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GABRIELA BÎLBÎIE. 2024. *Sintaxa construcțiilor coordonate în limba română*, Editura Universității din București, București, 295 p. ISBN 978-606-16-1457-8

In this book, Gabriela Bîlbîie offers a significant contribution to the syntax of coordination in Romanian, a topic that has remained relatively underexplored in the linguistic literature. The author's comprehensive classification of conjunctions in Romanian, alongside diagnostic tests and detailed syntactic analyses of coordination phenomena, offers a solid theoretical framework that enriches our understanding of coordination patterns in Romanian. Furthermore, the exploration of related constructions such as gapping and right node raising addresses complex issues that have received limited attention in Romanian linguistic literature. These contributions mark an important step forward in the study of Romanian syntax and help broaden the scope of cross-linguistic syntactic inquiry.

In the introductory chapter, the author emphasizes the under-representation of coordination in the literature, noting that existing studies tend to focus mostly on classifications of coordinators. These treatments, she argues, tend to overlook the broader and more complex set of phenomena inherently tied to coordination. She highlights that coordination encompasses and interacts with a wide range of syntactic configurations, diverse in form and behavior, which makes it a particularly challenging area of study. This complexity is further enhanced by the necessity of analyzing coordination in close relation to other grammatical constructions such as ellipsis, subordination, agreement, etc. These interdependencies

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make it difficult to treat coordination as a self-contained phenomenon, highlighting the need for more detailed research in this area.

With regard to Romanian, the author stresses the need for a new monograph that reflects the latest developments and issues raised in recent literature. As existing works tend to take a primarily descriptive approach, what is needed is a study that not only classifies coordinators but also engages with the underlying syntactic representation and the broader range of related phenomena that interact with coordination.

In the first chapter, *The Empirical Domain of Coordination* (pp. 17–100), the author begins by outlining the fundamental distinctions between coordination and subordination. She contrasts two main approaches: the more traditional, binary distinction that treats coordination and subordination as clearly separate categories, and a more gradient view (see Cosme, 2006; Cristofaro, 2003), which sees the boundary between them as more fluid and context-dependent.

Following this theoretical overview, the author moves on to classify and examine four main criteria used to distinguish between different types of connectors, namely coordinating conjunctions, subordinating conjunctions, and adverbs. These criteria include the inability of coordinating conjunctions to appear together or to be extracted along with the sequence they introduce, as well as constraints related to their mobility and selection properties. Through this analysis, she provides a detailed framework for identifying and differentiating these elements based on their syntactic behavior.

After establishing the foundational distinctions and classification criteria, the author presents a comprehensive set of diagnostic tests aimed at distinguishing coordination from subordination. She identifies and describes eleven such criteria in detail, offering a multifaceted analysis that draws on semantic, pragmatic, syntactic, and typological perspectives. This thorough approach contributes to a clearer delimitation of the empirical domain of coordination and enhances our understanding of how these two syntactic phenomena can be differentiated across various linguistic dimensions.

In the final part of Chapter 1, the author turns to the classification of syntactic types of coordination, based on two main factors: the presence or absence of overt coordinators, and the category type being coordinated, whether words, phrases, or pseudo-coordinated structures. Here, she also

discusses the distinction between simple and correlative constructions, emphasizing the special status of correlatives from both a syntactic and semantic perspective. Through examples of omnisyndetic correlatives in Romanian, she illustrates their unique behavior and highlights their relevance in understanding the broader typology of coordination structures.

After thoroughly examining the restrictions and properties of lexical coordination, phrasal coordination, and pseudo-coordinated structures, the author shifts focus to the inventory of coordinating conjunctions in Romanian, which she classifies into three main categories: copulative, disjunctive, and adversative. To distinguish coordinating conjunctions from other grammatical categories, she discusses syntactic criteria.

In Chapter 2, *Parallelism in Coordination* (pp. 102–143), the author explores the role of parallelism in identifying coordinated structures, particularly in light of the many asymmetries that can arise in actual usage. She begins by outlining the traditional view, which treats coordination as fundamentally reliant on structural parallelism. However, she points out that this assumption only holds for prototypical cases, and does not account for the numerous asymmetric constructions found across languages.

To address this, the author offers a detailed classification of asymmetries, first at the morpho-syntactic level and then at the semantic level. At the morpho-syntactic level, she discusses the classic concept of 'coordination of likes' (Chomsky, 1957), arguing that mismatches are acceptable as long as they conform to Wasow's generalization. She further discusses various types of morpho-syntactic asymmetries, including differences in prepositional marking, drawing on examples from French (Mouret, 2007) and Romanian, as well as variation in case marking across coordinated elements. A particularly insightful section is devoted to the Romanian comitative marker, which introduces notable asymmetry in coordination. The author also examines asymmetries in mood marking between coordinated structures, supporting her analysis with relevant examples from Romanian. She also discusses Daniels' (2002) concept of feature neutrality, using examples from Romanian pronominal clitics and showing that asymmetry in coordination is allowed only when the clitic forms are identical in the accusative and dative.

The focus is then shifted to semantic and discursive parallelism and asymmetry in coordination. The discussion begins with a series of

examples illustrating the range of speech acts that can be expressed through coordinated structures. Based on this analysis, the author argues that coordinated constructions do not necessarily imply a symmetric discourse relation. As long as the relevant syntactic conditions are respected, pragmatic asymmetries are entirely acceptable within coordination, highlighting the flexibility and complexity of how meaning and structure interact in these constructions.

Chapter 3, *The Syntactic Representation of Coordination*, addresses the challenges involved in accurately representing coordination within a formal syntactic framework. The author emphasizes that coordination often resists fitting neatly into pre-existing syntactic models, making its representation theoretically problematic.

In support of a hierarchical rather than a flat syntactic representation of coordination, the author presents a series of compelling arguments. One key point is that the coordinator and the element it introduces together form a distinct syntactic group, which must be represented at a structural level separate from the initial conjunct. This is evidenced by the fact that this group can appear independently, without the first coordinated element. Additionally, she notes that a comma, serving as a marker of prosodic rupture, may follow the first conjunct but never appears between the coordinator and the element it introduces, further reinforcing the special syntactic status of this grouping.

The author then introduces the X-bar representation of coordination, following Kayne (1994), and outlines several arguments from the literature that support its application. However, she also critically examines this model by highlighting its limitations (see Borsley, 2005). After a detailed discussion of coordination as an asymmetric, endocentric construction and its associated challenges, she argues in favor of a symmetric, non-headed analysis. In this view, despite the underlying asymmetry in structure, both coordinated elements contribute equally to the syntactic construction.

The final subchapter focuses on correlative constructions and offers a valuable contribution to our understanding of their syntactic representation in Romanian. Unlike in languages such as English or French, where correlatives can often be accounted for using a single type of representation, the author shows that Romanian requires both symmetric and asymmetric analyses to capture the full range of correlative structures.

Chapter 4, *Ellipsis in Coordination*, begins by establishing clear criteria for delimiting the empirical domain of ellipsis. The author provides a set of diagnostic tests designed to distinguish truly elliptical constructions from those that only appear to involve ellipsis but do not, in fact, presuppose any underlying omission. She then examines several types of ellipsis commonly found in coordinated structures, including right node raising, gapping, stripping, and sluicing. Each construction is analyzed in terms of its syntactic behavior and semantic interpretation.

This book serves both as an excellent resource for linguists, students, and even readers with limited background in linguistics who wish to deepen their understanding of coordination, and as a valuable scholarly contribution to a domain that, as the author convincingly argues, remains highly complex, difficult to define and represent, and still in need of extensive research to be fully understood.

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All links were verified by the editors and found to be functioning before the publication of this text in 2025.

DECLARATION OF CONFLICTING INTERESTS
The author declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.