

Notes on Sag et al., Chapter 7, 'Binding'

Linguistics 7420

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I. What is the 'configurational' version of binding theory proposed within the Principles and Parameters framework?

A. Binding theory (Chomsky's version)

1. **Governing category:** the phrase that contains x , the governor of x , and a subject/SUBJECT accessible to x .
2. **Governor:** an X^0 category governs an NP if the two categories are immediately dominated by the same maximal projection. Case is assigned via government.
3. **C-command:** one NP c -commands another if the maximal projection that immediately dominates the first NP also dominates the second NP.
4. **Binding:** one NP binds another if the first NP c -commands the second, and the two NPs have the same referential index (i.e., are coindexed).
5. **Subject/SUBJECT:** A little subject can be either a normal old subject (specifier of IP) or a genitive NP (specifier of NP). A big subject is AGR. We'll see why we need these in a moment.
6. **Three binding principles**

Principle A. An anaphor (reflexive) must be bound in its governing category.

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

Principle C. A referring expression (lexically headed NP) must be free everywhere.

B. The patterns in the following sentences are explained by binding theory; let's see how:

1. *Herself_i admired Sue_i.
2. *Sue_i admired her_i.
3. *She_i admired Sue_i.
4. She_i believed herself_i to be guilty.
5. *She believed that herself was guilty.
6. Sue_i gave Iris a picture of herself_i.
7. Sue gave Iris_i a picture of her_i.
8. *Sue_i gave Iris a picture of her_i.
9. Sue stole Iris_i's picture of herself_i.
10. *Sue_i stole Iris's picture of herself_i.
11. Sue_i stole a picture of herself_i.
12. *Your_i mother excused yourself_i.

C. Binding theory doesn't account for the following patterns:

1. Sue_i wrapped the blanket around her_i.
2. Sue talked to Sam_i about himself_i.

3. I hope that's not just cake for himself.

II. In HPSG, the binding principles are stated in terms of ARG-STR

- A. A reflexive pronoun must be an argument of a verb than has another preceding argument with the same reference. A nonreflexive pronoun cannot appear as the argument of a verb that has a preceding coreferential argument.
- B. **Principle A.** An argument that is [ANA+] must be outranked in its ARG-STR list by a coindexed argument.
- C. **Principle B.** An argument that is [ANA-] must not be outranked by a coindexed argument.
- D. **ARG-STR.** The value of ARG-STR is a list of the SPR requirement followed by the COMPS requirement(s).
- E. **Outranking.** A phrase A outranks a phrase B just in case A's syn-sem structure precedes B's syn-sem structure on some ARG-STR list.
- F. The distinction between prepositions like *to*, which are argument markers, and prepositions like *around*, which are independent predicates, with two elements on the ARG-STR list.
- G. With respect to the binding facts, the objects of some prepositions act as though they were in fact arguments of the verb selecting the PP.
- H. The feature P-OBJ (a head feature exclusively of case-marking prepositions) is used to carry information about the object of the preposition up to the PP.
- I. The value of P-OBJ is identical is the same as that of the COMPS list of the preposition.
- J. A PP and its P-OBJ are of equal rank.
- K. We assume that some prepositions are ambiguous, in that they can either be predicates or case markers; only in the latter case do these prepositions have the P-OBJ feature.
- L. Explain the following patterns in terms of the HPSG binding theory:
 1. *The house has a fence around itself.
 2. The house has a fence around it.
 3. To make a noose, you wind the rope around itself.
 4. To make a noose, you wind the rope around it.
 5. Sue wrapped a blanket around herself.
 6. Sue wrapped a blanket around her.