

Culinary recipes: orality and scripturality (I)

Ioan Milicăⁱⁿ*, Sorin Guia

Faculty of Letters, "Alexandru Ioan Cuza" University, Bd. Carol I 11, 700506 Iași, Romania

Article info

History:

Received February 24, 2017

Accepted March 10, 2017

Published March 23, 2017

Key words:

text linguistics

culinary recipes

orality

scripturality

Abstract

The international research devoted to the study of recipes is a flourishing area of scientific inquiry. The study of cooking recipes is an emerging scientific area in contemporary Romanian linguistics. The aim of this first part of our research is to grasp, from a semiotic angle, a set of basic features to account for a larger project of culinary text linguistics. The paper outlines the major European culinary traditions, the compositional patterns of cooking recipes and their isotopies. Moreover, we examine several textual features of recipes employing the model of Beaugrande & Dressler (1981); however, the analysis is not strictly conducted within the framework of the chosen model as other interpretative frameworks may be adopted to reveal the textual properties of recipes.

"Tell me what you eat and I shall tell you what you are"
(J.A. Brillat-Savarin, *Physiology of Taste*, 1825)

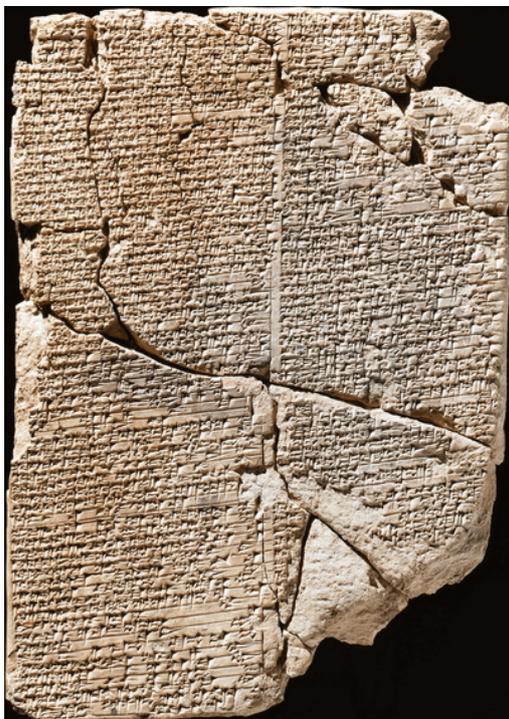
1. Introduction

Recipes are pieces of communication composed and transmitted for the primary purpose of teaching somebody how to prepare a certain food. They are passed on both orally and in writing, and the peculiarities of the communicative channel determine the presence or the absence of certain structural components in the making of recipes. First of all, it suffices to show that, in the process of oral transmission, the message is supported by both paralinguistic (accent, tempo, intonation) and non-linguistic elements (body language) which disappear when the recipes are written down. On the other hand, writing has its strategic benefits concerning the accuracy, stability and durability of information preservation.

The study of culinary recipes is of great interest to many categories of specialists: ethnologists, anthropologists and semioticians, historians and linguists, psychologists and sociologists, etc. In fact, in the cultural history of humanity, the semiotic evolution of recipes is tightly related to the development of writing and technology, in general. In his instructive book on the history of writing, Fischer (2001, p. 56) states that Sumerian cuneiform writing favoured the conservation of some of the earliest forms of literature (Lat. *litteratura* 'alphabet'): administrative and legal texts, commercial notes, letters, poems and stories, religious writings, astronomy records and recipes. This list of texts is, undoubtedly, exemplifying and does not exhaust the diversity of texts written on clay tablets. However, the inventory signals the existence of certain "styles" of written language: literary, religious, administrative, economic, epistolary or scientific and technical. In this regard, the assyriologist Jean Bottéro (2004, p. 25) emphasizes the antiquity and stability of the literary genre of culinary texts, when he states that "[w]e should note that although we are only discussing cooking recipes here, there were other recipes known in that land involving other products: the fabrication of perfumes and unguents; dyes; coloured glass to replace semiprecious stones; beer; the raising and training of horses. Infrequently and sometimes inadequately studied, these documents constitute a true «literary genre»". Additionally, the compositional pattern of the oldest culinary recipes goes back "before the middle of the third millennium BCE" and borrows the style of the teachings of the

*Email addresses: ioanister@gmail.com (IM), soringuia01@yahoo.com (SG).

father to his son, typically marked by the use of the second person in the narrative. Last but not least, these ancient texts (Fig. 1) are introduced by a technical name of the dish, and include information about the ingredients and the techniques for cooking them (Bottéro, 2004, p. 24).



Fragment from a dish with small birds, probably partridges:

Remove the head and feet. Open the body and clean the birds, reserving the gizzards and the pluck. Split the gizzards and clean them. Next rinse the birds and flatten them. Prepare a pot and put birds, gizzards and pluck into it before placing it on fire. Put the pot back on fire. Rinse out a pot with fresh water. Place beaten milk into it and place it on the fire. Take the pot (containing the birds) and drain it. Cut off the inedible parts, then salt the rest, and add them to the vessel with the milk, to which you must add some fat. Also add some rue[†], which had already been stripped and clean. When it has come to a boil, add minced leek, garlic, samidu[‡], and onion (but not too much onion).

[†]*Ruda graveolens.*

[‡]*Samidu* is a typical Babylonian spice, often used in cooking Bottéro (2004, p. 26–29).

Figure 1: YBC 8958 tablet from the collection of Yale University, Old Babylon, approx. 1750 BC [online].

The textual stability of recipes depends on the main vectors of linguistic variation, namely the diachronic, diatopic, diastratic and diaphasic factors. They do not only reflect the changes in time, space, society or style, but also emphasize mentalities, tastes and trends (Albala, 2011; Neț, 1998). In what follows, we will address these aspects.

2. European culinary traditions

Papers in culinary art history reveal two important aspects for our research. Firstly, it is worth mentioning the unity of the Medieval and Renaissance European cuisine (Albala, 2006, p. 1–28). Despite all sorts of changes, from economic to linguistic, the cooking and serving ritual significantly changes only towards the end of the Renaissance. At the tables of the elites, lavishly spiced and intensely aromatic dishes are typical for this period, as can be noticed from the oldest cookbook known to Romanians:

What shocks the contemporary reader, even at a glimpse in the cooking book, is primarily the great number of ingredients—10 to 12 for a single dish, either fish or meat, vegetables or fruits—with the most varied and contradictory flavours: at the same time sweet, sour, spicy, salty, yet also extremely aromatic/perfumed (with rose water, raspberry water, etc.) and often colourful, as saffron is often used, probably under the influence of Turkish fashion. Cinnamon and sugar, which are present in almost all recipes, came also from the Turkish cuisine, as witnessed by the foreign travellers who visited us.

(LCB, p. 89–90)

A major change can be noted starting with the second half of the 17th century, when the revolution in European cuisine does not only occur at the level of new foods and beverages, i.e. exotic ones, such as chocolate, tea and coffee, but also due to the use of new cooking techniques.

Secondly, old European recipes mirror the existence and intertwining of three food ideologies: religious, medical and courtly:

The most pervasive of these food systems might be called “Christian” although its roots are not necessarily found in the teachings of Jesus and his disciples. It encompasses monastic ascetism as well as the calendar of fasts and feasts that have historically regulated food consumption. In all its manifestations, the ideal goal of Christian foodways has been spiritual purity through the control of bodily urges, though this can easily be lost sight of when rules are bent and holidays become occasions for excess.

The second major system is medical in origin and has gained and lost popularity in the past two millennia depending on the state of nutritional science, though it continues to influence common beliefs to this day. The object of this system of “humoral physiology” of course, is the maintenance or recovery of health by means of dietary regimen.

Lastly, the “courtly” or gastronomic food culture has also profoundly influenced southern Europe, radiating from urban centers of power such as Rome, Naples, Venice, and the courts of Aragon, Castile, and Provence. Its goal is ostensibly pleasure, but this is usually mixed with motives of conscious ostentation in order to impress guests.

(Albala, 2000, p. 1203)

In the Romanian cultural space, the intertwining of the three culinary traditions is documented by several types of sources. On historical grounds, the writings of foreign travellers who visited the Romanian lands between the 16th and the 19th centuries highlight the Romanians’ strict observance of culinary interdictions during the great fasts of the Christian Orthodox calendar¹. At the same time, there are many accounts on the oriental dishes served at the tables of boyards² and rulers, whose abundance contrasts with the frugality of foods eaten by the gentry³. To gain a better understanding of the impact of the Orthodox Christianity on the Romanian foodways, the accounts of foreign travellers may be corroborated both with the provisions of the old codes of law, and with the recipes for cooking fish or the fasting food included in the oldest cookbook⁴ written in Romanian, as well as with the description of the peasants’ meals accounted for in the rare works of Romanian culinary ethnography (Lupescu, 2000, p. 161–174).

¹In his travels through Moldova between 1632 and 1639, the Italian monk Niccolò Barsi makes note of some of the culinary peculiarities of the inhabitants: “On Easter they take the host and the ones who take it already fasted for forty days, by eating nothing but bread and vegetables without oil; they don’t eat fish, only their salted spawn and say that sturgeon and caviar are not fish. Following the Greek customs, they eat meat on Saturday and on the Friday after Easter; this is how they do it for several weeks and then fast on Friday and eat nothing but fish” (Holban, 1973, V, p. 78–79).

²The Swiss writer François Recordon (1795–1844), the French language secretary of the Wallachian ruler Ioan Caragea (1812–1818) grasps the Balkan specificity of the daily meals: “Lunch, whose hour only depends on appetite, always comprises fifteen to twenty dishes prepared by the Greeks who cook Turkish dishes very well. Boyars never taste all these dishes; they are usually satisfied with the simplest, and yet distinguished ones such as: yogurt, milk skin and pilaf that are Turkish delicacies. (...) On usual fasting days they serve tasty fish from the Danube or other rivers in the country; however, during the great fasts before Easter and Christmas, they need to be satisfied with greens boiled in water with a little salt and sugar for a better taste, and also with snails, crayfish that are extremely appreciated and a little dried or sugared fruit.” (Cernovodeanu, 2004, I, p. 685).

³During the time of a 1769 travel, the German writer Johann Friedel made thorough notes on the daily food of the highlanders from Banat at Danube’s Cauldrons: “The food of these people mainly consists of milk, cheese and corn that they cultivate a lot. Corn procures many dishes. When still milky, they bake it, cornstalk included, grains are then removed and eaten <precisely> as early fruits; when the <corn> matures, it is dried, smashed or grinded with small grinders turning it, by boiling, into a sort of mashed consistent paste (polenta, in Italy), or baked as a wide and thick pie not bigger than the thumb and which is eaten as bread. I tasted from all the three dishes and I found them extremely tasty, but I could not eat too much, as I was not used to them. They drink water and milk. Instead of wine, they have a great traditional Romanian spirit, *țuica*, that they produce in large amounts for home consumption. Except for lamb, meat is never eaten. Fruits, then mellons, cucumbers or even boiled pumpkins are favourite dishes.” (Cernovodeanu, 2000, X/I, p. 35).

⁴This collection of recipes dates either from the end of the 17th century (LCB, p. 83) or the first half of the 18th century (Chivu, 2006, p. 123) and contains 293 recipes, out of which 64 are of fish, and 20 are related to cooking food during fasting times (LCB, p. 87).

Ethnomedicine studies (Candrea, 1999, p. 101–108) and the historical studies on the evolution of Romanian medicine (Samaritan, 1935–1938) showed that magical medicine coexisted with the medicine driven by humoral physiology. Superstitions and beliefs related to foods and beverages⁵ unveil folk practices and, at the same time, shed lights on aspects such as food hygiene, education and politeness of simple folk or the dominant tastes and mentalities of a certain age. The transition from the empirical to the scientific medicine is also relevant against the background of the food regime whose therapeutic value is acknowledged⁶ even from old times.

3. Stylistic patterns of recipes

The progress in the art of cooking is also mirrored by the renewal of the stylistic pattern of recipes. “The textual structure of early recipes”, as Young & Gloning note (2004, p. 191–192), “is characterized by (i) a two-part global structure and (ii) a specific set of textual elements”. The two parts of the global structure “are (a) the introduction of the dish in question, typically via a heading (...) or a hypothetical expression” and “(b) the description of the method of preparation. (...) This kind of global structure remains constant until the mid nineteenth century; from 1860 onward, a three-part structure evolves in which the ingredients form a textual block of their own (...), and this textual pattern becomes the new standard in the twentieth century”. Regarding the preparation instructions, this sequence includes such textual elements as instructions to follow, tools to use, cooking techniques, cooking time, etc. The modern pattern of recipes is shown in Table 1.

Heading	✓ name of product-to-be
	✓ cultural information
Ingredients	✓ list of ingredients
	✓ specific amounts
	✓ temperature
	✓ amount of final product: e.g., ‘serves four’
Instructions	✓ equentially ordered
	✓ directive mode
	✓ alternative paths

Table 1: Prototype of the modern culinary recipe (Östman, 2004, p. 133)

The comments made by Young & Gloning prove valid not only for the oldest German recipe collections of the 14th century, but also for the oldest Romanian cookbook. In the book, the recipes are organized

⁵“Pregnant women need to make sure they don’t eat anything that might jeopardize their pregnancy. They should not eat fish head if they want the baby to speak rapidly. They should not eat fish or snails to avoid having drooling and runny nose children. They should not eat chicken wings for the babies not to fling their arms and stamp their feet, as if they wanted to fly. They should stay away from unsliced meat from the spit for the baby not to be born with a tongue-tie. They are advised not to eat twinned fruit, i.e. the ones that cling to each other so as not to give birth to twins” (Candrea, 1999, p. 105).

⁶In the oldest Romanian cookbook, the reader discovers several prescriptions of “medical wine” in which curative mentions are made: “3 drams of garden angelica, 1 dram of galanga calamoromatico ana, 4 drams of cinnamon, 4 cubebas, cloves, leaflets, caculea ana dram pol, orange peel, // lemon peel ana 1 dram, approx. 700 grams of sugar, 3 litres of wine. After crushing the ingredients hard, add wine and store the mixture for 5–6 days. So strain it through Hippocrates’ sleeve and with this wine prepare the soup in the morning and drink a glass, instead of coffee because it is very tasty, it strengthens the head and stomach; drink it after your meals instead of vodka, as well” (LCB, p. 161).

thematically⁷ —“fish foods”, “fasting foods”, “meat foods”, poultry”, etc.—and are introduced by stereotypical paratextual elements, “Altă mîncare” [Another dish] or “Alt fel” [Another sort], as the following example illustrates:

Take 2 capons or fat chickens and boil them sweetly, thicken the juice with a few egg yolks stirred with a little almond milk and pass through a colander; then add some fresh butter and let it melt with the fowl. And when you pour it, put toast bread slices underneath.

Another dish. Take some small little chickens, but, if none, they can also be bigger and older; fill them with rice, fried onion, small raisins, mutton kidneys or kidneys from another bird <!>, salt, pepper and other dressings and boil them sweet. And when you pour them, sprinkle cinnamon on top.

(LCB, p. 144)

The same structural pattern may be identified in the recipes included in the cookbook published in 1841 by Mihail Kogălniceanu and Costache Negruzzi (KN). This detail shows the stability of the ancient stylistic model:

Take lamb meat and slice it, then boil it with some butter. After it cools, pass it through egg, sprinkle well with bread crumbs and fry it in fat, then put it on plates with some parsley on top.

(KN, p. 63)

Furthermore, recipes highlight three isotopies:

- a) *enumerative*, to be found in the sequences regarding the use of ingredients: “Take some small little chickens, but, if none, they can also be bigger and older; fill them with *rice, fried onion, small raisins, mutton kidneys or kidneys from another bird* <!>, *salt, pepper and other dressings* and boil them sweet.” (LCB, p. 144);
- b) *procedural*, to be found in the textual body usually referring to the preparation of a certain product and unveiled by the use of dynamic verbs: “*Take* lamb meat and *slice* it, then *boil* it with some butter. After it cools, *pass* it through egg, *sprinkle* well with bread crumbs and *fry* it in fat; finally, *put* it on plates with some parsley on top.” (KN, p. 63);
- c) *instructive (commentative)*, encompassing appraisals, explanations, advice and suggestions on the tools and optimal cooking procedures: “Prepare the fish, put it in the pan. Then add 2 cups of oil, 50 drams of white wine, one litre of water, 25 drams of sour grape or lemon juice, 24 drams of sugar, ginger and other dressings and salt, onion and chopped herbs, *and boil it well with a lid on top, to prevent steam from coming out and watch it to avoid overboiling.*” (LCB, p. 108). This isotopy highlights the deliberate instructive character (didactic, educational) of recipes (Fischer, 2013, p. 114). For the orally⁸ transmitted recipes, the instructional isotopy seems ampler and reflects not only the cooking skills of the speaker, but also the expository talent of the individual who tells the recipe:

Da, precîs, un fel d’ê gogoși, numa că să taie cu deremețăuu. (...) Deê fac ca o pătură, o ntițz și pă urmă ca să tai. Și să fie așe um pt’ic pă mărjină parcă crețișor aluatu, cum îl tai, să aibă o formă d’ê pătrățele, și-l măi tîi la mijloc, și pă urmă o part’ê o ntorcê și iêsă așe, are o formă a cûrigăului, și cu aia să taie, cu deremețău, așe să spun’ê aiê la nuoi, deremețău. Îi d’ê l’iémn, are o cod’ită și are o rot’ită d’ê ..., așe undulată. Pui făină, d’êpind’ê cît’ê vreji să fac și să frămîntă cu sâmat’ișe, uouă, l’ê bat, l’ê pun acólo, pătru uouă, depind’ê că, cu cît pui măi mult’ê ie măi bun că-î mai galben la culóre, um pt’ic d’ê zahăr, dá nú pui așe d’ê mult zâhăr că, dacă pui așe mult zahăr în aluat nú creșt’ê așe d’ê bin’ê aluatul. Pă cûrigauăle pui și d’iasupra un pt’ic de zâhăr praf.

⁷The absence of instructions on the cooking time and, occasionally, on gram weight shows that recipes were read by or to a cook that knew his business.

⁸The dialectal texts used as examples were collected during field work: TDMu (1975, II) and Guia (2014).

Și pun um_pt'ic d'ê drojd'ie, și frămînt. Un_pt'ic d'ê sare, **că n_oricē aluat ca sareā n bucat'ē , șt'i tu cā n-are gust. Tre să puī k'ar dacā făc aluatul dulcē, dā un_pt'ic d'ê sare oricum tre să puī.** Șapuoi il frămînt. Și cînd dost'eșt'ē, **deč creșt'ē aluatu**, l-ai înt'îns pā masā, cu sučitorea atūncîna il tai cu deremețāu **cum ț-am ecsplīcāt**, și-l pūi în lāboș, **nūoi folosīm lāboșe d'ē ast'ia mari, d'ē fier**, pun'ēm ulēiu (oloiu), cînd îi înçîns ai țipāt cūrigauāle care li-am tăiat pā masā⁹.
(SM¹⁰, Odoreu, 5)

The comments of the housewife who tells a donut recipe are mainly about the use of certain tools, like the fluted-edge wheel and the “iron” pan in which the donuts are fried, on the quantities of ingredients, such as eggs, salt and sugar, and on the organoleptic qualities of the dish (the donut dough): colour, consistency and taste. The lack of precise indications on the quantities of the ingredients and the presence of some approximate quantifier such as “um_pt'ic d'ê” [a bit of], proves that the cooking skills are passed on empirically by repeated preparation of a certain product.

Cookbooks address a generic and undetermined readership in absentia. In the conversational transmission of recipes, the face to face interaction reveals that the first recipient of the culinary knowledge and recommendations is the addressee of the cooking expert, be it the cook apprentice, the field investigator who asks for information or, more recently, one or several participants involved in a TV cooking show¹¹. In fact, **Norrick (2011, p. 2753)** claims that, at present, recipes spoken to others are influenced by the structural patterns of the written recipes, and the compiling of the latter is often signalled explicitly in the former. In other words, the written recipe is a text whose authority shows in the cooking indications conveyed orally. In the conversation between the experts in the art of cooking, the telling of a recipe seems to be doubled by commentaries and value judgements, an aspect poorly tackled by instructive texts from cooking books.

4. Textual features of recipes

Recipes may be studied in connection to the seven standards of textuality identified by **Beaugrande & Dressler (1981)**: cohesion, coherence, intentionality, acceptability, informativity, situationality and intertextuality.

Cohesion is the feature reflected by the elements that ensure a text's stability. An important mechanism for maintaining the cohesion of culinary recipes is repetition. In cookbooks, the recurrence of certain linguistic units reflects the stereotypy and procedural nature of the text destined to help in the making of a culinary product. According to Lausberg, Heinrich **Plett (1983, p. 236)** distinguishes between two types of repetition, repetition in contact, achieved when repeated words follow, and repetition at a distance, achieved when succession is interrupted by a variable sequence in the text. Although in recipes both types of repetition can be encountered, repetition at a distance is much more frequent and shapes the polysemantism of textual constituents such as *to give, to make, to take, to put*, etc.:

⁹[Yes, precisely, a type of donuts, cut with a pastry fluted-edge wheel. (...) So prepare the dough to look like a blanket, stretch it and then cut it. Let its margins be curly, slice it in little squares and then in the middle, turn one side to obtain a pretzel-like form which you finally cut with the pastry wheel. The tool has a wooden handle and a fluted-edge wheel. Add as much flour as you want for your portions and knead it with buttermilk, add four whisked eggs, the more, the tastier and more yellow, a bit of sugar, but not too much because the dough will not grow. Sprinkle a little powdered sugar on the buttermilk, as well. And a little yeast and knead it. A little salt for the taste, as even sweet dough requires it. And you knead and when the dough grows, flatten it on the table with the rolling pin, cut it with the fluted-edged wheel, as I have already explained, put it in the pot, we use large iron pots, we pour the oil, and when hot, throw the pretzel-like donuts on the table.]

¹⁰Speaker: Doina Toth, 61 years old, 10 years of education; recording and transcription: Maria Uivărășan.

¹¹Among the cooking TV shows one can count the cooking contests, the reality shows with professional chefs that explain to the audience in the studio and beyond the screen how to cook, travelogs, etc. Such cooking TV shows entertain million of viewers in the art of cooking and the “life stories” told during the shows increase in the chef's credibility and reputation; they also maintain “the synthetic personalisation” of the communication with the viewers in the sense that the discursive techniques adopted by chefs create the illusion of familiarity by initiating a fictional dialogue with the audience (**Matwick & Matwick, 2014, p. 151–152**).

17th and 18th centuries: “Să iei un lin mare și să-i scoți mașile pe urechei și să-l speli bine. Deci să-l **umpli** cu umplutură făcută de nuci pisate, de pâine frecată, de rânza lui, erburi tocate, piper, scorțișoară, pușintel untulemn, stafide mărunte și sare. Deci după ce-l **vei umplea, pune-l** în tingire, **puindu-i** untulemn, apă și vin alb, zeamă de lămâe, atât cât să stea acoperit mai mult de un deget, sare și mirodii și ceapă prăjită; și, fiind primăvara au vară, **pune** grăunțe de agriș au de aguridă, iar de va fi iarnă au toamnă, vișine uscate, și-l fiarbe au în cuptor într-o plachie, au pe foc în tingire”^a (LCB, p. 107).

19th century: “Să iei șasezeci și cinci dramuri de carne de vițel sau de pasere, să o tai tare mărunțel și să **pui** o franzelă, de pe care **iei** coaja cu răzătoare, și apoi să o stropești cu lapte și să o pui în carne cu puțină măduvă de vacă. Apoi să **se puie** toate în piuliță, să se piseze tare bine. Apoi să **iei** douăzeci dramuri de grăsime să frigă puhav, **să pui** înuntru două ouă întregi și un gălbănuș și să le pisezi bine; apoi să **pui** carnea cea fiartă înuntru, puțină sare, să o amesteci bine, și, dacă va fi prea subțire, **să pui** puțin posmag. Apoi să faci gălușcele, să le tăvălească în posmag și să le prăjească în grăsime să se îngălbinească. Apoi să **puie** în chisă și să se toarne deasupra zama făcută rumână”^b (KN, p. 3).

20th century: “Se alege ștevia, **se pune** la fiert și se face la fel ca ciorba de urzici de mai sus. Separat se prăjește ușor o ceapă tocată cu o lingură de ulei; **se pune** făina, se rumenește și se stinge cu apă. Se amestecă în ciorbă și se lasă să mai dea un clocot. În loc de orez **se pot pune** la fiert câțiva cartofi tăiați mărunț”^c (Marin, 2004, 204, p. 74).

In recipe telling, repetition at a distance is more frequent and signals the existence of some verbal reflexes meant to improve communication:

Dăm cārna pī māșină, **dăm** curēcū pī māșină, **puném** slāninā d’e făcūt rīntăș, **puném** șapă, **mest’e-cām** uoréz, rāis cum zīșēm nuoī mai d’e mult, rāis, și le **mest’ecām** tăt’e laoláltă **puném** säre, **puném** cīperī, **puném** șimbru, tăt’i șele șe trēbe, d’ē estea, **mest’ecām** tă lauoláltă ș apo fāșem gālūșt’e cī pūmu d’e mari [!], cu frūnză d’e curēc¹².

(BN¹³, Ilva Mare, 1)

Coherence is the property that emphasizes the textual universe created by the network of significant units that give meaning. Recipes are texts that transmit specialised knowledge about ingredients, cooking tools and techniques¹⁴. These elements are lexically stressed by appealing to technical terms. In the conversational transmission of recipes, a specialised viewpoint is also adopted, in the sense that protagonists usually

^a[Take a big tench, take out its bowels and give it a good wash. Fill it with crushed nuts filling mixed with chopped bread, its rennet, minced herbs, pepper, cinnamon, a little oil, small raisins and salt. After filling it, put in a cookware, add oil, water and white wine, lemon juice to cover it a little more than a finger, then add salt, spices and fried onion; add gooseberries or sour grapes during the spring or summer or dry sour cherries during the autumn and winter, put the tench in the oven or boil it on flame.]

^b[Take sixty-five drams of beef or chicken, mince it and add a loaf of bread to it after removing the crust with a grater, then sprinkle it with milk and mix it with the meat and a little bone marrow. Then put them in the mortar and grind them well. Then take twenty drams of fat to fry softly, put two eggs and a yolk and mix them well; next you put the boiled meat inside, a bit of salt, mix well and add some crumbs if it’s too thin. After that, prepare the dumplings, pass them through crumbs and fry them in fat until they turn yellow. Finally put them in the mixer and pour the brown juice.]

^c[Choose the rhubarb and boil it just like as the nettle soup above. Separately, a minced onion is fried with a spoon of oil; flour is added, browned and cooled with water. It is mixed in the soup and brought to one more boiling. Instead of rice, a few small chopped potatoes can be boiled.]

¹²[We mince the meat, the cabbage, we add ham for the sauce based on oil and fried flour, we add onion, we mix the rice, or rais as it used to be called in old times; we mix them all together, add salt, pepper, thyme, all that is needed, we mix again and make dumplings as big as a fist with cabbage leaves.]

¹³Speaker: Floarea Suci, 70 years old, 4 years of education, married for 43 years in Ilva Mare, retired; recording and transcription: Cristina Nechita.

¹⁴“**Apricot marmelade**

interact from the specialist's perspective¹⁵. The language of cookbooks and culinary recipes mirrors the existence of speaker groups with expert knowledge in the art of cooking (Norrick, 2011, p. 2749).

Both recipe writing and recipe telling reveal a stylistic algorithm that is either simpler or more complex. It is based on experience or, more recently, it is taught in cooking schools and this detail allows us to ascertain that recipes are, similarly to other types of technical texts, highly standardized communicative pieces. The standardization is reflected by the textual prototype outlined in Table 1.

According to Beaugrande & Dressler, cohesion and coherence are text-centred properties, whereas *intentionality* and *acceptability* are correlated to the semiotic identities of the protagonists involved in verbal interaction. While intentionality reveals the attitude of the addresser, acceptability unveils the attitude of the addressee. The relation between sender and receiver is based on efficient cooperation. Viewed from the addresser's perspective, recipes are short performative texts that express courses of action which need following so as to cook a certain meal. Therefore the sequentiality of these texts that usually follow the "step by step method" is determined by practical reasons: the necessary ingredients (and amounts) to cook the meal, the typical way of doing it and how long a certain operation or stage lasts, the alternatives that can be followed in case someone does not have certain ingredients and tools, the risks involved in the process of cooking and the conditions for serving and storing the food etc. At the syntactic level, for instance, the procedural and factual nature of recipes favours a more frequent use of some types of subordinates (temporal, causal, conditional and final).

From the standpoint of the addressee, the sender's intentions may be distinguished only to the extent to which we understand the expressive conventions ensuing from the stylistic principle of specialisation (Irimia, 1999, p. 49–50). Their disregard alters the stylistic qualities of the technical and scientific texts, namely neutrality, clarity and precision (Chivu, 2000, p. 67). In relation to the (inter)subjective axis of verbal communication, sender-message-receiver, the three qualities of the technical and scientific style may be regarded as proofs of intentionality and acceptability. Consequently, utterances such as "Se curăță dovleacul de coajă și de sîmburi, se taie bucăți și se înăbușă cu puțin unt și o ceapă tăiată mărunt" [Peel the pumpkin and remove the seeds, then slice and smother with a bit of butter and a minced onion] (Marin, 2004, 172, p. 64) or "Se leagă zahărul cu 3 pahare de apă" [Thicken the sugar with 3 glasses of water] (Marin, 2004, 1383, p. 414) are meaningful only to those familiar with the specialized vocabulary and the grammar of recipes.

The cooperation between protagonists is also emphasized by another dominant feature of recipes, i.e. their inclusion in the directive class of speech acts (Dima, 2015, p. 192). Directive speech acts encourage us to take action, which means that the sender builds the text in relation to a compositional algorithm used for the receiver's benefit and reflecting on the beneficiary's likely possibilities of action. In his/ her turn, the beneficiary gives credit to the receiver and is willing to apply the instructions and recommendations the former gave.

Informativity is the standard that refers to the novelty of information in a certain text. Viewed from the perspective of the couple *theme/rheme* (DȘL, p. 437, p. 531–532), the informativity theorized by Beaugrande & Dressler goes beyond the strict framework of the utterance; this is considered an overall gradual property and may be evaluated in relation with the predictability of textual elements. In other words, the use of certain functional monemes such as articles, prepositions or conjunctions, i.e. of elements with

For 1 kg of apricots add 500 grams of sugar

Pick well-matured apricots, wash them, drain them, break them into two and remove the stones. Put them together with the sugar in the cookware or a glazed pan. Boil them, mixing unceasingly, until it thickens properly. Pour the marmalade into jars and seal with parchment paper after it cools off." (Marin, 2004, 1358, p. 405).

¹⁵The technical culinary vocabulary may be recognized in the following excerpt of recipe for chicken soup: "Mai întîi aléz ȳo găîină și ȳo taj. După și ai tăîet-ȳo faș **uņcruóp** și ȳo **uăpărești** ca sî îî smulž ușór piēniļi, dup așēja sî **șinituięști**, scuot mátiļi, ȳo spēļi g'ini, g'ini cu apă și ȳo taj îm bucăt." (BT, Vorona, 3; Speaker: Eleonora Mihai, 60 years old, 6 years of education, housewife; recording and transcription: Ancuța Durnia). – [First take a chicken and cut its head off. Next you boil water and parboil the chicken to pull its feathers out easily, then you clean it for cooking, take out the insides, wash it well with water and slice it].

great predictability modulates the informativity degree of lexical monemes (Martinet, 1970, p. 135–188). Three dynamic degrees of informativity can be distinguished: a) first-order informativity, illustrated by the STOP message posted on traffic signs, b) second-order informativity, also called normal informativity, which is the usual informative standard of texts and c) third-order informativity, to be distinguished in texts designed to take by surprise the reader's horizon of expectations. From the angle of this classification, the informativity of culinary recipes may be described as normal or standard informativity, in the sense that the respective texts are characterized by compositional predictability¹⁶. Current studies in robotics and computer-assisted translation show that “much instructional language is ambiguous, underspecified and often even ungrammatical relative to conventional usage” (Malmaud *et al.*, 2014, p. 33). We have already noticed that intentionality and acceptability play a decisive role in the conveyance and understanding of technical texts such as recipes. As zero anaphora was considered to be the main source of ambiguity in the automatic interpretation of cooking instructions, we believe that the phenomenon is worth discussing to reveal that it acts as a style marker of recipes. The zero anaphora of the direct object has been much debated, according to the titles included in the international bibliography on the language of recipes. Studies such as Massam & Roberge (1989), Culy (1996) and others concluded that, in recipes, zero anaphora is mainly determined by contextual (stylistic, semantic and discursive) factors. In Romanian linguistics, the research of anaphora has not been of much interest to researchers (Zafiu, 2004, p. 239–252; GALR, II, p. 749–766), hence our observations below:

- i) In the absence of a specialised linguistic corpus, it is impossible to account for the functional efficiency of zero anaphora in culinary language; consequently, it is rather difficult to label the phenomenon as a style marker of recipes. As Rodica Zafiu claims, “there is definitely a difference between the anaphora in the oral texts of spontaneous conversation and the anaphora of learned, written texts” (GALR, II, p. 755). However, this qualitative assessment, completed by the statement that in “oral spontaneous texts, zero anaphora and third person personal pronouns clearly dominate” (*idem*), requires quantitative validation. At present, the increasingly intense circulation of (translated) recipes in mass-media and the spread of online communication favoured the internationalization of zero anaphora.
- ii) In the oldest Romanian cookbook, the presence of zero anaphora is rather determined by discursive factors (of demands of communication) than by grammatical restrictions. In one of the recipes for cooking eggs, the non-expression of the subject is context-motivated: “*Alt fel. Să pot fiarbe Ø și în vin alb cu zahar și cu scorțișoară // pe didesupt cu fălii de pîine prăjite în unt și pe deasupra presărate cu zahar și scorțișoară*” [Another one. Boil Ø in white wine with sugar and cinnamon // on bread slices toasted in butter and sprinkled with sugar and cinnamon] (LCB, p. 148). In the middle of the 19th century, under the influence of an original unknown to us, at the beginning of the cookbook printed by M. Kogălniceanu and C. Negruzzi (1841), a mashed soup recipe is published¹⁷; the use of zero anaphora points out the cultural prestige of the French syntactic model followed by translator(s): “*Să iei un pui și să-l prejaști și jumătate de franzelă iar prăjită (puiul însă să fie tăiat în bucăți). Când va fi puiul și franzela prăjite, să se puie Ø în piuliță și să se piseze Ø bine; apoi să pui amestecătura în oală și să o umpli cu zeamă bună, să fiarbă Ø un ceas*” [Take a chicken and fry it and also toast half a loaf (first the chicken needs to be cut into pieces). When the chicken and loaf are fried, put Ø in the mortar and grind well; then put the mix in the pot and fill it with good juice to boil Ø for an hour] (KN, p. 1). The influence of the same model accounts for the more seldom presence of the cataphora:

¹⁶In the second part of the article, when we are going to discuss the stylistic division of the culinary register, we will notice how recipes can be analysed by virtue of the ancient, three-fold division of style: simple, medium (standard) and high. Previous research distinguishes a stylistic division with two classes: “We believe that professional culinary language encompasses at least two strata: 1) the *current professional* communication, adopted by the speaker/writer in order to address a non-specialist audience and illustrated by the current lexis of cookbooks; 2) the “high” (specialised) professional used among the specialists who frequently use terminological neologisms borrowed from other languages” (Ciolac, 2015a, p. 381).

¹⁷The recipe recalls the well-known soup (fr. *bouillon*) of the father of modern gastronomy, the chef François Pierre de la Varenne, author of the cookbook *Le Cuisinier françois* (1651).

“La jumătate de ocă de făină pui un gălbănuș de ou și unul întreg și apă caldă cît socotești că trebuie; și apoi, după ce **se odihnește** Ø, întinzi **aluatul** mai suptire cît se poate și, lăsîndu-l puțin să se răcească, să-l stropești cu o lingură de unt de ciocolată, două bucățele rase” [For half a kilo of flour an egg yolk is needed and a full egg with as much warm water as required; and then, after resting Ø, flatten the dough as thinner as possible, let it cool and sprinkle with a spoon of chocolate butter, two bars] (KN, p. 126).

- iii) After the consultation of a small corpus of dialectal texts collected during field work, we can argue that zero anaphora is the expression of communicative economy. So far, the phenomenon cannot be correlated with the main sociolinguistic variables (sex, age, social background, level of education) that would afford the unveiling of systematic, collective stylistic variations. At times, the correlation of zero anaphora to the cognitive-communicative economy may be viewed in relation to the basic pragmatic principles: cooperation, politeness and relevance.

Pînia Țo frămînt cu aluuat potriyîes cu sári, púî acólu și trii pátru ȚoȚâ dácâ am Țoliá di smîntîná dácâ am Țoliácâ di Țuléî la Țurmâ **frámînt** Ø **ca sâ h'îîi** Ø **mai frázed**, și brînzá Țo fa cu záhãr, cu ȚoȚ, potriyîtâ dípi cum trébi așa, ș-Țo fac și fac fuáia púî brînzá li adún ásá cum sâ spúni puáli m brîu și li puî sí sí fáca [!]¹⁸
(BC¹⁹, Căiuți, 4)

Puém cárne d'e porc, Țo spălãm, dacá-î d'e žițál, Țo spălãm fain Țo puém sã șárbã, puém șápã, puém muórcoz, lãsãm sã șárbã, dupa șéja **strecurãm** Ø, fãșém ái, și puém cárne im fãrf [K] im blíd'e și puém zámã d'e așéia ș-o dușém la rãșálã sã sã rãșáscã și gáta aítúra²⁰.
(BN²¹, Ilva Mare, 1)

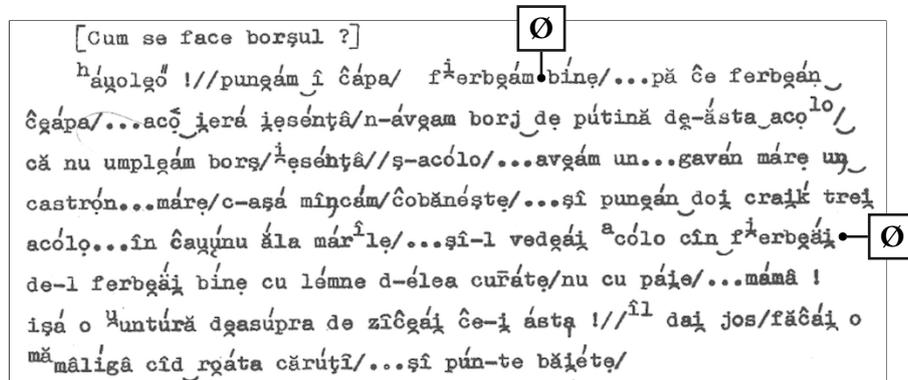


Figure 2: The account was collected from the village of Viziru, Brăila country²² (TDMu, p. 828)

¹⁸[I knead the bread with the dough, I add the necessary amount of salt and also three-four eggs, a little cream and oil if there are some in the house, finally I knead the dough to be tender and I add sugar and egg to the cheese in sufficient amounts. I roll it to obtain the puff, I add the cheese and bring it together to obtain the lap belt with cheese and then bake it.]

¹⁹Speaker: Natalița Orîndaru, 90 years old, retired, 4 years of education; recording and transcription: Alina Elena Rusu.

²⁰[We use pork, we wash it, if it is beef, we wash it some more, boil it, add onion, carrots, let it boil, then strain it, prepare the garlic and put the meat on plates... [correction], in dishes, add its juice, let it cool in a cold place and the meat jelly is finally ready].

²¹Speaker: Floarea Suci, 70 years old, 4 years of education, married for 43 years in Ilva Mare, retired; recording and transcription: Cristina Nechita.

²²[(How do we prepare borsch?)

Oh dear! We would put the onion and boil it well, ... after we had boiled the onion, ... there was essence there, we didn't have borsch to sour the soup, ... we had a a big bowl, we ate as shepherds did ... and we would put two or three carps in there ... in that big cask-iron kettle,... and you could see it boiling on nice fire wood, not on straws, ... oh, goodness! There was so much tasty grease on top! Then you would remove the borsch from the fire, make a polenta as big as a cart wheel and serve it at will!].

Situationality concerns the factors that ensure a text's pertinence in a certain communication environment. In general, this textual standard draws attention to the contextual conditions that govern the communicative behaviour of the individuals, in terms of the use of certain textual patterns in relation to the situation of communication. Put differently, this parameter shows the communicative function of a text, be it culinary, epistolary, fictional, scientific or of a different stylistic nature. The primary function of recipes is to train someone to successfully cook a meal. To this instructional function, which is common to all technical texts acting as guides, other roles may be added. In conversation, recipes are intertwined in the fabric of the narrative; "they are similar to narratives in several ways, but they are also like sets of instructions" (Norrick, 2011, p. 2753) which makes them work like communicative vehicles that highlight the crafts and passions of a group of connoisseurs, hence the identitary function these texts fulfil. In addition, the TV cooking programmes highlight the entertainment function of the culinary discourse (Matwick & Matwick, 2014). In such TV shows, cooking recipes are often incorporated into "slices of life", i.e. obviously persuasive narratives that aim at a co-interest in the viewers and the increase of audience. If we bring the past into play, we cannot neglect the magical function of some recipes. Finally, the educational function of culinary texts cannot be denied (Fischer, 2013, p. 114), as they act as textual mirrors of habits, tastes and mentalities.

Intertextuality is the constitutive principle with multiple implications in the transfer of knowledge via texts, in developing cultural typologies, in establishing filiations between texts, in the analysis of relations between texts and their underlining cognitive models, etc. Certainly, we cannot display here the entire range of intertextual implications. We reached the conclusion that intertextuality cannot be studied by a single discipline, and it is necessary to draw on theoretical and methodological constructs of an interdisciplinary nature. Under this aspect, the anthropological dimension of textuality is worth mentioning: "Textuality articulates (semiotically) through signs and structures in a narrative, descriptive and argumentative nature the fundamental issues on the life of the community" (Metzeltin & Thir, 2013, p. 34).

If someone is to focus strictly on recipes, intertextuality may be dealt with by several types of research:

- a) philological studies, interested in connections between texts (source text vs. target text, manuscript vs. published text, original vs. copy);
- b) studies of language history, centred on the features of older or newer linguistic elements preserved by recipes;
- c) translation studies, focused on the analysis of texts and their translations from various historical periods;
- d) rhetorical, stylistic and poetic studies, devoted to the compositional resources and classification of texts, as well as to the formal and content properties of messages;
- e) pragmatic studies, focused on the factors that ensure the successful oral or written transmission of recipes;
- f) semiotic and cultural anthropology studies, interested in recipes from the viewpoint of their socio-cultural impact.

Without the pretences of exhausting the inventory, we may assess that the short instructive texts that guide us in cooking more or less sophisticated meals are extremely adaptable, when considered from an intertextual angle.

5. Partial conclusion

In order to shed light on the common and distinctive features determined by the oral – written distinction, in the second part of our research, this opposition will be correlated with other markers [regional (non-literary) vs. standard (literary), informal vs. formal; original composition vs. translation, etc.]. Additionally, we will advocate the existence of a three-fold division within the culinary register, namely simple, standard and high and we will discuss it in relation to other taxonomic accounts (genre, language

or style). Our analysis will draw on a small corpus of texts collected during field work and on texts from various Romanian cookbooks.

Bibliography

- Albala, K. (2000). *Southern Europe*, in K. F. Kiple, K. C. Ornelas (eds), *The Cambridge World History of Food*, Cambridge University Press, vol. II, p. 1203–1210, [Crossref](#).
- Albala, K. (2006). *Cooking in Europe, 1250–1650*, Greenwood Press, Westport / Londra.
- Albala, K. (ed.) (2011). *Food Cultures of the World Encyclopedia*, 4 volumes, Greenwood Press, Santa Barbara / Denver / Oxford.
- Beaugrande, R.-A. de & Dressler, W. (1981). *Introduction to Text Linguistics*, Longman, Londra / New York.
- Bottéro, J. (2004). *The Oldest Cuisine in the World. Cooking in Mesopotamia*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago / Londra.
- Candrea, I.-A. (1999). *Folclorul medical comparat. Privire generală. Medicina magică*, introduction by L. Berdan, Editura Polirom, Iași.
- Cernovodeanu, P. (ed.) (2000). *Călători străini despre Țările Române*, vol. X, part I, Editura Academiei Române, București.
- Cernovodeanu, P. (ed.) (2004). *Călători străini despre Țările Române în secolul al XIX-lea*, new series, vol. I, Editura Academiei Române, București.
- Chivu, Gh. (2000). *Limba română de la primele texte până la sfârșitul secolului al XVIII-lea. Variantele stilistice*, Editura Univers Enciclopedic, București.
- Chivu, Gh. (2006). *Cartea de bucate. Un manuscris singular în scrisul vechi românesc*, in *In honorem Gabriel Ștrempel*, Satu-Mare, 2006, p. 123–135, republished in Chivu, Gh. (2015). *Vechi texte românești. Contribuții filologice și lingvistice*, Editura Academiei Române, București, p. 112–123.
- Ciolac, A. (2015a). *Din nou despre elementele lexicale franceze în cărți de bucate românești (I)*, in “Limba română”, vol. LXIV, issue 3, p. 381–399.
- Ciolac, A. (2015b). *Din nou despre elementele lexicale franceze în cărți de bucate românești (II)*, in “Limba română”, vol. LXIV, issue 4, p. 515–533.
- Culy C. (1996). *Null Object in English Recipes*, in “Language Variation and Change”, vol. 8, issue 1, p. 91–124, [Crossref](#).
- Dima, E. I. (2015). *Textul gastronomic românesc între dialectal și literar. Studiu de caz: Buna menajeră de Ecaterina (Colonel) Steriad*, in R. Zafiu, I. Nedelcu (eds), *Variația lingvistică: probleme actuale. Actele celui de-al 14-lea Colocviu Internațional al Departamentului de Lingvistică*, Editura Universității din București, București, vol. II, p. 187–197.
- DȘL = Bidu-Vrăncianu, A., Călărașu, C., Ionescu-Ruxăndoiu, L., Mancaș, M. & Pană Dindelegan, G. (2001). *Dicționar de științe ale limbii*, Editura Nemira, București.
- Fischer, K. (2013). *The addressee in the recipe. How Julia Child gets to join you in the kitchen*, in Gerhardt, C., Frobenius, M., Ley, S. (eds), *Culinary Linguistics. The Chef’s Special*, John Benjamins, Amsterdam / Philadelphia, p. 103–118, [Crossref](#).
- Fischer, S. R. (2001). *A History of Writing*, Reaktion Books, Londra.
- GALR = *Anafora*, in Guțu Romalo, V. (coord.), *Gramatica limbii române*, vol. II, *Enunțul*, Editura Academiei Române, București, 2008, p. 749–766.
- Guia, S. (2014). *Dialectologie română. Studii și corpus de texte*, Editura Vasiliana ’98, Iași, p. 163–382.
- Holban, M. (ed.) (1973). *Călători străini despre Țările Române*, vol. V, Editura Științifică, București.
- Irimia, D. (1999). *Introducere în stilistică*, Editura Polirom, Iași.
- KN = Kogălniceanu, M. & Negruzzi, C. (1973). *200 de rețete cercate de bucate, prăjituri și alte trebi gospodărești*, edition by T. Moraru, Editura Dacia, Cluj-Napoca.
- LCB = Constantinescu, I. (ed.) (1997). *O lume într-o carte de bucate. Manuscris din epoca brâncovenească*, transcription, foreword and afterword by I. Constantinescu, introduction by M. Cazacu, Editura Fundației Culturale Române, București.
- Lupescu, M. (2000). *Din bucătăria țaranului român*, Editura Paideia, București.
- Malmaud, J., Wagner, E. J., Chang, N. & Murphy, K. (2014). *Cooking with Semantics*, in *Proceedings of the ACL 2014 Workshop on Semantic Parsing, Baltimore, Maryland, June, 26, 2014*, p. 33–38, [Crossref](#).
- Marin, S. (2004). *Carte de bucate. Ediție integrală*, Editura Humanitas, București.
- Martinet, A. (1970). *Elemente de lingvistică generală*, Romanian edition by P. Miclău, Editura Științifică, București.
- Massam, D. & Roberge, Y. (1989). *Recipe Context Null Object in English*, in “Linguistic Inquiry”, vol. 20, issue 1 (Winter, 1989), p. 134–139.
- Matwick, K. & Matwick, K. (2014). *Storytelling and synthetic personalization in television cooking shows*, in “Journal of Pragmatics”, vol. 71, p. 151–159, [Crossref](#).
- Metzeltin, M. & Thir, M. (2013). *Antropologia textului*, translated to Romanian by O. Nicolae, Editura Universității „Alexandru Ioan Cuza”, Iași.
- Neț, M. (1998). *Cărțile de bucate românești: un studiu de mentalități*, Editura Academiei Române, București.
- Norrick, N. R. (2011). *Conversational recipe telling*, in “Journal of Pragmatics”, vol. 43, p. 2740–2761, [Crossref](#).
- Östman, J.-O. (2004). *Construction Discourse. A prolegomenon*, in Östman, J.-O. & Fried, M. (eds), *Construction Grammars. Cognitive grounding and theoretical extensions*, John Benjamins, Amsterdam / Philadelphia, p. 121–144, [Crossref](#).

- Plett, H. (1983). *Știința textului și analiza de text. Semiotică, lingvistică, retorică*, translated to Romanian by S. Stănescu, Editura Univers, București.
- Samarian, P.Gh. (1935–1938). *Medicina și Farmacia în Trecutul Românesc: 1382–1775*, vol. I, Tipografia „Modernă”, Călărași / Ialomița, 1935; vol. II, Tipografia „Cultura”, București, 1938.
- TDMu = Cazacu, B. (coord.), *Texte dialectale. Muntenia*, vol. II, Editura Academiei R.S.R., București, 1975.
- Young, C. & Gloning, T. (2004). *A History of the German Language through Texts*, Routledge, London / New York.
- Zafiu, R. (2004). *Observații asupra anaforei în limba română actuală*, in Pană Dindelegan, G. (coord.), *Tradiție și inovație în studiul limbii române*, Editura Universității din București, București, p. 239–252.