepă, c-o țis că-s droguri, amu te-or duce în pușcărie de pui cânepă. S-o schimbat că o fost prea mult de lucru, o trebuit a coase de mână toate, apoi așa, aea tineri mai bine o luat un pantalon, o bluză și s-o dus. (I haven’t finished those two graded either, there came the army, it was war, there wasn’t school anymore, and this is it (…) Everyone run, everyone left, because here, if they work for a boss he treads you underfoot (…) The costume has been changed, because they don’t allow to grow hemp, they said it is a hard drug, now they would imprison you if you put hemp. It has changed because there was too much of work, they had to sew everything by hand, then, the youngsters have better got some trousers, a blouse and they left.) (AP, 28.03.2015).

3. Why using spoken specific structures in the written press?

We consider that there are three main reasons (or necessities) for which the written press absorbs and uses multiple forms specific to the spoken language register and each of these reasons is generated by the general necessities of the press’ readers. Thus, the orality has influenced the written press as a result of the readers’ need for:

- Generality,
- Authenticity,
- Identity.

The written press, as its name indicates, belongs to the written register of a language, but it collects the material especially from oral sources. This is why the written language used in press shows a lot of marks characteristic to the spoken register. The verbal structures
presented in this paper are extremely common in everyday spoken language and the press assumes them because it has a **general** character being addressed to a large mass of people. A discourse containing this type of structures is meant to be understandable and assumed by its readers who are very different people belonging to different regions of the country and to different social classes, speaking different dialects and working in different areas. The **ordinary** aspect of language is easier accepted and understood by every person, from the ordinary to the intellectual, and the press’ aim is to be read by everybody. A common discourse is preferred to an elevated one because it can be understood by every type of person, both by the ordinary people and the intellectual ones. In the same time, an elevated exigent discourse will be understandable only by the last ones and this is not an aim of the mass-media.

The **authenticity** of the real language is another important aspect respected by the press in constructing its material. This is why an article has to be written in the same way it was related by the **original** speakers. The regional language peculiarities have to be conserved and communicated in the very same form they are used by the real people who live in every area of a country. Different areas of a country develop different dialects of the language of that country and these dialects present specific peculiarities of structure and use which provide important distinctions both for the regional readers and the historians.

People want to **identify** themselves with what they read. A national paper of press unlike a regional one can be read by the people of the entire country and these readers have to feel that what they read is addressed to themselves as well as it is addressed to every person in each part of that country. Thus, the **identity** is very important to be respected by a press which want to improve itself and to be read at a high level and this is why there are so many marks of orality in the written press.

4. **Conclusion**

It have to be mentioned that sometimes the press looks like a transcript of an oral discourse because it is made by speakers and it is read by people who create the subjects for press. The unusual structures we can find in the papers belonging to this style are natural for common Romanian people and they accept them as a normal way of expression.
in a common everyday language. The fact that a past or a future action is expressed in a written text with the same spontaneous form a speaker would use it in speaking is not a problem or a mistake from the readers’ point of view. It is just a way to make the reader feel part of what he or she reads.

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**References**


**Corpus**

AP = Agerpres [http://www.agerpres.ro](http://www.agerpres.ro)
DV = Dilema Veche [http://dilemaveche.ro](http://dilemaveche.ro)
SS = Stiri pe surse [http://www.stiripesurse.ro](http://www.stiripesurse.ro)
TMD = Timpul.md [http://www.timpul.md](http://www.timpul.md)
Biodata

Larisa BULAI attended the courses of the Faculty of Letters at University “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” from Iași and graduated with the Bachelor’s degree in 2010 in the areas of study of Romanian language and literature, English language and literature and RLT/ELT and with the Master’s degree in 2012 in the area of General and Romanian Linguistics. She was admitted at the Doctoral School of Philology at University “Al. I. Cuza” in the same year. Currently, Larisa Bulai is a PhD Student in the last year of preparing the Doctoral thesis. She published the following articles, *Synthetic vs. analytical in Romanian and English verbal structures. Diachronic contrastive research upon the old language, The Bible from Bucharest versus King James’ Holy Bible, Study on the utility of contrastive analysis in the context of authentic texts corpus development, The impact of the orality upon the verbal structures used in Romanian written press Comun versus științific în textul medical din ziarele de informație generală* and *The Future Indicative paradigm in Romanian language of the 16th, 17th, 18th centuries and nowadays*. Larisa Bulai has also taught English Language for the last 4 years as a Secondary School teacher.