

Binding theory

1 Summary

1.1 Binding

X binds Y iff

- X c-commands Y and
- X is coindexed with Y

1.2 Binding principles

- Principle A
Anaphors (reflexive pronouns and reciprocals) must be bound in their local domain (governing category)
- Principle B
Pronouns must be free (i.e., unbound) in their local domain (governing category)
- Principle C
R-expressions must be free (i.e. unbound) everywhere

1.3 Questions

- Why is the following sentence ungrammatical?
 - *Herself_i likes Hortense_i
- What is the local domain in the sentences below?
 - Hortense_i likes herself_i
 - *Hortense_i likes her_i
 - *Herb_i thinks that Hortense likes himself_i
 - Herb_i thinks that Hortense likes him_i
 - Hortense_i likes herself_i's pet porcupine
 - Hortense_i likes her_i pet porcupine

2 Some non-English like phenomena

2.1 Anaphors with non-local antecedent (Mandarin Chinese)

- (1) *Herb_i thinks [Hodge_j knows [that Hank_k likes himself_{*i/*j/k}]]]
- (2) Zhangsan_i renwei[Lisi_j zhidao[Wangwu_k xihuan ziji_{i/j/k}]]
Z thinks L knows W like self
'Zhangsan thinks Lisi knows that Wangwu likes himself'

2.2 Anaphors with local subject antecedent (Finnish)

- (3) Pekka_i näki että Matti_j katsoi itseään_{*i/j}
P saw that M watched self
'Pekka saw that Matti watched himself'
- (4) *Puhuin Pekalle_i itseään_i
spoke-I Pekka-to self
'I spoke to Pekka about himself'

2.3 Pronouns with non-subject antecedent (Yoruba)

- (5) Ségun_i so pé Túndé_j rò pé ó_{*i/*j/k} sanra
S said that T think that he fat
'Segun said that Tunde thought that he was fat'

2.4 Logophoric pronouns (Ewe)

Logophoric pronouns corefer with a semantically determined element. For example, *yè* in Ewe refers to the 'source' of the embedded clause:

- (6) Kofi_i be yé_{i/*j} -dzo
K say LOG left
'Kofi said that he left'
- (7) Kofi_i be e_{*i/j} -dzo
K say he left
'Kofi said that he left'

2.5 Different local domains

The local domain for anaphor and pronoun binding can differ across languages. The local domain for Marathi and Norwegian, for example, is different from that of English. (How?)

2.5.1 Marathi

- (8) *Tom_i mhanat hota ki Sue ni swataahlaa_i maarle
T said . that S erg self hit
'Tom said that Sue hit himself'
- (9) Jane_i laa Tom ne swataaci_i pustake phkun dilyaace kalle
Jane dat Tom erg self books throw . learned
'Jane learned about Tom throwing away (her)self's books'
- (10) Jane_i John ne swataahlaa_i maarlyaavar rusun
Jane John erg self hitting angry
'Jane remained angry upon John hitting (her)self'

2.5.2 Norwegian

- (11) *Jon_i var ikke klar over at vi hadde snakket om seg_{i/j}
J was not aware of that we had talked about self
'Jon was not aware that we had talked about himself'
- (12) Jon_i likte din artikkel om seg_i
J liked your article about self
'John liked your article about himself'

(The data are mostly from Daniel Büring's book *The Syntax and Semantics of Binding Theory*, to be published by the Cambridge University Press)