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## TYOLOGICAL FEATURES OF FRIULIAN

I.i. The aim of this paper – originally a lecture given for the Prague Linguistic Circle on 10 November 2003 (Cadorini 2004c) – is to describe the typological features of Friulian (Eastern Rhaeto-Romance) by means of Skalička's theory (comp. e.g. Skalička 1951; Skalička–Sgall 1994; Sgall 1995). Friulian, just like any other Romance language, is predominantly an isolating language.

The following examples shall offer a comparison of Friulian with French (markedly isolating, comp. Skalička 1951, 14-27), Latin (mainly inflected, comp. Skalička 1951, 11), and Romanian (where the isolating type is often demonstrated in different system constituents than in other Romance languages, comp. Skalička 1968, 8).

The aforementioned Romance languages are particularly suitable for a morphological comparison because all of them often make use of zero endings to mark the same morpheme (unlike Italian, Spanish, Sardinian, etc, where the same morphemes end with a vowel, comp. Cadorini 2004b, §IV.i). Thereby the phonetic and graphic form of morphological features do not create confusing adjacent differences as it would be if we compared Friulian with e.g. Italian.

1 French.: *Il a un champ sur une colline.* 'He has a field on a hill.'

1 Fri.: *Al à un cjamp suntune culine.*

1 Rom.: *A un câmp pe o colină.*

1 Lat.: *Agrum in summo colle habet.*

2a French.: *Le champ de Pierre il est sur la colline là-bas.* 'Peter's field is on that hill over there.'

2a Fri.: *Il cjamp di Pieri al è su la culine là jù.*

2b Fri.: *Il cjamp di Pieri al è su par la culine aculì.*

2b Rom.: *Câmpul lui Petru e pe culina de acolo.*

2 Lat.: *Petri ager in hoc colle summo est.*

3 French.: *Il a vendu un champ.* 'He sold a field.'

3 Fri.: *Al à vendût un cjamp.*

3 Rom.: *A vândut un câmp.*

3 Lat.: *Agrum vendidit.*

Examples 1 and 2 demonstrate that the French and Friulian nouns explicitly express definiteness (*il x un; la x une*) and the subject of a verb (French *il*, Fri. *al*) by means of a separate monosyllabic function word. Latin manifests only grammatical person or it indicates subject with a nominative, in both cases by means of inflection. Romanian explicitly signals definiteness (*-ul x un ... -Ø; -a x o ... -ă*) and grammatical case (*câmpul x câmpului; Petru x lui Petru*), using partly standard inflected endings, partly analytical morphemes.

Example 3 shows the structure of a basic past tense: the Romance compound tenses (*il a vendu, al à vendût, a vândut*) correspond to the Latin one-word perfect tense.

I.ii. The introductory examples support the common belief that Friulian greatly resembles written French. The notion of similarity is enhanced by the morphemes the two languages have in common and which often appear in texts: the sigmatic plural of nouns, the sigmatic second grammatical person, or the ending *-e* for feminine gender and for the 3rd person singular of verbs.

Naturally, the analysis also shows differences. Firstly, French is mainly isolating also in word-

formation, unlike Friulian which prefers derivation (a feature of agglutinative languages). The other interesting dissimilarity lies in the above mentioned explicitly expressed subject.

2a French: *Le champ de Pierre il est sur la colline là-bas.* ‘Peter’s field is on that hill over there.’

2a Fri.: *Il cjamp di Pieri al è su la culine là jù.*

4 French: *Le champ de Pierre est sur la colline là-bas.*

4 Fri.: *\*\*Il cjamp di Pieri è su la culine là jù.*

5 French: *Qu’a-t-il fait de cette étoffe? Il en a fait une poupée.* ‘What did he make of the cloth? He made a doll.’

5a Fri.: *Ce aial fat di chê stofe? Al à fat une pipine.*

5b Fri.: *\*\*Ce aial fat di chê stofe? Al ind à fat une pipine.*

5 Rom.: *Ce a făcut din stofa aceea? A făcut o păpușă.*

5 Lat.: *Quid ex eo panno fecit? Pupam fecit.*

Examples 2a and 4 show that when a subject is expressed by a noun in French, an unstressed pronoun is not – unlike in Friulian – obligatory. However, when we consider spoken uncodified language variants, we shall see that the rules are different here: French always uses a pronoun, whereas Friulian rarely uses only a verb, even when the subject is not explicitly expressed. Friulian therefore seems to be halfway between the language of *The Song of Roland* (Uhlir 1966, 104) and contemporary spoken French.

Examples 5 demonstrate that Friulian does not allow clusters of unstressed pronouns or pronominal particles before a verb, whilst in French both pronouns are used.

I.iii. An important difference lies the fact that the Friulian pronouns are so “phonetically worn away” (reduced by the diachronic development) that they can not take the main inflectional importance as it is in the case of the French pronouns, which are also described as inflectional prefixes.

Table 1		
indicative mood, present tense		
person	Friulian	French
1.	<i>o cjanti</i>	<i>je chante</i>
2.	<i>tu cjantis</i>	<i>tu chantes</i>
3. m.	<i>al cjante</i>	<i>il chante</i>
3. f.	<i>e cjante</i>	<i>elle chante</i>
1.	<i>o cjantìn</i>	<i>nous chantons</i>
2.	<i>o cjantais</i>	<i>vous chantez</i>
3. m.	<i>a cjantìn</i>	<i>ils chantent</i>
3. f.	<i>a cjantìn</i>	<i>elles chantent</i>

When we compare the French verb conjugation with suffix *-er* with a verb that belongs to the Friulian conjugation with *-â* (both conjugations continue the Latin conjugation with *-are*), we shall find out that whilst the pronunciation of four persons of a French verb (all persons singular and the 3rd person plural) does not differ, in Friulian every person has a different ending. However, three pronouns (1st person singular, 1st and 2nd person plural) are identical.

II.i. Based on the introductory lines, the hypothesis of the present paper is that Friulian, just like other Romance languages, is predominantly an isolating language. We shall follow Vladimír Skalička and Petr Sgall’s (Skalička–Sgall 1994, 338; Sgall 1995, 56) characteristics of an isolating type of language.

Table 2

	Skalička and Sgall	Friulian
3a	No affixes, the existence of monosyllabic words.	Affixes appear in derivatives. Tendency towards monosyllabism.
3b	The regularity of isolating morphemes does not support the distinction of lexical categories, the existence of conversion.	The endings distinguish verbs from nouns and pronouns, there are some distinct conjugation patterns. Declension expresses only gender and number. Articles are used to convert into substantives.
3c	Abundance of isolated underived words.	Such words exist, the occurrence was not researched. Numerous multiword lexical units, not only compounds.
3d	Absence of affixes does not allow their categorisation.	Affixes used in derivation differ from inflectional endings.
3e	Numerous function words do not allow free word order.	The specific role of function words allows partial free word order.
3f	Function words support subordinate clauses with conjunctions.	Yes.

It is generally known that no language falls exclusively into one typological category. For that matter, deflections in points 3a, 3b and 3c were noted already by Vladimír Uhlíř (1966; 1969) for French, and by Horst Geckeler for French, Spanish and Italian (comp. Geckeler 1984; 1985; 1989).

Concerning point 3a, we may add that the propensity to monosyllabism is not as strong in Friulian as it is in French and Gallo-Italian languages (this feature, however, does not exist in Italian and Spanish). Derivational affixes then correspond to the Ibero-Romance and Italo-Romance languages.

Regarding point 3b and conversion, we wish to note that in Friulian and Italian, and even more in Romanian, there is often a morphological homonymy between an adjective (in masculine/neuter singular) and an adverb. Homonymy is common also between adverbs and prepositions.

Concerning point 3c, let us mention that a large group of multiword lexical units is formed by “analytic verbs” (Vicario 1997), i.e. the coupling of a verb with an adverb, resembling the English “phrasal verb”. This type of lexemes is common in all Rheto-Romance languages, although it seems that in the case of the Western branch, their position within a sentence bears similarity to the German separable verbs (according to a personal information from Markus Giger).

II.ii. Regarding point 3e, we need to note that a majority of the Romance languages have a relatively free word order. This was true also for old French (comp. Uhlíř 1966, 104), which had declension with two cases. Contemporary French uses non-prepositional accusative, which has resulted in a fixed word order. The free word order in Italian, which also uses direct accusative, follows from the influence of Latin as the main cultural language on another language that was predominantly written – from the 15th to the second half of the 19th century, the spoken Italian was of little statistical significance.

For that matter, contemporary spoken variants of Italian tend to draw on the syntactic means of the local adstrata; so in the Southern Italy prepositional accusative is used, whilst in the

north some function words acquire a special function. A similar situation can be observed in Friulian (comp. Cadorini 1997). These structures shall be described in the following section. On the one hand, they restrict the free word order. On the other hand, they allow the formation of sentences with a marked word order by means of prepositions and function words, i. e. they diversify the limitation of word order.

II.iii. It has already been mentioned that a function word, traditionally called “unstressed subjective pronoun”, or the so called “pleonastic pronoun”, is compulsory in Friulian (§I.ii). The co-occurrence of two unstressed pronominal units is unfeasible in Friulian, though. Therefore in examples 5 the (ablative) particle *indi* was not applicable; in other cases the subjective pronoun is dropped.

6: Lis 'savis a cjant-in.  
The toads 3PL sing-3PL  
'the toads sing'

7a: I candidâts a scriv-in ai eletôrs.  
The candidates 3PL write-3PL to.ART voters  
'the candidates write to the voters'

7b: Ai eletôrs ur scriv-in i candidâts.  
to.ART voters 3PL.DAT write-3PL the candidates

8a: Lis tabelis a mostr-in lis stradis.  
the signposts 3PL show-3PL the roads  
'the signposts give information about direction'

8b: Lis stradis lis mostr-in lis tabelis.  
the roads 3PL.ACC show-3PL the signposts

Examples 6 to 8 demonstrate that a subjective pronoun occurs in sentences with unmarked word order (see examples a). When there is a direct or prepositional object at the beginning of a sentence, the position before the verb is taken up by a different pronoun: we can say that there is a function word adjacent to the verb and it corresponds with the thematic sentence element. Such word is apparently redundant. It seems that its function is to draw attention to the logical predicate which is identical with the grammatical predicate only in the case of an unmarked word order.

What follows is that pronouns have a specific syntactic function.

II.iv. We shall also note that the pronouns in examples 6 to 8 are members of paradigms made of nowadays isolated words. The final number of grammatical cases in the pronominal paradigm is yet to be determined; the spoken Italian has been found out to have 7 cases (Cadorini 1997) expressed by morphemes of various etymon (comp. Cadorini 2004a). There are other circumstances which show the paradigmatic relationship of isolated function words – e.g. relative clauses.

6c: Chês 'savis che a cjant-in.  
DET toads REL 3PL sing-3PL  
'the toads that sing'

7c: Chei eletôrs che ur scriv-in i candidâts.  
DET voters REL 3PL.DAT write-3PL the candidates

'the voters to whom the candidates write'

- 8c: Chês stradis che lis mostr-in lis tabelis.  
DET roads REL 3PL.ACC show-3PL the signposts  
'the direction about which the signposts give information'
- 9: Chei Tonuts che sô fie e je in Argentine.  
DET Tonuts REL 3.POSS daughter 3SG is in Argentina  
'the Tonuts whose daughter is in Argentina'
- 10: Chei projets che ind orden-in une gnove version.  
DET projects REL 3PL.PART order-1PL a new version  
'the projects of which we order a new version'
- 11: Chê cjase là che al viv-ev-e un siôr.  
DET house LOC REL 3SG live-PST-3SG a man  
'the house where a man lived'
- 12: Chês rosis che parie a fas-in zois lis aganis.  
DET flowers REL INS 3PL make-3PL garlands the fairies  
'the flowers with which the fairies make garlands'
- 13: Chês montagnis di dulà che a torn-in i fantats.  
DET mountains ABL LOC REL 3PL return-3PL the boys  
'the mountains from where the boys return'

We can see in examples 6c to 13 that relative clauses are introduced by the conjunction *che*; the pronominal function is then taken up by a personal pronoun (see examples c) or another element of a pronominal character (9-13). Despite the differences in the conduct among the elements in the pronominal paradigm, the most important fact is that the function words are isolated, i.e. they cannot be derived from one another, and that they often underwent conversion in order to take over this function.

II.v. It is necessary to amend the aforementioned reflection by saying that “relative conjunctions” do not necessarily require pronominal elements:

- 8d: Chês stradis che a mostr-in lis tabelis.  
DET roads REL 3PL show-3PL the signposts  
'the direction about which the signposts give information'
- 9d: Chei Tonuts che la fie e je in Argentine.  
DET Tonuts REL the daughter 3SG is in Argentina  
'the Tonuts whose daughter is in Argentina'
- 10d: Chei projets che o orden-in une gnove version.  
DET projects REL 1PL order-1PL a new version  
'the projects of which we order a new version'
- 11d: Chê cjase che al viv-ev-e un siôr.  
DET house REL 3SG live-PST-3SG a man  
'the house where a man lived'
- 12d: Chês rosis che a fas-in zois lis aganis.  
DET flowers REL 3PL make-3PL garlands the fairies

'the flowers with which the fairies make garlands'

13d: Chês montagnis che a torn-in i fantats.  
 DET mountains REL 3PL return-3PL the boys  
 'the mountains from where the boys return'

This problem is also yet to be explored. On the basis of examples *d* we can say that together with a conjunction, such function words do not constitute a multiword unit, but they are independent and fulfil an auxiliary syntactic function.

II.vi. The above described system of unstressed personal pronouns and other unstressed elements assumes special importance when we compare it with the system of the primary and secondary typological features as described by Petr Sgall (1995, 65 with reference to Sgall 1958 a 1967).

	Sgall	Friulian
	<i>when grammatical values are expressed by function words similar to lexemes (isolating language).</i>	
$\alpha$	abundance of prepositions, auxiliary verbs, subordinators	yes
$\beta$	subordinate clauses with finite verbs or infinitive clauses with a preposition constitute the main form of dependent predication	yes
$\gamma$	the word order is fixed because there are no endings or agreement; the most common syntactic functions will rather not be expressed by function words	a specific character of function words determines the subject, accusative object and dative object, the word order is partially free
$\delta$	functional sentence perspective requires articles	yes: apart from the definite and indefinite article, there is also an adjectival article
$\epsilon$	numerous monosyllabic words require a rich vowel system	yes: apart from "phonologically strong" vowels, there are many diphthongs and triphthongs

Rather convincing is Sgall's assumption that the character of expressing grammatical values is supported by a number of accompanying features. It is even more credible when we consider that in Friulian this type is not a mere construction but a dynamic inclination that changes the language structures in the long run.

We have already seen that isolated function words are accompanied by verbs and nouns. What is unusual and does not tally with Sgall's scheme (point  $\gamma$ ), is the finding that there is at least one language that applies the isolating tendency to the extent that it assigns new syntactic function to already existing function words. By doing this, it frees the word order and at the same time retains the explicitness of words from the point of view of basic syntactic relationships.

III.i. After having discussed the features that confirm the isolating type, we shall now look at features that correspond to other language types.

We have already seen that inflectivness is represented by conjugation. Agglutinative suffixes in the tense system are often mentioned in connection with the Rheto-Romance group. This assumption is based on the fact that every form has two shapes: the unmarked one with the personal unstressed pronoun before a verb, and the marked one with the pronoun postponed. At first sight, the marked forms resemble inversion in French; they are indeed used in the

same way as in French. In addition to that, they are used in other cases and the way they form also varies in some details. The Friulian traditional grammar classifies these forms as independent interrogative and optative moods.

indicative mood, present tense		
Person	unmarked	marked
1.	o cjanti	cjantio
2.	tu cjantis	cjantistu
3. m.	al cjante	cjantial
3. f.	e cjante	cjantie
1.	o cjantin	cjantino
2.	o cjantais	cjantaiso
3.	a cjantin	cjantino

Although in these forms the nouns appear together with a verb, they cannot be considered inflectional endings because they are affixed to all definite forms (except the imperative) and they only communicate information about grammatical person (and in the case of the 3rd person singular also about gender). Moreover, such suffixes form a new syllable, which is unlikely to hold true for endings.

During his consultation in summer 1991, Nereo Perini pointed out other features that can be classified as agglutinative. Friulian simultaneously forms imperfect subjunctive by adding suffix *-s-* + person ending; future tense is formed by adding suffix *-ar-* + forms of the verb *vê* ‘to have’; present conditional is formed by adding suffix *-ar-* and *-s* and personal ending. Here is an example with the 2nd person singular:

present indicative	future tense	imperfect subjunctive	present conditional
<i>tu cjant-is</i>	<i>tu cjant-ar-âs</i>	<i>tu cjant-ass-is</i>	<i>tu cjant-ar-ess-is</i>

Because it is difficult to determine with certainty the semantic content of these verb suffixes, it is impossible to claim that they are unequivocal examples of agglutination.

III.ii. The semantic value is clear when it comes to noun suffixes. A vast majority of nouns have plural forms ending with *-s* (a feature common to the Western Romance languages). When the feminine gender is stressed, it always ends with *-e* (in vernacular also *-a* or occasionally with *-o*). Leaving aside the Udine dialect (the basis for codification with the ending *-is* – we shall not discuss the possible phonological neutralisation of the opposites *-is* x *-es*) and some marginal dialects, the feminine plural is always formed by the combination of suffixes *-e-* (possibly *-a-*) and *-s*. This applies to all Western Romance languages.

In fact, we cannot talk about typologically pure agglutination. From the formal point of view, the individual suffixes do not have the required syllabic character. From the paradigmatic point of view, we need to point out that there is not only one way of forming plural and that Friulian has a tendency to constitute pronominal inflection which forms plural by adding */-j/*, so it partially differs according to individual parts of speech.

III.iii. On the other hand, all the conditions are met in the case of several suffixes used in derivation. An example is suffix *-on-*, which expresses “a large degree” of measurements, activities, density, etc., and suffix *-ut-* / *-uç-*, which expresses “a lower degree; tenderness”:

Noun	Adjective, f.	Verb, inf.	Adverb	Preposition
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<i>femine</i> ‘woman’	<i>biele</i> ‘pretty’	<i>crodi</i> ‘to believe’	<i>ben</i> ‘well’	<i>dongje di</i> ‘close’
<i>femenone</i> ‘a big woman’	<i>bielone</i> ‘very pretty’	<i>crodonâ</i> ‘to be sure’	<i>benon</i> ‘excellently’	<i>dongjone di</i> ‘too close’
<i>femenute</i> ‘a small woman’	<i>bielute</i> ‘quite pretty’	<i>croduçâ</i> ‘not to be convinced’	<i>benut</i> ‘quite well’	<i>dongjute di</i> ‘not close enough’

As we can see, suffixes go with most word classes. In the first column we can notice phonological changes of unstressed vowels, although they do not represent vocal harmony, which is according to Sgall (Sgall 1995, 66) one of the secondary features of agglutinative languages. The system of unstressed vowels in Friulian was elaborated by Sergio Cristin (comp. Cristin 1995), but a complete description is yet to be made.

The above mentioned suffixes can also be connected and their order changes the meaning: *crodi* ‘to believe, to suppose’ ⇒ *crodonuçâ* ‘to be quite certain but not absolutely sure’ x *croduçonâ* ‘not to be sure at all’ (the derived forms were created for the purpose of this paper).

As far as the two remaining types are concerned, we can say that they are marginal in Friulian. Introflective features are present in verbs and derivatives, but it is their marginality that ranks them among irregularities, similarly to French (comp. Uhlř 1988) and other Romance languages, except Romanian (comp. Geckeler 1985, 282; Geckeler 1989, 80-81). Polysynthesis is present in numerous compounds, but even this feature is not more significant in Friulian than it is in other relative languages (comp. Geckeler 1985, 282; 1989, 80).

IV.i. Skalička’s typological theory proves particularly useful in analysis of other languages as well. It not only helps to categorise them within a larger framework – in accordance with the criteria used to describe the typology of other languages – but it also gives new stimuli to the theory itself. I venture to suggest that a typological analysis of Friulian is one such stimulus.

The Friulians have immense troubles in writing their mother tongue. The source of these problems undoubtedly lies also in the fact that the Friulian school system has only started to form this last century. But this is not the only reason: those translating from the Romance languages to Friulian and Italian (or from Italian to Friulian) know that translating to and from Friulian is more difficult. It is not only the vocabulary but the nature of the language itself that causes problems.

Translators dealing with typologically different languages have similar experience. However, we have seen that Friulian is predominantly isolating, in concord with other Romance languages, including Italian.

We can therefore assume that the dissimilarity originates elsewhere. It seems that the problematic area is writing. Let us determine which features causing problems to translators can be attributed to the contrast between the written and spoken language.

A typical feature of spoken discourse is redundancy. In Friulian redundancy does not appear only in concord (a feature of an inflected language). The obligatory pronominal subject (§II.iii) as well as pronouns with relative pronouns (§II.iv-v) are also features of redundancy. Yet another example is the redundant usage of pronouns in the following sentence with a reflexive verb and impersonal reflexive pronoun (the example is taken from Yamamoto 1994, 154):

- 14:    Si                si                gjavisi                lis scarpis.  
          3SG.REFL    3SG.REFL    take.off-3SG.REFL    the shoes  
          ‘someone takes the shoes off’



In a spontaneous spoken discourse we often encounter attempts to emotionalise utterances. Diminutives and other means are used to convey the different affective tones. Friulian texts abound in a high concentration of various emotional tones, which are easily incorporated into texts by means of the aforementioned suffixes.

Expressivity in spoken discourse is manifested also on the syntactic level (comp. Zima 1961, 5). Intonation allows for and the same time requires a more free word order. This tendency may encourage the formation of suitable function words (§II.ii-vi). Expressivity is closely connected with functional sentence perspective. Regarding this matter, we can also mention the existence of demonstrative pronouns in the place of articles in spoken Czech and other Slavonic languages (Mathesius 1947).

Another typical feature of spoken discourse is its gradual formation; the speaker then stacks one new element after the other to semantically refine the utterance. For example chains of similar words are formed by using prepositions and adverbs. Diachronic development then results in complex prepositions and adverbs. Friulian belongs among the languages where such expressions – more or less fixed – are commonplace. Recursiveness is not an exception:

15: Al è vignût di di-d-entri.  
He is came from from-from-inside  
'he is came out from the inside'

IV.ii. Sgall mentions the tendency to nominalisation as a secondary feature of an agglutinative type (Sgall 1995, 66). This propensity is often mentioned in connection with written discourse. E.g. Jaroslav Bauer names the diachronic development of the Czech participles and infinitives among the features of written language (Bauer 1986, 364-370). The truth is that contemporary Friulian avoids nominalisation, although it has the necessary syntactic and word formative measures (also of agglutinative type) that are actually on the same level as in other Romance languages.

Interesting notes on the approach of languages towards nominalisation can be read in two articles comparing Czech and Slovak. Markus Giger proves that from the typological point of view Slovak has a transitional function in the group of Western Slavonic languages. Among the discussed features there are two that concern nominalisation: infinitive verbs (Giger 1999, 205-206) and definite forms in sentences with an elided subject (Giger 1999, 206-209). In both cases Slovak seems to be prone to nominalisation more than Czech.

In spite of this, when Vlasta Podhorná compared Páral's "Radost až do rána" with its Slovak translation from 1977, she found out that "200 Czech nominal constructions were translated into Slovak as verbal [...]. This result surely proves that the Slovak translation of nominal phrases into verbal constructions is not accidental" (Podhorná 1982, 152).

This information suggests that the share of a typological feature of a language does not have to be in proportion with its occurrence in spoken discourse. Similarly to Slovak, Friulian makes use of nominalisation less than its typological character allows. They are also languages that for most of the speakers were only spoken languages (for Slovak this is not true since the World War I).

The present examples do not provide sufficient material to draw a definite conclusion. However, they support the hypothesis that writing can influence the usage of typological features of a language and thus its appearance.

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## LE FRIULAN ET SON TYPE LINGUISTIQUE

On a appliqué la théorie de la typologie linguistique de Vladimír Skalička au frioulan (le ladin oriental). Comme il est pour les autres langues romanes aussi, le type isolant l'emporte sur les autres types linguistique. Le frioulan a même développé chez des mots fonctionnels l'abilité d'exprimer certaines relations syntaxiques. On y trouve soit les traits flexionnels typiques pour la plupart de langues romanes soit des caractères agglutinants en mesure bien plus considérable que chez les langues sœurs. En effet l'agglutination est présente dans des formes verbales et dans l'emploi de certains suffixes dérivationnels. A partir des matériaux frioulans, on peut formuler l'hypothèse de travail que l'emploi de l'écriture conditionne l'aspecte superficiel de la langue ainsi qu'il peut déterminer la mesure dans laquelle les moyens des divers types linguistiques ils sont employés.

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