

# Binding

*Based on Koenenman & Zeiljstra (2017)*

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# Reflexives

- (1) a.  $I_i$  like myself $_i$ .  
b. Mary $_i$  sees herself $_i$  in the mirror.  
c. [Peter and Bill] $_i$  excused themselves $_i$ .

## Pronouns

- (2) a. John<sub>i</sub> told Mary<sub>j</sub> that she<sub>j</sub> can call him<sub>i</sub> at 7pm.  
b. They<sub>i</sub> didn't tell John<sub>j</sub> that he<sub>j</sub> had misrepresented them<sub>i</sub>.
- (3) a. Mary called me.  
b. They said I was wrong.
- (4) Every boy who knows his house can direct you to it.

# The notion

Binding is a semantic phenomenon, namely **coreference**, that obeys syntactic constraints.

# Syntactic constraints

## Reflexives

Reflexives **must** be bound:

- (5) a. \*You like myself.  
b. \*John sees herself in the mirror.  
c. \*Peter knows each other.

# Syntactic constraints

## Domain of binding

(6) John said that Peter thought that Harry blamed himself.

(7) John said that Peter thought that Harry blamed him.

# The generalization

## Principle A:

A reflexive **must** be bound by a nearby antecedent.

## Principle B:

A non-reflexive pronoun **cannot** be bound by a nearby antecedent.







