THE MINIMALIST PROGRAM

The development of the minimalist program (MP), Noam Chomsky’s most recent generative model of linguistics, has been highly influential over the last twenty years. It has had significant implications not only for the conduct of linguistic analysis itself, but also for our understanding of the status of linguistics as a science.

The reflections and analyses in this book contain insights into the strengths and the weaknesses of the MP. Among these are: a clarification of the content of the strong minimalist thesis (SMT); a synthesis of Chomsky’s linguistic and interdisciplinary discourses; and an analysis of the notion of optimal computation from conceptual, empirical, and philosophical perspectives.

This book will encourage graduate students and researchers in linguistics to reflect on the foundations of their discipline, and the interdisciplinary nature of the topics explored will appeal to those studying biolinguistics, neurolinguistics, the philosophy of language, and other related disciplines.

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THE MINIMALIST PROGRAM

The Nature and Plausibility of Chomsky's Biolinguistics

FAHAD RASHED AL-MUTAIRI

The University of Essex (UK)
To the memory of my mother, Muneera, who, despite never having had the opportunity to learn how to read and write, worked very hard and sacrificed so much of her life to make sure all of her twelve children received the best education possible.
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Abbreviations

B&H  Boeckx and Hornstein (2010)
C   complementizer
C_{HL} computational system of human language
CI  conceptual-intentional (system)
cp-  *ceteris paribus* (clause)
CP  complementizer phrase
D   determiner
D-  deep-(structure)
DP  determiner phrase
FI  full interpretation
FL  faculty of language
FLB faculty of language in the broad sense
FLN faculty of language in the narrow sense
GB  government and binding (theory)
LF  logical form
MLC minimal link condition
MP  minimalist program
MRA multiple realization argument
N   noun
NP  noun phrase
PF  phonological form
PLD primary linguistic data
P&P principles and parameters (framework)
S   sentence
S-  surface-(structure)
SL  statistical learning
SM  sensory-motor (system)
SMT strong minimalist thesis
Spec specifier
T   tense
List of abbreviations  xiii

TP   tense phrase
UG   universal grammar
V    verb
v    light causative verb
VCN  virtual conceptual necessity
VLSI very large-scale integrated (microcircuit)
VP   verb phrase