TRANSLATIONAL PERSPECTIVES ON SOME LINGUISTIC STRUCTURES OF THE BIBLICAL DISCOURSE: A COMPARATIVE - CONTRASTIVE ANALYSIS (ROMANIAN, FRENCH AND ENGLISH) *

Mihaela Munteanu Siserman, Anamaria Fălăuş
Senior Lecturer, PhD, Technical University of Cluj-Napoca, North University Centre of Baia Mare, Lecturer, PhD, Technical University of Cluj-Napoca, North University Centre of Baia Mare

Abstract: The analysis of some linguistic structures that are defining for the biblical discourse will capture both, the differences and the similarities of construction encountered in all the three languages taken into discussion. The paper attempts to focus on some morphosyntactic elements (the categories of tense and mood being mostly emphasized) and on the changes that might appear at the level of canonical word order, for example emphatic constructions and verb elliptical structures, some discourse related issues being also mentioned.

Keywords: biblical text, comparative analysis, morphosyntactic level, archaic, sententious character

1. Introduction

This research attempts to investigate, from a comparative perspective (emphasizing not only the differences, but also the similarities) the way in which the biblical discourse is constructed and functions at various linguistic levels. The research methodology adopted is related, on the one hand, to the principles of contrastive analysis which attempt to identify the convergent / divergent elements of the three linguistic systems in order to see whether they lead to a (quasi-)identical trans-coding of the message. On the other hand, the biblical discourse can be considered a type of specialized language, with its own defining features, in terms of structure and functionality at different linguistic levels (from lexical to stylistic or pragmatic components).

2. The lexical, semantic level

The basic constitutive element of each language, irrespective of its functional role (common, everyday language or specialized language) is represented by its lexical and semantic baggage. The material encountered at this level can be found in various dictionaries (general, explanatory, encyclopedic, specialized, terminological, bi- / multilingual etc.). In what concerns the lexis of the biblical discourse[1], we consider that a comparative analysis should first and foremost focus on the cult and / or dogmatic differences that define various Christian denominations (Orthodox, Catholic, Protestant, each of them with their fractions), differences that can be en- / decoded at a terminological level. On the other hand, if we were to mention a defining feature of the Orthodox biblical text, this would be its highly archaic character, or, more precisely, its "archaic intention" [10, p. 93], inscribed in the very spirit of the Orthodox cult tradition.

3. The morphosyntactic level

In what concerns the two levels of language (the morphological and syntactic ones), the grammatical analysis, in most of the cases, cannot treat them separately, their reciprocal conditioning being given, on the one hand, by the morphological ascription that a lexico-grammatical unity has in the language system, and on the other, by its inherent syntactic character (the only exceptions being the connective elements: prepositions and prepositional phrases, conjunctions and conjunctional phrases).

The contrastive-comparative analysis of the fragments taken from the biblical text usually emphasizes a (quasi-)identical equivalence of the three linguistic systems at a morphosyntactic level, the differences that appear being given by way in which each linguistic system is organized and structured. For example, the structuring of the lexico-semantic information can be realized differently at the level of speech parts, whether we speak about individual lexemes or phrases:

ro. *a merge înainte* – fr. *avançer* – eng. *to advance / to go or move forward*; ro. *a vizita* – fr. *rendre visite* – eng. *to visit / to pay a visit*; ro. *a face justiție cuiva* – fr. *rendre justice à quelqu'un*– eng. *to do justice to somebody*; ro. *a face + adjectiv* (*fericit, nefericit* etc.) – fr. *rendre + adjectif* (*heureux, malheureux,* etc.) – eng. *to make + adjective (happy / sad)*; ro. *a depune mărturie* – fr. *rendre temoignage* – eng. *to testify*;

The morphosyntactic analysis has tried to underline the most defining linguistic aspects for this type of discourse. Without attempting to realize an exhaustive study, we are going to mention some of these aspects, more precisely those connected to the verbal paradigm.

3.1. The alternation ro. **perfect compus** – fr. **passé simple** (ro. perfect simplu) – eng. **past simple** (ro. perfect compus)

In what concerns Romanian and French, both linguistic systems make use of two different past tenses (ro. perfect compus / perfect simplu or fr. passé composé / passé simple). Through a comparative analysis, we have noticed that, quite frequently, the Romanian 'perfect compus' (or passé composé) has 'passé simple' as its French counterpart. The English version, on the other hand, uses Past Simple in the same context, this tense being the Romanian equivalent of 'perfect compus'.

ro. *Și* ***s-a iscat*** *o neînțelegere între uncenicii lui Ioan și un Iudeu, asupra curățirii* (Ioan 3:25)
fr. *Or il* ***arriva*** *qu'une discussion concernant la purification opposa un Juif à des disciples de Jean* (Jean 3:25)
eng. *Then there* ***arose*** *a question between some of John's disciples and the Jews about purifying* (John 3:25)

ro. *Și în vremea aceea, regele Irod* ***a pus mâna*** *pe unii din Biserică, ca să-i piardă* (Fapte 12:1)
fr. *À cette époque-là, le roi Hérode* ***entreprit*** *de mettre à mal certains membres de l'église* (Actes des Apôtres 12:1).
eng. *Now about that time Herod the king* ***stretched*** *forth his hands to vex certain of the church.* (Acts 12:1)

The temporal value associated with the Romanian 'perfect compus' or the English Simple Past is that of a complete verbal action, and from the point of view of textual grammar (mostly the theory of enunciation), simple past (or 'perfect compus') expresses an action or a state that precedes the moment of speech, without making reference to other temporal landmarks [4, p. 250], this form pointing towards the idea of anteriority with no mentioning of the present moment, or "l'expression d'une antériorité par rapport au présent dans l'énonciation de discours" [2, p. 268]. Indeed, English grammar stresses the use of Past Simple in contexts which express complete actions or events which happened at a stated past time or complete past actions not connected to the present with a stated or implied time reference [3, p. 236].
The occurrence of passé simple in French, even if it suggests, as in the case of the Romanian passé composé and the English Simple Past, a complete past action or state, is dictated by its constant reference to the moment of narration (*temps du récit*[2]), and its belonging to the field of literary language, for which it is considered to be defining. From the point of view of textual typologies, passé simple can be usually encountered in narrative paragraphs[3]:

dans des propositions indépendentes, coordonnées ou juxtaposées, dans des principales avec leurs subordonnées […] pour poser, dans l'époque du passé, des événements dans leur succession chronologique. Les passés simples se succédant, entretiennent des rapports à l'intérieur d'une chaîne causale qui intègre et rend solidaires les uns des autres les faits qu'ils dénotent et qui construisent de la sorte la *cohérence temporelle* [s.n.] d'un monde passé, réel ou fictif. [2, p. 277]

The fact that the Romanian version of the biblical text opted for 'perfectul compus'[4] can be related to the oral character that this verbal form can bestow on the biblical discourse which is a narrative type of text by default. In English, besides various other uses, the Simple Past is a constant of narratives meant to express past fictional or true events. Due to its recurrence, there has also "grown up a convention of using the past for narratives even when the events portrayed are supposed to take place in the future, as in science fiction." [15, p. 323]

There are also situations in which all the three languages use 'perfectul compus'(ro.) (fr. passé composé or eng. Simple Past) in order to render the same idea:

ro. **perfect compus** – fr. **passé composé –** eng. **Simple Past**

ro. *Şi* ***a căzut*** *ploaia şi* ***au venit*** *râurile mari şi* ***au suflat*** *vânturile şi* ***au izbit*** *în casa aceea, şi* ***a căzut****. Şi căderea ei* ***a fost mare*** (Matei 7:27)
fr. *La pluie* ***est tombée****, les torrents* ***sont venus****, les vents* ***ont soufflé****; ils* ***sont venus*** *battre cette maison, elle* ***s'est écroulée*** *et grande fut sa ruine*. (Mathieu 7:27)
eng. And the rain **descended**, and the floods **came**, and the winds **blew**, and **beat** upon that house; and it **fell**: and great was the fall of it. (Matthew 7:27)

In terms of aspect, the Simple Past (or its Romanian and French variants, 'perfectul compus' or 'passé composé') brings forward a perfective valence (which is also emphasized by the French and Romanian terminology), indicating a definite, complete action or state [4, p. 251]. The above mentioned example evokes a series of successive actions, happening one after another and culminating with a resulting, cumulative effect, emblematic of the unchaining of the forces of nature.

3.2. This second part of our analysis attempts to take into discussion a grammatical issue that seems to be defining for the morphosyntactic system of the Romanian language, and which can have various counterparts (equivalent linguistic structures) in English or French due to various constraints imposed by the act of translation, and the meaning intended to be preserved or rendered. The structure in question is 'gerunziul' (the Romanian terminology), and it has a multitude of occurrences in the biblical text, as an impersonal non-finite verbal form. Its corresponding verbal paradigm in French and English is the Present Participle[5].

The comparative-contrastive analysis of the biblical text of the three linguistic systems taken into discussion has led to the following situations of linguistic equivalence:

a) The three idiomatic systems make use of the same verbal form:

- ro: **gerunziu** – fr. **participe présent** (with a verbal character)–eng. **Present Participle** (verbal character)

ro. *Dar el **cunoscând** gândurile lor, le-a zis...* (Luca 11:17)
fr. *Mais Lui, **connaissant** leurs réflexions, leur dit...* (Luc 11:17)
eng. *But he, **knowing** their thoughts, said unto them,* (Luke 11:17)

b) There are also differences worth noticing:

- ro: **gerunziu** – fr. **participe présent** (with a verbal character)–eng. **time subordinating clause**

ro. *Și **văzând** Isus mulțime împrejurul Lui…* (Matei 8:18)
fr. ***Voyant** de grandes foules autour de Lui ...* (Mathieu 8:18)
eng. *Now **when Jesus saw great multitudes about him**, …* (Matthew 8:18)

ro. *Acesta, **auzind** că Isus a venit din Iudeea în Galileea, s-a dus la El...* (Ioan 4:47)
fr. ***Ayant entendu** dire que Jésus arrivait de Judée en Galilée, il vint le trouver...* (Jean 4:47)
eng. ***When he heard** that Jesus was come out of Judea into Galilee, hewent unto him,* (John 4:47)

In what concerns the Romanian-French distinction, the French variant of the second example does not have a direct equivalent in the Romanian morphological system. In comparison with the Romanian version, French comes with a past form of the participle (*participe passé*), with its specific forms for each verbal group (*chant**é**, fin**i**, cr**u**, d**i**t, mi**s**, n**é**, part**i*** etc.), or makes use of a phrase[6] that uses an auxiliary verb (*avoir / être*) as a present participle + a past participle: *ayant vu*, *étant sorti* etc., verbal forms that mark the anteriority of the action in relation to the main clause.

ro. *Și Isus, **auzind** că Ioan a fost întemnițat, a plecat în Galileea* (Matei 4:12)
fr. ***Ayant appris** que Jean avait été livré, Jésus se retira en Galilée*. (Mathieu 4:12)
eng. *Now **when Jesus had heard** that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee*; (Matthew 4:12)

The same idea of temporal anteriority is preserved in the English version of the text which uses a time subordinating clause with a finite verb form in the Past Perfect in order to stresses the idea of an action happening before another past action or a stated moment in the past. By making use of time subordinating clauses, English underlines, once again, the idea of temporal succession, the actions taking place one after another.

- ro. **gerunziu** – fr. **infinitif** – eng. **Present Participle**

ro. *Departe de ei era o turmă mare de porci,* ***păscând*** (Matei 8:30)
fr. *Or, à quelque distance, il y avait un grand troupeau* ***en train de paître***. (Mathieu 8:30)
eng. *And there was a good way off from them an herd of many swine* ***feeding***. (Matthew 8:30)

ro. *…a văzut pe Simon şi pe Andrei* ***aruncând*** *mrejele în mare* (Marcu 1:16)
fr. *… il vit Simon et André* ***en train de jeter*** *le filet dans la mer* (Marc 1:16)
eng. *….he saw Simon and Andrewhis brother* ***casting*** *a net into the sea* (Mark 1:16)

The French versions propose a periphrastic construction *(verbal periphrasis*[7]) that underlines the durative aspect of the action which is expressed through the use of the gerund in the Romanian version.
In English, however, the verbs of sensation 'see', 'hear', 'feel', etc. may also be followed by the **short infinitive** to express a complete action, something that one saw or heard from the beginning to the end. When they are followed by the **present participle,** the idea rendered suggests an incomplete action, an action in progress or a long action [3, p. 21].

- ro. **gerunziu** – fr. **subordinating clause** (time, reason) – eng. **subordinating clause** (time)

The absolute, participle constructions mentioned above have, as their macrosyntactic counterparts, a subordinating clause, the connective element being present this time in both French and English variants, marking a subordinating relationship:

ro. *Şi* ***venind*** *Isus în casa lui Petru a văzut pe soacra acestuia* ***zăcând****…* (Matei 8:14)
fr. ***Comme Jésus entrait*** *dans la maison de Pierre il vit sa belle-mère* ***couchée****…*(Mathieu 8:14)
eng. *And* ***when Jesus was come*** *into Peter's house, he saw his wife's mother laid*, (Matthew 8:14)

- ro. **gerunziu** – fr. **finite verb form in a main clause** – eng. **subordinating clause** (time)

ro. ***Intrând*** *El în corabie, ucenicii Lui L-au urmat* (Matei 8:23)
fr. *Il* ***monta*** *dans la barque et ses disciples le suivirent*. (Mathieu 8:23)
eng. *And* ***when he was entered*** *into a ship, his disciples followed him*. (Matthew 8:23)

At the level of syntax, the French version proposes two coordinated sentences, connected with the use of the conjunction *et* (*and*), the coordination being also strengthened by the use of the two finite verb forms (passé simple:*monta*, *suivirent*), which, at a textual level, render the succession of actions in a coherent chronological order. In English, nevertheless, the

subordinating clause suggests the same processual, chronological order of events, time subordinators such as *when, after, before, as soon as* being useful as chronological order signals.

- ro. **gerunziu –** fr. **subordinating clause (relative) –** eng. **subordinating clause (time)**

ro. *Iar un samaritean, **mergând** pe cale, a venit la el*…. (Luca 10:33)
fr. *Mais un Samaritain, **qui était en voyage** arriva près de l'homme*… (Luc 10:33)
eng. *But a certain Samaritan, **as he journeyed**, came where he was*...(Luke 10:33)

English grammar makes use of different linking words and phrases in time clauses to be more precise about various temporal relations[8] [8, p. 102]. In what concerns the above mentioned example, the use of '*as'* as a linking word introducing a time clause manages to create a relationship of equivalence between the Romanian gerund and the English subordinating construction.
In French, the possibility to equate a non-finite verbal form (at a microsyntactic level) with a syntactic structure (a relative clause) is given by the present participle's dual character, i.e. *verbal* (verifiable through the expansion of this non-finite verbal form into a subordinating relative clause) and *adjectival* (morphological value that justifies its attributive use). (see *Note 5*).

- ro. **relative subordinating clause** – fr. **present participle** (a mirror image of the above mentioned relationship) – eng. **relative subordinating clause**

ro. *Și a tămăduit pe mulți **care pătimeau de felurite boli**...* (Marcu 1:34)
fr. *Il guérit de nombreux malades **souffrant** de maux...* (Marc 1:34)
eng. *And he healed many **that were sick of divers diseases**, …* (Mark 1:34)

- ro. **relative subordinating clause** – fr. **past participle** – eng. **relative subordinating clause**

ro. *A doua zi mulțimea, **care sta de cealaltă parte a mării**, a văzut că nu era acolo decât numai o corabie* (Ioan 6:22)
fr. *Le lendemain la foule **restée** sur l'autre rive se rendit compte qu'il y avait eu là une seule barque* (Jean 6:22).
eng. *The day following, when the people **which stood on the other side of the sea** saw that there was none other boat there* (John 6:22).

The French past participle represents the contraction of a relative clause, functioning as a verbal adjective in the nominal group (*la foule restée*).

3.3 Word order considerations
Depending on the context, all the three language systems make use of specific word order structures such as the displacement (déplacement) or detachment (détachement) of some syntactic positions from their "canonical" order. The most frequent occurrences of inversions or 'frontings' are given by complex predicative structures in which the predicative adjective

precedes the copular verb (as in the case of The Sermon on the Mount or the Beatitudes) or subject-verb inversions. By making use of these techniques, the text becomes more emphatic and expressive, preserving a certain oral flavor.

ro. ***Fericiți cei ce plâng****,că aceia se vor mângâia*. (Matei 5:4)
fr.***Heureux ceux qui pleurent*:***ils serons consolés*. (Mathieu 5 :4)
eng. ***Blessed are they that mourn****: forthey shall be comforted.*(Matthew 5:4)

ro. ***Hericiți cei blânzi****,că aceia vor moșteni pământul*. (Matei 5:5)
fr. ***Heureux les doux:*** *ils auront la terre en partage.*(Mathieu 5:5)
eng. ***Blessed are the meek****: for they shall inherit the earth.* (Matthew 5:5)

ro. *Și* ***a căzut ploaia*** *și* ***au venit râurile mari****… Și căderea ei a fost mare*. (Matei 7:27)
fr. *La pluie est tombée, les torrents sont venus… et* ***grande fut sa ruine***. (Mathieu 7:27)
eng. *And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and* ***great was the fall of it.*** (Matthew 7:27)

ro. *În acele zile* ***s-au coborât****, de la Ierusalim în Antiohia,* ***proroci***. (Fapte 11:27)
fr. *En ces jours-là, des prophètes descendirent de Jérusalem à Antioche* (Actes des Apôtres 11:27).
eng. *And in these days* ***came prophets*** *from Jerusalem unto Antioch*. (Acts 11:27)

4. Features of discourse

Another distinction that might prove relevant for the comparative analysis of the same fragment of the biblical discourse belonging to the three linguistic systems taken into discussion is the one that focuses on the way information is ordered and structured into paragraphs. At this textual level, we can notice the predominantly descriptive way in which chapters are named in Romanian and English, in comparison with the French variant, where the semantic information is rendered more synthetically.

ro. *Cartea neamului lui Isus Hristos, zămislirea, numele și nașterea* (Matei 1)
fr. *Généalogie de Jésus Christ* (Mathieu 1).
eng. *Christ is born of Mary—She conceives by the power of the Holy Ghost—OurLord is named Jesus.* (Matthew 1)

At the same Evangelist (Matthew), the title of the fourth chapter has a more powerful explanatory value in Romanian and English, while the French chapter is structured in more paragraphs, interrupted by subtitles:

ro. *Isus este ispitit de diavol. Începutul propovăduirii lui. El cheamă pe cei dintâi ucenici la apostolat și vindecă tot felul de bolnavi* (Matei 4)
fr. *La tentation de Jésus* (4:1-11)
Jésus se retire en Galilée (4:12-17)
Appel des premiers disciples (4:18-22)
Jésus et les foules (4:23-25)

eng. *Jesus fasts forty days and is tempted — He begins His ministry, calls disciples, and heals the sick.* (Matthew 4)

The division of a fragment into smaller units by introducing a title (subtitle) or other "material markers" [13, p. 173] sequentially orients the reading and interpretation of the text and contributes to the building of a complete future image. The theoretical basis of this interpretation is explained by Carmen Vlad in her theory of the so-called *iceberg text*[9][12, 13]. The fragmentation of the evangelical chapter in different paragraphs reunited through *material markers* (titles) brings about two types of interpretations: on the one hand, it updates the "evocative" representations of the title [13, p. 179], which can usually make reference to the history that is about to be narrated (the title can offer the reader, or the addressee an *a priori* interpretation of the text, it can lead to the creation of some expectations); on the other hand, this organization of the text in distinct sequences creates just a seeming break in the discursive chain, because the textual meaning is retrieved from the connection that bounds these different parts, seen and interpreted not as isolated entities, but as vast discursive ensembles that constantly preserve a close relationship with the whole text [13, p. 173].
Another example in this respect is given by the title of the first chapter of St. Mark's Gospel:

ro. *Ioan Botezătorul. Botezul lui Isus Hristos. Ispitirea. Predica. Primii ucenici. Primele vindecări* (Marcu 1).
fr. *Jean le Baptiste* (1:1-8); *Baptême de Jésus* (1:9-11); *Jésus tenté au désert* (1:12-13); *Jésus proclame l'Évangile en Galilée* (1:14-15); *Appel de quatre pêcheurs* (1:16-20); *Jésus manifeste son autorité à la synagogue de Capharnaüm* (1:21-28); *Guérison de la belle-mère de Simon* (1:29-31); *Guérisons après le sabbat* (1:32-34); *Jésus quitte Capharnaüm* (1:35-39); *Purification d'un l'épreux* (1:40-45).
eng. *Jesus is baptized by John—He preaches the gospel, calls disciples, casts out devils, heals the sick, and cleanses a leper.*

The first two sequences of the title are identically expressed in both Romanian and French: *Ioan Botezătorul* (*Jean le Baptiste*), and *Botezul lui Isus Hristos* (*Baptême de Jésus*). The English version lacks the first subtitle and for the second one it makes use of a passive construction. However, for the next subdivisions, at a morphological level, the equivalence is made through the name of the action in Romanian (*Ispitirea*), the French version proposing an elliptical passive structure (*Jésus tenté au désert*), while the English variant chooses not even to mention this part. The following informational content is equated through a synthetic linguistic expression in Romanian, *Predica [the Sermon]*, and an analytical version of French and English: *Jésus proclame l'Évangile en Galilée*and *He preaches the gospel, calls disciples, casts out devils, heals the sick, and cleanses a leper.* As it can be easily noticed, the English variant reunites all the information in this very sequence. The symbolism created by the use of a series of short finite verbs one after the other, emphasizes the idea that all the above mentioned actions are the very consequence of Jesus being baptized by John.

5. The sententious character of the biblical text

Jesus uses parables when addressing the crowds, their sententious character being rendered through a language that can be accessible to every reader or listener of the post Christi period, the precepts being organized under the form of utterances devoid of any emphatic tone.

According to Daniela-Luminița Teleoacă [10, p. 105], these paraboles[10] are actually a "*narratio"*, a "*pars epica*", a story with characters and action meant to emphasize a sententious truth.

The message sent through these moralizing expressions is still alive and up-to-date, and the ideas are interpreted as general truths, because they encapsulate the image of the ordinary, average man, with his fears, sufferings, sins or virtues and prove their argumentative force, as a persuasive strategy in different contexts of everyday speech.

ro. *Ajunge zilei răutatea ei*. (Matei 6:34)
fr. *A chaque jour suffit sa peine*. (Mathieu 6:34)
eng. *Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof*. (Matthew 6:34)

ro. *Nu judecați ca să nu fiți judecați* (Matei 7:1)
fr. *Ne vous posez pas en juges afin de n'être pas jugés.* (Mathieu 7:1)
eng. *Judge not, that ye be not judged*. (Matthew 7:1)

ro. *De ce vezi paiul din ochiul fratelui tău, și bârna din ochiul tău nu o iei în seamă?* (Matei 7:3)
fr. *Qu'as-tu à regarder la paille qui est dans l'œil de ton frère ? Et la poutre qui est dans ton œil tu ne la remarques pas* ? (Mathieu 7:3)
eng. *And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?* (Matthew 7:3)

6. Conclusions

The comparative – contrastive analysis of some biblical fragments has allowed us to notice both similarities and differences between the three idiomatic variants taken under discussion (Romanian, French and English versions).

As we have mentioned from the very beginning, the present research does not focus on the lexical aspects of the biblical text. In what concerns the morphosyntactic and discursive levels (that were placed under close scrutiny in this study) we can reach the following conclusions:

(i) the archaic character of the Romanian version (as compared to the present day language) is given by both lexical elements and the preference for some emphatic structures (cleft sentences or fronting) and inversions: the predicative adjective preceding the copular verb, subject-verb inversions, etc. Every time the editor or the translator of the biblical text has in mind some emphatic effects, the French and English versions of the same text will make use of the same dislocations / detachments.

(ii) the differences are mostly determined by the morphosyntactic features that are defining for the languages in question: the existence / absence of some morphological structures with similar counterparts in the other two languages: the Romanian gerund is the equivalent of the French and English Present Participle, the French passé simple has no English counterpart, the Romanian language system allows for the absence of the Subject (included in or inferred from the verb desinence), whereas French and English do not make use of this type of construction.

(iii) at the level of discourse, the organizing into smaller or larger paragraphs in French (the number of biblical versets staying always the same) guides the readers and offers

them different reading keys, by clustering the informational content with the help of some (sub)titles.

(iv) the sententious character of the biblical text results from the advancing of some general truths, expressed through the use of a gnomic present and some indefinite nominal structures that offer them the status of generalities.

Notes:

1. The comparative analysis of the three idiomatic systems (Romanian / French /English) will constitute the object of a future research.

2. « En français moderne, le passé simple n'est plus guère en usage dans la langue du *discours* (conversation, dialogue, évocation personnelle et non historique du passé …» [14, p. 351].

3. In GBLR [4, p. 276)] passé simple is also called "fictional narrative time", being mostly used in the 3rd person singular.

4. We have decided to use the Romanian term when naming the tense (**perfectul compus**) so as not to confuse it with the English **Past Perfect**, which is the counterpart of another Romanian past tense, namely mai-mult-ca-perfectul.

5. In the French morphological system of the verb, 'participiul prezent' or Present Participle (fr. *participe présent*) and 'gerundivul' or the Gerundive (fr. *gérondif*) have identical forms (*chantant, finissant, écrivant* etc.). The distinction between the two impersonal moods is given, on the one hand, by the presence of the preposition *en* (in the case of the Gerundive), and, on the other hand, by their syntactic function. The Present Participle covers two types of morphosyntactic functions in French:

a) as a *verbal* form [6, p. 195] it preserves the properties of the class of the verb and it represents the contraction of a subordinate clause (usually of a relative one): *C'est le bateau naviguant* [qui navigue] *sur tous les océans*.

b) as a *verbal adjective*, it has the status of a descriptive adjective which obeys the rules of syntagmatic agreement dictated by the noun it determines: « *Glissez, glissez, brises* ***érantes*** */ Changez en cordes murmurantes*...» (Lamartine).

The French Gerundive has an adverbial character: *Il lui parlait* ***en riant,*** *L'appétit vient* ***en mangeant***, in this case the subject of the Gerundive being identical with the subject of the finite verbal form, and the presence of the preposition *en* expressing the temporal simultaneity of the two actions (for details, see [6, p. 195-198, 339-342]; [7]; [2, p. 217-220]; [11, p. 59-62]).

In English, the *–ing* forms (e.g. *smoking, walking*) can be used not only as verbs, but also as adjectives, adverbs or nouns. [9, p. 277] When *–ing* forms are used as verbs, adjectives or adverbs they are often called 'present participles'. When they are used more like nouns, they are often called 'gerunds'. In fact, the distinction is not as simple as this, and some grammarians prefer to avoid the terms 'participle' and 'gerund'. (For a detailed discussion of the point, see section 17.54 of *A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language*, by Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech and Svartvik. (Longman 1985))

As its French counterpart, the English Present Participle has a double character, an *adjectival* one and a *verbal* one. As a *verbal* form [15, p. 425-428], it is used in absolute constructions that have as their implied subject the subject of the sentence's finite verbal form: *Walkingthrough the park, we saw a lovely show of daffodils*; in nominative absolute constructions, where the subject of the present participle differs from that of the finite verb, or it is to be stressed (in this case, the subject of the participle is stated: *Christmas day being a holiday, the shops were all closed*); in a number of idiomatic expressions where the participle may be found unattached and not logically related to the subject: *Strictly speaking…, Judging by….*

6. Some grammarians use the same terminology to speak about the same construction, i.e.*participe passé* [7], others make use of different formulae, such as *participe passé composé* (*participe 1 composé*) [2], or *participe passé composé* [5], the last two terms being used to avoid a possible confusion with past participle.

7. Verbal periphrases, irrespective of their nature (of time, mood, aspect) make use of a semi auxiliary that bears the semantic "load" of the entire structure, followed, most of the time, by an infinitive preceded by a preposition (*venir de, commencer à, finir par, être en train de, être sur le point de + infinitiv*)
8. when things started (*since, ever since*), one thing following another (*after, before, as soon as, when, once*, etc.), one thing following another very quickly (*no sooner…than, the moment / minute …*, etc.), every time (*when, whenever, every time*), when things finish (*until, by the time*), things happening at the same time (*as, while, whilst, when*).
9. According to the author, the text, as a semiotic category, has the capacity to make "visible" an *explicit* area, identified at the level of the surface relations that it generates, and an *implicit* meaning, retrieved from various inferential mechanisms. By emphasizing the importance of this implicit area that the iceberg text contains *in nuce*, Carmen Vlad continues the idea of Coșeriu, according to which the meaning of the text that we consider true and appropriate should surpass the pure linguistic sphere, as the texture, the character of a text can be derived from both linguistic and extralinguistic means. [1, p. 182-183].
10. In fact, Matthew, the Evangelist (13:3), announces this parable-like character of Jesus' words: *And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, ...*

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Coseriu, E. *Linguistica del testo. Introduzione a una ermeneutica del senso*. Editione italiana a cura di Donatell di Cesare. La nuova Italiana Scientifica, [1980] 1997.
2. Dospinescu, V. *Le Verbe. Morphématique. Sémantique. Syntagmatique. Mode, temps, aspect et … voix en français contemporain*. Iași: Junimea, 2000.
3. Evans, V. *Round-Up*. English Grammar Practice. Edinburgh: Pearson Education Limited, 1995.
4. *GBLR - Gramatica de bază a limbii române* (coord. Gabriela Pană-Dindelegan). București: Univers Enciclopedic Gold, 2000.
5. Girodet, J. *Savoir conjuguer tous les verbes français*. Paris: Bordas, 1994.
6. Grevisse, M. *Précis de grammaire française*, Paris – Louvain-la-Neuve: Duculot, 1990.
7. Riegel, et all. *Grammaire méthodique du français*, Paris: PUF, 1994.
8. Side, R. and Wellman, G. *Grammar and Vocabulary for Cambridge Advanced and Proficiency*. Edinburgh: Pearson Education Limited, 1999.
9. Swan, M. *Practical English Usage*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996.
10. Teleoacă, D.-L. Morfosintaxa textului biblic actual. Evanghelia după Matei, in *Limba Română*, An LXI, nr. 1/2012, pp. 91-108.
11. Țenchea, M. *Noms, verbes, prépositions. Études de linguistique française et roumaine*. Timișoara: Hestia, 2006.
12. Vlad, C. *Textul aisberg*. Cluj-Napoca: Casa Cărții de Știință, 2000.
13. Idem. *Textul aisberg. Teorie şi analiză lingvistico-semiotică, ediția a II-a revăzută și adăugită*. Cluj-Napoca: Casa Cărții de Știință, 2003.
14. Wagner, R.-L et Pinchon, J. *Grammaire du français classique et moderne*, Paris: Hachette, 1962.
15. Zdrenghea, M. M. and Greere, A.L. *A Practical English Grammar with Exercises*. Cluj-Napoca, Clusium: 1997.

Corpus of texts

Biblia sau Sfânta Scriptura. București: Ed Institutului Biblic de Misiune al BOR, 1991.

Nouveau Testament. Traduction œcuménique de la Bible (TOB). Édition intégrale. Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1980.
The Holy Bible. Authorized King James Version. Salt Lake City, Utah, USA: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2013.