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## **A Brief History of the Contextualization of Grammatical Discourse**

Zuzana Puchovská (ed.), *Le discours grammatical contextualisé slovaque dans la description du français* (1918-2018), Éditions des archives contemporaines, Paris, 2021, 312 p.

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The choice of motto from M. Wilmet for the arguments preceding the book coordinated by Z. Puchovská says everything about the intentionality: which is that the image of a unitary French language is fiction, because numerous factors constantly diversify it. Wilmet has four perspectives in mind when it comes to French constantly changing: chronological, geographical, socio-professional and functional. Aware of the difficulty to capture its multifaceted sensibilities, the French language approached by the authors of the collective book details the variety and nuances through analyses that are useful and, from a certain point of view, exotic for the reception of French. Assuming the fact that all French speakers, be they native or not, add personality to the language without including the utopia of the unity of French – something that has been proven ever since 1991 by H. Besse and Rémy Porquier. On the contrary, the authors of this volume concentrate on the metadiscourse, through which – they believe along with their coordinator – they manage to grow the audience of French grammar and, especially, emphasize the factors that participate in the diversification of the language. Thus, the core of the research in the book is the hypothesis of the legitimacy of contextualized grammatical discourse, through which French grammar diversifies. At the same time. We will also find, among the works in the book, how such a hypothesis amplifies the scientific potential of French. Beyond the numerous specialized studies in the field, the authors of the volume explore the term of grammar through the methodical explanation of the linguistic and morphological system, and the novelty is that all forms of internal functioning of the French language are analyzed in the context of French culture and language. It would serve well Romanian philologists, with a long-standing Francophone tradition, to resume the grand analyses of the '60s and '70s, when French endured, during the communist years, and built bridges for dialogue that stand to this day. What fails to occur in our area – or, if such research does, however, happen, it is marginal or accessible to only a small, elitist public – Slovakian researchers, as we can see, manage to achieve. Not from any time, but from the last five years, focusing on three concepts of

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grammar: the Slovakian researchers aimed to explore naturalized French from the editions of all French works published in Slovakia in the past hundred years which can be characterized by a grammatical discourse, then, the ideas are specific to textbooks and to French as a foreign language. The research expanded to centers and institutions that were partners of Comenius University, such as the National Library in Martin, the University Library in Bratislava, and the State Scientific Library in Banská Bystrica. Of course, it is not simple to choose which important works must be at the center of such a century-wide investigation. That is why the authors and co-authors of this book established a few criteria that form the basis of this collective research. First of all, their works needed to identify the structures destined for non-specialists in French, then, the scientific works needed to contain a type of grammatical discourse, third, the articles needed to be written and conceived exclusively by authors who were Slovakian or of Slovakian nationality, and the final criterion to comply with was that the texts needed to be written in Slovakian foremost. We can see, from the published texts, that the authors kept the imposed criteria in mind. Chronologically, the first to uncover 50 years of metadiscourse is Katarína Chovancová, who analyzes the texts published in Slovakia between 1918 and 1968; the second communist period, stretching all the way to its end, between 1969 and 1992 is handled by Eva Švarbová, and the following period is covered by the studies of the coordinator, Zuzana Puchovská (1993-2018). The three socio-political periods have personalized characteristics for what we call the analysis of the grammatical metadiscourse. Contextualized, the metadiscourses in the published texts of this book center on the French textbooks destined for future learners, who wish to understand the system by which French grammar functions. Of course, with practical utility at the forefront, taking into consideration the future speakers of French, the authors efficiently adapted their methods and analyses. Cécile Bruley and Branislav Meszaros interpret, with the use of contrast, various works with Slovakian authors that were foundational to the learning of French for several generations. The works authored by K. Chovancová, E. Švarbová și Z. Puchovská are interested in certain specificities, as I was saying. The three authors employ, for the periods that they analyze, some of the tools specific to the theorist, the linguistic theorist, and the detective work of the historians of yesteryear. The text that ends this collective monograph is authored by François Schmitt. Zuzana Puchovská's idea seems extremely lucid and intelligent to me: to conclude in a contrapuntal and professional manner, I would say, a work dedicated to a Romance language in a Slavic country through the opening opinion authored by a native speaker. Schmitt makes comparisons and refers to textbooks for foreign learners of French, as well as didactic textbooks, and draws extremely interesting conclusions on how to design a truly functional educational system.

I would say that this book is a veritable history of the analysis of the Slovakian-French grammatical metadiscourse. The angles and utility of the book are diverse, even multidisciplinary. For the research in other Romance

languages, I believe that such small histories can enter into an extremely interesting dialogue. As long as the research is carried out as competently as Zuzana Puchovská has managed to, of course.