explanation that he wished to differentiate the earlier type of novel, as it was shaped during the epoch of literary realism, from the new type, which came about (amid some antitheses) during the interwar and the postwar period. In Števček's view, the true bearer of modernity is neither a new topic nor a new form, but an "appreciation of the subject as the bearer of the intellectual treasure of the modern novel". The foremost Slovak prosaists distinguished themselves by "having brought the optics of a subjective evaluation, feeling and even a subjective vision of reality into the novel". The development of the Slovak novel is therefore determined by the process of a gradual emancipation (first the author, and then the novel's hero) from social anonymity. However, after 1945 this process again became complicated because the "dynamic element of development" came to be the world outlook (*Weltanschauung*). At the same time, the latter was somethihg suprapersonal as interpreted in this country (the hero again belonged to the "whole" - this time to a "socialist" whole) which stands outside the author and the individual. J. Števček supports all the notions spoken of here by his abundant analyses from which, in fact, they had originally been derived; that is why they sound convincing, acquire the nature of developmental laws.

A conspicuous feature of Števček's work is systematism. Occasionally one feels that he fetters literature with it. But this is mere semblance, because everything is logically argued and justified. Against "systematism" stands a large of interpretations and analyses that are very instructive and constantly draw attention - to such an extent that the "synchronic" plane pushes the "diachronic" one into the background. And precisely here is the principal field of ideas, verifiable judgements and insights that can be utilized with profit. Hence, there is no question of "closed" cognition, but of a flux of searching and finding, which is unusually stimulating. It may be assumed that the cultural community will reach out for Števček's *The History of Slovak Novel* not only for a compendium of ideas, but also for inspiration in promoting research in this field. Vividness and inspiration as the opposites of the rigidity and morbidity of literary explications, such are the signs of the creativeness which fully pervade all of Števček's work and make it a real part of the never-ending process of cognition.

Vladimír Petrík

Lakoff, George - Turner, Mark: *More than Cool Reason. A Field Guide to Poetic Metaphor*. Chicago and London, The University of Chicago Press 1989. 230 pp.

The authors, who are well-known for their work in the field of metaphor in general, have now published a book on metaphor in poetry which nevertheless surpasses the limits set by the title itself. Lakoff and Turner had no doubt planned to write a handbook of poetic metaphor but the result is rather a more synthetic treatment of the mechanism of metaphor use and interpretation that is helpful beyond the domain of poetry as well. This may simply be a logical consequence of the fact that metaphor is considered by the authors - and not without justification - to be part and parcel of everyday speech and by no means a peculiarity or privilege of creative poetry.

Lakoff and Turner have applied to metaphor what may be labelled a systemic approach, maintaining that metaphor is never used and interpreted in isolation. Besides, in their opinion metaphor is more than a linguistic phenomenon, and is qualified as conceptual mapping, a manifestation of normal thought mechanism that are universally human. Basic conceptual metaphors are cognitive in nature and in poetry, or in ordinary speech, we find only particular linguistic expressions of these conceptual metaphors.

It is repeatedly stressed that metaphor is an ordinary and omnipresent linguistic phenomenon; it is only brought to perfection by poets because they are capable of making use of its potential. If metaphor were something unusual and extraordinary, then it would hamper communication or even make it impossible.

The publication is destined for undergraduates who are seriously interested in poetry. It is based exclusively on data from English and American poetry and the readers will appreciate that the

authors do not avoid modern poetry which is abounding in metaphors that are not always easy to interpret.

One of the most important conclusions of the authors is their contention that the observed metaphorical variability can be reduced to several elementary cognitive models that are largely conventional. These conventional metaphorical models are viewed by Lakoff and Turner as particular manifestations of the "great chain of being", a metaphorical term itself, that could be characterized as an anthropocentric sequence at the top of which is the humain domain followed by animals, plants, natural phenomena, and concluded by inert objects. This sequence operates in many disparate and discontinuous fields of language, confirming its thoroughly anthropocentric character.

In addition to the issue of metaphor, the authors discuss metonymy as well, in an attempt to help keep the two frequently confused notion apart.

In conclusion, the authors briefly mention several basic attitudes to metaphor, namely, the so-called Literal Meaning Theory, the Pragmatic Position, the No Concepts Position, the Dead Metaphor Position, The Interactionist Theory, and the It's All Metaphor Position.

The pragmatic orientation of the book is stressed not only by such chapters as The Power of Poetic Metaphor and The Metaphoric Structure of a Single Poem but also by the inclusion of a bibliography comprising a list of recommended publications, an index of topics, and above all, a list of all cognitive metaphors mentioned and exemplified in the book.

This volume will be appreciated by all those who have read previous books on this or related subjects published in the past by the two authors.

Viktor Krupa

Dorian, Nancy C. (ed.): *Investigating Obsolescence. Studies in Language Contraction and Death.* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press 1989. 445 pp. ISBN 0-521-32405-X.

This volume has been prepared by Professor Nancy C. Dorian of Bryn Mawr College with the intention of enhancing scattered research into the nature of this very real problem. It would be no exaggeration to maintain that language extinction is an everyday phenomenon, especially in many multilingual countries where tens or even hundreds of languages coexist and are spoken by relatively few persons - in Sub-Saharan Africa, Oceania, Australia, and America.

This publication may be characterized as essentially descriptive - practical suggestions for language policy seem to be beyond its scope, and it was not the contributors' aim to give advice on how to save languages threatened by extinction. However, the ultimate disappearance of a language is only a part of the problem of the world's linguistic homogenization including also, e.g., the process of dialect levelling. The Introduction is concluded by a list of "Focus Questions", such as problems in locating terminal speakers of a language, skewed performance in terminal linguistic communities, linguistic change as a structured phenomenon, home language transmission and its cessation (pp. 8-10).

The 25 papers are divided into three sections titled "Focus on Context" (pp. 13-164), "Focus on Structu-

re" (pp. 167-331), and "Invited Commentaries" (pp. 335-394).

Papers included in Section I deal predominantly with social and historical circumstances of language extinction in some countries in Africa, Europe, South Asia, and America. Some of the contributions have a synthetic character, e.g., Gerrit J. Dimmendaal (On Language Death in Eastern Africa, pp. 13-31) discusses economic and social factors as causes in the process of extinction and the role of language as a symbol of ethnic identity. In addition to these sociolinguistic problems, Dimmendaal concentrates on the problem of linguistic traces left by an extinct language. David Bradley observes the gradual fading of the Ugong language in Thailand (pp. 33-40) and the process of ethnic minorities' assimilation in the country. Seosamh Watson (pp. 41-59) tries to solve the complicated question as to who is or is not a speaker of a language community, taking data from Scottish and Irish Gaelic. According to him, a key role in the process of extinction is played by a lack of prestige of the doomed language. Most of the remaining contributions in this section focus on the fate of languages functioning outside their own original environment. Einar Haugen (pp. 75-89) deals with the precarious