Binding Theory Tutorial

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Outline

1. Introduction
2. What the theory accounts for
3. What the theory is
4. Technical terms
5. Answering binding questions
## Anaphors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Generalization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i. * Himself laughed.</td>
<td>An anaphor must have an antecedent in the same sentence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii. John$_i$ admires himself$_i$; John$_i$’s father$_j$ admires himself$_i$</td>
<td>The antecedent must C-command the anaphor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii. * John$_i$ thinks she$_j$ admires himself$_i$.</td>
<td>The antecedent must be in the same clause.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Pronouns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i. He; laughed. John; thinks he; is smart.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii. John; thinks he; is smart. John;’s father; admires him;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii. *John; admires him;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A pronoun may or may not have an antecedent in the same sentence.

The antecedent may but does not have to C-command the pronoun.

The antecedent may not C-command the pronoun **and** be in the same clause.
R-expressions

Generalization

i. He\textsubscript{i} likes John\textsubscript{i}.
He\textsubscript{i} thinks John\textsubscript{i} is smart.
John\textsubscript{i} thinks the man\textsubscript{i} is smart.

An R-expression may not be C-commanded by anything coindexed with it.
## Three principles

### The theory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NP Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Prin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anaphors</td>
<td>An anaphor must be <strong>bound</strong> in its <strong>binding domain</strong>.</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pronouns</td>
<td>A pronoun must be <strong>free</strong> in its <strong>binding domain</strong>.</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-expressions</td>
<td>An R-expression must be <strong>free</strong>.</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional technical terms in bold.
Binding

Definition

Node A binds node B in a tree if and only if

1. *Node A is coindexed with Node B.*
2. *Node A C-commands Node B.*
C-command

[Diagram of linguistic structures]

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Binding domain

What is the binding domain in the following sentence?

She thinks John loves himself.
Binding domain

What is the binding domain in the following sentence?

She thinks John loves himself.

The question is ill-formed.

What is the binding domain of She in the following sentence?

She thinks John loves himself. [The entire sentence]

What is the binding domain of himself in the following sentence?

She thinks John loves himself. [The embedded clause]
Binding domain

[Tree diagrams showing the syntactic structure of sentences]
The recipe for finding binding violations

See binding_theory_tutorial_notes.pdf
Writing it up

See binding_theory_tutorial_notes.pdf