

Syntax

BINDING THEORY

John and Mary despise them. (pronoun)
John and Mary think everyone despises them. (pronoun)
John and Mary despise themselves. (reflexive)

An expression without independent reference is called an **anaphor**. The expression the anaphor takes reference from is called the **antecedent** of the anaphor.

The soldiers might disgrace themselves.
**The soldiers' behavior might disgrace themselves.*
The men will shoot arrows at each other. ambiguity!

C-COMMAND (constituent-command): X c-commands Y iff the first branching node dominating X dominates Y, and X does not dominate Y, nor Y dominates X.

A node c-commands its sisters and their descendants (X is a descendant of Y if X is dominated by Y).

C-COMMAND CONDITION ON ANAPHORS:

An anaphor must have an appropriate c-commanding antecedent.

Anaphoric Relations and Overt DPs

Binding theory: the module of the grammar regulating DP interpretation.

Poirot admires him.
Poirot admires himself.
Bertie said that he felt rather ill.
Bertie expected him to feel a little better.
He expected Bertie to feel a little better.

full DPs: refer independently, select a referent from the universe of discourse, referential expressions.

pronouns: select a subgroup from the wider domain of entities which we might want to talk about.

Features specified, coreference with something from context.

anaphors: lack independent reference, must be coreferent with something, need an antecedent (reflexives, reciprocals)

ANAPHORS

1. Anaphor and antecedent must agree with respect to person, number and gender.

2. Pronouns can also bind anaphors: *He has hurt himself.*

3. Locality constraints: **Poirot thinks that Miss Marple hurt himself.*

the antecedent must be found in some local domain, the binding domain. Anaphors must be locally bound: clause-mate condition.

**I expect himself to invite Poirot.*

→ the antecedent must precede the anaphor.

**Poirot's sister invited himself.*

→ the antecedent must c-command the anaphor.

Principle of anaphor interpretation I.

An anaphor must be bound by a clause-mate antecedent.

Binding:

A binds B iff (= if and only if)

- (i) A c-commands B;
- (ii) A and B are coindexed.

Simpler definition: Binding = c-command + coindexation.

But! *Poirot believes [himself to be the best.]*

* *Poirot believes that himself is the best.*

Principle of anaphor interpretation II.

A reflexive X must be bound inside a clause that contains X and X's governor (= Case assigner).

PRONOUNS

*Poirot_i had hurt him_{*j}/himself_i.* → the pronoun must be free.

R(EFERENTIAL)-EXPRESSIONS

Having independent reference, they do not tolerate binding from another element.

*He_i says that Poirot_{*i} is leaving.* → *he* cannot be coreferent with *Poirot* because *he* c-commands it

*His_i brother_k likes Poirot_{i/j}*_k very much.* → *his* can be coreferent with *Poirot* because it does not c-command, therefore does not bind it.

The binding theory

Principle A: An anaphor must be bound in its governing category.

Principle B: A pronoun must be free in its governing category.

Principle C: An R-expression must be free everywhere.

Two types of control

OC (obligatory control) and NOC (non-obligatory control): different properties.

Anaphoric:

- (5)
- a. *It was expected PRO to shave himself **antecedent needed**
 - b. *John₁ thinks that it was expected PRO₁ to shave himself **locality**
 - c. *John₁'s campaign expects PRO₁ to shave himself **c-command**
 - d. John₁ expects PRO₁ to win and Bill₂ does too ('and Bill expects himself to win,' *not* 'and Bill expects John to win') **sloppy interpretation**
 - e. [The unfortunate]₁ expects PRO₁ to get a medal **de se reading**
 - f. [Only Churchill]₁ remembers PRO₁ giving the 'Blood, Sweat, and Tears' speech. **bound reading with only**

Pronominal:

- (6)
- a. It is illegal PRO to park here.
 - b. John₁ thinks that Mary said that PRO₁ shaving himself is vital
 - c. John₁'s friends believe that PRO₁ keeping himself under control is vital if he is to succeed
 - d. John₁ thinks that PRO₁ getting his resumé in order is crucial and Bill does too ('Bill₂ thinks that his_{1/2} getting his resumé in order is crucial') **strict and sloppy reading**
 - e. [The unfortunate]₁ believes that PRO₁ getting a medal is unlikely.
 - c. Only Churchill remembers that PRO giving the BST speech was momentous

OC: PRO as an anaphor, subject to Principle A

NOC: PRO as a pronoun, subject to Principle B

contradictory requirements → zero form, PRO as an ungoverned category