Syntactic theory and the structure of English: A minimalist approach. By Andrew Radford. Cambridge University Press, 1997. Pp. 558.

Dealing theoretically with various and particular structures, this textbook explains the minimalist approach, which was proposed in *the minimalist program* by Chomsky (MIT Press, Cambridge; Massachusetts, 1995). *The minimalist program* presents the comprehensive theory 'whose core assumption is that grammars should be described in terms of the minimal set of theoretical and descriptive apparatus necessary' (515). Radford's methodology seems suitable for novices to learn syntax because the purpose of first chapter is 'to outline contemporary ideas on *the nature of grammar* and *the acquisition of grammar*' (1) and to facilitate more detailed discussion in the following chapters. Additionally, the 46-page glossary contains precise definitions of grammatical terminology, which assist both in understanding the whole content and develop further interest.

Exploring key concepts of the minimalist program such as movement, checking, VP shells, and agreement projections, as well as providing thorough analysis of various construction types, Radford illustrates cross-linguistic variation: different varieties of English (e.g. Belfast English, Jamaican Creole, Child English, Shakespearean English, etc). Thus, readers can see through this content how many natural languages and dialects share underlying linguistic features in terms of Universal Grammar.

To explain any natural language, some syntactic models are needed to accurately describe grammaticality. This textbook discusses such models. For instance, a semantic subject of an infinitive phrase is either overt or covert. Comparing the sentence 'we would like you to stay' with the relevant sentence 'we would like to stay', the sentences differ because the semantic subject 'you' of the infinitive phrase appears in the former sentence, but not in the latter one.

However, we find that the semantic subject of the infinitive clause is identical to the subject of the main clause in the latter sentence. In the syntactic framework, we conclude that an empty categories, 'which have no overt phonetic form, and hence which are inaudible or silent' (131) exist; consequently, a null subject (referred to as PRO in the text) exists in the position of the semantic subject instead, and refers to the main subject in the latter sentence. He gives another example for empty categories. In the sentence 'he hates syntax', we carelessly assume that the verb phrase 'hates syntax' merges with the subject pronoun to form the sentence. However, we cannot find any universality in the assumption when explaining other relevant sentences such as 'she has gone to Paris'. The tense auxiliary 'has' apparently appears, leading to another assumption that another projection is present above the verb phrase. Consequently, it is certain that at least one empty category intervenes in 'He hates syntax' (see §4).

Syntax structures involve grammatical processes to be generated. This book also considers such processes as movement operations, which are originally explained in *The principles and parameters theory* of Chomsky. The operations describe how particular constructions are derived and how each constituent is grammatically interrelated with the others within a sentence. Topicalization, for instance, is an outstanding example of movement operations: a relevant constituent is moved 'into a more prominent position at the front of the relevant clause, thereby marking it out as the topic of the sentence' (312).

This work is an easy-to-understand textbook to start a study of contemporary linguistics with, but it is still advanced and sophisticated enough for further reference. As mentioned above, it covers wide range of data, various constructions, and significant issues of syntax to be considered: we can browse some minimalist analyses to deal with them. Consequently, readers

might comprehend the whole work within the framework of the minimalist program. This work

makes a contribution in exploring the minimalist approach in such a clear and precise way.

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