

FUCHS, CATHERINE. *La comparaison et son expression en français*. Paris: Ophrys, 2014. ISBN 978-2-7090-1409-1. Pp. 208. 18 €.

Belonging to the collection *L'essentiel français*, this text provides an informative in-depth but manageable study of the forms and functions of the comparison in contemporary French linguistic practice. The author has organized her study across two parts containing six chapters and an introductory chapter in total. Written in an accessible style, Fuchs's book guides the reader through a vast range of categories for uses of the comparison: "l'inégalité," "l'égalité," "la prévalence," "la préférence," "l'alternative résolue," "la similarité," "l'analogie," and "l'identité." To provide a richer sense of the scope and organization of this volume, I cite a few chapter titles and headings: "Diversité des schémas d'(in)égalité," "Le schéma canonique d'(in)égalité: la gradation [les configurations]," "la comparaison valuative," and "la comparaison similative." Before attacking these concepts and topics, Fuchs importantly begins with an introductory chapter ("Qu'est-ce que la comparaison?"), which I found particularly helpful in gleaned a general understanding of the principal characteristics and operations of the comparison and traditional as well as emerging approaches to the study of the comparison in the field of linguistics. Every chapter is well organized with each subsection presenting each comparison expression's etymology, other related remarks, clear explanations of the expression's operations broken down into its components, and numerous model sentences that make concretely evident the preceding information. The first part treats "la comparaison quantitative d'inégalité ou d'égalité" in which "l'(in)égalité opère sur les quantités relatives d'un 'paramètre' commun" (19). These first chapters cover examples that illustrate 'par excellence' the comparison (e.g., *plus/moins... que, davantage, aussi/autant... que, si/tant... que*, etc.). The second part treats "les comparaisons qualitatives" that "n'opèrent pas sur des quantités (et n'engagent donc pas la notion de gradation), mais établissent entre les deux entités comparées un rapport qualitatif" (19–20). These chapters focus on expressions labeled "valuative," "similative," and "d'identité" (e.g., *valoir mieux, aimer mieux, préférer, comme, tel (que), même que, and autre*). The text is clearly meant for researchers and doctoral students in the field, and they are the readers who stand to gain the most from it. Yet, as a non-specialist, I enjoyed discovering the information and appreciated the deeper degree of language awareness surrounding the comparison it permitted me. The level of explanation is much too technical and advanced to use in any of my French language courses, but the text has given me some ideas on how to answer students' questions in the future about the comparison (in a simplified manner) such as by considering the categories of comparisons presented in this volume. Moreover, what I found the most useful are the excellent model sentences that Fuchs pulled from a variety of sources: multi-media, Internet, literature, proverbs and sayings, and historical citations. I can see myself using many of these sentences to supplement review and presentation of the comparison with my students in future lessons.