

## Optimality Theory and Binding Phenomena

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The difficulty which phenomena such as long-distance reflexivization pose to the binding principles of Chomsky (1980, 1981, 1982) has prompted Burzio (1989, 1996, 1998) to examine the prospect of accounting for binding phenomena in a framework of violable constraints.

Burzio's analysis encounters serious difficulty when data (cited by Lasnik(1989)) from languages such as Thai and Vietnamese -- languages in which permit locally bound R-expressions -- as well as data (cited by Thainsson() and Huang()) from Icelandic and Chinese -- languages in which there is a recognizable overlap in the distribution of reflexives and pronouns -- are considered.

Our aim is to develop an alternative constraint-based analysis which avoids these difficulties. We claim that Burzio's notion of a referential economy hierarchy may be replaced by a hierarchy related to informational economy and that, in the spirit of the Q (hearer oriented) and I (speaker oriented) principles advocated by Atlas & Levinson(1981) and by Horn(1984), this hierarchy is consulted by two distinct families of constraints: Q-constraints which militate toward informational identity between an antecedent and the arguments with which it is coreferential, and I-constraints which work against the repetition of information and against morphological complexity.

The result is an analysis which refrains from assuming that expressions possess any inherent 'referential content' of their own, but refers only to informational and articulatory economy and one that, while avoiding the problems which confront the Burzio (1998 et al.) literature, can capture the universals described in that literature.