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Defining Language: A local grammar of definition sentences

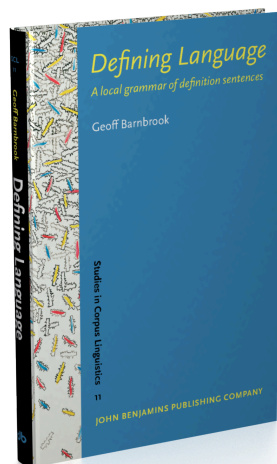
Geoff Barnbrook

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Defining Language

Studies in Corpus Linguistics

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Volume 11

Defining Language: A local grammar of definition sentences

by Geoff Barnbrook

Defining Language

A local grammar of
definition sentences

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John Benjamins Publishing Company
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For John Sinclair — teacher, colleague, friend

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Brief description

This book describes the analysis of the main features of the language used in English definition sentences, using as a corpus the definitions contained in the *Collins Cobuild Student's Dictionary*. It examines the usefulness of the information provided by dictionaries in natural language processing work and the nature of the language used in dictionary definitions in general and in the Cobuild range in particular. It provides a general survey of monolingual English dictionaries, including a brief history of their development, and a detailed investigation of the nature of learners' dictionaries and their special features. The concept of sublanguages is examined, together with the justification for regarding definition sentences as a sublanguage and for the application to them of a local grammar of definition. Grammars and parsers are considered in general terms, and in their relevance to the creation of a model for the language of definitions.

The methodology adopted for the development of the language model is described, together with a detailed account of the taxonomy, local grammar and associated parser developed for definition sentences. The implications of the results of the analysis and future possible applications of the taxonomy, grammar and parser are described and assessed.

