

FUCHS, CATHERINE. *La comparaison et son expression en français*. Paris: Ophrys, 2014. ISBN 978-2-7080-1409-1. Pp. 208. 18 €.

In this rich yet concise volume Fuchs accomplishes her formidable goal of presenting a summary of the vast scope and the complexity of comparative structures in French by establishing two broad categories: quantitative comparison and qualitative comparison. The first part of the book covers quantitative comparison, also called *la comparaison d'(in)égalité*. What Fuchs calls the “canonical schema,” *Pierre est plus (ou aussi) grand que Paul*, falls into this first category. However, although Fuchs examines in detail the functioning of that schema, she takes pain to show that it is far from unique. She illustrates her point by detailing in the first chapter of this section the entire panorama of the structures available in French for expressing quantitative comparison and by concluding this section with a chapter examining three types of grammatical structures rarely spoken of in discussions on comparison: detached constructions, metalinguistic comparatives, and symmetrical correlatives. The second part of the book focuses on qualitative comparison, dealing specifically with valuative comparison (*la comparaison valuative*), simulative comparison, and comparison of identity and alterity. The examples in the book are authentic texts from a wide variety of sources: the Frantext literary database, advertisements, magazine and newspaper articles, simple Google searches, and examples of spoken French. Every step has been taken to simplify the presentation of this necessarily complicated material. The introduction is especially helpful with its clear outline of the different chapters and its explanation of terminology. Building upon the work of typologists, Fuchs adopts the simplified vocabulary of *comparandes* (*comparé* et *standard*) for the objects being compared and *paramètre* for the property on which the comparison is based. In addition, each of the two parts of the book begins with a two-page summary that complements the information given in the introduction; each chapter ends with a short *en bref* recapitulation of the chapter’s salient points; and the book contains an indispensable glossary. Linguists will undoubtedly be the most appreciative of this book and also the most capable of wading through some of the more difficult technical portions (of which there are many, in spite of all the attempts at simplification). The intended audience also includes teachers and learners of French, but only those with a solid mastery of the language and with some basic understanding of linguistics will be able to profit from the volume. For those with the required background, this book brings multiple benefits, the most notable being exposure to the many heretofore underappreciated and possibly misunderstood means of expressing comparison that go beyond the canonical structure familiar to all. The inclusion of these structures, which is what makes this book so unique, will lead both teachers and learners of French to a better understanding of the intricacies of comparison and to an expanded repertoire for expressing them. To conclude with an example of a detached construction: *Mieux que tout autre livre sur ce sujet, celui de Catherine Fuchs met en lumière toute la complexité et l’ampleur de l’expression de la comparaison en français*.