

Binding theory notes

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1 Binding theory decisions

Are there coindexed NPs?

1. No.

Is there an anaphor?

(a) Yes → **Prin A violation**

(b) No → **No violation**

2. Yes.

Does either NP C-command the other?

(a) Yes

Call the C-commanding NP **Higher** and the C-commanded NP **Lower**. Is Lower an R-expression?

i. Yes → **Prin C violation**

ii. No

Is Lower bound in its binding domain?

Yes

Is Lower a pronoun?

Yes → **Prin B violation**

No → **No violation**

No

Is Lower an anaphor?

Yes → **Prin A violation**

No → **No violation**

(b) No.

Is one of the two coindexed NPs an anaphor?

i. Yes → **Prin A violation.**

ii. No → **No violation.**

2 Writing up your results

You have followed the recipe on the previous page and you know whether there is a binding violation and if so, what kind of Binding violation you've got. You write up your conclusions as follows. State whether there is a binding violation.

1. If there is,
 - (a) identify the expression of interest anaphor/pronoun/R-expression for a Prin A/Prin B/Prin C (“This is a Prin B violation. The pronoun is *he*.”)
 - (b) Is there a Prin C violation? Is so, state that there is a Prin C violation and state which NP is the R-expression and what other NP binds it. You're done.
 - (c) Otherwise, state what kind of violation it is (Prin A or Prin B) and state what the binding domain of the expression of interest is. (“The binding domain of the pronoun *he* is the embedded clause *that he is a genius*.”)
 - (d) State whether the expression of interest is bound and if so, what other NP binds it. (“The pronoun *he* is bound by *John*.”)
 - (e) If it is bound, state whether it is bound in its binding domain. (“and *John* is in its binding domain.”)
2. If there is no binding violation, say so. If two NPs are coindexed, state whether there is a binding relationship and what binds what. Then state why this binding relationship is allowed. If there is no binding relationship between the coindexed NPs state that and say why there is no binding relationship in either direction, and state why that lack of a binding relationship is allowed (“The pronoun is free in its binding domain, as Prin B requires.”). You're done.

3 Examples

Try writing these up

- (1) John_{*i*}'s mother thinks he_{*i*} is smart.
- (2) * John_{*i*}'s mother thinks himself_{*i*} is smart.
- (3) * His_{*i*}'s mother thinks John_{*i*} is smart.
- (4) * He_{*i*}'s thinks John_{*i*} is smart.
- (5) John_{*i*} resembled his_{*i*} father.
- (6) John_{*i*} rarely shaved him_{*i*}.
- (7) John_{*i*} rarely shaved himself_{*i*} with a razor.