On the Absence of (Certain) Islands in Shupamem

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1 Introduction

Certain configurations that are expected to be stable syntactic islands across languages seem to allow movement out of them in Shupamem:

- Sentential Subjects (1)
- Complex NPs (2-3)
- Adjunct Clauses (4-6)
- Factive Clauses (7)
- Embedded Questions (8)

(1) Sentential Subjects
   a. [mí Râjè jìyòn rì] vèt Mínjò.
      COMP Raye see.pst1 chair surprise.pst1 Mimshe
      ‘That Raye saw the chair surprised Mimshe.’
   b. á pò: rì: [mí Râjè jìyòn ___] vèt Mínjò.
      EXPL TOP chair COMP Raye see.pst1 surprise.pst1 Mimshe
      ‘As for the chair, that Raye saw (it) surprised Mimshe.’

(2) Complex NPs (Relative Clauses)
   a. Râjè jì [mòmbà juó i-jùn ndáp ná].
      Raye know.prs man rel 3sg-buy.pst1 house rel.comp
      ‘Raye knows the man who bought the house.’
   b. á pò: ndáp Râjè jì [mòmbà juó i-jùn ___ ná].
      EXPL TOP house Raye know.prs man rel 3sg-buy.pst1 rel.comp
      ‘As for the house, Raye knows the man who bought (it).’
(3) Complex NPs (Clausal Complements of Nouns)
   a. Mímjó jù? [sàŋgám mí Râjè jì pén].
      Mimshë hear.PST1 story COMP Raye eat.PST1 fufu
      ‘Mimshë heard the story that Raye ate the fufu.’
   b. á pò: pén Mímjó jù? [sàŋgám mí Râjè jì ___].
      EXPL TOP fufu Mimshë hear.PST1 story COMP Raye eat.PST1
      ‘As for the fufu, Mimshë heard the story that Raye ate (it).’

(4) Adjunct Clauses (Temporal Clauses)
   a. Mímjó sën lénómì [kà Râjè n-ziyön ndáp].
      Mimshë break.PST1 mirror before Raye REAL-see.INF house
      ‘Mimshë broke the mirror before Raye saw the house.’
   b. á pò: ndáp Mímjó sën lénómì [kà Râjè n-ziyön ___].
      EXPL TOP house Mimshë break.PST1 mirror before Raye REAL-see.INF
      ‘As for the house, Mimshë broke the mirror before Raye saw (it).’

(5) Adjunct Clauses (Reason Clauses)
      Mimshë left.PST1 on reason REL Raye hit.PST1 chair REL.COMP
      ‘Mimshë left because Raye hit the chair.’
   b. á pò: rì: Mímjó lë? [mà ngä kà: Râjè láp ___ nó].
      EXPL TOP chair Mimshë left.PST1 on reason REL Raye hit.PST1 REL.COMP
      ‘As for the chair, Mimshë left because Raye hit (it).’

(6) Adjunct Clauses (Conditional Clauses)
   a. [Mímjó kò n-ziyön ndáp] mbú: Râjè ná: tuó lë?.
      Mimshë if REAL-see.INF house then Raye IRR FUT1 leave
      ‘If Mimshë sees the house, then Raye will leave.’
   b. á pò: ndáp [Mímjó kò n-ziyön ___] mbú: Râjè ná: tuó lë?
      EXPL TOP house Mimshë if REAL-see.INF then Raye IRR FUT1 leave
      ‘As for the house, if Mimshë sees (it), then Raye will leave.’

(7) Factive Clauses
   a. Mímjó jà?á ñwàr-i [mì Râjè jìyòn rì:].
      Mimshë feel.sorry.PRS body-3SG COMP Raye see.PST1 chair
      ‘Mimshë regrets that Raye saw the chair.’
   b. á pò: rì: Mímjó jà?á ñwàr-i [mì Râjè jìyòn ___].
      EXPL TOP chair Mimshë feel.sorry.PRS body-3SG COMP Raye see.PST1
      ‘As for the chair, Mimshë regrets that Raye saw (it).’
(8) Embedded Questions

a. Mímʃó píʃó [mí Rájè jùn kì].
   Mimshe ask.PST1 COMP Raye buy.PST1 what
   ‘Mimshe asked what Raye bought.’

b. á pò: Rájè Mímʃó píʃó [mí í-jùn kì].
   EXPL TOP Raye Mimshe ask.PST1 COMP 3SG-buy.PST1 what
   ‘As for Raye, Mimshe asked what she bought.’

c. Mímʃó píʃó [mí á kì juó Rájè jùn ___ ná].
   Mimshe ask.PST1 COMP EXPL what REL Raye buy.PST1 REL.COMP
   ‘Mimshe asked what it was that Raye bought.’

d. á pò: Rájè Mímʃó píʃó [mí á kì juó í-jùn ___ ná].
   EXPL TOP Raye Mimshe ask.PST1 COMP EXPL what REL 3SG-buy.PST1 REL.COMP
   ‘As for Raye, Mimshe asked what it was that she bought.’

Not all expected island configurations are transparent to movement. Noun phrase coordinate structures have island status, but only with respect to the second conjunct (9b-9c).

(9) Noun Phrase Coordinate Structures

   Mimshe break.PST1 chair CONJ table with strength
   ‘Mimshe broke the chair and the table quickly.’

   EXPL TOP chair Mimshe break.PST1 CONJ table with strength
   ‘As for the chair, Mimshe broke (it) and the table quickly.’

   EXPL TOP table Mimshe break.PST1 chair CONJ with strength
   Intended: ‘As for the table, Mimshe broke the chair and (it) quickly.’

With regard to the data in (1-8) we can entertain two analytical options:

(i) The topicalized constituent (X) has undergone A-movement out of the relevant “island”:
   á pò: X₁, [TP ...[Island.... t₁...]]

(ii) X is base-generated in its surface position and binds an empty category in the “island”:
   á pò: X₁, [TP ...[Island.... e₁...]]

In this talk, we will argue for analysis (i), concluding that the constructions in (1-8) do not constitute islands in Shupamem. Explaining the absence of these island effects is beyond the scope of this talk.
2 Background on Shupamem

Shupamem (ISO 639-3: bax) is a Grassfields Bantu language of the Western Province of central Cameroon, spoken by approximately 420,000 speakers (Eberhard, Simons, & Fennig 2021).

Figure 1: Homeland of the Shupamem speech community

This section reviews certain grammatical facts that will be relevant for our forthcoming discussion (Shupamem word order, the complementizer system and pronominal resumption).

All data is based on field work with the third author and native speaker of the language. We transcribe the data using the International Phonetic Alphabet.¹

¹ Shupamem has a writing system: https://omniglot.com/writing/bamum.htm
    See also: http://www.learnbamum.com/study-now
The basic word order is Subject–Verb–Object–X (10a), where X may be an oblique phrase or an indirect object (10b).²

(10) a. Mímʃó kìp rì:.
   Mimshe break.pst1 chair
   ‘Mimshe broke the chair.’

   Mimshe give.pst1 flower to 3sg
   ‘Mimshe gave a flower to him/her.’

In the Shupamem complementizer system, some subordinate clauses are introduced by a single invariable complementizer—e.g. mǐ in complement clauses (11)—while others involve two complementizers.

   Mimshe hear.pst1 story comp Raye kill.pst1 lion
   ‘Mimshe heard the story that Raye killed the lion.’

Relative clauses (RCs) feature two complementizers (12): one follows the RC head and agrees with it in noun class morphology (e.g. juó/pùá/ká), while the other is RC-final and formally invariable (nó).

   Mimshe kill.pst1 lion sg.an-rel 3sg-see.pst1 Raye rel.comp
   ‘Mimshe killed the lion that saw Raye.’

   b. ápìn p-uá pà-jùàp jìkè nò.
   expl pl-person pl.an-rel 3pl-sing.pst1 song rel.comp
   ‘It is people who sang.’

   c. Mímʃó ìjì? [mò jìgà ká: Ràjè láp rì: nò]
   Mimshe leave.pst1 on reason rel Raye hit.pst1 chair rel.comp
   ‘Mimshe left because Raye hit the chair.’

Pronominal resumption varies based on syntactic position and animacy. It is obligatory for topicalized subjects (13) and human/animate-denoting (in)direct objects (14), but unavailable for topicalized inanimate-denoting (in)direct objects (15).

(13) ápò: Mímʃó *(í)-jìyàn rì:.
   expl top mimshe 3sg-see.pst1 chair
   ‘As for Mimshe, he saw the chair.’

   expl top raye mimshe give.pst1 flower to 3sg
   ‘As for Raye, Mimshe gave a flower to her.’

² Shupamem has four surface tones: high (´), low (`), rising (ˇ) and falling (ˆ).
b. á pò: mìn Mímʃó jíyón-*ń(í).
   EXPL TOP person Mimshe see.PST1-3SG
   ‘As for the person, Mimshe saw him.’
c. á pò: móší Mímʃó jíyón-*ń(í).
   EXPL TOP bird Mimshe see.PST1-3SG
   ‘As for the bird, Mimshe saw it.’

   EXPL TOP branch Mimshe hit.PST1 chair with 3SG
   ‘As for the branch, Mimshe hit the chair with (it).’
b. á pò: ní Mímʃó jíyón-(*ń).
   EXPL TOP machete Mimshe see.PST1-3SG
   ‘As for the machete, Mimshe saw (it).’

3  ə movement in Shupamem

Two relevant ə- configurations in Shupamem are the focus cleft construction (17) and the topicalization construction (18).

(16) Mímʃó jíyón rì:
    Mimshe see.PST1 chair
    ‘Mimshe saw the chair.’

    EXPL COP.PRS chair REL Mimshe see.PST1 REL.COMP
    ‘It is the chair that Mimshe saw.’

(18) á (*pà) pò: rì: (*juó) Mímʃó jíyón ---.
    EXPL COP.PRS TOP chair REL Mimshe see.PST1
    ‘As for the chair, Mimshe saw (it).’

Predicative RC structures in which the RC head is the focused/topicalized constituent appear to underlie both focus clefts (17) and the topicalization construction (18). Both constructions involve an expletive subject, followed by an obligatorily null copula in positive declarative clauses (see Nchare 2012, 450ff).³ Relativizers must be overt in the case of focus clefts (17), but null in topicalization constructions (18).

Table 1: Formal properties of focus clefts and topicalization constructions in Shupamem

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Expletive Subject</th>
<th>Overt Copula</th>
<th>Overt Relativizer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focus Cleft</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>×</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topicalization</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>×</td>
<td>×</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

³ A negative copula is licit in focus clefts, but yields unacceptability in topicalization constructions (Nchare 2012).
In this way, focus clefts and topicalization constructions both involve relativization and therefore $\bar{A}$-movement of the prominent constituent, assuming a head raising analysis of RCs à la Kayne 1994.

In order to diagnose $\bar{A}$-movement we will rely on the following diagnostics:

- **Crossover effects:** $\bar{A}$-moved elements cannot move across c-commanding pronouns that they end up binding (Strong Crossover) nor can they move across non-c-commanding pronouns that they end up binding (Weak Crossover).

**Strong Crossover**

(19) a. ˈiːjyɔn wɔ?
   3SG-see.PST1 who
   ‘Who did he/she see?’

b. á wɔ̃ juɔ ˈiːjyɔn-ı nɔ?
   EXPL who REL 3SG-see.PST1-3SG REL.COMP.Q
   ‘Who did he/she see?’
   ✓ ‘Who is the x such that y saw x?’
   * ‘Who is the x such that x saw x?’

**Weak Crossover**

(20) a. mɔn-ı jyɔn wɔ?
   child-3SG see.PST who
   ‘Who did his/her child see?’

b. á wɔ̃ juɔ mɔn-ı jyɔn-ı nɔ?
   EXPL who REL child-3SG see.PST1-3SG REL.COMP.Q
   ‘Who did his/her child see?’
   ✓ ‘Who is the x such that y’s child saw x?’
   * ‘Who is the x such that x’s child saw x?’

- **Parasitic gap licensing:** An illicit gap is licensed in the presence of a non c-commanding $\bar{A}$- gap.

(21) a. Mïmʃɔ jyɔn ndáp kà ɨn-ʒuŋ ndáp.
   Mimshe see.PST1 house before 3SG-REAL-buy.INF house
   ‘Mimshe saw the house before buying the house.’

b. *Mïmʃɔ jyɔn ndáp kà ɨn-ʒuŋ
   Mimshe see.PST1 house before 3SG-REAL-buy.INF
   Intended: ‘Mimshe saw the house before buying (it).’

c. ✓ á pɔ̀ ndáp Mïmʃɔ jyɔn ___ kà ɨn-ʒuŋ ___.
   EXPL TOP house Mimshe see.PST1 before 3SG-REAL-buy.INF
   ‘As for the house, Mimshe saw (it) before buying (it).’
• **Reconstruction effects:** An Ā-displaced constituent behaves as if it occupies a lower structural position with respect to binding theoretic considerations.

(22) a. Mǐm̀ jìyòn fitú ǹgwàr-î.
Mǐm̀ see.pst1 picture body-3sg
‘Mǐm̀ saw a picture of himself.’

b. á pò: fitú ǹgwàr-î Mǐm̀ jìyòn ₦.
EXPL TOP picture body-3sg Mǐm̀ see.pst1
‘As for the picture of himself, Mǐm̀ saw (it).’

4 Arguments for Ā-movement Out of “Islands”

In this section we present arguments for Ā-movement out of six purported syntactic islands based on the diagnostics presented in section 3. In all six cases, movement out of the “island” in question gives rise to crossover effects, licenses parasitic gaps inside the “island”, and manifests reconstruction effects.

4.1 Sentential Subject Constructions

• **Crossover effects**

Wh- clefting of material internal to sentential subject configurations gives rise to both strong (23a) and weak (23b) crossover effects.

(23) a. á wò juó [mí ɪ-jìyòn-ɪ] vět Mǐm̀ nà?
EXPL who REL COMP 3sg-see.pst1-3sg surprise.pst1 Mǐm̀ REL.COMP.Q
✓‘Who is the x such that that y saw x surprised Mǐm̀?’

*b. á wò juó [mí m̀m-ì jìyòn-ɪ] vět Mǐm̀ nà?
EXPL who REL COMP child-3sg see.pst1-3sg surprise.pst1 Mǐm̀ REL.COMP.Q
✓‘Who is the x such that that y’s child saw x surprised Mǐm̀?’

*‘Who is the x such that that x’s child saw x surprised Mǐm̀?’

• **Parasitic gap licensing**

Topicalization of material internal to sentential subjects licenses parasitic gaps inside subject CPs (24b) that are not licensed in the absence of topicalization (24a).

(24) a. *[mí Ràjè jì pén kà ɪ-n-ná ₦] vět Mòlà.
COMP Raye eat.pst1 fufu before 3sg-real-cook.inf surprise.pst1 Molù

b. ✓ á pò: pén [mí Ràjè jì ₦ kà ɪ-n-ná ₦]
EXPL TOP fufu COMP Raye eat.pst1 before 3sg-real-cook.inf
vět Mòlà.
surprised Molù
‘As for the fufu, that Raye ate (it) before cooking (it) surprised Molù.’
• Reconstruction effects

Reconstruction effects are observed when anaphor-containing constituents inside sentential subjects are topicalized.

(25) á  phó: sànqam màfíʔ ñwàr-ì [mí Ràjè sà; ___] vêt Mímfà.  
EXPL TOP story about body-3SG COMP Raye tell.PST1 surprise.PST1 Mimshe  
‘As for the story about herself, that Raye told (it) surprised Mimshe.’

4.2 Complex Noun Phrase Constructions

• Crossover effects

Wh- clefting of complex NP-internal material gives rise to both strong (26a, 27a) and weak (26b, 27b) crossover effects.

(26) Complex NPs (Relative Clauses)  
a. á wò juó Ràjè jì [mòmbà juó í-jíyön-ì nò]?  
EXPL who REL Raye know.PRS man REL 3SG-see.PST1-3SG REL.COMP.Q  
✓‘Who is the x such that Raye knows the man y who saw x?’  
* ‘Who is the x such that Raye knows the man x who saw x?’
b. á wò juó Ràjè jì [mòmbà juó món-i jíyön-ì nò]?  
EXPL who REL Raye know.PRS man REL child-3SG see.PST1-3SG REL.COMP.Q  
✓‘Who is the x such that Raye knows the man y whose child saw x?’  
* ‘Who is the x such that Raye knows the man x whose child saw x?’

(27) Complex NPs (Clausal Complements of Nouns)  
a. á wò juó Mímfò jù? [sànqam mí í-jíyön-ì] nò?  
EXPL who REL Mimshe hear.PST1 story COMP 3SG-see.PST1-3SG REL.COMP.Q  
✓‘Who is the x such that Mimshe heard the story that y saw x?’  
* ‘Who is the x such that Mimshe heard the story that x saw x?’
b. á wò juó Mímfò jù? [sànqam mí môn-i jíyön-ì] nò?  
EXPL who REL Mimshe hear.PST1 story COMP child-3SG see.PST1-3SG REL.COMP.Q  
✓‘Who is the x such that Mimshe heard the story that y saw x?’  
* ‘Who is the x such that Mimshe heard the story that x saw x?’

• Parasitic gap licensing

Topicalization of complex NP-internal material licenses parasitic gaps in relative clauses (28b) and clausal complements of nouns (29b) that are not licensed in the absence of topicalization (28a, 29a).
(28) Complex NPs (Relative Clauses)
   a. *Râjè jì [mòmbà juó jùn ndáp kà i-n-3iɣòŋ] Raye know.PRS man REL 3SG-buy.PST1 house before 3SG-REAL-see.INF ná.
      REL.COMP
   b. √á pò: ndáp Râjè jì [mòmbà juó jùn] kà EXPL TOP house Raye know.PRS man REL 3SG-buy.PST1 before i-n-3iɣòŋ ná.
      3SG-REAL-see.INF REL.COMP
      'As for the house, Raye knows the man who bought (it) before seeing (it).'

(29) Complex NPs (Clausal Complements of Nouns)
   b. √á pò: ndáp Mînfjò jù? [sàŋgàm mì Râjè jùn] kà EXPL TOP house Mimshe hear.PST1 story COMP Raye buy.PST1 before i-n-3iɣòŋ ná.
      3SG-REAL-see.INF
      'As for the house, Mimshe heard the story that Raye bought (it) before seeing (it).'

• Reconstruction effects

Reconstruction effects are observed when anaphor-containing material that is internal to relative clauses (30a) and clausal complements of nouns (30b) is topicalized.

(30) a. Complex NPs (Relative Clauses)
   á pò: fitú ŋwâr-i Râjè jì [mòmbà juó jùn] EXPL TOP picture body-3SG Raye know.PRS man REL 3SG-see.PST1 ná.
      REL.COMP
      'As for the picture of himself, Raye knows the man who saw (it).'
   b. Complex NPs (Clausal Complements of Nouns)
   á pò: fitú ŋwâr-i Mînfjò jù? [sàŋgàm mì Râjè siɛt] EXPL TOP picture body-3SG Mimshe hear.PST1 story COMP Raye tear.PST
      'As for the picture of herself, Mimshe heard the story that Raye tore (it).'
4.3 Adjunct Clause Constructions

4.3.1 Temporal Clauses

• Crossover effects

Wh- clefting of material inside adjunct temporal clauses gives rise to both strong (31a) and weak (31b) crossover effects.

(31) a. á wò juó Mímfó sëñ lënòmì [kà ̀i-n-șiỳàn-ᵣ] nò?
   EXPL who REL Mimshe break.PST1 mirror before 3SG-REAL-see.INF-3SG REL.COMP.Q
   ✓‘Who is the x such that Mimshe broke the mirror before y saw x?’
   * ‘Who is the x such that Mimshe broke the mirror before x saw x?’

   b. á wò juó Mímfó sëñ lënòmì [kà mòn-吲 n-șiỳàn-ᵣ]
   EXPL who REL Mimshe break.PST1 mirror before child-3SG REAL-see.INF-3SG nò?
   REL.COMP.Q
   ✓‘Who is the x such that Mimshe broke the mirror before y’s child saw x?’
   * ‘Who is the x such that Mimshe broke the mirror before x’s child saw x?’

• Parasitic gap licensing

Topicalization of material inside adjunct temporal clauses licenses parasitic gaps inside those clauses (32b) that are not licensed in the absence of topicalization (32a).

(32) a. *Mímfó pië? lërwa [kà ̀i-n-șánkò ______].
   Mimshe take.PST1 book before 3SG-REAL-read.INF

   b. ✓ à pò: lërwa Mímfó pië? ______ [kà ̀i-n-șánkò ______].
   EXPL TOP book Mimshe take.PST1 before 3SG-REAL-read.INF
   ‘As for the book, Mimshe took (it) before reading (it).’

• Reconstruction effects

Reconstruction effects are observed when anaphor-containing constituents inside adjunct temporal clauses are topicalized.

(33) á pò: títsù ǹwàr-吲 Mímfó sëñ kàmërá [kà Ràjè n-șiỳàn ______].
   EXPL TOP picture body-3SG Mimshe break.PST1 camera before Raye REAL-see.INF
   ‘As for the picture of herself, Mimshe broke the camera before Raye, saw (it).’
4.3.2 Reason Clauses

• Crossover effects

Wh- clefting of reason clause-internal material gives rise to both strong (34a) and weak (34b) crossover effects.

\[(34)\] a. á wò juó Mímʃój lọ? [mò ẹgà ká: i-làb-í nà]?  
EXPL who REL Mimshe leave.pst1 on reason REL 3SG-hit.pst1-3SG REL.COMP.q  
✓‘Who is the x such that Mimshe left because y hit x?’  
* ‘Who is the x such that Mimshe left because x hit x?’  

b. á wò juó Mímʃój lọ? [mò ẹgà ká: mòn-ì làb-í nà]?  
EXPL who REL Mimshe leave.pst1 on reason REL child-3SG hit.pst1-3SG REL.COMP.q  
✓‘Who is the x such that Mimshe left because y’s child hit x?’  
* ‘Who is the x such that Mimshe left because x’s child hit x?’

• Parasitic gap licensing

Topicalization of reason clause-internal material licenses parasitic gaps inside those clauses (35b) that are not licensed in the absence of topicalization (35a).

\[(35)\] a. *Mímʃój lọ? [mò ẹgà ká: Ràjè jùn ndáp ká i-n-ʒiɣòn  
Mimshe leave.pst1 on reason REL Raye buy.pst1 house before 3SG-REL-see.inf  
____ nà].  
REl.COMp  

b. ✓ a pò: ndáp Mímʃój lọ? [mò ẹgà ká: Ràjè jùn ___ kà  
EXPL TOP house Mimshe leave.pst1 on reason REL Raye buy.pst1 before  
i-n-ʒiɣòn ___ nà].  
3SG-REL-see.inf REL.COMp  
‘As for the house, Mimshe left because Raye bought (it) before seeing (it).’

• Reconstruction effects

Reconstruction effects are observed when anaphor-containing material that is internal to reason clauses is topicalized.

\[(36)\] á pò: ̈fítú ɣwàr-ì Mímʃój lọ? [mò ẹgà ká: Ràjè jìɣòn ___  
EXPL TOP picture body-3SG Mimshe leave.pst1 on reason REL Raye see.pst1  
nà].  
REl.COMp  
‘As for the picture of herself, Mimshe left because Raye saw (it).’
4.3.3 Conditional Clauses

- Crossover effects

Wh- clefting of material internal to conditional clauses gives rise to both strong (37a) and weak (37b) crossover effects.

   expl who rel 3sg if real-see.inf-3sg then raye irr fut1 leave rel.comp.q
   ✓ ‘Who is the x such that if y sees x, then Raye will leave?’
   * ‘Who is the x such that if x sees x, then Raye will leave?’

   expl who rel child-3sg if real-see.inf-3sg then raye irr fut1 leave rel.comp.q
   ✓ ‘Who is the x such that if y’s child sees x, then Raye will leave?’
   * ‘Who is the x such that if x’s child sees x, then Raye will leave?’

- Parasitic gap licensing

Topicalization of material inside conditional clauses licenses parasitic gaps inside those clauses (38b) that are not licensed in the absence of topicalization (38a).

(38) a. * [Mímjó kò n-siét lèrwà kà í-n-ziún ___] mbú: Râjè ná: Mimshe if real-tear.inf book before 3sg-real-buy.inf then raye irr tuó ló?.
   fut1 leave

b. ✓ á pò: lèrwà [Mímjó kò n-siét ___ kà í-n-ziún ___] expl top book mimshe if real-tear.inf before 3sg-real-buy.inf mbú: Râjè ná: tuó ló?.
   then raye irr fut1 leave
   ‘As for the book, if Mimshe tore (it) before buying (it), then Raye will leave.’

- Reconstruction effects

Reconstruction effects are observed when anaphor-containing constituents inside conditional clauses are topicalized.

(39) á pò: fítú ŋwàr-ì [Mímjó kò n-siét ___] mbú: Râjè ná: tuó ló?.
   expl top picture body-3sg mimshe if real-tear.inf then raye irr fut1 leave
   ‘As for the picture of himself, if Mimshe tears (it), then Raye will leave.’

5 Other (Indecisive) Diagnostics for ̃A-movement

Three possible diagnostics for ̃A-movement that prove indecisive in the context of Shupamem “island” extraction are SUPERIORITY EFFECTS (section 5.1), IDIOMS (section 5.2), and SLUICING (section 5.3).
5.1 Superiority Effects

Superiority effects are observed in questions with multiple wh- elements when a structurally lower wh-item crosses over a higher wh-expression yielding ungrammatical outputs.

Under the movement analysis sketched in (i)(p. 3), otherwise-legal focus clefting of “island”-internal wh-items would be predicted to be blocked in the presence of a higher interrogative expression. The base-generation approach in (ii)(p. 3), however, would predict the absence of superiority effects in these cases, making the consideration of superiority effects a potentially decisive diagnostic in movement vs. base-generation analyses of purported island extraction in the language.

Unfortunately, this diagnostic is not applicable in Shupamem due to the absence of superiority effects in the language (40-41), as in other West African languages, such as Ikpana (Kandybowicz et al. to appear), Krachi (Torrence and Kandybowicz 2015), Akan (Saah 1994) and Yoruba (Adesola 2006).

(40) a. á fù: wò wò?
    EXPL call.PST1 who who
    ‘Who called whom?’

    b. á wò juó í-fù: wò nò?
    EXPL who REL 3SG-call.PST1 who REL.COMP.Q
    ‘Who is it that called whom?’ (√ wh₁ moves over wh₂)

    c. á wò juó wò fù-ŋí nò?
    EXPL who REL who call.PST1-3SG REL.COMP.Q
    ‘Who is it that who called?’ (√ wh₂ moves over wh₁)

(41) a. Mímfó fà kì nò wò?
    Mimshe give.PST1 what to who
    ‘What did Mimshe give to whom?’

    b. á kì juó Mímfó fà ___ nò wò nò?
    EXPL what REL Mimshe give.PST1 to who REL.COMP.Q
    ‘What is it that Mimshe gave to whom?’ (√ wh₁ moves over wh₂)

    c. á wò juó Mímfó fà kì nò ì nà?
    EXPL who REL Mimshe give.PST1 what to 3SG REL.COMP.Q
    ‘Who is it that Mimshe gave what to?’ (√ wh₂ moves over wh₁)

5.2 Idioms

Topicalization of “island”-internal idiom chunks would be predicted to yield idiomatic interpretations under the movement analysis sketched in (i) on p. 3, on the assumption that all parts of idioms must form a constituent at some stage of the derivation. Under the base-generation approach in (ii) on p. 3, only literal interpretations would be predicted to be available in these cases.
In this way, idioms could offer a potentially decisive diagnostic in movement vs. base-generation analyses of purported island extraction in the language.

However, this diagnostic is not applicable because idioms in Shupamem are a purely surface phenomenon.

Only when all parts of the idiom appear linearly adjacent do idiomatic interpretations become available. Since movement of any sort—i.e. both Ā-movement (42b, 43b) and A-movement (42d, 43d)—bleeds idiomatic interpretation, both movement and base-generation analyses correctly predict the absence of those interpretations when “island”-internal idiom chunks are topicalized.

(42) a. IDIOM 1
kijī to: ndôm nṣi.
idiom pierce.PST1 drum chief
Literally: ‘The idiot pierced the chief’s drum.’
Idiometrically: ‘The idiot shockingly succeeded.’

b. á pô: ndôm nṣi kijī to: ___.
EXPL TOP drum chief idiom pierce.PST1
‘As for the chief’s drum, the idiot pierced (it).’ (Idiomatic interpretation unavailable)

c. á pâ jô kijī to: ndôm nṣi.
EXPL COP.PRS like idiom pierce.PST1 drum chief
Literally: ‘It seems like the idiot pierced the chief’s drum.’
Idiometrically: ‘It seems like the idiot shockingly succeeded.’

d. kijī pâ jô kâa itô: ndôm nṣi.
idiom COP.PRS like COMP 3SG-pierce.PST1 drum chief
‘The idiot seems like he pierced the chief’s drum.’ (Idiomatic interpretation unavailable)

(43) a. IDIOM 2
Mímʃó vê láp ɲgią.
Mimshe grab.PST1 genitals leopard
Literally: ‘Mimshe grabbed the leopard’s genitals.’
Idiometrically: ‘Mimshe is in deep trouble.’

b. á pô: láp ɲgią Mímʃó vê ___.
EXPL TOP genitals leopard Mimshe grab.PST1
‘As for the leopard’s genitals, Mimshe grabbed (them).’ (Idiomatic interpretation unavailable)

c. á pâ jô Mímʃó vê láp ɲgią.
EXPL COP.PRS like Mimshe grab.PST1 genitals leopard
Literally: ‘It seems like Mimshe grabbed the leopard’s genitals.’
Idiometrically: ‘It seems that Mimshe is in deep trouble.’
5.3 Sluicing

Sluicing is a type of ellipsis where, in most cases, everything except for a *wh*- expression is elided (Merchant 2001).

(44) A. Mímʃó jìn jiəm.
Mímʃó buy.pst1 thing
‘Mimsha bought something.’
B. ki?
what
‘What did Mímʃó buy?’

Sluicing in some languages is island-sensitive (e.g. Nupe, see Mendes & Kandybowicz 2021), implicating movement in the derivation of the sluice. In this case, the movement analysis (i) would make the prediction that sluices originating in any of the so-called “island” structures in (1-8) should be unavailable, while the base-generation analysis (ii) would predict the possibility of such sluices.

If this were true for Shupamem, then sluicing could serve as a decisive diagnostic for movement vs. base-generation analyses of purported *A*-movement out of “islands.”

Unfortunately, sluicing is not a decisive diagnostic of overt *A*-movement in Shupamem because sluicing in the language appears to have a *wh*- in-situ source structure. 4 Example (45B) below shows that sluicing of the second conjunct of an NP coordinate structure, an island in the language (46), is possible.

(45) A. Mímʃó kip [rì: pò: jiəm].
Mímʃó break.pst1 chair CONJ thing
‘Mimsha broke the chair and something.’
B. ki?
what
‘What?’

EXPL TOP table Mímʃó break.pst1 chair CONJ with strength
Intended: ‘As for the table, Mímʃó broke the chair and (it).’

The data in example (47) supports the conclusion that sluicing in Shupamem does not have a move-and-delete derivation. The source of a sluice appears to be a *wh*- in-situ structure.

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4 Similarly in other languages: Morgan 1973; Hankamer 1979; Abe 2015; Ott & Struckmeier 2016; Stigliano 2020.
(47) a. Mímʃó kìp [rì: pò: kì]?
Mimshe break.PST1 chair CONJ what
‘What is the x such that Mimshe broke the chair and x?’
⇒

b. Mímʃó kìp [rì: pò: kì]?
Mimshe break.PST1 chair CONJ what

Therefore, (45B) does not involve actual *wh- movement, but rather a *wh- in-situ + delete derivation. Consequently, sluicing cannot be used as a decisive diagnostic to test whether movement out of the “islands” considered in this paper has occurred.

6 Conclusion

The purported “island” configurations in Shupamem discussed in this paper (1-6) exhibit strong and weak crossover effects, allow parasitic gap licensing and manifest reconstruction effects (Table 2).

Table 2: A-movement diagnostics in Shupamem syntactic “island” configurations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Crossover Effects</th>
<th>Parasitic Gap Licensing</th>
<th>Reconstruction Effects</th>
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</thead>
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<td>Sentential Subject Constructions</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Complex NPs (Relative Clauses)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complex NPs (Clausal Complements of N)</td>
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<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Temporal Clauses</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reason Clauses</td>
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<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conditional Clauses</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Factive Clauses</td>
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<tr>
<td>Embedded Questions</td>
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This serves as evidence in favor of A-movement out of these domains. Therefore, we conclude that these constructions do not constitute syntactic islands in Shupamem.

Although we did not apply our diagnostics to embedded questions (8), we expect them to align with complex NP constructions of the relative clause type (2) since their formation involves a RC structure.

We did not apply our diagnostics to factive clauses (7) and the *wh- in-situ variety of embedded questions (8a,b), but we expect them to behave the same.

In conclusion, certain domains that one expects to be syntactic islands do not have the status of islands in Shupamem. Our findings here parallel those recently discovered in other languages. For example, like Shupamem, all adjunct clauses in Ikpana are transparent for A- movement (Kandybowicz et al. to appear) and in Norwegian, temporal and conditional adjunct clauses (but not reason clauses) fail to have strong island status (Bondevik et al. 2019; Faarlund 1992; Kush et al. 2018).
We speculate that the reason that A-movement is available in all of these cases concerns the syntax of relativization, given that the syntax of relative clauses is implicated in all cases of A-movement discussed in this talk.

References

Mendes, Gesoel & Jason Kandybowicz. 2021. Salvation by Deletion in Nupe. Ms. University of Maryland and The Graduate Center, CUNY.