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# **Úvahy o Mathesiově pojetí vědy, jazyka a gramatiky**

FRANTIŠEK DANEŠ

## **Observations on V. Mathesius's notions of science, language and grammar**

**ABSTRACT:** The then-non-standard conviction of V. Mathesius – that science is an ongoing process of constructing truth and that human cognition represents a simplified reduction or epistemological stylization of experience – now appears to be in accordance with major present-day philosophical approaches. Mathesius's viewpoint followed primarily from his pronounced activist nature and self-reliant way of thinking, partly influenced by the ideas of E. Sapir, A. Marty, and analytical philosophy. In this study, the philosophical ambience of the Prague Linguistic Circle at that time is also examined. Mathesius understood language as communicative competence, implying communication skills in addition to the system of means. Given that he viewed the utterance (the processes of its encoding and decoding) as a legitimate object of linguistic study, he appears to be a predecessor to modern text linguistics. This study reconsiders Mathesius's functional grammar project, inspects the development of the ideas behind it more closely and states its psycholinguistic basis.

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# **Pojem významu ve světle pražské poetiky a estetiky**

MARIE KUBÍNOVÁ

## **The concept of meaning in light of the Prague School's poetics and aesthetics**

**ABSTRACT:** The word “meaning” appears often in the work of Jan Mukařovský. He does not, however, define this concept explicitly; thus we must deduce its content retrospectively, based on individual instances of its use. We then encounter a surprising ambiguity manifested even within a single text in literature studies. That is, when Mukařovský describes the structure of a literary work, he refers to its three basic components: sound, meaning and theme. “Meaning” is thus associated explicitly with merely one particular aspect of the text. But Mukařovský then goes on to say that thematic elements (motifs) operate as bearers of meaning in literary texts, and even that meaning should be understood as the “common denominator” of all components. Meaning in a strictly linguistic sense is thus rivaled by meaning of artistic form – i.e. the entire aesthetic effect in which the equivalent of the “meaning-aesthetic object” can be found. This “meaning-aesthetic object”, discussed in Mukařovský’s works on aesthetics, is at the same time characteristically presented as the fluctuating component of the work; with respect to the recipient as a historical variable, the Prague School preconceives the issue of the fluctuating identity of a work and several methodological principles of reception aesthetics.

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## **Od školské spisovnosti ke standardní češtině: výzva k diskusi**

### **From school-imposed literary norms to Standard Czech: A call for discussion**

**ABSTRACT:** This paper recalls difficulties in the functional and social stratification of Czech and the codification of its literary norm. These difficulties make it necessary to discuss the possibility of a transition from the current post-purist viewpoint to a more realistic and liberal one. The point is to abandon the unavailing efforts at a sharp specification of “literary” morphemic forms and to aim for an approach which works with a gradual division of standard and non-standard phenomena, viewed as a rich cline of functionally diversified forms. This theoretical approach may reveal that informal discourse in Czech also has its standard even though it includes frequent oscillation between items from different registers. It is a substantial task to apply this approach in education, where bookish forms are still currently required in communicative situations for which bookish style is inappropriate.

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## **K čemu je dobrý obrat k jazyku a jiné: polemika s Romanem Göttlicherem**

### **The boon of the Linguistic Turn and other matters: A reaction to Roman Göttlicher**

**ABSTRACT:** This essay is a reaction to Roman Göttlicher's article *Communication, Silence and Speech in Christianity* (2003). It aims to show that Göttlicher does not provide just cause to deduce the insufficiency of natural language and the superiority of silence, as the article's concluding passages state. In addition, the article's indirect criticism of the Linguistic Turn and related appeal for a turn away from language is an unsuitable approach to the context of this philosophical scheme as well as to paragraph 7 of Wittgenstein's Tractatus. I argue that a) in communication, silence cannot be conceived as a sign above natural language because the two are complementary – silence acquires meaning only in relation to verbal response, b) claiming the insufficiency of natural language is a question of religious disposition and is not supported by any linguistic arguments in Göttlicher's article, c) the Linguistic Turn has actually helped to reveal the role of natural language in our conception of the world, and natural language has become an essential basis for philosophical exploration, and d) Göttlicher's use of citations from Wittgenstein's Tractatus is not well-founded, because Wittgenstein addresses problems in describing the world using language, not the sufficiency of language for communication with God.

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