

The making of the Grande Grammaire du français

Anne Abeillé
Université Paris 7

Abstract

We present the making of the Grande Grammaire du français, its authors, its outline, its new terminology, how the basic linguistic concepts are (re)defined, and how the data are chosen and annotated (with both invented examples and data from corpora). The new reference Grammar of French (La Grande Grammaire du français), coordinated by Anne Abeillé, Annie Delaveau and Danièle Godard, to be published in 2009 by Bayard, will be approximately 2000 page long, and the result of a collective project (around fifty authors from more than 10 countries). Like the recent reference grammars of the other Romance Languages, it takes into account the important results of the linguistic research of the past 30 years, while aiming at a non specialist audience (it is not formalized, and uses the traditional syntactic categories). It includes a description of all the syntactic phenomena, as well as semantic, pragmatic and prosodic insights, especially as they interact with syntax. The analysis concerns the data from standard written French, but also includes data from spoken corpora and regional or non standard French (when accessible). Throughout the grammar, a simple phrase structure grammar is used, with major constituents and explicit syntactic functions, which enables us to adopt a common representation.