Dicționarul limbii române (DLR) (The Dictionary of the Romanian Language) is the comprehensive dictionary of the Romanian language. It took more than 100 years to complete its first edition: the work for the first volume began in 1906 and the last volume was published in 2010. In 2010, with the financial support of the National Bank of Romania, a complete anastatic edition was released. This complete form rejoins the ‘old series’, whose name was abbreviated as DA, published mainly before the Second World War under the direction of Sextil Pușcariu, and the ‘new series’, abbreviated as DLR, published in 1965-2010.

DLR is also known as “Dicționarul Academiei” (“The Dictionary of the Academy”) as it has always been a major task of the Romanian Academy ever since its creation in 1866. The founding documents stated that the elaboration of the comprehensive dictionary of the Romanian language was one of the main purposes that underlay the foundation of the Romanian Academic Society. Out of all works planned by the Academic forum, the Dictionary was the most complex and the most laborious. Three attempts were made in order to complete this endeavour and it is only the fourth that was successful. First, August Treboniu Laurian and Ioan C. Massim published Dicționarul limbii române (The Dictionary of the Romanian Language) in 1869-1877, a three-volume lexicon, which bore a certain imprint of the Latinist current. Then, Bogdan Petriceicu Hasdeu undertook this project. His dictionary, the Etymologicum Magnum Romaniae, comprised the Romanian words ranging from A to bărbat, with encyclopaedic definitions and complex explanations. His dictionary was compiled in 1887-1895. Then Alexandru Philippide was designated as head of the new project, but his dictionary remained unfinished and unpublished. Finally, in 1906 this complex project was undertaken by Sextil Pușcariu, who managed to publish the first volume, letters A-B, in 1913. Sextil Pușcariu continued the work at the dictionary until 1949. The political changes after World War II deeply affected the scientific activity and there was a ten-year gap in the lexicography field. Then, in 1959, a new team took over the dictionary, with Acad. Iorgu Iordan, Ion Coteanu and Al. Graur as editors-in-chief (Ion Coteanu alone from 1991 to 1999). The last volumes were supervised by Acad. Marius Sala and Gh. Mihăilă, from 2000 to 2010.

During these 104 years, 37 volumes were published. Five of them belong to the old series (A, B, C, D-De, F-I, I, k, L-Lojniță), and the rest to the new series. There is no rigorous correspondence between the volumes and the letters of the alphabet which range the words in the lexicon: in the old part, a volume can comprise more than one letter, whilst in the new part a letter can be divided in more volumes. Thus it is obvious that the 37 volumes are unequal, that there are some differences between the old part and the new part; first of all, because language has changed ever since the first volume was published. New words have entered the language, others have acquired new meanings, some others have restrained their use. Secondly, the lexicographic methods have changed, to a certain extent. For instance, in the old part, words are translated into French. In the new series, the editors gave up this translation because DLR is not a bilingual dictionary, but this change made it less accessible to international specialists. Another example regards the organization of derived words into ‘lexical nests’ – the words derived from a stem are grouped under the stem-word and thus are not treated separately in the old series, beginning with the second part of letter B. This economical model was abandoned in the new series for greater precision. Moreover, the publication of the 37 volumes

RRL, LVIII, I, p. 73–86, București, 2013
took more than a century; in this period, the orthographic rules changed several times. Another issue concerns the inclusion of words in the dictionary. Sextil Puşcariu had a deep respect for folk literature and therefore he included in the dictionary many old and regional words which were used in folklore, but he rejected a great deal of neologisms, especially the ones attested in the scientific and technical writings. The new series contains a greater number of loanwords because researchers applied a scientific criterion: scientific terms are noted in the dictionary only if they occur in other language variants, such as general, artistic or popular language.

These are shortcomings that the anastatic edition cannot fix. It simply puts together the 37 volumes as they were published. What this edition solves is the division of the lexicographic material in tomes, thus making the dictionary more reader-friendly. The correspondence letter-volume is not 1:1 even in this edition, because the number of words beginning with the same letter varies a lot, but no letter was divided in more than two tomes (except for S, where the material was too wide). The 37 volumes have been comprised in 19 tomes, divided as follows: Tome I, A–B; Tome II, C; Tome III, D–Deținere; Tome IV, Deținut–Dyke; Tome V, E; Tome VI, F–Î; Tome VII, I–Lherzolită; Tome VIII, LI–Luzulă; Tome IX, M; Tome X, N–O; Tome XI, P–Pogribanie; Tome XII, Pogrijeenie–Q; Tome XIII, R–Scalbuc; Tome XIV, Scladă–Sponghios; Tome XV, Spongiar–Ș; Tome XVI, T; Tome XVII, Ț–U; Tome XVIII, V–Vizurină; Tome XIX, Vîclă–Z. The volumes were arranged in alphabetical order, even if they were elaborated at different times. For instance, D and E, which were the last to appear, are placed after C and before F (although these two belong to the old series). Even if there are certain differences between the old series and the new one, which were inherent to such a long-time labour, there is a certain continuity between the two. The new teams in Bucharest, Iași and Cluj-Napoca carried on the main principles stated by Sextil Pușcariu and applied them more rigorously: the criteria for making the word list, for establishing the entry-form of each word and the structure of each article remained mainly the same. Some fragments of the new series had already been written by Puşcariu’s team, and the drafts were further enriched and revised by the new teams. More precisely, M, N, O and a part of P had been drawn up, and D, E and a part of L had already been elaborated and revised by the former lexicographers in Bucharest and Cluj-Napoca. None of these drafts were published and some of them were lost, but they served as an important working material for those volumes published after World War II.

DLR, in its present form, contains more than 175,000 words and their variants, whose meanings and evolution are described in 17,885 pages. It is the widest historical dictionary of the Romanian language. It is the only dictionary which allows the reader to follow the formal and the semantic evolution of words, from the first known attestation to the present day. DLR is also an explicative dictionary, because each word is defined and all the meanings are noted, explained and illustrated. The meanings are ranged historically, beginning with the etymological one; for new loanwords, the meaning that is first attested is noted first, although it might not be the etymological one. Each definition is illustrated with a number of examples from both literary and non-literary texts, also ordered chronologically. Inflection characteristics and formal variations are noted at the end of each article. Moreover, the choice for an entry-form of each word makes this dictionary a normative tool, because it indicates the correct form and the correct spelling of each word, sometimes even the correct pronunciation. Diatopic and diastratic variation is also mentioned through indications such as “regional” (the region is often mentioned), “popular”, “colloquial”, etc. DLR also contains etymological information: the etymon of each word is noted at the end of each entry, sometimes with wider discussions in the old series. Therefore, the Academic dictionary is an indispensable tool in research on the Romanian language. It offers a wide view of the Romanian vocabulary and its history.

This complex structure of the dictionary makes it obvious that the effort of the elaborating team was huge. The new series gathered three groups working in the linguistic institutes of the Academy in three cities: Bucharest, Iași and Cluj-Napoca. Bucharest, with its largest team, brought the largest contribution (17 volumes, letters M, N, P, S, Z and D), while the researchers in Cluj-Napoca elaborated eight volumes (letters O, R, T, Ț, U, the second part of L: Li–Lizulă, K, Q) and the lexicographers in Iași, six volumes (Ș, V, W, X, Y, the first part of L: L–Lherzolită and E). Three of these volumes received the Bogdan Petriceicu Hasdeu prize, awarded by the Romanian Academy: the
last part of S (Spongiar-Swing), elaborated in Bucharest, the volume which contained the words beginning with Ț, elaborated by the lexicographers in Cluj-Napoca, and the first part of L (L-Lherzolită), compiled in Iași.

This complete edition gathering DA and DLR was necessary because there were just a few libraries which had all 37 volumes. Most of the times, the collections were incomplete, and the older volumes were deteriorated. This anastatic edition makes the Academic dictionary available for a larger number of readers. It is a working tool that should be present in all libraries, because DLR is a necessary working instrument not only in linguistic research, but in all humanities.

This is why publishing the complete edition, with the support of the National Bank of Romania, represents a moment of great - even national - importance, in our cultural life.

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Dan Ungureanu is one of those people who do not fear of the “deep waters" of probing into the origin of civilizations and languages, as they are presented in Vladislav Illič-Svityč’ poem, written in reconstructed Nostratic. In other words, the young author is a daring author who tackles great, difficult themes and subjects that focus on the essence of human communication problems, from the perspective of a linguist, formed in the classical, and, implicitly, Indo-European spirit. An apprentice of the late philologist G.I. Tohâneanu, who studied at the most famous higher education institutions in Paris (École Pratique des Hautes Études, École Normale Supérieure, Université Paris IV), the young philologist has already given the contemporary culture some reference works in the Indo-European field.

The book published in 2011 confirms an already fully-fledged scholar, as we can notice in the pages presenting the present stage of theoretical research regarding languages affinities. Whether he refers to the studies about the Indo-European family, or presents the established studies regarding the Finno-Ugric and Altaic families, his exhaustive effort to include all contributions (from the sixteenth century to the twentieth century) is doubled by the effort to select relevant and fundamental information, as well as by the concern for data systematization, aimed at providing a solid base for the author’s own analytical and demonstrative approach.

The hypothesis he takes over from his predecessors and analyses through new working methods and procedures is that the languages in the Indo-European group and the related languages had a common ancestor called “Nostratic". His comparative and historical, statistical and mathematical perspective is focused, as made apparent in the book’s very title, on Indo-European, on the one hand, and on the Uralic and Altaic language families, on the other hand. In 1836, Richard Lepsius firmly stated the possibility of Indo-European having common origins with other languages, in his comparative study on Indo-European, Semito-Hamitic (in a broad sense) and Coptic numerals. He was followed by R. von Raumer, G. I. Ascoli, F. Delitzsch, J. McCurdy, C. Abel, with regard to the same two great ancient linguistic areas, and then, in the twentieth century, by A. Cuny, S. Levin, W. P. Lehmann, V. Blažek, R. Bomhard și J. C. Kerns.

The latter two authors refer to a “Proto-Nostratic", starting from the comparisons between the Proto-Indo-European and Proto-Afro-Asiatic. The one who uses for the first time the generalising concept is, according to the historical synopsis realised by Dan Ungureanu, the Danish researcher
Holger Pedersen, who suggested that Indo-European, Hamito-Semitic, Altaic and Uralic groups have affinities and form a “Nostratic” family. The Russian linguist V. Illič-Svityč redenominated this family by the term definitively established in specialized research – “Nostratic”.

Apart from the thoroughness of the inventory and systematization of a vast material, which is barely accessible (with writings little, if at all known, even to specialists in general and comparative linguistics, in Indo-European), what is noteworthy is the pertinent observations formulated in the book.

The entire bibliographical material, diachronically or synchronically described – with the stated concern for considering the most recent and modern contributions – is critically and creatively interpreted by the author of this book. For example, he remarks that it is in the nineteenth century is the first one when linguists begin to observe the evolutions comparable to the social and biological ones, and that the idea of comparison receives a genealogical meaning – the search for a common origin (p. 30); he emphasizes the paradox of Bernard Comrie’s acceptance of the existence of the Nostratic family made up of Indo-European, Uralic, Turkish, Mongol and Tungustic (p. 35); there is a lot of debate upon the unacceptability of A. R. Bomhard and J. K. Kems relatively recent theories (1994) regarding the affinity of Dravidian and Semito-Hamitic languages to the Nostratic family, in the absence of some grammatical similarities, if we put aside the typological ones (p. 43). Even when some researchers, such as V. Illič-Svityč, offered models of scientific erudition and thoroughness, they are taken to task for various weaknesses, such as approaching languages in pairs, etc.

Furthermore, the author expresses serious reservations regarding the tripartite religious ideology of G. Dumézil (p. 52), as well as its reflections on the social structure of Indo-European human communities. Given that religion is one of the cultural factors that have offered the substantial extra-linguistic framework for the Indo-European linguistic reconstruction (meanwhile for the Nostratic languages there are no such bases, just as not even the grammatical base can support the lexical similarities that could justify the reconstruction of a common base), such statements have a significant meaning for the evaluation of the various contributions to clarifying the debated issues.

Among these contributions, the author quotes Lucia Wald’s article of 1987, with the bibliography and suggestions of solutions of the time.

Regarding all these issues, Dan Ungureanu resumes the debate upon this family on the basis of a “recent and barely accessible” lexical corpus, proposing a new comparative method and an original working technique, based on a critical and personal fructification, as we have already remarked, of the latest bibliography (especially works published after 1990) with reference to the subject under discussion.

More precisely, one of the stated objectives of the paper is to offer a statistic and mathematic basis to the research in the domain, starting from the latest acquisitions of lexicostatistics and glottochronology (p. 53). For this purpose, the author proposes that some principles should be observed in the scientific demonstration of the subject in question:

– The exclusive use of the radicals reconstructed by the specialists of a certain linguistic family;
– The comparative approach must be exclusively applied to the radicals with the same meaning;
– The restriction of the compared terms to the inventory of the ones found in minimum three linguistic families, taking into consideration that within any two languages, lexical coincidences can reach to 2–3% (because of the finite number of phonemes and meanings), meanwhile in three languages (Indo-European, for example) the number of coincidences is practically void.

In his study, Dan Ungureanu, as I said before, has achieved a connection with the most recent research in the field. He also benefitted from accessing the electronic database of an international project initiated in 1994 and supported by the collaboration of different universities and research institutions from Russia, USA and the Netherlands: 2077 hypothetic Nostratic radicals, 1152 comparisons between the Nostratic radicals and radicals from other phyla, etc.

The explanatory enterprise is realised on a corpus of etymons with at least three attestations: I, You, He/ She; That one; Who; Who II; No; Skin, bark; Hand; We (pp. 117-185).

Among the rules that the author considers necessary in applying the mathematic and statistic methods, in the long-range comparison is placed, first of all, the exclusion from the equation of the living individual languages attested.
The quantitative unbalance between these (many) and the proto-languages (few) leads to erroneous statistical evaluations. For example, between the Bantu and Dravidian languages it would result a similarity of 100% (p. 194).

Secondly, the semantic tolerance has to be severely restricted, since it favours conjectural analogies. Therefore, the author himself questions the comparison between kano (*arm, hand*) and kanŋ (*armpit*), as having too distant meanings.

Phonetic quasi-identity is also necessary for accurate long-range comparison. The phonetic erosion in time and space leads to attestations that suggest irrelevant similarities (“non-decisive” says the author). Finally, correct results are obtained when one indicates from the beginning the total number of evaluated languages and then the numerical ratio between similar words and different words.

The morphological similarities within the three proto-languages (the first person suffix – in verbal inflection, the identity of the accusative and ablative (“the case of the cases”, as the late Elena Slave would say) constitute a grammatical basis for comparison and for the reconstruction of a Nostratic family. The issues of “false positives”, or “data coincidence”, as well as certain restrictions of glottochronology are approached by the author in order to obtain in his study data as objective as possible.

The entire paper represents an instructive and pleasant reading, since the author knows how to transform substantial thematic encyclopaedic learning and methodological difficulties into a living, accessible and captivating exposition. A researcher with solid and systematic knowledge, with an inquiring and nonconformist spirit and a subject as difficult as it is interesting at the same time – these are the revelations offered by of Dan Ungureanu’s book.

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**Summary**

The purpose of this book is to offer an authoritative survey of the topics which are currently under investigation in the minimalist program.

The book starts with a well structured “Overview” (pp. xxi-xxvi), written by Cedric Boeckx (the editor), comprising a bird’s-eye view of the open-ended nature of the minimalist program (Boeckx insists on the term “program”, highlighting from the very first line the idea that minimalism is not a specific theory), a summary of the main features and goals of the book, and a brief presentation and thematic clustering of the contributions comprised in the book.

In the first chapter, “Some roots of minimalism in generative grammar” (pp. 1-26), Robert Freidin and Howard Lasnik make a synthetic presentation of the historical origins of the minimalist program within the generative enterprise which began 60 years ago. After briefly presenting the main tenets of the MP, synthesized as two fundamental questions about I-languages, the authors set off to identify and describe the basic assumptions based on research that led to the formulation of the MP. The authors point out the motivations behind the elimination – within the MP – of, among many other ideas, two previously proposed linguistic levels, D-structure and S-Structure. They show that the elimination of D-structure is due to both technical necessities, and conceptual necessities, that is the requirement of a simple(r) design for language (see p. 11). The notion of “simplicity” – a crucial

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1 This review appeared originally in the LINGUIST List at https://linguistlist.org/issues/23/23-2544.html.
desideratum of generative theorizing – is closely scrutinized by Freidin and Lasnik. The authors insist on the separation between the relevance of simplicity to the structure of grammar and a general aesthetic notion of simplicity, made from LSLT (Chomsky 1955) to the MP (Chomsky 1993). They trace back "the germ" of certain ideas central to minimalism: for instance, the Inclusiveness Condition is shown to have been proposed by Chomsky since Aspects in a simplified manner, "transformations cannot introduce meaning-bearing elements" (Chomsky 1965: 132). In addition to simplicity, 'economy' is central to minimalism. Economy comes in two guises: as economy of derivation and as economy of representation. It is shown that, while economy conditions on derivations have been in one way or another suggested in earlier works, economy conditions on representations have been advocated later, starting with Chomsky's (1986) Principle of Full Interpretation. Finally, the authors discuss the three factors of language design and analyze to what extent these factors were present in pre-minimalist generative theorizing. In sum, the first chapter of the book is especially helpful in understanding the conceptual roots on which the minimalist enterprise is based.

Features are a central problem in minimalist grammar since, by virtue of being properties of syntactic atoms, they are directly objects of the theory. Thus, it is the goal of the second chapter, "Features in minimalist syntax" (pp. 27-51), by David Adger and Peter Svenonius, to specify the main conceptual problems raised by the notion of feature in minimalist grammar. The authors begin by distinguishing between “category” and “feature” (as they comment, “a distinction commonly assumed within minimalism, although little discussed” – p. 30): “category” has essentially a positional definition, while “feature” is a property of a category that sub-classifies it (p. 27). Next, Adger and Svenonius delineate the possible structure of a feature system in natural language. It is shown that a privative system is inadequate for human languages, and that a system more complex than a privative one is called for. The ontology put forth revolves around the notions “feature classes” and “hierarchy of features”, with the authors distinguishing between “first-order features” and “second-order features”. The last two sections of the chapter are devoted to the interaction of features with syntax (section 2.3) and with the interfaces (section 2.4.). The authors further distinguish between “interface features”, which play a role both in syntax and at the interfaces, and “syntax-internal features”, which act only in syntax. The authors have identified and clarified the main issues regarding features in the current stage of theorizing; this is a necessary step towards the formulation of a more minimalist theory of features.

In the chapter devoted to Case (“Case” – pp. 51-72), David Pesetsky and Esther Torrego address the problems related to “case” throughout the history of generative grammar. The authors begin by highlighting the controversial nature of case among various minimalist theoretic accounts: “the phenomenon of case represents one of the more outstanding challenges for the minimalist conjecture” (p. 51) since case does not seem to arise either from “(1) interactions of independent mental systems or (2) general properties of organic systems” (ibidem). They continue by addressing the problem of the GB Case Filter, and by then explaining how Burzio’s generalization - which lays out the link between licensing accusative case and the external argument, but does not elucidate the nature of this link - has led to the account developed by Chomsky, according to which a separate head (little v) is involved in both accusative assignment and the external argument thematic role. On the empirical side, it is worth noting that Pesetsky and Torrego clearly delineate the entire array of case types identified in the literature (structural case, inherent case, quirky case, and exceptional case marking), and illustrate all these categories with clear examples. Another point of interest is related to the problem of the ergative alignment, which is shown not to be “a radically different organization of case marking” (p. 66) but “an expected variation on patterns already attested in other languages” (ibidem). Finally, Pesetsky and Torrego raise the problem already announced at the onset of the chapter, namely, the existence of case phenomena in natural language. Capitalizing on the well-known correlation between tense and nominative case, the authors suggest that “case might in fact be an uninterpretable instance of tense” (p. 68), i.e., the counterpart of a contentful feature. Although this solution does not exhaust the fundamental question of why case should exist after all, it is certainly a step towards understanding the place occupied by case in the organization of natural language.
Naoki Fukui’s chapter, “Merge and Bare Phrase Structure” (pp. 73-95), opens the series of chapters which address issues pertaining to the mechanics of phrase structure. In this chapter, Fukui concentrates on the core problems of bare phrase structure: the operation Merge. He begins by stating the four fundamental properties of the ‘structure’ of human language (and the system generating it): (a) hierarchical structure; (b) unboundedness/discrete infinity; (c) endocentricity/headedness; (d) the duality of semantics; (d) is a tricky term: it refers to the fact that “generalized predicate-argument structure is realized in the neighborhood of a predicate (within the core part of a clause), whereas all other semantic properties, including discourse related and scopal properties, involve an ‘edge’ or a peripheral position of a linguistic expression (generally a sentence)” (p. 75-76). The entire chapter is thus built as a discussion of these four properties. Merge (internal and external) straightforwardly accounts for properties (a) and (d). Property (b) is ensured by the existence of an Edge Feature (EF). Property (c), the problem of labeling, is subject to much controversy in the current stage of generative grammar. The author closely examines the notion of EF, a unique feature which is distinct from all the other lexical features. Given its idiosyncratic properties, the author suggests that the term EF in fact describes the conditions of application of Merge to a lexical item - not being thus a bona fide feature. The author also examines several linguistic phenomena in Japanese, which are taken to be arguments in favor of unbounded Merge. As expected, unbounded Merge interweaves with certain necessary (interpretative) interface mechanisms. Finally, it is worth mentioning that the Fukui has a historical perspective, which is helpful in more clearly understanding the current (minimalist) ideas.

Jan-Wouter Zwart’s chapter, “Structure and order asymmetric Merge” (pp. 97-118), is a natural continuation of the previous chapter: the role of Merge is further inspected with reference to the relation between structure and linear order in the minimalist approach. The author starts by discussing the problems posed by order in the pre-minimalist setting, and then highlights the main (combined, theoretical and empirical) observations from Kayne’s (1994) Linear Correspondence Axiom, seeking to capture them in a minimalist model of syntax. Zwart carefully analyzes the possible outcomes of the operation Merge and dismisses the idea that Merge yields sets: “ordering by set membership yields no result among sisters, i.e., it does not derive head-complement linear order” (p. 100). Instead, he argues that if Merge is conceived as yielding ordered pairs, then the structure-to-order conversion follows naturally and the head-complement distinction is sufficient to derive order at the interface. Based on this, the author discusses “deviations” from the expected structure-to-order conversion, proposing two typological generalizations (“Head-finally is a linguistic sign, signaling derivation layering” - p. 108; “Head-initiality in a head-final language is established in narrow syntax” - p. 109) which he briefly shows to hold across a large number of languages. He then comments on the Final-over-Final Constraint (Holmberg 2000, Biberauer et al. 2008) and examines the instances of head-finality in a head-initial language (Dutch). Finally, Zwart highlights the importance of “derivation layering”, and shows that the concepts ‘lexical’ and ‘syntactic’ can be defined in relation to derivations.

In the chapter devoted to “Multidominance” (p. 119-142), Barbara Citko begins by defining the notion of multidominance (i.e. “a multidominant structure is a structure in which a single node has two mothers” (p. 119)) and by stating the issues that a multidominance account has to deal with: (i) the generation of multidominant structures, (ii) their linearization, and (iii) the empirical insights offered by such an account. The author goes on to show that, although the concept of multidominance has been described as “unorthodox, non-standard, or incompatible with basic assumptions about phrase structure” (ibidem), the availability of multidominance actually follows from the most basic assumptions about phrase structure building and movement in the minimalist framework. Thus, the author argues for the existence of a third type of Merge, Parallel Merge, which combines the properties of Internal and External Merge: essentially, by Parallel merge, a constituent (β) merges with a subpart (γ) of another constituent (α), which is the result of a previous Merge operation [i.e. Merge (α, γ) → {α, {α, γ}}]. Consequently, γ is shared between α and β. Parallel Merge feeds multidominant structures. It therefore results that multidominance should not be problematic for the current views on phrase structure building. The author brings empirical support form a variety of unrelated constructions, which testify to the existence of this structure building mechanism in the
grammar: across-the-board wh-questions, wh-questions with conjoined wh-pronouns, right-node raising, gapping, determiner sharing, standard free relatives, serial verbs, parasitic gaps, idioms, comparatives, transparent free relatives, parentheticals, wh-amalgams, and cleft-amalgams. In the final part of the chapter, Citko concentrates on the problem of the linearization of multidominance structures. Among the many empirical advantages of Multidominance, I would like to point out the promising reinterpretation of structures which amount to (a form of) non-pronunciation: with Gapping and Right-Node Raising analyzed as a form of multidominance and not as instances of ellipsis (with ellipsis conceived as “deletion”), it is easy to understand why these structures deviate from the generally acknowledged syntactic and interpretative properties of structures containing ellipsis sites.

Another very important innovation brought about by the Minimalist Program is the Copy Theory of Movement. It is the goal of Jairo Nunes’ chapter, “The Copy Theory” (pp. 143-172), to examine the conceptual and empirical advantages of the Copy Theory over the GB Trace Theory. In the first part of the chapter, the author discusses the conceptual advantages of the Copy Theory. It is shown that, in contrast with the Trace Theory, the Copy Theory of Movement complies with the Inclusiveness Condition, one of the most important minimalist requirements, and that it is sufficiently powerful to explain certain dependencies (anaphoric dependencies, idiom interpretation, etc.) without resorting to “suspect” solutions. The second part of this chapter backs up the theoretical construct presented, bringing into discussion the pronunciation of lower and multiple copies, which is an irrefutable argument for the Copy Theory and against the Trace Theory.

Norvin Richards (“A-bar dependencies”, pp. 173-194) focuses on the problems posed by A-bar dependencies in the minimalist framework. Rather than restricting the discussion to the current Probe-Goal conception, he presents the historical solutions proposed to account for the phenomena under scrutiny, showing how every new step in minimalist theorizing has contributed to gain a better understanding of the data and of the minimalist goals. He starts by showing how the elimination of D-Structure created the problem of ordering movement and non-movement operations, then tackles the problems raised by the elimination of S-Structure. He moves on to examine the successive cyclic nature of wh-movement, and, finally, analyzes the role of the interfaces. Richards also analyzes certain shortcomings of the theory at the current stage of research. For instance, there is no generally accepted account of the Condition of Extraction Domains, which bans extraction out of subjects and adjuncts, and, furthermore, cross-linguistic research seems to indicate that adjunct and island effects are not governed by the same principle.

Another issue surrounded by controversy in the Minimalist Program is the nature and place of head movement. In chapter 9, “Head Movement and the Minimalist Program” (pp. 195-219), Ian Roberts approaches this problem from both a technical and a conceptual perspective. Roberts starts by inspecting the nature of head movement in GB, where head movement is subject to the standard conditions on movement operations: structure preservation, locality, and well-formedness conditions on the trace of the head-moved category. He continues by critically reviewing the reasoning that triggered the reevaluation of head movement in the minimalist perspective: it does not affect interpretation (which, as Roberts shows, is not entirely true), its trigger is not very clear. Furthermore, the derived structure of head movement is countercyclic, it violates the Extension Condition, c-command problems occur in the structures derived by head movement, onward cyclic movement is never successive cyclic but rather always involves ‘roll-up’. Roberts then turns to the alternatives to head movement (PF movement, remnant movement, and ‘reprojective’ movement), and insists on the limits of each of these solutions, concluding that “no single version is entirely free of problems, and none appears to be a global alternative to ‘traditional’ head movement” (p. 215). Finally, the issue is discussed from a conceptual point of view, and Roberts concludes by suggesting that head movement cannot altogether be excluded from the syntax.

Luigi Rizzi’s chapter (“Minimality”, pp. 220-238) deals with the problems raised by locality principles which broadly fall under the domain of intervention. Rizzi starts by disentangling the two intuitive concepts under which a large number of locality principles can be subsumed, Intervention and Impenetrability, and sets as his goal to discuss only the first type. The author presents the late GB conception of Relativized Minimality, and then turns the successive minimalist revisions of this
concept, emphasizing the increasing role of "features" in shaping the theory in order to account for an increasingly broader range of data. Rizzi explains in detail how the Minimal Link Condition version of Relativized Minimality (Chomsky 1995a), stated in terms of features of the elements involved in a configuration, has been updated in order to account for certain asymmetries (e.g. to what is traditionally conceived as argument/adjunct asymmetries in wh-extraction) by positing a richer featural composition of the terms involved. Finally, the author turns to intervention effects in acquisition and pathology, where he argues that a strict competence/performance (or grammar/parser) divide is too coarse to account for several linguistic similarities (e.g. for the fact that object relatives are comparatively harder to understand than subject relatives by normal adult subjects, and clearly problematic for children between 3 and 5 and for agrammatic patients), and explicitly argues for a strongly integrated view of the grammar/parser interaction.

The intuition that syntactic computation proceeds in a cyclic fashion has been pursued throughout generative grammar in different guises (‘domain’, ‘bounding node’, ‘barrier’, ‘phase’). In chapter 11, “Derivational cycles” (pp. 239-259), Juan Uriagereka examines the nature of cycles in the present minimalist approach, insisting especially on ‘phases’, the incarnation of cycles in the current model. Uriagereka then turns to the discussion of a series of cyclic effects, among which successive cyclic movement, binding relations, and case valuation, showing that all these effects can be elegantly accounted for by resorting to ‘cycles’. The author then examines the minimalist constraints which have tried to express both cyclicity and successive cyclicity: the Extension Condition (Chomsky 1993: 22), the Virus Theory (Chomsky 1995a: 233), the Minimal Link Condition (Chomsky 1995b: 311), and the Phase Impenetrability Condition (Chomsky 2000: 106). Finally, Uriagereka insists on the emergent nature of cycles, and on the nature of phases.

Kleanthes K. Grohmann’s chapter, “Anti-locality. Too-close relations in grammar” (pp. 260-290), focuses on a more recent line of investigation which pursues the possibility that there is also a lower bound on (derivational) distance, dubbed “anti-locality”. While the upper boundaries of (movement) dependencies have been a constant preoccupation of generative grammar, the complementary problem – which is shown by Grohmann to be at the core of certain (un)grammaticality phenomena in language –, namely, the lower bound on movement (distance), has been somehow left in the background of generative theorizing. Grohmann convincingly shows that excessively short (i.e. anti-local) movement steps are banned; ‘shortness’ is calculated across Prolific Domains (a term coined by Grohmann himself): movement within a Prolific Domain is anti-local, thus banned. The author is very precise in characterizing the Prolific Domains. There are three Prolific Domains within the clause (and, as shown by Ticio 2003, within the DP as well): a Θ-Domain, a Φ-Domain, and an Ω-Domain, which are associated with thematic relations, argument properties, and discourse information, respectively. Grohmann’s system manages to capture the intended idea (that movement must not be too local), but, unfortunately, seems to not be compatible with the recent minimalist proposal of ‘phases’.

In chapter 13, “Derivations” (pp. 291-310), Samuel David Epstein, Hisatsugu Kitahara, T. Daniel Seely examine the nature of derivations from both a conceptual and a technical perspective. The authors manage to capture the essential nature of derivations, namely that they follow from (i.e. grow out of) the fundamental properties of human language which have been unveiled by generative grammar (principally, the recursive nature of human language), and which are currently investigated in the minimalist framework. In the first part of the chapter, the authors show that derivations play a critical role in minimalist inquiry. In the second part, the authors delimit the main conceptual problems regarding derivations against the Strong Minimalist Thesis. The authors then address the mechanics of minimalist derivations; they show that the minimum machinery needed for a derivation to go through includes (at least) Merge, ‘mergeable’ lexical items, and (undeletable) edge features carried by lexical items. This minimum machinery generates a derivation in compliance with the principles of efficient computation (e.g. the no-tampering condition, among others). The authors also discuss the relevance of phases, and argue for the choice of certain specific derivational tools (e.g. the Probe-Goal Agree mechanism). Finally, the reader is guided through the stepwise derivation of an example, which elegantly illustrates the conceptual and mechanical principles discussed so far.
Robert A. Chametzky’s chapter, “No derivation without a representation” (pp. 311-326), is a contribution to the long-standing ‘argument’ between derivationalists and representationalists. In a rather informal manner (as testified by the titles of his chapter’s subchapters: “Don’t stop till you get enough”, “If you could see c-command like I can see c-command”, “If you build it, will they c-command?”, “But what would Zeno say?”), Chametzky argues against (what might be called) the “derivational bias” of generative grammar, capitalizing on the representational nature of the c-command relation. Building on previous work (mainly Richardson and Chametzky 1985), the author reverses the perspective on c-command, ‘taking the point of view of the c-commandee’, and defining c-command as follows: “For any node X, the c-commanders of X are all the sisters of every node which dominates X (dominance reflexive)” (p. 318). This has the welcomed result that “it [c-command] provides a set of nodes which are not in a dominance relation with some given node and with which that node can be in some substantive linguistic relation or other” (ibidem). Chametzky ends on a very conciliatory note, suggesting a mixed, representational and derivational, approach to syntax. Chametzky’s chapter is a welcome counterweight to Epstein, Kitahara and Seely’s chapter, which has an exclusively derivational perspective. The important questions about the nature of c-command raised in this chapter promises to stimulate a new and fruitful debate.

Željko Bošković (“Last resort with Move and Agree in Derivations and Representations”, pp. 327-353) discusses the nature of the Economy Principle with respect to Derivations and Representations. He focuses on the Last Resort Condition, which prohibits superfluous steps in derivations, and claims that a similar condition constrains representations. In the section devoted to the application of the Last Resort Condition to movement, Bošković argues that the approach (Chomsky 2000, 2001) that places the movement-triggering diacritic on the target rather than on the moving element itself gives rise to an unwelcomed Look Ahead consequence. Placing this diacritic on the moving element instead bypasses this problem. The system put forth by Bošković, in which the necessities of the moved element trigger movement, has desirable consequences from the current phasal perspective. Consider the Attract version: in the case of successive cyclic wh-movement, the head that would attract a wh-phrase is too far away (in a different phase) to attract the moving element; hence, as insisted, Look Ahead is unavoidable. By contrast, movement triggered by the element’s own properties (i.e. Greed) solves this problem. He also discusses freezing effects, where last resort considerations are crucially involved, and then addresses the problem of the operation Agree, claiming that what drives Agree is valuation (with only unvalued features functioning as probes). Finally, in the final parts of the chapter, Bošković discusses the implications of the Last Resort Condition for pure Merge (lexical insertion) and for Economy of Representation. He argues that only functional elements are subject to economy principles, and proposes to define the enumeration on lexical items only; repeated access to the lexicon will be then allowed to ensure structure building. While interesting, this last stipulation might have the effect of violating the Inclusiveness Condition (as currently conceived).

In chapter 16 (“Optionality”, pp. 354-376), Shigeru Miyagawa analyzes the issue of movement operations which seem to be optional, thus violating the minimalist assumption that operations should arise as strictly last resort. From the onset, Miyagawa sets its goal to formulate a theory of optional operations that is consonant with the tenets of Last Resort. The phenomena he deals with are quantifier raising (QR) (in English) and (a subclass of) scrambling, which he argues (and convincingly demonstrates) that are closely matched in their properties and are thus open to a unified account. After presenting the joint distributional and interpretative properties of QR and scrambling, the author concludes that QR is a covert type of scrambling. Essentially, in the case of QR it is the lower copy which is pronounced, while in the case of scrambling, the higher copy gets pronounced. The research question posed by Miyagawa is whether these operations are truly optional, and the answer (which is somehow expected) is that they are not: the possibly optional movements occurring in the case of QR and scrambling determine a new (semantic) interpretation. This, in turn, provides a ‘last resort’ perspective on optional movement, even though extended and somewhat weaker.

In chapter 17 (“Syntax and interpretation systems. How is labor divided?”, pp. 377-395), Eric Reuland reassesses the problems of binding and, more generally, of anaphoric dependencies from a
minimalist perspective. Reuland starts by presenting the main aspects of the Canonical Binding Theory, as developed in GB, and then insists on problems such as the distinction between binding and co-reference, and the hybrid status of indices. The author then proves that resolving the hybrid status of indexing by pursuing a syntactic reinterpretation is not feasible, and proposes that this problem should be solved by delimiting syntactically encoded dependencies from dependencies that result from interpretative processes. Furthermore, it is shown that the notion of index cannot be accommodated in a minimalist model of grammar. The net result of Reuland’s demonstration is that there are three possible ways to establish an (anaphoric) dependency: in the discourse, in logical syntax, and in narrow syntax, and that there is a timing in choosing one type of dependency over the other: “from syntax to discourse, the domain restrictions decrease, and each less restricted process is effectively used where some more restricted process is not available” (p. 390).

The chapter by Alex Drummond, Dave Kush and Norbert Hornstein, “Minimalist construal. Two approaches to A and B” (pp. 396-426), naturally continues one of the problems sketched by Reuland in the previous chapter. Namely, the authors contribute to the ongoing pursuit to build a minimalist theory of construal. The authors start from the empirical observation that construal relations (binding and control) display the characteristic hallmarks of core grammatical process, and thus (at least) some of these relations should be dealt with within the core computational system. The authors choose to focus on binding (properly distinguished from co-reference, following Reinhart 1983) rather than on control, arguing that there has been less debate on binding within the minimalist framework. Drummond, Kush and Hornstein then concentrate on discriminating between the two current competing minimalist approaches to binding (construal): the Chain-Based Construal, a movement based analysis developed by Hornstein (2001), and the Agree-Based Construal, whose syntactic engine relating the antecedent to the anaphor is the operation Agree (e.g. Reuland, 2005; current volume). The two analyses are shown to be convergent in certain respects, the most important one being that they both exploit copies (i.e. a local syntactic relation) to mediate the semantic binding relation. The argumentation tilts the balance in favor of the Chain-Based approach.

In “A minimalist approach to argument structure” (pp. 427-448), Heidi Harley presents the ‘split-vP’ syntactic architecture which has replaced the Theta Theory of the GB framework. After presenting the GB view on argument structure, Harley shows the limitations of this conception, and comments on its non-minimalist spirit. The author then argues that, within minimalism, a Fregean conception of the LF interface corroborated with the Full Interpretation Principle may take over the functions of the Theta Criterion and of the Projection Principle. The ‘little v’ hypothesis is then introduced: it is worth underlining that Harley has managed to present all the relevant results of the late GB/early minimalism periods that have led to the postulation of the little v projection. The author thus explains, not only presents, the outgrow of this idea. Finally, several minimalist alternatives to this conception are briefly discussed.

Gillian Ramchand’s chapter (“Minimalist semantics”, pp. 449-471), continues the path paved by Harley in the previous chapter, in that Ramchand further attempts to construct a minimalist theory of argument roles and relations, and a minimalist event semantics. Ramchand assumes that a structural semantic combinatorial system exists which correlates with syntactic combinatorial primitives. Ramchand insists on the fact that the structural semantic system, which is grammatically relevant, should be properly distinguished from the encyclopedic content of words. The proposed event structure contains three subcomponents: a causing subevent (initP), a process denoting subevent (procP), and a subevent corresponding to result state (resP), which are hierarchically ordered: initP > procP > resP. After discussing the implementation of this idea, and highlighting the roles of each piece of structure (specifiers, complements, etc.), Ramchand summarizes the basic argument relations and roles resulting from this system: initiators, undergoers, resultees, grounds (of Result). There are also some composite roles, which will be derived via movement: undergoer-initiator and resultee-undergoer. Finally, Ramchand also addresses the problem of cross-linguistic variation in the proposed system, verifying the expectation that the lexicalization of a particular structure looks quite different.
from language to language. Ramchand manages to elegantly couple the problem of argument structure with the lexical-aspectual typology (decomposition) of verbs, which is a step forward in the understanding of the syntax/lexical-semantics interface.

Paul M. Pietroski’s chapter (“Minimal semantic instructions”, pp. 472-498) also deals with the matters of semantics in minimalism, more exactly, with the relation between word and concepts. Thus, together with the following chapter, written also by a philosopher, this chapter shows how minimalist problems extend beyond narrow syntax proper and how minimalist guidelines may appeal to problems which traditionally fall outside the preoccupation of linguists. Although technical implementation employed in Paul M. Pietroski’s chapter falls beyond the boundaries of my area of expertise, I can assess the conceptual outcome of Pietroski’s enterprise: couching semantic structures within the more general building structure conception utilized in minimalism, the study of I-language semantics is not fundamentally different from other areas of linguistic inquiry and theorizing, a good result in the current context.

In chapter 22, “Language and thought” (pp. 498-522), Wolfram Hinzen starts from the accepted view that language is the main (and perhaps only) access point for the study of thought structure. Hinzen underlines the impact that minimalism has had on semantics, leading us “us to rethink the very foundations of semantics” (p. 502). After discussing certain matters of “intellectual heritage”, and highlighting the problems of explanatory priority, Hinzen puts syntax in thought’s service (section 4) and convincingly shows that the human modes of signifying are “are directly correlated with the syntactic forms that we use” (p. 520). In sum, Wolfram Hinzen argues that semantics may be viewed as employing the same mechanism of structure building like syntax. His results are thus convergent with Pietroski’s.

In chapter 23 (“Parameters” – pp. 523-550), Ángel Gallego assesses the problems raised by parameterization and variation in the current minimalist framework. Gallego starts by reviewing the status of parameters in the GB era, and shows that the early Principles and Parameters view that variation is encoded in the syntax is at odds with the Strong Minimalist Thesis, and, consequently, should be abandoned. Gallego then concentrates on the results of the post-GB period, showing that two main strands of research may be delimited: the macro/micro-parameter distinction, and the developments in the study of functional categories and syntactic representations. After discussing the results of the “Cartographic Project” and showing that the macroparametric perspective should be abandoned, Gallego successfully recasts the problems raised by parameters in a minimalist context, directing the discussion into the area of the interaction of the three Factors of language design (Chomsky 2005). Gallego shows that variation emerges through the interaction of Factor 1 and Factor 2, and arrives at a version of the Borer-Chomsky Conjecture (Baker, 2008), placing parametric variation in the lexicon, more exactly in the morphophonological manifestations of closed classes. To sum up, Ángel Gallego manages to spell-out the variation problem as an interface problem, which should thus be on the minimalista agenda.

Charles Yang and Tom Roeper’s contribution (“Minimalism and language acquisition” – pp. 550-573) is a natural continuation of the discussion initiated by Gallego in the previous chapter, as it also focuses on parameters in the minimalist program, but, this time, from the perspective of language acquisition. The authors start by assessing the problem of language acquisition in a minimalist setting, showing that one cannot provide a clear-cut answer to the question “has minimalism altered the fundamental problem of language acquisition?” (p. 552), as, on the one hand, minimalism has not supplemented the basic architecture of P&P for language acquisition, but, on the other hand, minimalism has recast the problems of learning in a broader context of cognition and evolution, which may give a more elaborate view of child language acquisition. The authors capitalize on the importance of parameters, arguing that the elimination of parameters would run the risk of jettisoning previous important research. Yang and Roeper then evaluate different models of learning, and insist on their limitations. Finally, the authors explore certain minimalist operations and concepts in the terrain of acquisition: Merge and Label, Merge over Move, the Strong Minimalist Thesis, Recursion, and show that “raw primary linguistic data is a support both for the abstractions of minimalism and for the data comparison systems that utilize them” (p. 573).
In chapter 25 (“A minimalist program for phonology”, p. 574-594), Bridget Samuels applies minimalist thinking to a domain which is of crucial importance in the current (phonal) minimalist context (phases are sent to Spell-Out, i.e. to the interfaces, one of which is the Phonological Form), but which is unfortunately insufficiently explored. Samuels not only states the problems raised by phonology in a minimalist context, but of also puts forth a very elegant solution to these problems (i.e. the ‘phonological derivation by phase’ approach). Samuels argues that an appropriate perspective on the phonological module should treat it as a system of abstract symbolic content, divorced from phonetic content (i.e. what has been dubbed in recent work ‘substance-free phonology’). Furthermore, it is argued that phonology does not have to construct its own domains, but can take as its direct input the strings received from the syntax. In a nutshell, the conclusions drawn by the author are that “nothing required by phonology is required by the faculty of language in the narrow sense” (p. 592) and that “phonology may be entirely explainable through Third Factor principles pertaining to general cognition and the SM system” (ibidem). In sum, the problems discussed in this contribution and the solutions advanced have far-reaching consequences for understanding language and its evolution.

In chapter 26 (“Minimizing language evolution. The minimalist program and the evolutionary shaping of language”), Víctor M. Longa, Guillermo Lorenzo and Juan Uriagereka address the problem of language evolution from a minimalist perspective. The authors start by carefully delimiting the faculty of language in a broad sense from the faculty of language in the narrow sense, and by highlighting the essential properties of Merge (binarity, asymmetric labeling, structural preservation, unboundedness). After this brief linguistic background, the authors carefully put the recent genetic discoveries (e.g. the FOXP2 gene) in a linguistic and evolutionary context. As also noticed in the “Overview”, Edward Stabler’s chapter (chapter 27, “Computational Perspectives on Minimalism - pp. 617-642) closes out the book, by returning to computational concerns that were very prominent in the early stages of generative grammar. In an explicit formal context, Stabler reassesses basic units and operations of generative grammar in its minimalist version. After establishing the characteristics of a minimalist grammar under the specifications of Bare Phrase Structure theory, Stabler comments on the nature of merge, and then addresses problems which are at the core of current minimalist theorizing: phases, Relativized Minimality, multiple movements and multiple Agree, the issue of linearization, and, finally, only mentions problems pertaining to head movement, LF and PF movements, Adjunct Merge, and sideward movement. The chapter ends with three appendices, in which Stabler illustrates certain computational algorithms for certain problems raised in the main text.

The Handbook ends with an impressive reference list (57 pages) and a very useful Index.

Evaluation

After having done certain evaluative comments along the way, and before making the overall evaluation of the book, I would like to point out that there is a problem with the Romanian data in Nunes’ chapter (p. 154). While the argumentation which rules out his example (21b) [“*Ce ce precedă?” – what what precedes] is correct, the overall characterization of Romanian as a language with obligatory multiple wh-fronting is not correct. Romanian possesses two options with respect to wh-fronting: either (i) all the elements move to the C-domain, observing Superiority (subject wh-phrase > object wh-phrase) [“Cine ce precedă?” – who what precedes] or (ii) the highest phrase (the subject) moves to the C-domain, while the other wh-phrase(s) remain in situ. Thus, example (21b) [“Cine precedent ce?” – who precedes what], marked as ungrammatical in this chapter, is in fact well-formed in Romanian.

The Oxford Handbook of Linguistic Minimalism is an excellent book. As a whole, it manages to capture the main conceptual and technical issues raised in the current minimalist framework in an almost unitary fashion. Taken separately, the chapters of the handbook are, without exception, complete studies dedicated to certain problems. Furthermore, most of the chapters assess the historical foundations of respective topic, carefully extricating what can be maintained from the former generative models from what must be revisited and revised in accordance with the minimalist guidelines. At the same time, it is worth mentioning that each chapter elegantly balances the conceptual side of the problem addressed and its technical implementation(s). It is also worth
emphasizing that each chapter is characterized by a remarkable intellectual honesty: the limits and imperfections of the proposed accounts are clearly stated, and the controversial issues are not “swept under the rug”. The Handbook is an inestimable source of new ideas to be explored in future research, and sets the agenda for future linguistic (but not only linguistic) theorizing, and, at the same time, represents a testimony to the prestige held by generative linguistics in the last half of the century. It thus goes without saying that it is a “must read” for anyone interested in generative linguistics in particular, and in theoretical linguistics in general.

It should be further mentioned that the articles are impeccably written by known linguists and philosophers with an exceptional awareness of the linguistic bibliography, and very well edited.

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