

# The Companion Series

Workshop at NIAS, Wassenaar November 18 and 19 2011

Organisers:

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Fifteen years ago NIAS hosted a theme group, organized by Martin Everaert and Henk van Riemsdijk, to discuss and get off the ground a project that aimed at putting together a large collection of what we called syntactic case studies. The idea, in short, was that handbooks tend to be very focused on the major literature, the current stage of theorizing and to limit illustrations to those languages that are easily accessible to students and teachers alike. As a result many proposals and analyses that have, at some time in the recent or more distant past played a significant role in the development of the current theory and/or shed important light on aspects of languages that generally do not make it into the handbooks, tend to slide into oblivion and become inaccessible to current generations of syntacticians.

This idea to create a remedy against this situation took shape during the 1996/1997 theme group and resulted in a concrete plan for a "Companion to Syntax" that Everaert and Van Riemsdijk edited and which was published in 5 substantial volumes with Blackwell in 2006. The success of this work was such that we were encouraged by Wiley-Blackwell to set up a series of companions for other subdomains of linguistics. Earlier this year another 5-volume set, the Companion to Phonology, edited by Marc van Oostendorp et al. appeared. And now there are plans for a second expanded edition of the Syntax Companion as well as plans for two new companions: the Companion to Semantics and the Companion to Language Acquisition.

The present NIAS workshop brings together representatives from the existing companions, the editors of the two new ones, as well as some advisors, among other things on optimizing the functionality of the companions for electronic platforms. We hope to learn from each other's experiences, to update the philosophy behind the concept 'case study', and to brainstorm about additional projects along these lines.