

# Binding Theory Tutorial

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2013 Jan

## Outline

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

## Anaphors

### Generalization

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| i. * Himself laughed.   | An anaphor must have an antecedent in the same sentence. |
| ii. John <sub>i</sub> admires himself <sub>i</sub> ;<br>* John <sub>i</sub> 's father <sub>j</sub> admires himself <sub>j</sub> ; | The antecedent must C-command the anaphor.               |
| iii. * John <sub>i</sub> thinks she <sub>j</sub> admires himself <sub>i</sub> .   | The antecedent must be in the same clause.               |

## Pronouns

### Generalization

- |      |   |  |
|------|---|--|
| i.   | He <sub>i</sub> laughed.<br>John <sub>i</sub> thinks he <sub>i</sub> is smart.  | A pronoun may or may not have an antecedent in the same sentence.              |
| ii.  | John <sub>i</sub> thinks he <sub>i</sub> is smart.<br>John <sub>i</sub> 's father <sub>j</sub> admires him <sub>i</sub> | The antecedent may but does not have to C-command the pronoun.                 |
| iii. | *John <sub>i</sub> admires him <sub>i</sub> ;   | The antecedent may not C-command the pronoun <b>and</b> be in the same clause. |

## R-expressions

### Generalization

- 
- i. \*  $He_i$  likes  $John_j$ .  
    $He_i$  thinks  $John_j$  is smart.  
    $John_j$  thinks the man<sub>i</sub> is smart.
- An R-expression may not be C-commanded by anything coindexed with it.

## Three principles

### The theory

NP Type		Prin
Anaphors	An anaphor must be <b>bound</b> in its <b>binding domain</b> .	A
Pronouns	A pronoun must be <b>free</b> in its <b>binding domain</b> .	B
R-expressions	An R-expression must be <b>free</b> .	C

Additional technical terms in bold.

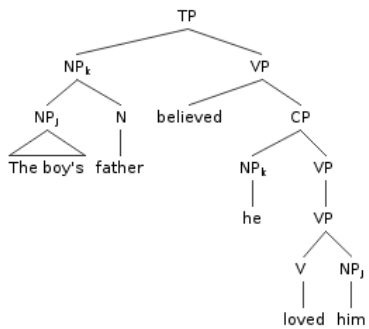
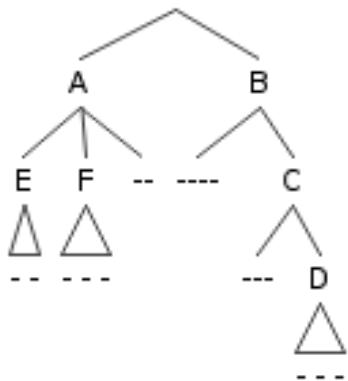
## Binding

### 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





## 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.**

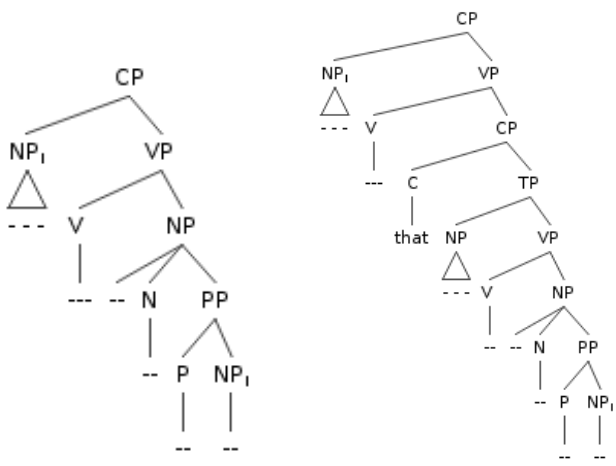
What is the binding domain of *She* in the following sentence?

**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



## The recipe for finding binding violations

See [binding\\_theory\\_tutorial\\_notes.pdf](#)

## Writing it up

See [binding\\_theory\\_tutorial\\_notes.pdf](#)