La place de l'adjectif : des théories aux corpus
Adjective position in French: from theories to corpora

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Abstract: In this article some classical theories concerning adjective position in modern French are compared with the data that online corpora can reveal. Indeed, having few examples or closed non-computerized corpora at their disposal, researchers of the "non-computerized" era sought, with some success, to establish general and generalizable values to explain adjective position in modern French. It turns out, however, that a number of these generalizations are contradicted by the findings revealed by the corpora. We will briefly highlight them and then indicate to what extent corpus-based study, especially that availing of almost unlimited online corpora, can lead to a better understanding of this phenomenon. A new way of analyzing adjective position, based on statistics rather than mere raw frequency, seems today quite feasible thanks to online corpora and referentials.

Key words: manual corpora, computerized corpora, adjective position.