

Ling 315, Lecture Notes. 19 Mar 2007.

1. **C-command.** For background, read Section 4.3 of the textbook, pp. 116-122.

Our current rules for reflexives and pronouns:

Reflexives Rule. A reflexive pronoun must be co-referential with a preceding expression in the same minimal sentence.

Pronouns Rule. A non-reflexive pronoun must *not* be co-referential with another expression in the same minimal sentence.

These rules account for examples like the following:

- (1) a. Nadia_i thinks [_{CP} that Tim_j betrayed her_i/*herself_i].
b. Nadia_i thinks [_{CP} that she_j betrayed her_j/*herself_i].
c. Nadia_i convinced Tim_j [_{CP} that she_i had betrayed him_j/*himself_j].
- (2) a. Most people who know Zelda_i adore her_i/*herself_i.
b. Most people who know her_j/*herself_i adore Zelda_i.

Some terminology:

Antecedent = An expression a pronoun or reflexive depends on for its reference.

R-expression = An expression that refers to some entity.

Our current rules, however, do not make the right predictions for:

- (3) a. [Her_i sister]_j adores her_j/herself_j.
b. [Zelda_i's sister]_j adores her_j/herself_j.

One way to account for these cases is to define a new structural relation, that of *c-command*:

- (4) A node A *c-commands* a node B iff A's sister either:
a. is B, or
b. contains B.

Equivalently:

- (5) A node A *c-commands* a node B iff every branching node that dominates A also dominates B, and neither A nor B dominate the other.

We can then use this relation to account for (3), by revising our rules as follows:

Reflexives Rule (Revised):

Pronouns Rule (Revised):

We need a third rule for examples like (7) and (8):

- (6) Zelda_i adores herself_i.
- (7) *She_i adores Zelda_i.
- (8) *She_i said that Zelda_i would be there on time.
- (9) *She_i liked the flowers that we bought for Zelda_i.
- (10) Zelda_i liked the flowers that we bought for her_i.
- (11) The flowers that we bought for her_i pleased Zelda_i.

2.

2. Binding Theory. Some terminology (note that this is NOT how mathematicians, logicians, etc. use the term *bind*):

(12) A binds B iff A *c-commands* B and A and B are co-referential.

Binding theory (Chomsky 1981):

Principle A: A reflexive must be bound in its minimal CP.

Principle B: A pronoun cannot be bound in its minimal CP.

Principle C: An r-expression cannot be bound.

Cf. e.g. Hellan (1988), Reinhart & Reuland (1993).

- (13) Gorka_i saw a snake near him_i.
- (14) Diana_i told Paul about *her_j/herself_j.
- (15) He_i made us fond of him_j/*himself_j.