

# On movement, resumption, and island constraints in Limbum ex-situ focus <sup>\*</sup>

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## Abstract

This paper presents novel data from the understudied Grassfields Bantu language Limbum (Cameroon). Focussing on an ex-situ focus-marking construction (the *á*-focus construction) three main topics of  $\bar{A}$ -syntax are discussed that the Limbum data bear on. First, object resumption is only possible for specific indefinites, but not non-specific indefinites, definites, proper names, or pronouns. While similar splits have been observed to hold for resumption in relative clauses (Doron 1982; Sharvit 1999; Bianchi 2004; Sichel 2014), Limbum attests that they may also extend to focus/wh-dependencies. The split is argued to follow from a structural difference between specific and non-specific indefinites (DP vs. NP). Second, despite the lack of reconstruction into the base position with object resumption, there is reconstruction into intermediate position, providing support to approaches in which at least for some languages, resumption involves  $\bar{A}$ -movement (e.g. Zaenen et al. 1981; Engdahl 1985; Boeckx 2003; Klein 2017). And third, focus-dependencies for nominal arguments can violate syntactic islands while this is ungrammatical for otherwise licit VP- and PP-focalizations. The former also exhibit movement properties and reconstruction (*pace* Panitz 2018). This is argued to show that islands can be category-sensitive. Lastly, subject focus and subject marking is discussed. It is suggested that obligatory subject resumption is due to an EPP-like constraint forcing the spell-out of the derived subject position. The dependency of the form of subject marking on the status of the subject (nominal vs. pronominal) is argued to necessitate the postulation of a featural distinction between nouns and pronouns.

**Keywords:**  $\bar{A}$ -movement, resumption, islands, specificity, focus, reconstruction

## 1 Introduction

This paper presents novel data from the understudied Grassfields Bantu (Niger-Congo) language Limbum, which is spoken by about 130 000 people (according to a 2005 census, Eberhard et al. 2019) in the Northwest Region of Cameroon. The data in this paper stem from a number of elicitation sessions with one native speaker from Nkambe, Cameroon, over a period of several months between August 2018 and May 2019.

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There is some previous work on Limbum, in particular a grammar by Fransen (1995) and several papers on focus (Becker and Nformi 2016; Driemel and Nformi 2018; Becker et al. 2019). However, none of these works focusses particularly on  $\bar{A}$ -syntax. The grammar naturally sacrifices depth of study in favour of broadness whereas the papers on focus are concerned to a significant part with semantic properties and only touch upon syntactic question in as much as they relate to the semantic properties. In this paper, I will provide a more detailed investigation of the syntactic properties of one argument displacement construction in the language, namely the ex-situ  $\acute{a}$ -focus construction. I will report on three main findings: First, object  $\acute{a}$ -focus exhibits a specificity-dependent split. While commonly, a gap occurs in the base position of the dependency, specific indefinite objects may also optionally leave a resumptive pronoun. The restriction of resumptives to specific interpretations is well-known from the literature on optional resumption in relative clauses (Doron 1982; Sharvit 1999; Bianchi 2004; Sichel 2014). Limbum presents evidence that it can also be found to hold for monoclausal focus/wh-dependencies.

Second, despite the lack of reconstruction (for variable binding and scope) in simple clauses resumptive focus shows reconstruction (for variable binding) into intermediate positions. Given that the former is due to the general interpretation of specific indefinites as taking (exceptional) wide scope, this provides further support that resumption in some languages involves  $\bar{A}$ -movement (Zaenen et al. 1981; Engdahl 1985; Pesetsky 1998; Boeckx 2003; Kandybowicz 2008; Sichel 2014; Klein 2017; van Urk 2018) rather than base-generation (McCloskey 1990, 2002; Shlonsky 1992; Aoun et al. 2001; Bianchi 2004; Salzmann 2009, 2011; Rouveret 2008, 2011).

Third, focussing of nominal arguments (both gap-leaving and resumptive-leaving) from inside a strong syntactic island (e.g. a complex noun phrase) is grammatical in Limbum and exhibits reconstruction effects in base and intermediate positions (at least for gap dependencies). However, island constraints are respected by VP- and PP-focalization, which is otherwise available in non-island contexts. This suggests that movement out of and reconstruction into a syntactic island configuration is possible (*pace* Panitz 2018) and that island constraints may be sensitive to the category of the extracted constituent.

A minor fourth point concerns resumption in subject focus extractions. In contrast to object resumption it is obligatory and does not exhibit any sensitivity to specificity. It thus requires a different syntactic analysis. Additionally, it exhibits an interesting pattern of subject marking where the form and presence of a marker is dependent among other things on whether the subject is a noun or a pronoun. Under current assumptions about the syntax of nouns and pronouns, both are taken to instantiate category D (Postal 1969; Abney 1987; Elbourne 2001, 2005). As I will argue, the pattern in Limbum calls for the postulation of a featural difference between nouns and pronouns in the form of a [pron] feature.

The paper is structured as follows. In section 2, after a very brief introduction to basic Limbum clause structure, I will present the  $\acute{a}$ -focus construction and, following arguments by Becker et al. (2019) argue that it has a monoclausal structure involving  $\bar{A}$ -movement. Section 3 details the distribution of gaps and resumptive pronouns as depending on the definiteness/specificity of the extracted nominal. It demonstrates that resumptives only occur with (epistemically and existentially) specific indefinites while they are generally absent with non-specific indefinites, proper names, pronouns, definite nominals, and wh-items. Further, it presents evidence that despite the lack of simple reconstruction, reconstruction into intermediate positions is available. I will suggest that the distribution arises from the interplay of a structural difference between specific and non-specific indefinites and the proposal that (resumptive) pronouns are realizations of a D-head whose NP-complement goes unpronounced (either due to ellipsis or due to copy deletion). In a nutshell, the approach takes specific indefinites to contain a (silent) D-layer, just like definites,

proper names, and pronouns do, whereas non-specific indefinites are bare NPs. Given a general optionality of moving either the NP-part (of a DP) or the whole DP, this gives rise to the possibility of a D-head with a copy-deleted NP-complement in the case of specific indefinites, but not non-specific indefinites. Proper names and pronouns independently do not allow NP-subextraction because for the former, the N-head incorporates into the D-head (Longobardi 1994), while for the latter, the NP-complement is elided from the start of the derivation rendering it unmovable (Elbourne 2001). The lack of simple reconstruction effects in resumptive dependencies derives from the fact that these only occur with specific indefinites who independently nearly always take widest scope (cf. Fodor and Sag 1982). Section 4 presents the facts surrounding island sensitivity. It is first shown that gaps and resumptives inside islands are equally grammatical and that, with the former, reconstruction effects can be observed. It is further argued that island constraints cannot be taken to be absent from the language as they appear to hold for VP- and PP-focalization. After presenting arguments against an analysis of island-internal gaps as involving a silent (PF-deleted) resumptive pronoun, I conclude that island constraints in Limbum are category-sensitive. The last section 5 is concerned with obligatory resumption and argument encoding in subject position. It is first shown that subject resumption does not correlate with specificity. This fact receives an analysis in terms of a phonological EPP holding in the derived subject position that leads to the exceptional pronunciation of the subject copy as a resumptive pronoun. Then, the sensitivity of subject marking (in all except the third person plural) for nominal type (pronoun vs. noun) and tense is presented. After discussing the problems of some approaches to subject marking with the Limbum pattern, I conclude that the postulation of a [pronoun]-feature is inevitable. Section 6 summarizes the main points of the paper.

## 2 The *á*-focus construction

In this section, I will introduce the relevant ex-situ focus construction, including ex-situ wh-questions. Then I will argue, following Becker et al. (2019), that, first, it does not have a biclausal cleft structure, and, second, that it involves  $\bar{A}$ -movement.

The general word order of a neutral declarative clause in Limbum is SVO. Any tense and aspect markers precede the verb. Adverbs including the negation marker *kàʔ* are restricted to the clause-final position. An example of such a clause is given in (1).

- (1) Njínwè f̃ à mū yē bō f̃ nìnkòr.  
 woman DET SM PST2 see children DET yesterday  
 ‘The woman saw the children yesterday.’

The verb commonly appears in root form without any agreement affixes. However, in certain tenses and aspects a subject marker occurs before the TAM-morpheme that can be analyzed as subject agreement. I will come back to the distribution and analysis of these subject markers in section 5.

While (new information) focus is possible in situ (2), there also exists a marking strategy that includes displacement of the focussed constituent to sentence-initial position where it is preceded by the focus marker *á* and (optionally) followed by a particle *cí* (3).<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>There is yet another construction where the focussed constituent stays in situ but focus is marked by a preceding marker *bá* (i).

- (i) A: Wè bí kōnī bá ndá?  
 you.SG FUT1 meet FOC who

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- (2) A: Wè bí kōnī ndá?  
 you.SG FUT1 meet who  
 ‘Who will you meet?’  
 B: Mè bí kōnī Ngàlá.  
 I FUT1 meet Ngala  
 ‘I will meet NGALA.’ (Driemel and Nformi 2018: 18)
- (3) A: Á ndá (cí) wè bí kōnī?  
 FOC who COMP you.SG FUT1 meet  
 ‘Who will you meet?’  
 B: Á Ngàlá (cí) mè bí kōnī.  
 FOC Ngala COMP I FUT1 meet  
 ‘I will meet NGALA.’ (Driemel and Nformi 2018: 18)

## 2.1 Structure of the construction

The fact that the marker *á* precedes the focussed constituent in conjunction with there being a following element suggests that the construction is a cleft, i.e. a biclausal structure where *á* is the copula ‘it is’ and *cí* is the relative marker ‘that’. Indeed, in her grammar of Limbum, one of the few published works on the language, Fransen (1995) analyses the *á*-focus construction as a cleft. However, the speaker consulted here generally disagreed with several of the data in this grammar, pointing out either that they had an archaic appeal sounding somewhat old-fashioned or that they might belong to a different variety of the language. Following the argumentation in Becker et al. (2019) which is based on the judgements of the same speaker as the ones presented in this paper, I will therefore adopt the view that the construction is monoclausal.

Let me briefly present their arguments. First, in contrast to the *bá*-focus, the *á*-focus construction is compatible with non-exhaustive contexts. This is evidenced by the fact that it may contain a universal quantifier as part of the focussed constituent (4) which is inherently non-exhaustive as it explicitly refers to all alternatives while exhaustivity decidedly excludes some alternatives.

- (4) Á ɲwè nsip (cí) mè bí kōnī.  
 FOC person every COMP I FUT1 meet  
 ‘I will meet EVERYBODY.’ (Becker et al. 2019: 225)

As they point out, however, cleft structures are typically found with an exhaustive meaning component (Horn 1981; Percus 1997) and should therefore be incompatible with non-exhaustive contexts, i.e. with a universal quantifier in focus position.

Second, Fransen (1995) analyses the *á* marker in (5) as a copula, concluding that it also acts as a copula in the *á*-focus construction which must therefore be a cleft.

- (5) á rtēē  
 COP palm.tree  
 ‘It is a palm tree.’ (Fransen 1995: 301)

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- ‘Who (if not X) will you meet?’  
 B: Mè bí kōnī bá Ngàlá.  
 I FUT1 meet FOC Ngala  
 ‘It is Ngala whom I will meet.’ (Driemel and Nformi 2018: 18)

However, this strategy is used to express contrastivity/exhaustivity rather than new information (for details see Becker et al. 2019; Driemel and Nformi 2018). As I am concerned here in particular with displacement operations, nothing more will be said about the *bá*-focus construction in this paper.

Becker et al. (2019) suggest that *á* in (5) is in fact a focus particle (as it is (4)) while the copula is silent. This correctly predicts that TAM-markers or negation are incompatible with *á* (6a). If a TAM-marker is required in the focus part, the only way to express it is to add an overt copula *bā* and an expletive *à* resulting in a proper biclausal structure (6b).

- (6) a. (\*mū) á (\*mū) bāā (cí) Nfor à bā zhē.  
 PST2 FOC PST2 fufu COMP Nfor SM PST1 eat  
 ‘Nfor ate FUFU.’  
 b. À mū bā bāā Nfor à mū zhē.  
 EXPL PST2 COP fufu Nfor SM PST2 eat  
 ‘It was fufu that Nfor ate.’ (Becker et al. 2019: 227)

Third, clefts are typically analysed as containing a relative clause (Akmajian 1970; Gundel 1977; Percus 1997; Svenonius 1998; Hedberg 2000; Reeve 2011). For the *á*-focus construction, however, there are good arguments against the presence of a relative clause. As Fransen (1995) and Mpoche (1993) show, a relative clause may optionally be followed by the demonstrative marker *nà* (7a). This marker is ungrammatical in an *á*-focus construction (7b).

- (7) a. mū zhǐ í mū zhéé mṇṇmbé (nà)  
 child REL 3SG PST2 eat plantains DEM  
 ‘the child who ate plantains’  
 b. Á ṇkfúú (cí) mē bí kōnī (\*nà).  
 FOC chief COMP 1SG FUT1 meet DEM  
 ‘I will meet the CHIEF.’ (Becker et al. 2019: 228)

In addition, while the element *cí* in Fransen’s (1995) examples seems to be homophonous with the relative pronoun this is not the case for the speaker consulted in this paper who consistently distinguished *cí* [tʃi] from the relative pronoun *zhǐ* [ʒi]. As shown in (8) and pointed out in Becker et al. (2019: 227), *cí* cannot act as a relative pronoun whereas *zhǐ* can.

- (8) Nwè fō rṇṇ njṇṇwè fō zhǐ/\*cí Nfor à mū yē nṇkòr.  
 man DET know woman DET REL/COMP Nfor SM PST2 see yesterday  
 ‘The man knows the woman whom Nfor saw yesterday.’

Their point is corroborated by data showing that the relative pronoun covaries with the head noun (at least) in number taking the form *vǐ* in the plural (9a) whereas the complementizer *cí* is invariant in a focus construction (9b).

- (9) a. Nwè fō rṇṇ bōmbánrò fō vǐ/\*cí njṇṇwè fō à mū yē nṇkòr.  
 man DET know boys DET REL.PL/COMP woman DET SM PST2 see yesterday  
 ‘The man knows the boys whom the woman saw yesterday.’  
 b. Á bōmbánrò fō cí/\*vǐ njṇṇwè fō à mū yē nṇkòr.  
 FOC boys DET COMP/REL.PL woman DET SM PST2 see yesterday  
 ‘The woman saw THE BOYS yesterday.’

Thus, despite its appearance, the *á*-focus construction does not show typical properties of a cleft. Rather, it seems to involve a monoclausal structure in which the focussed constituent is placed in the left periphery instead of its base position. In what follows, I will argue that it has indeed moved to this surface position rather than being base generated there.

## 2.2 $\bar{A}$ -properties of the construction

Standard diagnostics for  $\bar{A}$ -movement commonly include crossover effects, reconstruction for (variable) binding and scope, reconstruction into intermediate positions, and island effects. Except for the latter, all of these support a movement approach to the  $\acute{a}$ -focus construction. I will put island constraints aside here for now in order to streamline the presentation. However, they will be discussed in detail in section 4 below.

First of all, the  $\acute{a}$ -focus construction may be used to focus embedded objects, that is, it may apply across a finite clause boundary (10) which is one hallmark of  $\bar{A}$ -dependencies.<sup>2</sup>

- (10)  $\acute{A}$  [njínwè fɔ̃]<sub>1</sub> cí mɛ̀ rɛ̀ mɛ̀-nɛ̀ Nfor bí kɔ̃nɪ̃ \_\_\_\_<sub>1</sub>.  
 FOC woman DET COMP 1SG know 1SG-C Nfor FUT1 meet  
 ‘I know that Nfor will meet THE WOMAN.’

Next, consider Principle C configurations. In the baseline sentence in (11), the personal pronoun  $\acute{i}$  ‘3SG’ in the matrix clause cannot be coreferential with the embedded object *Nfor* as this would incur a violation of Principle C.<sup>3</sup>

- (11)  $\acute{I}_{*i/j}$  rɛ̀  $\acute{i}$ -nɛ̀ à cí ró Nfòr<sub>i</sub>.  
 3SG know 3SG-C 2SG PROG search Nfor  
 ‘He knows that you are searching for Nfor.’

Now, when the embedded object has undergone focus-fronting into the matrix clause this restriction pertains (12). The fronted object cannot be coreferential with the matrix subject pronoun.

- (12)  $\acute{A}$  Nfòr<sub>i</sub> cí  $\acute{i}_{*i/j}$  rɛ̀  $\acute{i}$ -nɛ̀ wɛ̀ cí ró \_\_\_\_<sub>i</sub>.  
 FOC Nfor COMP 3SG know 3SG-C 2SG PROG search \_\_\_\_  
 ‘He knows that you are searching for NFOR.’

This receives an immediate explanation if the object reconstructs into its base position where it incurs a Principle C violation as in (11).

A similar observation is made for bound variable anaphora. If an object that contains a variable appears below a quantified expression, it may receive a bound variable reading in addition to a free variable reading (13).

- (13) [Nwè nsɪp]<sub>x</sub> bí kɔ̃nɪ̃ táā zhì<sub>x/y</sub> ɲgwá.  
 man every FUT1 meet father 3SG.POSS wife  
 ‘Every man will meet the father of his wife.’

When this object is focussed and leaves a gap, the bound variable reading remains available (14).

- (14)  $\acute{A}$  [táā ɲgwá zhì<sub>x/y</sub>]<sub>1</sub> cí mɛ̀ kwáʔshí mɛ̀-nɛ̀ [ɲwè nsɪp]<sub>x</sub> bí kɔ̃nɪ̃ \_\_\_\_<sub>1</sub>.  
 FOC father wife 3SG.POSS COMP 1SG think 1SG-C man every FUT1 meet \_\_\_\_

<sup>2</sup>Note that the complementizer  $nɛ̀$  in (10) shows agreement (in the form of a prefix). The general pattern of complementizer agreement in the language is that the complementizer agrees with the matrix subject for person, number, and animacy in case there is no intervener (i.e. a direct object). An exploration of this phenomenon and the interesting intervention effects that are observed with it is beyond the scope of this article. I refer the interested reader to Nformi (2018), who documents the pattern in some detail.

<sup>3</sup>Note that the form of the 2.SG pronoun in (11) is  $\acute{a}$  instead of the expected  $wɛ̀$ . According to Fransen (1995: 181f.) this special form appears in future tense, hortative, and sequential constructions. As (11) is none of these, the contexts for this form in the dialect presented here might actually be wider. Unfortunately, I have nothing further to say about the distribution of this form.

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‘I think that every man will meet THE FATHER OF HIS WIFE.’

Again this falls out naturally if the object reconstructs into the gap position.

The same holds for relative quantifier scope. Note first that quantifier raising of the embedded subject to a position above the matrix subject is not possible (15), i.e. that quantifier raising (at least for universal quantifiers) is clause-bound (May 1985; Larson and May 1990).

- (15) Nwè-ryē?nì à mū la í-nē mū nsìp à mū cí bumi.  
 MAN-teach SM PST2 say 3SG-C child every SM PST2 PROG sleep  
 ‘A/Some teacher said that every child was sleeping.’  $(\exists > \forall, * \forall > \exists)$

Now, in (16) the object *mbànrù* ‘male’ has been focussed across the universal quantifier subject *njínwè nsip* ‘every woman’ into the matrix clause leaving a gap in its base position. Nevertheless, the sentence does not in any way acquire an odd reading where a single child has several biological mothers, that is the universal quantifier still outscopes the existential despite their surface order being the other way round (16).

- (16) Á mbànrù<sub>i</sub> cí Shey à mū lā í-nē njínwè nsìp à mū bzá \_\_\_\_<sub>1</sub>.  
 FOC male COMP Shey SM PST2 say 3SG-C woman every SM PST2 birth \_\_\_\_  
 ‘Shey said that every woman gave birth to A SON.’  $(\forall > \exists, * \exists > \forall)$

This yet again is easily explained if the object reconstructs into the gap position for interpretational purposes.

Taken together, these reconstruction effects present an argument in favour of the *á*-focus involving  $\bar{A}$ -movement. Recent studies, however, argue that reconstruction effects may also hold in base-generation dependencies (Guilliot and Malkawi 2009; Rouveret 2008; Moulton 2013) and therefore cannot constitute unequivocally decisive evidence for  $\bar{A}$ -movement. What is argued by the same authors is that a distinction between base-generation reconstruction and movement reconstruction is still possible. While the latter show what is termed ‘reconstruction conflicts’ the former do not. A reconstruction conflict arises in clauses where the reconstructing XP is subject to two conflicting requirements. Consider the example in (17). The targeted reading is one where the quantifier *every student* binds the coindexed pronoun *he* and the R-expression *Bresnan* is coreferential with the pronoun *she*. In order to achieve this reading, the extracted XP must be able to reconstruct into a position below the quantifier but above the pronoun, that is, it must reconstruct into an intermediate position. The grammaticality of (17a) attests that this is possible. In contrast, in (17b) there is no position in which both requirements could be satisfied simultaneously. The sentence (with the intended reading) is therefore ungrammatical.

- (17) a. [Which paper that  $he_1$  gave to  $Bresnan_2$ ]<sub>i</sub> did every student<sub>i</sub> think [  $t'_i$  that  $she_2$  would like  $t_i$  ]?  
 b. \*[Which paper that  $he_1$  gave to  $Bresnan_2$ ]<sub>i</sub> did  $she_2$  think [  $t'_i$  that every student<sub>i</sub> would like  $t_i$  ]? (Lebeaux 1991)

Importantly, with reconstruction in base-generation dependencies, as is observable in French and Welsh resumption, this conflict is absent. That is, whether the necessary intermediate position exists or not has no influence on the grammaticality of the clauses. Rather, either both sentence are acceptable, as in French (18), or both are unacceptable, as in Welsh (19).

- (18) *No reconstruction conflicts in French*

- a. Quel résumé qu'il<sub>1</sub> a donné à Hamida<sub>2</sub> est-ce que chaque étudiant<sub>1</sub> se  
which abstract that.he has given to Hamida Q that each student REFL  
demande si elle<sub>2</sub> va le corriger?  
asks if she goes it amend  
'Which abstract that he<sub>1</sub> gave to Hamida<sub>2</sub> does each student<sub>1</sub> wonder if she<sub>2</sub> will  
amend it.'
- b. Quel résumé qu'il<sub>1</sub> a donné à Hamida<sub>2</sub> est-ce qu'elle<sub>2</sub> se demande si  
which abstract that.he has given to Hamida Q that.she REFL asks if  
chaque étudiant<sub>1</sub> va le réviser?  
each student goes it revise  
'Which abstract that he<sub>1</sub> gave to Hamida<sub>2</sub> does she<sub>2</sub> wonder if each student<sub>1</sub> will revise  
it.'

(Panitz 2014: 18; citing Guilliot and Malkawi 2012)

(19) *No reconstruction conflicts in Welsh*

- a. \*barn yr athro ar [ei<sub>1</sub> mab]<sub>2</sub> y gŵyr pob mam<sub>1</sub> y mae ef<sub>2</sub> yn  
opinion the teacher on her son COMP knows each mother COMP is he PROG  
ei chuddio  
it conceal  
'the teacher's opinion of [her<sub>1</sub> son]<sub>2</sub> that each mother<sub>1</sub> knows that he<sub>2</sub> conceals'
- b. \*barn yr athro ar [ei<sub>1</sub> mab]<sub>2</sub> y gŵyr ef<sub>2</sub> y mae pob mam<sub>1</sub> yn  
opinion the teacher on her son COMP knows he COMP is each mother PROG  
ei pharchu  
it respect  
'the teacher's opinion of [her<sub>1</sub> son]<sub>2</sub> that he<sub>2</sub> knows that each mother<sub>1</sub> respects'

(Rouveret 2008)

While the occurrence of a gap in the Limbum focus examples suggests an analysis in terms of movement rather than base-generation, one might still propose that the gap is actually a silent resumptive pronoun in a base generation dependency. This seems reasonable in particular in light of the fact that focalization from inside an island leaving a surface gap is possible (see also section 4). However, reconstruction conflicts as in English (17) also occur in Limbum. Consider the pair of sentences in (20).

- (20) a. Á ñkār [bō bvi<sub>1</sub>]<sub>2</sub> cí ñjínwè nsip<sub>1</sub> kwàʔshī [CP t'<sub>2</sub> í-nē ó<sub>2</sub>  
FOC friend children 3SG.POSS COMP woman every think 3SG-C 3PL.SM  
mū cèb t<sub>2</sub> ].  
PST2 insult  
'(It's) a friend of [her<sub>1</sub> children]<sub>2</sub> (that) every woman<sub>1</sub> thinks that they<sub>2</sub> insulted.'
- b. \*Á ñkār [bō bvi<sub>1</sub>]<sub>2</sub> cí ó<sub>2</sub> kwàʔshī [CP t'<sub>2</sub> ó-nē ñjínwè nsip<sub>1</sub> à  
FOC friend children 3SG.POSS COMP 3PL.SM think 3SG-C woman every SM  
mū cèb t<sub>2</sub> ].  
PST2 insult  
'(It's) a friend of [her<sub>1</sub> children]<sub>2</sub> (that) they<sub>2</sub> think that every woman<sub>1</sub> insulted.'

In (20a), the embedded object *bō bvi* 'her children' has undergone focus-fronting. It contains a bound variable anaphor *bvi* 'her' which in the targeted reading is bound and therefore should be c-commanded by the universally quantified matrix subject *ñjínwè nsip* 'every woman'. At the same time the embedded pronominal subject *ó* 'they' is coreferential with the fronted object and therefore should not c-command it in order to avoid a Principle C violation. There is thus only one position in which both requirements are met, namely the intermediate position *t'<sub>2</sub>* in



the left edge of the embedded clause. Just like in English, the corresponding sentence with the matrix and embedded subjects swapped is ungrammatical (20b) because neither in  $t'_2$  nor in  $t_2$  can both requirements be met at the same time. That (20a) is grammatical indicates that the object reconstructs into the intermediate position. In turn, this provides a strong argument in favour of (successive-cyclic)  $\bar{A}$ -movement being involved in the  $\acute{a}$ -focus construction.

Taken together, these four reconstruction diagnostics (Principle C, variable binding, relative scope, reconstruction conflicts) strongly suggest that the focussed constituent in the  $\acute{a}$ -focus construction has undergone syntactic movement into its surface position.

### 3 Distribution of gaps and resumptive pronouns

#### 3.1 The role of specificity

All focus sentences shown up until now contain a gap in the base position of the focussed constituent. In fact, as evidenced by (21a) and (21b), this seems to be the only grammatical option. A resumptive pronoun in this position results in ungrammaticality.

- (21) a.  $\acute{A}$  Tanko<sub>1</sub> cí Nfòr à mū yē \*yē<sub>1</sub>/\_\_\_<sub>1</sub> nìṅkòr.  
 FOC Tanko COMP N. SM PST2 see 3SG/\_\_\_ yesterday  
 ‘It is Tanko who Nfor saw yesterday.’  
 b.  $\acute{A}$  yē<sub>1</sub> cí Nfor à mū yē \*yē<sub>1</sub>/\_\_\_<sub>1</sub> nìṅkòr.  
 FOC 3SG COMP Nfor SM PST3 see 3SG/\_\_\_ yesterday  
 ‘It is her/him that Nfor saw yesterday.’

However, this does not entail that resumptive pronouns are never available in object position. In fact, object focus extraction allows an optional resumptive pronoun in case the focussed constituent is a bare noun indefinite as in (22).

- (22) *Object focus with resumptive pronoun*  
 a.  $\acute{A}$  njiṅwē<sub>1</sub> cí Nfor bí kōnī yē<sub>1</sub>.  
 FOC woman COMP Nfor FUT1 meet her  
 ‘Nfor will meet A WOMAN.’  
 b.  $\acute{A}$  rkar<sub>1</sub> cí Nfor bí yū zhī<sub>1</sub>.  
 FOC car COMP Nfor FUT1 buy it  
 ‘Nfor will buy A CAR.’

In (22), the focussed element necessarily receives an interpretation as referring to a specific entity, that is, the bare noun in both examples is used referentially. This is corroborated by the fact that sentences like (22) are incompatible with contexts where a specific interpretation is very implausible such as (23) and (24). Only the versions with a gap (23A1) and (24A1) are accepted there.

- (23) Context: Nfor has been very nervous today. When his friend Tanko asks him why that is, Nfor tells him that in today’s mail he has received a summons to the police station for a testimony next week. In the afternoon, Nfor and Tanko meet up with their friend Shey. He also notes that Nfor seems very nervous and asks him why. Nfor only says that he has an important appointment coming up. When Nfor has left Shey asks Tanko:

- Q:  $\acute{A}$  ndá<sub>1</sub> cí Nfor bí kōnī \_\_\_<sub>1</sub> à?  
 FOC who COMP Nfor FUT1 meet Q  
 ‘Who(m) will Nfor meet?’

---

Tanko replies:

A1: Á ɲwè-rta<sub>1</sub> cí Nfor bí kɔ̃nī \_\_\_\_<sub>1</sub>.  
FOC man-cap COMP Nfor FUT1 meet  
'Nfor will meet A POLICEMAN.'

A2: #Á ɲwè-rta<sub>1</sub> cí Nfor bí kɔ̃nī yē<sub>1</sub>.  
FOC man-cap COMP Nfor FUT1 meet 3SG.O  
'Nfor will meet A POLICEMAN.'

- (24) Context: Yesterday, Nfor told Shey that he wants to get himself a car and asked him to accompany him to a second-hand car dealership. A friend of Nfor and Shey knows that Nfor is planning to spend a large amount of money that he's been saving up over the past few months. However, he doesn't know what Nfor will buy. So he asks Shey:

Q: Á kē<sub>1</sub> cí Nfor bí yū \_\_\_\_<sub>1</sub> à?  
FOC what COMP Nfor FUT1 buy Q  
'What will Nfor buy?'

Shey replies:

A1: Á rkar<sub>1</sub> cí Nfor bí yū \_\_\_\_<sub>1</sub>.  
FOC car COMP Nfor FUT1 buy  
'Nfor will buy A CAR.'

A2: #Á rkar<sub>1</sub> cí Nfor bí yū zhi<sub>1</sub>.  
FOC car COMP Nfor FUT1 buy 3SG.INAN.O  
'Nfor will buy A CAR.'

In contexts that prefer a specific interpretation, however, both a gap (25A1) and (26A1) and a resumptive pronoun (25A2) and (26A2) are equally accepted.

- (25) Context: Nfor has been very nervous today at school. When his classmate and best friend Tanko asks him why that is, Nfor tells him that he has a very important meeting with one of their teachers, Mr. Bassong, next week to talk about a stipend. In the afternoon, Nfor and Tanko meet up with their friend Shey who's going to a different school. He also notes that Nfor seems very nervous and asks him why. Nfor only says that he has an important appointment coming up. After Nfor has left Shey asks Tanko:

Q: Á ndá<sub>1</sub> cí Nfor bí kɔ̃nī \_\_\_\_<sub>1</sub> à?  
FOC who COMP Nfor FUT1 meet Q  
'Who(m) will Nfor meet?'

Tanko replies:

A1: Á ɲwè-ryē?ni<sub>1</sub> cí Nfor bí kɔ̃nī \_\_\_\_<sub>1</sub>.  
FOC man-teach COMP Nfor FUT1 meet  
'Nfor will meet A TEACHER.'

A2: Á ɲwè-ryē?ni<sub>1</sub> cí Nfor bí kɔ̃nī yē<sub>1</sub>.  
FOC man-teach COMP Nfor FUT1 meet 3SG.O  
'Nfor will meet A TEACHER.'

- (26) Context: Nfor and Shey visited a second-hand car dealer yesterday. After test-driving a few cars, Nfor tells Shey that he's interested in a red Audi A4 and that he'll come back to buy it later this week. A friend of Nfor and Shey knows that Nfor is planning to spend a large amount of money that he's been saving up over the past few months. However, he doesn't know what Nfor will buy. So he asks Shey:

Q: Á kē<sub>1</sub> cí Nfor bí yū —<sub>1</sub> à?  
 FOC what COMP Nfor FUT1 buy Q  
 ‘What will Nfor buy?’

They replies:

A1: Á rkar<sub>1</sub> cí Nfor bí yū —<sub>1</sub>.  
 FOC car COMP Nfor FUT1 buy  
 ‘Nfor will buy A CAR.’

A2: Á rkar<sub>1</sub> cí Nfor bí yū zhi<sub>1</sub>.  
 FOC car COMP Nfor FUT1 buy 3SG.INAN.O  
 ‘Nfor will buy A CAR.’

It thus seems to be the case that the focussing of an indefinite (bare) noun is in principle compatible with a gap and a resumptive pronoun in the base position of the dependency. However, the resumptive pronoun forces an interpretation of the extracted object as a specific indefinite.

Specificity is a somewhat vague semantic-pragmatic notion linked to the different interpretation of indefinite noun phrases (Karttunen 1968, 1969/1976; Quine 1956, 1960; Baker 1966; Fodor 1970; Partee 1970; Kripke 1977; Fodor and Sag 1982). There is a whole body of work on specificity and as often happens with vague concepts it has been understood to quite some different concepts (for an overview, see Farkas 1994). It has been argued to be linked to presuppositionality (Yeom 1998; Geurts 2010), noteworthiness (Maclaren 1982; Ionin 2006), discourse-linking (Pesetsky 1987), topicality (Cresti 1995; Portner 2002; Endriss 2009) and many more. In general, two very prominent understandings as listed in Farkas and Brasoveanu (2020) are scopal specificity (i.e. specific elements take wide scope) and epistemic specificity (i.e. specific elements refer to a certain object/person that the speaker ‘has in mind’). Both of them seem to be at play in the specificity split in Limbum. This is shown in the sentences below.

First, an indefinite noun phrase like *ɲwè-ryē?ni* ‘a teacher’ in (27) may either be interpreted as taking scope below the universal *ɲjɲwè nsip* ‘every woman’, which would result in a non-specific reading where for each woman there is a potentially distinct teacher such that she heard a rumour that Nfor insulted him as evidenced by the continuation in (27a). Crucially, the indefinite may also take (exceptional) wide scope out of the island and above the universal quantifier which would result in a reading where there is one single teacher and every woman heard that Nfor insulted that teacher. The availability of this reading is shown by the possible continuation in (27b).<sup>4</sup>

(27) *Njɲwè nsip à mū yō? nsūŋ zhi-nē Nfor à mū cèb ɲwè-ryē?ni.*  
 woman every SM PST2 hear rumour 3SG.INAN-COMP Nfor SM PST2 insult man-teach  
 ‘Every woman heard a rumour that Nfor insulted a teacher.’

a. Sherry heard that Nfor insulted his math teacher, Betty that he insulted his physics teacher, etc.

<sup>4</sup>Exceptional wide scope refers to elements taking scope outside a scope island. Commonly, scope islands are identical to islands for movement. As will be discussed in section 4, however, nominal argument extraction is possible from an island such as the complex noun phrase in (27). That complement clauses nonetheless constitutes a scope island is shown by examples like (15), repeated below as (i), where the universal quantifier cannot take scope outside the embedded clause.

(i) *ɲwè-ryē?ni à mū la í-nē mū nsip à mū cí bumi.*  
 MAN-teach SM PST2 say 3SG-C child every SM PST2 PROG sleep  
 ‘A/Some teacher said that every child was sleeping.’ ( $\exists > \forall$ ,  $*\forall > \exists$ )

- b. Namely his English teacher Mr. Bassong.

Second, an indefinite object such as *njínwè* ‘woman’ in (28) shows two different readings with regard to epistemicity. An epistemically specific reading, where the identity of the referent of the indefinite is known to the speaker, is evidenced by the continuation in (28a). Equally, the indefinite object may be interpreted as epistemically non-specific such that the identity of the woman is unknown (to the speaker) as shown by the continuation in (28b).

- (28) *Mè riŋ mè-nē Nfor à mū kōnī njínwè nìŋkòr.*  
 1SG know 1SG-C Nfor SM PST2 meet woman yesterday  
 ‘I know that Nfor met a woman yesterday.’  
 a. I even know her. It was Yaah.  
 b. But I don’t know who it was.

Now consider the same sentence but with the indefinite object focus-fronted. If there is a gap in the object’s base position both interpretations are licit (29). As soon as a resumptive pronoun replaces the gap, however, the non-specific reading becomes impossible (30a). The indefinite object can then only be perceived as identifiable by the speaker (30a).

- (29) *Á njínwè cí mè riŋ mè-nē Nfor à mū kōnī — nìŋkòr.*  
 FOC woman COMP 1SG know 1SG-C Nfor SM PST2 meet yesterday  
 ‘I know that Nfor met A WOMAN yesterday.’  
 a. I even know her. It was Yaah.  
 b. I don’t know who it was.
- (30) *Á njínwè cí mè riŋ mè-nē Nfor à mū kōnī yē nìŋkòr.*  
 FOC woman COMP 1SG know 1SG-C Nfor SM PST2 meet 3SG.O yesterday  
 ‘I know that Nfor met A WOMAN yesterday.’  
 a. I even know her. It was Yaah.  
 b. \*But I don’t know who it was.

This property of Limbum object focus extraction is not extraordinary cross-linguistically. For optional resumption (i.e. resumption that alternates with a gap in the same position) it has been observed in several languages that the antecedent of the resumptive pronoun is required to be specific/referential/D-linked (Doron 1982; Sharvit 1999; Bianchi 2004; Sichel 2014). However, this observation has been restricted to relativization. As argued in section 2.1, Limbum focus/wh-clauses do not contain a relative clause but have proper monoclausal structures. Limbum thus shows that the correlation between specificity and (optional) resumption is not restricted to relativization  $\bar{A}$ -dependencies but may also occur in focus/wh-dependencies.

Indeed, the validity of the observation is supported by the fact that elements that are commonly regarded as inherently non-specific, like the universal quantifier *nsip* ‘every’ and the non-D-linked wh-expressions *ndá* ‘who’ and *kē* ‘what’, are generally illicit as antecedents of a resumptive pronoun in Limbum.

The universal quantifier comes in two guises. When it combines with a singular noun, it appears in the singular form *nsip* itself and serves the function of a distributive universal quantifier (DUQ), as expressed by ‘each’ in English. When it combines with a plural noun, it takes the plural form *bsip* and is interpreted as a universal quantifier (UQ) like ‘all’ in English. As has been reported by Baker (1996); Baker and Kramer (2018); Cinque (1990); Safir (2017), in languages with a referentiality-based split in argument marking morphology, this morphology may double UQs but may not double DUQs. This means that, if we treat the resumptive as such argument-marking

morphology, we should expect plural objects with *bsip* to at least in principle be able to leave a resumptive pronoun when focus-fronted. Singular objects containing *nsip*, on the other hand, should never allow a resumptive pronoun when extracted for focus. Indeed, this is what we find in Limbum: While the UQ in (31) is compatible with both a gap and a resumptive pronoun, the latter is ungrammatical with the DUQ in (32).

(31) *All extraction*

Á [bō bsip]<sub>1</sub> cí ɲwè-ryē?nì à mū shà?nī wō<sub>1</sub>/—<sub>1</sub>.  
 FOC child.PL every.PL COMP man-teach SM PST3 greet 3PL.O/—  
 ‘The teacher greeted ALL CHILDREN (collectively, e.g. by waving at the group).’

(32) *Every extraction*

Á [mū nsip]<sub>1</sub> cí ɲwè-ryē?nì à mū shà?nī \*yē<sub>1</sub>/—<sub>1</sub>.  
 FOC child every COMP man-teach SM PST3 greet 3SG.O/—  
 ‘The teacher greeted EVERY CHILD (individually, e.g. by shaking hands with each child).’

Also, wh-elements, animate or inanimate, generally do not occur with a resumptive pronoun (33). If they do, which is possible for animate wh-elements, the question is about a member of a specific set of individuals (34).

- (33) a. Á ndá<sub>1</sub> cí Nfòr à mū yē ??yē<sub>1</sub>/—<sub>1</sub> nɪŋkòr.  
 FOC who COMP N. SM PST2 see 3SG.O/— yesterday  
 ‘Whom did Nfor see yesterday?’  
 b. Á [nɪŋwè féh]<sub>1</sub> cí Nfòr bí kɔnī ??yē<sub>1</sub>/—<sub>1</sub> à?  
 FOC woman where COMP N. FUT1 meet 3SG.O/— Q  
 ‘Which woman will Nfor meet?’  
 c. Á kē<sub>1</sub> cí Nfòr bí yū \*zhī<sub>1</sub>/—<sub>1</sub> à?  
 FOC what COMP 2SG know 2SG-C N. FUT1 buy 3SG.O/— Q  
 ‘What will Nfor buy?’  
 d. Á [rkar fēh]<sub>1</sub> cí Nfòr bí yū \*zhī<sub>1</sub>/—<sub>1</sub> à?  
 FOC car where COMP N. FUT1 buy 3SG.INAN.O/— Q  
 ‘Which will Nfor buy?’
- (34) a. Á ndá<sub>1</sub> cí Nfòr à mū yē yē<sub>1</sub> nɪŋkòr.  
 FOC who COMP N. SM PST2 see 3SG.O yesterday  
 ‘Who (of this group of people) did Nfor see yesterday?’  
 b. Á [nɪŋwè féh]<sub>1</sub> cí Nfòr bí kɔnī yē<sub>1</sub> à?  
 FOC woman where COMP N. FUT1 meet 3SG.O Q  
 ‘Which woman (of this group of women) will Nfor meet?’

Interestingly, as evident from (21), for proper names and pronouns, no resumption is possible. Both types of nominal expression are clearly specific and referential by their very nature. We would thus expect them to be at least compatible with the presence of a resumptive pronoun when focus-fronted. Nonetheless, this is not the case. A resumptive pronoun with a focussed pronoun antecedent (35) is almost as ungrammatical as with a focussed non-specific bare noun. When a proper name is fronted, a resumptive pronoun is equally ungrammatical (36).

(35) *Pronoun extraction*

Á mē<sub>1</sub>/wē<sub>1</sub>/yē<sub>1</sub>/zhī<sub>1</sub> cí Nfòr à mū yē (\*mē<sub>1</sub>/\*wē<sub>1</sub>/\*yē<sub>1</sub>/\*zhī<sub>1</sub>)/—<sub>1</sub>  
 FOC 1SG/2SG/3SG.O/3SG.INAN.O COMP Nfor SM PST2 see 1SG/2SG/3SG.O/3SG.INAN.O/  
 nɪŋkòr.  
 yesterday

---

‘It is me/you/her/it that Nfor saw yesterday.’

(36) *Proper name extraction*

Á Tanko<sub>1</sub> cí Nfòr à mū yē \*yē<sub>1</sub>/\_\_\_<sub>1</sub> nìnkòr.  
FOC Tanko COMP N. SM PST2 see 3SG.O/\_\_\_ yesterday  
‘It is Tanko who Nfor saw yesterday.’

Equally, definite objects followed by the definite determiner *f̃* are incompatible with a resumptive pronoun independent of whether they are interpreted as epistemically specific (37) (*de re*) or not (38) (*de dicto*). That is, for nominals that are not inherently specific, like definites, the dichotomy between specific and non-specific interpretation has no influence on the acceptability of a resumptive pronoun.

(37) *Specific definite extraction (de re reading)*

Context: Shey is a teacher at the local school. In order to prevent misinformation by spreading rumours, the headmaster has informed him that a colleague, Mr. Bassong, has recently been involved in a serious argument with a father of a pupil and that he (the headmaster) will meet both, Mr. Bassong and the father individually to talk about the matter. Later that day, Shey’s friend Tanko tells him that he has heard that there was an argument between a teacher and a father and that the headmaster has reportedly asked both of them for a meeting to clarify the issue. Tanko asks:

Q: Á ndá<sub>1</sub> cí í bí kōnī \_\_\_<sub>1</sub> ntómbzà à?  
FOC who COMP 3SG FUT1 meet first Q  
‘Who will he meet first?’

Recalling that the headmaster has told him that he’ll meet Mr. Bassong first, Shey replies:

A1: Á [ŋwè-ryē?nì f̃]<sub>1</sub> cí í bí kōnī \_\_\_<sub>1</sub> ntómbzà.  
FOC man-teach DEF COMP Nfor FUT1 meet first  
‘He will meet THE TEACHER first.’

A2: #Á [ŋwè-ryē?nì f̃]<sub>1</sub> cí í bí kōnī yē<sub>1</sub> ntómbzà.  
FOC man-teach DEF COMP Nfor FUT1 meet 3SG.O first  
‘He will meet THE TEACHER first.’ (OK under a subject extraction reading)

(38) *Non-specific definite extraction (de dicto reading)*

Context: Shey is telling Tanko that he has heard that there was a loud and very intense argument between a teacher and a man over the behaviour and also some grades of the man’s son. He further says that the headmaster of the school has asked both of them individually for a meeting to clarify the issue and hear out their positions because they apparently were almost breaking into a physical fight about it. Tanko says: ‘That’s going to be a hard task for the headmaster to resolve the issue.’

Q: Á ndá cí í bí kōnī \_\_\_<sub>1</sub> ntómbzà à?  
FOC who COMP 3SG FUT1 meet first Q  
‘Who will he meet first?’

Shey replies:

A1: Á [ŋwè-ryē?nì f̃]<sub>1</sub> cí í bí kōnī \_\_\_<sub>1</sub> ntómbzà.  
FOC man-teach DEF COMP Nfor FUT1 meet first  
‘He will meet THE TEACHER first.’

A2: #Á [ŋwè-ryē?nì f̃]<sub>1</sub> cí í bí kōnī yē<sub>1</sub> ntómbzà.  
FOC man-teach DEF COMP Nfor FUT1 meet 3SG.O first  
‘He will meet THE TEACHER first.’ (OK under a subject extraction reading)

The acceptance of a resumptive pronoun with proper names and pronouns slightly increases (somewhat more for proper names than for pronouns) in case the focalization takes place from an embedded clause (39a, b) while this is not the case for definites (39c).

(39) *Proper name, pronoun, and definite extraction long*

- a. Á Tanko<sub>1</sub> cí mè kwàʔshī mè-nē Nfòr à mū yē ʔyē<sub>1</sub>/\_\_\_<sub>1</sub> nɛ̀kòr.  
FOC T. COMP I think 1SG-C N. SM PST2 see 3SG.O/\_\_\_ yesterday  
'It is Tanko who I think that Nfor saw yesterday.'
- b. Á wè<sub>1</sub>/yē<sub>1</sub>/yì<sub>1</sub>/wō<sub>1</sub> cí mè kwàʔshī mè-nē Nfòr à mū yē  
FOC 2SG/3SG/2PL/3PL COMP I think 1SG-C N. SM PST2 see  
ʔʔwè<sub>1</sub>/ʔʔyē<sub>1</sub>/ʔʔyì<sub>1</sub>/ʔʔwō<sub>1</sub>/\_\_\_<sub>1</sub> nɛ̀kòr.  
2SG/3SG/2PL/3PL/\_\_\_ yesterday  
'It is you/him/you/them that I think that Nfor saw yesterday.'
- c. Á [njínwɛ fɔ̃]<sub>1</sub> cí mè rɪŋ mè-nē Nfòr bí kōnī \*yē<sub>1</sub>/\_\_\_<sub>1</sub>.  
FOC woman DET COMP 1SG know 1SG-COMP Nfor FUT1 meet 3SG.O  
'I know that Nfor will meet THE WOMAN.'

This correlation between distance of focalization and acceptability of resumptive pronoun could be taken as an indication that the resumption for proper names and pronouns is intrusive rather than grammatical (cf. e.g. Sells 1984; de Vries 2005; Alexopoulou 2009; Bianchi 2011). In contrast, no effect of distance on the acceptability of resumption can be observed for focalizations of indefinites. The resumptive pronoun is just as acceptable in long distance focalizations as it is in local focalization and likewise triggers a specific interpretation of its antecedent (40).

- (40) a. Á ɲwè-ryēʔni<sub>1</sub> cí Nfòr à mū súŋ mè í-nē í bí kōnī yē<sub>1</sub>.  
FOC man-teach COMP Nfor SM PST2 tell 1SG 3SG-C 3SG FUT1 meet 3SG.O  
'Nfor told me that he will meet a SPECIFIC TEACHER.'
- b. Á rkar<sub>1</sub> cí Nfòr à mū súŋ mè í-nē í bí yū zhi<sub>1</sub>.  
FOC car COMP Nfor SM PST2 tell 1SG 3SG-C 3SG FUT1 buy 3SG.INAN.O  
'Nfor told me that he will buy a SPECIFIC CAR.'

At a descriptive level, then, apparently a gap is the preferred solution wherever possible. A resumptive pronoun only appears when there is the danger of an ambiguity between a specific and a non-specific interpretation (though not for definites). Where no such ambiguity potentially arises, i.e. with inherently specific expression like proper names and pronouns, a resumptive pronoun seems to be avoided.

A summary of the pattern that emerges is given in the table in (41).

(41) *Pattern of resumption/gapping in focus fronting of objects*

	gap	RP
proper name	✓	*
pronoun	✓	*
definite specific	✓	*
definite non-specific	✓	*
indefinite specific	✓	✓
indefinite non-specific	✓	*
wh-item D-linked	✓	*
wh-item non-D-linked	✓	*

### 3.2 $\bar{A}$ -properties of $\acute{a}$ -focus with resumptives

Turning to the properties of the dependency between the displaced object and its corresponding resumptive pronoun, the occurrence of the latter is often analysed as base generation rather than syntactic movement, in particular if it is island-insensitive (e.g. McCloskey 1990, 2002; Shlonsky 1992; Aoun et al. 2001; Bianchi 2004; Salzmann 2009, 2011; Rouveret 2008, 2011). However, there are also approaches which have gained traction in recent times that derive resumptives as the spell-out of a trace or a lower copy left by syntactic movement (e.g. Zaenen et al. 1981; Engdahl 1985; Pesetsky 1998; Boeckx 2003; Kandybowicz 2008; Sichel 2014; Klein 2017; van Urk 2018). There is evidence, in particular from other African (Niger-Congo) languages for the latter approach (cf. among others, Korsah and Murphy 2020 on Asante Twi and Amaechi and Georgi 2019 on Igbo). For Limbum, it has already been shown that the focus construction with  $\acute{a}$  exhibits properties of an  $\bar{A}$ -dependency, at least when it results in a gap in the base position. If a resumptive were indeed indicative of base generation in Limbum, we would be forced to say that there are two different derivations for the focalization of specific indefinites, movement resulting in a gap and base generation leading to a resumptive pronoun. For non-specific indefinites, proper names, pronouns and definite expressions, only the former option would then be available.

Indeed, most of the  $\bar{A}$ -diagnostics used as evidence for movement in gap-dependencies seem to fail for focus with a resumptive pronoun. However, I will argue that the observed lack of  $\bar{A}$ -effects results from the fact that a resumptive pronoun only occurs with specific indefinite objects. I will discuss each diagnostic in turn.

First, note that Principle C effects cannot be employed as a diagnostic in resumptive focalizations. In contrast to a sentence with a gap, a sentence with a resumptive pronoun is ambiguous between subject and object resumption. This is due to the obligatory resumption for subjects (see also section 5.1). In a sentence like (42), it is therefore unclear whether the focussed constituent *Nfor* originates in the embedded object position or in the matrix subject position. The lack of Principle C effects in (42) is thus not informative as it could be due to object extraction not involving  $\bar{A}$ -movement or due to the matrix subject having undergone extraction which independently does not incur any violations of Principle C.

- (42)  $\acute{A}$  Nfòr<sub>i</sub> cí í<sub>i/j</sub> rɛ́ ɛ́-nē wè cí ró yē<sub>i</sub>.  
 FOC Nfor COMP 3SG know 3SG-C 2SG PROG search 3SG  
 ‘He knows that you are searching for NFOR.’



For variable binding (43) and relative scope (44) we find that in contrast to the corresponding gap sentence in (14) and (16) reconstruction effects are absent. In (43), the only reading that is available for the variable *zhì* ‘his’ is one as a free variable linked to one single man rather than a variable bound by and therefore covarying with the embedded subject *ɲwè nsìp* ‘every man’.

- (43) Á [táā ɲgwá zhì<sub>y/\*x</sub>]<sub>1</sub> cí mē kwàʔshí mē-nē [ɲwè nsìp]<sub>x</sub> bí kōnī yē<sub>1</sub>.  
 FOC father wife 3SG.POSS COMP 1SG think 1SG-C man every FUT1 meet 3SG  
 ‘I think that every man will meet THE FATHER OF HIS WIFE.’

In (44), only the pragmatically odd reading of a one single child being born by several mothers is possible. This reading is a consequence of the universal quantifier *ɲjɲwè nsìp* ‘every woman’ being outscoped by the existential *mbànrù* ‘male’, here, which shows that the latter does not reconstruct to its purported base position (occupied by the resumptive *yē* ‘3sg.o’) below the former.

- (44) #Á [mbànrù]<sub>1</sub> cí Shey à mū lā í-nē ɲjɲwè nsìp à mū bzá yē<sub>1</sub>.  
 FOC child-male COMP Shey SM PST2 say 3SG-C woman every SM PST2 birth 3SG.O  
 ‘Shey said that every woman gave birth to A SON.’ (\* $\forall > \exists$ ,  $\exists > \forall$ )

These data do not come as a surprise. It has long been noted that the semantic restriction to specific antecedents for (optional) resumptive pronouns blocks reconstruction for scope (Doron 1982; Suñer 1998; Boeckx 2003; Bianchi 2004, 2011; Salzmann 2017). In section 3.3, I will suggest that the lack of reconstruction effects in the previous examples results from the fact that resumption is restricted to specific indefinites in conjunction with the observation that specific indefinites always take wider or widest scope with regard to other scope taking elements in the clause (cf. Fodor and Sag 1982 and the subsequent literature on indefinites). The lack of observable reconstruction effects, i.e. narrow scope readings, in constructions with resumption is thus not informative with regard to the question of whether these constructions involve  $\bar{A}$ -movement since the relevant displaced elements never take narrow scope anyway (see also example (27) above).

However, there is an observation that seems to indicate that despite the lack of any observable reconstruction effects with resumption it still involves  $\bar{A}$ -movement. Although bound variable reconstruction into the base position is absent, see (43), it is possible in intermediate positions (45a). In other words, just like with gap focalizations, there is a reconstruction conflict in BVA reconstruction (45), which according to Guillot and Malkawi (2009); Moulton (2013); Rouveret (2008) is an unmistakable sign of  $\bar{A}$ -movement.

- (45) a. Á [ɲkār [bō bvi<sub>1</sub>]<sub>2</sub>]<sub>3</sub> cí [ɲjɲwè nsìp]<sub>1</sub> kwàʔshī í-nē ó<sub>2</sub> mū cèb  
 FOC friend children 3SG.POSS COMP woman every think 3SG-C 3PL PST2 insult  
 yē<sub>3</sub>.  
 3SG.O  
 ‘(It’s) [a friend of [her<sub>1</sub> children]<sub>2</sub>]<sub>3</sub> (that) [every woman]<sub>1</sub> thinks that they<sub>2</sub> insulted him<sub>3</sub>.’  
 b. \*Á [ɲkār [bō bvi<sub>1</sub>]<sub>2</sub>]<sub>3</sub> cí ó<sub>2</sub> kwàʔshī ó-nē [ɲjɲwè nsìp]<sub>1</sub> à mū  
 FOC friend children 3SG.POSS COMP 3PL think 3PL-C woman every SM PST2  
 cèb —<sub>3</sub>/yē<sub>2</sub>.  
 insult 3SG.O  
 ‘(It’s) [a friend of [her<sub>2</sub> children]<sub>2</sub>]<sub>3</sub> (that) they<sub>2</sub> think that [every woman]<sub>1</sub> insulted (him<sub>3</sub>).’

I conclude from this that the *á*-focus construction is derived by  $\bar{A}$ -movement of the focussed element into the left periphery of the clause independently of whether there is a gap or a resumptive

pronoun in the base position. This supports an approach to resumption in Limbum that treats it as the spell-out of movement traces or lower copies of moved elements (see e.g. Zaenen et al. 1981; Koopman and Sportiche 1982, 1986; Engdahl 1985; Pesetsky 1998; Boeckx 2003; Kandybowicz 2008; Sichel 2014; Klein 2017; van Urk 2018).

### 3.3 Deriving the restriction to specific indefinites and the lack of reconstruction

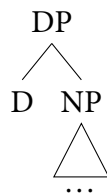
Before I turn to formulating an analysis of the data let me first summarize the observations about Limbum. The *á*-focus construction, in which an argument appears displaced in the clause-initial position, seems to have a monoclausal structure. While there usually appears a gap in the base position of the focussed constituent a resumptive pronoun may occur in case the constituent is an indefinite. The presence of a resumptive element forces the constituent to be interpreted as specific. While focalizations with a gap show reconstruction effects (for relative quantifier scope, Principle C, and variable binding) focalizations with a resumptive pronoun do not exhibit them. Nonetheless, we can observe reconstruction into intermediate position (i.e., reconstruction conflicts) with the latter.

As it stands, there are two main points that a successful analysis of these facts needs to achieve. It first has to explain why a resumptive pronoun is not available with proper name or pronominal antecedents despite these being inherently specific. And, second, it has to account for the absence of reconstruction into the base position with resumptives (under the assumption that resumptives are created by  $\bar{A}$ -movement).

Let me first develop the answer to question (i) above, i.e. why resumptives are restricted to (specific) indefinites, before turning to the issue of the lack of reconstruction effects. Following Postal (1969), Abney (1987), and Elbourne (2001), I will assume that pronouns are realizations of D-heads. In particular, resumptive pronouns are taken to be D-heads whose complement NP goes unpronounced (Elbourne 2001) either because it is elided or because it has undergone copy deletion. Additionally, there is a long history in the semantics literature starting with Fodor and Sag's (1982) seminal work that treats the interpretational ambiguity with regard to specificity in indefinites as a genuine semantic ambiguity. In the spirit of Milsark (1974) and Bowers (1991), I will suggest that, at least in Limbum, this semantic ambiguity is encoded syntactically as the presence vs. absence of a D-layer on top of the NP-layer. That is, specific indefinites are DPs (with a silent D-head) (46a) whereas non-specific indefinites are bare NPs (46b).

#### (46) *Structure of indefinites*

##### a. Specific



##### b. Non-Specific



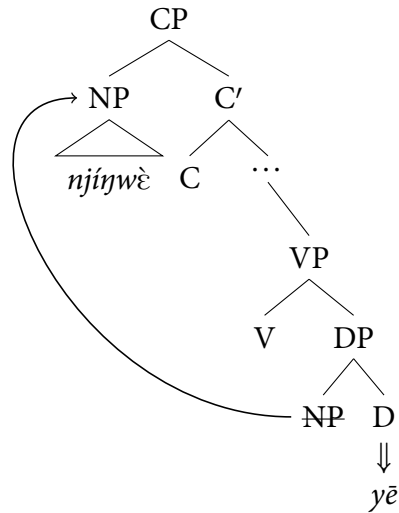
Given this, it is immediately clear why a resumptive pronoun forces a specific interpretation of a sentence like (22a), given again in (47).

- (47) *Á* njinwε<sub>1</sub> cí Nfor bí kɔnī yē<sub>1</sub>.  
 FOC woman COMP Nfor FUT<sub>1</sub> meet her  
 ‘Nfor will meet A WOMAN.’

While both types of indefinites are surface ambiguous in most cases, the presence of a resumptive in focus-fronting indicates the existence of a D-head, which is only available with specific indefinites.

The resumptive itself is created by movement of the NP-complement to the left periphery of the clause stranding its D-head which is then realized as the resumptive (48). The lower copy of the NP-complement undergoes regular copy deletion marked by striking through.

(48) *Generation of a resumptive pronoun with specific indefinite*

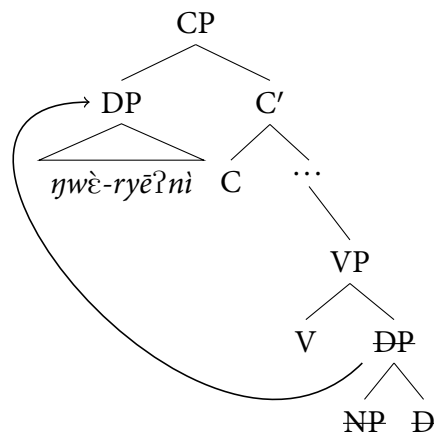


The fact that extracted indefinites leaving a gap may also be interpreted as specific, as shown in (25) repeated below as (49), follows from a general optionality of moving either NP (resulting in a resumptive) or moving the whole DP (resulting in a gap).

- (49) Á ηwè-ryē?ni<sub>1</sub> cí Nfor bí kōnī —<sub>1</sub>.  
 FOC man-teach COMP Nfor FUT1 meet  
 ‘Nfor will meet A (SPECIFIC) TEACHER.’

The structure of (49) would be along the lines of (50).

(50) *Generation of a gap with specific indefinite*

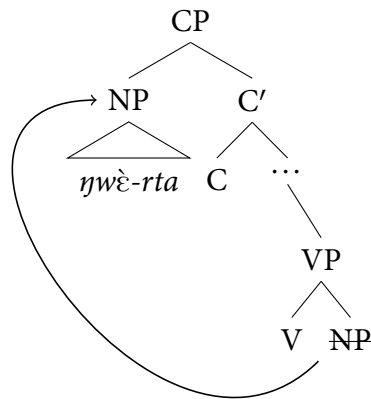


With non-specific indefinites, the derivation in (50) is not available. If a non-specific indefinite is focussed as in (23) repeated in (51), the NP is moved into focus position leaving a copy.

- (51) Á ηwè-rta<sub>1</sub> cí Nfor bí kōnī —<sub>1</sub>/\*yē<sub>1</sub>.  
 FOC man-cap COMP Nfor FUT<sub>1</sub> meet /3SG.O  
 ‘Nfor will meet SOME POLICEMAN.’

Once this copy has undergone regular copy deletion, nothing is left in the base position to be pronounced as a resumptive pronoun since a non-specific indefinite does not contain a D-layer to begin with (52).

- (52) *Generation of a gap with non-specific indefinite*



Thus, there is optionality between DP and NP movement which gives rise to specific indefinites leaving either a gap or a resumptive while non-specific indefinites are bare NPs and therefore only leave gaps.

An immediate question that arises from this analysis is why other D-containing elements are not able to leave a resumptive pronoun upon extraction. In particular, we have seen that resumptives are ungrammatical with proper names (36) and pronouns (35), given again below.

- (53) *Proper name extraction*

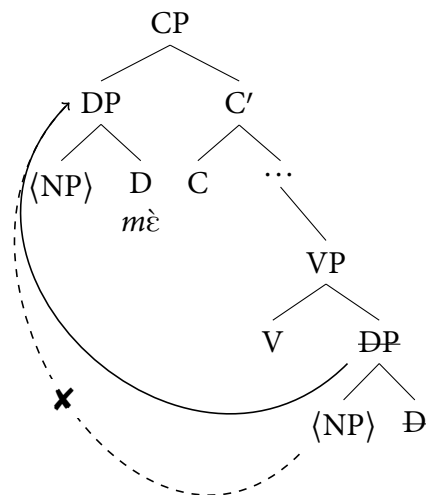
Á Tanko<sub>1</sub> cí Nfòr à mū yē \*yē<sub>1</sub>/—<sub>1</sub> nìṅkòr.  
 FOC Tanko COMP N. SM PST<sub>2</sub> see 3SG.O/— yesterday  
 ‘It is Tanko who Nfor saw yesterday.’

- (54) *Pronoun extraction*

Á mē<sub>1</sub>/wē<sub>1</sub>/yē<sub>1</sub>/zhī cí Nfòr à mū yē (\*mē<sub>1</sub>/\*wē<sub>1</sub>/\*yē<sub>1</sub>/\*zhī)/—<sub>1</sub>  
 FOC 1SG/2SG/3SG.O/3SG.INAN.O COMP Nfor SM PST<sub>2</sub> see 1SG/2SG/3SG.O/3SG.INAN.O/  
 nìṅkòr.  
 yesterday  
 ‘It is me/you/her/it that Nfor saw yesterday.’

Now while those elements indeed contain a D-head (see Longobardi 1994 for names and Postal 1969; Abney 1987; Elbourne 2001 for pronouns) they independently do not allow for subextraction of the complement of D. With pronouns, it has been argued that they are either D-heads without any complement (Postal 1969; Abney 1987) or D-heads with a silent/elided complement (Elbourne 2001). Thus, pronouns as in (54) simply do not contain a full NP-complement that could undergo extraction for focus; only the whole DP may move (55).

(55) *Generation of a gap with a focussed pronoun*



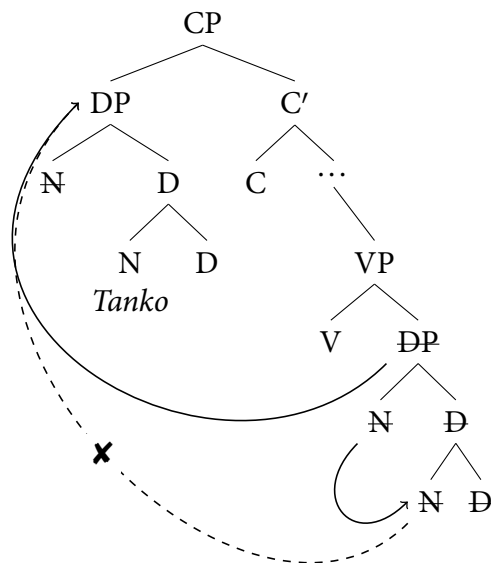
With proper names, the situation is somewhat different though. The complement of the D-head in those cases is the actual name (Longobardi 1994), e.g. *Nfor* in the cases above. Now it has been argued that while some languages allow for an overt determiner to cooccur alongside a name (e.g. some dialects of German, Portuguese, etc.) others strictly require the D-head to remain silent. Longobardi (1994) argues that for the latter languages, there is obligatory incorporation of the N-type name into its D-head making an independent realization of D by an article impossible. Crucially, if the name is incorporated into the D-head, this also means that it cannot be subextracted (cf. the ban on excorporation and the (Revised) Lexical Integrity Hypothesis; Lapointe 1981; Baker 1988; Roberts 1991; Spencer 2005). For Limbum, we find that proper names never occur with a determiner, neither in subject (56a) nor in object position (56b). It is thus most likely a language with obligatory N-to-D incorporation in proper names.

(56) *No determiner with proper names*

- a. Nfor (\*fɔ̃) à mū fàʔ.  
Nfor DET SM PST2 work  
'Nfor worked.'
- b. Mè bifu kōnī Tanko (\*fɔ̃) ayaŋsɛ.  
1SG FUT3 meet Tanko DET tomorrow  
'I will meet Tanko tomorrow.'

Given this, focus extraction of a proper noun (53) may never target the NP-complement of a proper name. It can only affect the whole DP with the complex [<sub>D</sub> D N] head. Thus, when the lower DP-copy undergoes copy deletion, nothing is left to be pronounced as a resumptive pronoun (57).

(57) *Generation of a gap with proper name*

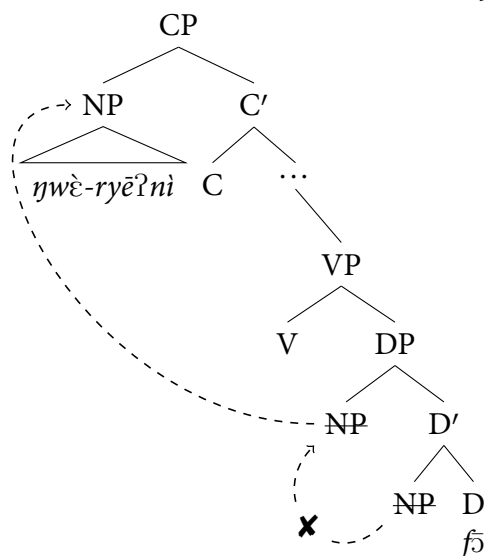


Definite objects, in contrast to specific indefinites, always have an overt determiner  $f\bar{5}$ . Thus, they are proper DPs and no N-to-D incorporation may occur. The question then is, why they never occur with resumptives or a stranded definite marker  $f\bar{5}$  as shown in (37) repeated below as (58).

- (58) Á     $\eta w\bar{e}$ - $ry\bar{e}$ ? $n\bar{i}$      $c\bar{i}$      $\acute{i}$      $b\bar{i}$      $k\bar{o}n\bar{i}$      $\text{---}_1/*y\bar{e}_1/*f\bar{5}_1$      $nt\acute{o}mbz\bar{a}$ .  
 FOC man-teach    COMP Nfor FUT1 meet    /3SG.O/DEF first  
 ‘He will meet THE TEACHER first.’

In the current analysis, this translates as: Why do definite DPs not allow subextraction of the NP-part, but only extraction of the whole DP? I would like to suggest that overt D-heads like  $f\bar{5}$ , in contrast to silent ones as they occur with specific indefinites, constitute phase heads (cf. Svenonius 2004; Heck and Zimmermann 2004; Hiraiwa 2005; Heck et al. 2009; Kramer 2010, among others for the phase status of DP). As such, a subextracting NP-complement would first have to move into the phase edge, i.e. SpecDP, before it could move into the left periphery of the clause (59). However, this edge-movement violates Comp-to-Spec Antilocality (Abels 2003, 2012; Grohmann 2003) which bans movement from the complement position of a head into the specifier of the same head. The only option for definite DPs to occur in focus position is therefore to move as a whole.

(59) *Definite NP-subextraction violates Antilocality*



This account captures the restriction of resumptives to specific indefinites. However, it currently does not explain why if resumption is  $\bar{A}$ -movement, as suggested by the presence of reconstruction conflicts like in (45), it does not exhibit reconstruction effects for quantifier scope and variable binding in simple clauses. In what follows, I will provide an answer to this question based on the observation that specific indefinites always take widest scope.

It is well established that indefinites are ambiguous between a presuppositional (i.e. specific) and a quantificational (i.e. non-specific) meaning (see e.g. Fodor and Sag 1982; Diesing 1992; Yeom 1998). The latter usually take narrowest scope while the former tend to take wider or even widest scope. I have suggested to encode this difference structurally in the presence vs. absence of a D-layer. Presuppositional indefinites come with a (possibly silent) D-head that carries/contributes whatever is responsible for the presuppositionality/specificity, for example a choice function variable (Winter 1997; Reinhart 1997; Kratzer 1998; Matthewson 1999, but see Abusch 1994; Cresti 1995; van Geenhoven 1998; Yeom 1998; Endriss 2009 for alternative approaches). Non-specific indefinites, however, are bare NPs (cf. Zimmermann 1993), whose quantificational force either comes about through existential closure at LF (Heim 1982; Diesing 1992), or by a ‘weak’ quantifier that is adjoined to the NP (Milsark 1974, 1977; Higginbotham 1987). Several proposals have been put forward as to why specific indefinites take widest scope (Fodor and Sag 1982; Farkas 1981; Winter 1997; Reinhart 1997; Kratzer 1998; Matthewson 1999). However, all of them derive that specific indefinites can and preferably do take scope over other scope-taking elements higher in the clause or outside a scope island even if they are interpreted in their base position. That specific indefinites are indeed able to take exceptional wide scope in Limbum has been shown by example (27), repeated in (60), where the indefinite *ɲwɛ̀-ryɛ̀ɲni* ‘teacher’ inside a scope island may nonetheless outscope the universal quantifier *ɲjɲwɛ̀ nsip* ‘every woman’ in the matrix clause as evidenced by the possible continuation in (60b).

- (60) *ɲjɲwɛ̀ nsip à mū yōʔ nsūŋ zhi-nē Nfor à mū cèb ɲwɛ̀-ryɛ̀ɲni.*  
 woman every SM PST2 hear rumour 3SG.INAN-COMP Nfor SM PST2 insult man-teach  
 ‘Every woman heard a rumour that Nfor insulted a teacher.’

- a. Sherry heard that Nfor insulted his math teacher, Betty that he insulted his physics teacher, etc.
- b. Namely his English teacher Mr. Bassong.

Under the view advanced here, the lack of reconstruction effects with resumptives then emerges as a consequence of their being restricted to specific, i.e. presuppositional indefinites as follows. Resumptives are realizations of stranded D-heads. D-heads only occur with specific indefinites. A resumptive pronoun thus indicates that the cooccurring indefinite NP must be specific. A specific NP always takes wide scope. Thus, even if the NP reconstructs, that is, its lower, in-situ copy is interpreted at LF, we expect it to take scope above any other scope-taking elements in the structure simply because a specific indefinite that is overtly pronounced in its base position (60) also takes widest scope.

For concreteness, let me roughly illustrate how the different readings are accounted for in an approach that derives exceptional wide scope by means of choice functions. A choice function is a function that applies to a set and yields an element of that set. When it is applied to a property denoted by an NP, it therefore picks out an individual that has that property. In these approaches, a specific indefinite introduces a variable over such choice functions which is existentially bound at the highest position (cf. Winter 1997; Reinhart 1997; see Kratzer 1998 for a proposal that treats the variable as free and bound by context rather than by an existential). As the indefinite is interpreted in situ and its scope is dependent on the position of the existential binder, no dislocation mechanism is needed and, hence, no locality requirements applying to dislocation constrain its possible scope options. This derives the scopal specificity. Epistemic specificity is achieved as the speaker may have a specific referent of that indefinite in mind, i.e. know the concrete choice function, while for the hearer it suffices to know that there is a choice function that selects a specific referent.

For example (60), the specific interpretation indicated by continuation b. corresponds to the following LF-sketch (61). Importantly, although the object has reconstructed, meaning that its interpretation as the output of a choice function  $f$  applied to the property *teacher* is computed in the base position as  $f(\text{teacher})$ , the existential in (61) still scopes over the universal. This makes it look as if the object were interpreted in its surface position (at least for computation of scope) and therefore gives the impression that no reconstruction has taken place.

$$(61) \quad \exists f[CF(f) \wedge [ \forall x[ \text{woman}(x) \longrightarrow x \text{ heard a rumour that } [ \text{insult}(N_{for}, f(\text{teacher})) ] ] ] ]$$

For non-specific indefinites, which lack the D-head that introduces the choice function variable, existential closure takes place at the  $\nu P$ -level (cf. Diesing 1992). Therefore, these indefinites always take narrow scope (62).

$$(62) \quad \forall x[ \text{woman}(x) \longrightarrow x \text{ heard a rumour that } \exists y[ \text{teacher}(y) \wedge \text{insult}(N_{for}, y) ] ]$$

In effect, the lack of reconstruction effects with resumptives is only apparent. Resumptives only occur with specific indefinites which independently take (exceptional) widest scope. The indefinite thus does reconstruct but this does not have any observable effects.

The suggested analysis, therefore, derives resumptives via  $\bar{A}$ -movement of the NP-complement of a DP, which accounts for the movement effects, i.e. reconstruction conflicts. The lack of observable reconstruction effects in with resumptives in simple clauses is treated as a consequence of them being restricted to specific, i.e. exceptional wide scope, indefinites.

## 4 Islands

In this section, I will show that extraction of nominal arguments from inside an island may take place unhindered even when it leaves a gap while it is barred for non-nominal elements such as VPs and PPs. This serves to show that islands at least in some languages, including Limbum, may



be sensitive to the category of the extracted element. In turn, it proves that proper  $\bar{A}$ -movement, and thus reconstruction, may cross strong islands boundaries (*pace* Panitz 2018). It also presents an argument against approaches that treat islands as mere PF constraints (Merchant 2001; Lasnik 2001; Hornstein et al. 2007; Boeckx 2012; Griffiths and Lipták 2014; Korsah and Murphy 2020).

#### 4.1 Islands are violable

As mentioned previously, islands (I will use the strong Complex Noun Phrase island here for expository purpose, data from adjunct islands behave alike) seem to not prevent a contained object from undergoing focalization outside the island in Limbum even when this focalization leaves a gap. The general distribution of gaps and resumptives is the same as with non-island long-distance focalization. That is, focalization of a bare noun leaving a gap is compatible with both a specific and a non-specific interpretation (63) while a resumptive pronoun forces a specific interpretation (64).

##### (63) *Gap-leaving bare noun extraction from island*

- a. Á njɪŋwɛ<sub>1</sub> cí mɛ̀ mū yō? [<sub>DP</sub> nsūŋ [<sub>CP</sub> zhǐ-nē Nfor bí kɔnī \_\_\_\_<sub>1</sub>  
FOC woman COMP I PST2 hear rumour 3SG.INAN-C N. FUT1 meet \_\_\_\_  
]].

‘I heard the rumour that Nfor will meet A (NON-SPECIFIC/SPECIFIC) WOMAN.’

- b. Á rkar<sub>1</sub> cí mɛ̀ mū yō? [<sub>DP</sub> nsūŋ [<sub>CP</sub> zhǐ-nē Nfor bí yū \_\_\_\_<sub>1</sub> ]].  
FOC car COMP I PST2 hear rumour 3SG.INAN-C N. FUT1 buy \_\_\_\_  
‘I heard the rumour that Nfor will buy A (NON-SPECIFIC/SPECIFIC) CAR.’

##### (64) *RP-leaving bare noun extraction from island*

- a. Á njɪŋwɛ cí mɛ̀ mū yō? [<sub>DP</sub> nsūŋ [<sub>CP</sub> zhǐ-nē Nfor bí kɔnī yē ]].  
FOC woman COMP I PST2 hear rumour 3SG.INAN-C N. FUT1 meet her  
‘I heard the rumour that Nfor will meet A (SPECIFIC) WOMAN.’

- b. Á rkar cí mɛ̀ mū yō? [<sub>DP</sub> nsūŋ [<sub>CP</sub> zhǐ-nē Nfor bí yū zhǐ ]].  
FOC car COMP I PST2 hear rumour 3SG.INAN-C N. FUT1 buy it  
‘I heard the rumour that Nfor will buy A (SPECIFIC) CAR.’

Inherently non-specific quantifiers (‘every NP’, ‘everybody’) (65) and *wh*-expressions (66) generally preclude the occurrence of a resumptive. Nonetheless, they are just as grammatical from inside an island as they are from a non-island embedded clause.

##### (65) *Q-extraction from island*

- a. Á [mū nsip]<sub>1</sub> cí mɛ̀ mū yō? [<sub>DP</sub> nsūŋ [<sub>CP</sub> zhǐ-nē ŋwɛ̀-ryē?nì fɔ̃  
FOC child every COMP 1SG PST2 hear rumour 3SG.INAN-C man-teach DEF  
à mū shà?nì \*yē<sub>1</sub>/\_\_\_\_<sub>1</sub> ]].  
SM PST2 greet him/\_\_\_\_  
‘I heard a rumour that the teacher greeted EVERY CHILD (individually).’

- b. Á [ŋwɛ̀ nsip]<sub>1</sub> cí mɛ̀ mū yō? [<sub>DP</sub> nsūŋ [<sub>CP</sub> zhǐ-nē ŋwɛ̀-ryē?nì fɔ̃  
FOC man every COMP 1SG PST3 hear rumour 3SG.INAN-C man-teach DEF  
à mū shà?nì \*yē<sub>1</sub>/\_\_\_\_<sub>1</sub> ]].  
SM PST2 greet him/\_\_\_\_ NEG  
‘I heard the rumour that the teacher greeted EVERYBODY.’

##### (66) *Extraction of wh-expressions from island*

- a. Á ndá<sub>1</sub> cí wè mū yō? [DP nsūŋ [CP zhǐ-nē Nfor bí kɔnī  
FOC who COMP you PST2 hear rumour 3SG.INAN-C N. FUT1 meet  
??yē<sub>1</sub>/\_\_\_<sub>1</sub> à ]]?  
him/\_\_\_ Q  
'Who did you hear a rumour that Nfor will meet?'
- b. Á [njinwè fěh]<sub>1</sub> cí wè mū yō? [DP nsūŋ [CP zhǐ-nē Nfor bí  
FOC woman where COMP 2SG PST2 hear rumour 3SG.INAN-C N. FUT1  
kɔnī ??yē<sub>1</sub>/\_\_\_<sub>1</sub> à ]]?  
meet her/\_\_\_ Q  
'Which woman did you hear a rumour that Nfor will meet?'
- c. Á kē<sub>1</sub> cí wè mū yō? [DP nsūŋ [CP zhǐ-nē Nfor bí yū \*zhǐ<sub>1</sub>/\_\_\_<sub>1</sub>  
FOC what COMP 2SG PST2 hear rumour 3SG.INAN-C N. FUT1 buy it/\_\_\_  
à ]]?  
Q  
'What did you hear a rumour that Nfor will buy?'
- d. Á [rkar fěh]<sub>1</sub> cí wè mū yō? [DP nsūŋ [CP zhǐ-nē Nfor bí yū  
FOC car where COMP 2SG PST2 hear rumour 3SG.INAN-C N. FUT1 buy  
\*zhǐ<sub>1</sub>/\_\_\_<sub>1</sub> à ]]?  
it/\_\_\_ Q  
'Which car did you hear a rumour that Nfor will buy?'

Equally, the focalization of a proper name from inside an island shows the same marginal acceptability of a resumptive pronoun (67) as the respective non-island focalization.

(67) *Proper name extraction from island*

- Á Tanko<sub>1</sub> cí mē mū yō? [DP nsūŋ [CP zhǐ-nē Nfòr à mū yē (?)yē<sub>1</sub>/\_\_\_<sub>1</sub>  
FOC T. COMP I PST2 hear rumour 3SG.INAN-C N. SM PST3 see him/\_\_\_  
nɛŋkòr ]].  
yesterday  
'I heard a rumour that Nfor saw TANKO yesterday.'

Only the focalization of pronouns from islands seems to show a significant difference compared to the respective non-island configuration. While in the latter a resumptive pronoun is severely degraded compared to a gap, in the former they are both equally grammatical, though the gap is preferred (68).

(68) *Pronoun extraction from island*

- Á mē<sub>1</sub>/wē<sub>1</sub>/yē<sub>1</sub>/zhǐ<sub>1</sub> cí mē mū yō? [DP nsūŋ [CP zhǐ-nē Nfòr à  
FOC 1SG/2SG/3SG.O/3SG.INAN.O COMP I PST3 hear rumour 3SG.INAN-C N. SM  
mū yē mē<sub>1</sub>/wē<sub>1</sub>/yē<sub>1</sub>/zhǐ<sub>1</sub>/\_\_\_<sub>1</sub> (nɛŋkòr) ]].  
PST2 see 1SG/2SG/3SG.O/3SG.INAN.O/ (yesterday)  
'I heard a rumour that Nfor has seen ME/YOU/HER/IT yesterday.'

The overall pattern is again given in the table in (69).

(69) *Pattern in focus fronting of objects*

	Non-islands		Islands	
	gap	RP	gap	RP
proper name	✓	*	✓	(?)✓
pronoun	✓	*	✓	✓
definite specific	✓	*	✓	*
definite non-specific	✓	*	✓	*
indefinite specific	✓	✓	✓	✓
indefinite non-specific	✓	*	✓	*
wh-item D-linked	✓	*	✓	??/*
wh-item non-D-linked	✓	*	✓	??/*

Now, crucially, in focalizations from islands, reconstruction effects can be observed (at least for gap-dependencies). Consider the data for variable binding (70) and scope ambiguities (71). Sentence (70) is just as ambiguous as its non-island counterpart allowing both a bound and a free variable reading. In (71), the universal has to take scope over the existential in order for the sentence to be acceptable. Otherwise, the pragmatically odd reading of one son with several biological mothers would be the only available reading, rendering the whole sentence unacceptable.

- (70) Á [táā ŋgwá zhì<sub>y/x</sub>]<sub>1</sub> cí mè mū yō? [DP nsūŋ [CP zhǐ-nē [ŋwè nsìp]<sub>x</sub>  
 FOC father wife 3SG.POSS COMP 1SG PST2 hear rumour 3SG.INAN-C man every  
 bí kōnī \_\_\_<sub>1</sub> ]].  
 FUT1 meet \_\_\_

‘I heard a rumour that every man will meet THE FATHER OF HIS WIFE.’

- (71) Á [mbànrù]<sub>1</sub> cí mè mū yō? [DP nsūŋ [CP zhǐ-nē nǐŋwè nsìp à mū  
 FOC male COMP 1SG PST2 hear rumour 3SG.INAN-C woman every SM PST2  
 bzá \_\_\_<sub>1</sub> ]].  
 birth \_\_\_

‘I heard a rumour that every woman gave birth to A SON.’

(\*∃ > ∀, ∀ > ∃)

Note that the corresponding examples with a resumptive pronoun, just like their non-island counterparts, do not exhibit any reconstruction effects (72) and (73). As pointed out above, this does not mean that no reconstruction has taken place.

- (72) Á [táā ŋgwá zhì<sub>y/\*x</sub>]<sub>1</sub> cí mè mū yō? [DP nsūŋ [CP zhǐ-nē [ŋwè nsìp]<sub>x</sub>  
 FOC father wife 3SG.POSS COMP 1SG PST2 hear rumour 3SG.INAN-C man every  
 bí kōnī yē<sub>1</sub> ]].  
 FUT1 meet 3SG.O

‘I heard a rumour that every man will meet THE FATHER OF HIS WIFE.’

- (73) #Á [mbànrù]<sub>1</sub> cí mè mū yō? [DP nsūŋ [CP zhǐ-nē nǐŋwè nsìp à mū  
 FOC male COMP 1SG PST2 hear rumour 3SG.INAN-C woman every SM PST2  
 bzá yē<sub>1</sub> ]].  
 birth 3SG.O

‘I heard a rumour that every woman gave birth to A SON.’

(∃ > ∀, \*∀ > ∃)

As has been pointed out above, reconstruction alone is not necessarily indicative of  $\bar{A}$ -movement but may as well occur in base-generation dependencies. However, we also find reconstruction conflicts as in (20) with gap focalizations from islands (74).

- (74) a.  $\bar{A}$  [ŋkār [bō bvi<sub>1</sub>]<sub>2</sub>]<sub>3</sub> cí njiŋwè nsip<sub>1</sub> à mū yō? [DP nsūŋ [CP  
FOC friend children 3SG.POSS COMP woman every SM PST2 hear rumour  
zhǐ-nē ó<sub>2</sub> mū cèb —<sub>3</sub> ]].  
3.INAN-C 3PL PST2 insult  
'It is a friend of [her<sub>1</sub> children]<sub>2</sub> that every woman<sub>1</sub> heard a rumour that they<sub>2</sub> insulted.'
- b. \* $\bar{A}$  [ŋkār [bō bvi<sub>1</sub>]<sub>2</sub>]<sub>3</sub> cí ó<sub>2</sub> mū yō? [DP nsūŋ [CP zhǐ-nē  
FOC friend children 3SG.POSS COMP 3PL PST2 hear rumour 3.INAN-C  
njiŋwè nsip<sub>1</sub> à mū cèb —<sub>3</sub> ]].  
woman every SM PST2 insult  
'It is a friend of [her<sub>1</sub> children]<sub>2</sub> that they<sub>2</sub> heard a rumour that every woman<sub>1</sub> insulted.'

The existence of such conflicts is a clear sign of  $\bar{A}$ -movement being involved in the derivation of focalizations from islands.

The involvement of movement is further corroborated by the fact that we find Principle C effects (75).

- (75)  $\bar{A}$  Nfor<sub>i</sub> cí í<sub>\*i/j</sub> mū yō? [DP nsūŋ [CP zhǐ-nē à cí ró —<sub>i</sub> ]].  
FOC Nfor COMP 3SG PST2 hear rumour 3.INAN-C 2SG PROG search  
'He has heard a rumour that you are searching for NFOR.'

Importantly, reconstruction conflicts can be also found if the island contains a resumptive (76). Although the first sentence, where the binder of the bound variable anaphor is the subject of the matrix clause while the pronoun is the subject of the embedded clause is not accepted as completely grammatical (76a), there is nonetheless a clear difference compared to sentence where the subjects are switched (76b).

- (76) a. ? $\bar{A}$  [ŋkār [bō bvi<sub>1</sub>]<sub>2</sub>]<sub>3</sub> cí [njiŋwè nsip]<sub>1</sub> à mū yō? [DP nsūŋ  
FOC friend children 3SG.POSS COMP woman every SM PST2 hear rumour 3.INAN-C  
[CP zhǐ-nē ó<sub>2</sub> mū cèb yē<sub>3</sub> ]].  
3PL PST2 insult 3SG.O  
'It is a (specific) friend of her children that every woman heard a rumour that they insulted.'
- b. \* $\bar{A}$  [ŋkār [bō bvi<sub>1</sub>]<sub>2</sub>]<sub>3</sub> cí ó mū yō? [DP nsūŋ [CP zhǐ-nē  
FOC friend children 3SG.POSS COMP 3PL PST2 hear rumour 3.INAN-C woman every  
[njiŋwè nsip]<sub>1</sub> à mū cèb yē<sub>3</sub>.  
SM PST2 insult 3SG.O  
'It is a friend of her children that they heard a rumour that every woman insulted.'

Taken together, this provides evidence that focalization from inside an island involves movement just like focalization from non-island contexts does. Moreover, as (76) shows, Limbum does not need to employ two different strategies for resumption in non-islands and resumption in islands as has been suggested for Lebanese Arabic by Aoun et al. (2001). Rather, in both contexts resumptives lack reconstruction effects in base position but give rise to reconstruction conflicts.

The free availability of gaps inside islands, however, does not warrant the conclusion that island constraints are absent from the language entirely. In contrast to nominal elements, VPs and PPs seem to respect them. First, VPs may be focussed in roughly the same way as arguments

(77). When a VP is displaced, it is nominalized by prefixing it with the class marker *r-* of class 5 and a placeholder verb *gĩ* ‘do’ appears in the base position of the VP, which can be regarded as a kind of *do*-support (cf. Hein 2018).

- (77) Á r-[yũ msāŋ] cí njĩwè fō bí gĩ.  
 FOC NMLZ-buy rice COMP woman DET FUT1 do  
 ‘It is buying rice that the woman will do.’ (Becker and Nformi 2016: 75)

Intriguingly, while NP-focalization from an island is grammatical, VP-focalization is not (78).

- (78) \*Á r-[yũ msāŋ] cí mè mū yō? [DP nsũŋ [CP zhĩ-nē Nfòr bí  
 FOC NMLZ-buy rice COMP 1SG PST2 hear rumour 3SG.INAN-COMP Nfor FUT1  
 gĩ ]].  
 do  
 ‘I heard a rumour that Nfor will BUY RICE.’

This shows that island constraints are not completely absent in Limbum. Apparently, they seem to be category-sensitive in the sense that they are selectively inactive only for ((pro)nominal) argument extraction.

Roughly the same pattern is found for PP displacements. With a baseline sentence given in (79a), it is possible to focalize the PP *ní pkũh* ‘in bed’ which results in a gap (79b). A resumptive pronoun, *njó* in this case, is illicit.

- (79) a. Nfòr nòŋ ní pkũh.  
 N. sleep in bed  
 ‘Nfor is lying in (the) bed.’  
 b. Á [ní pkũh]<sub>1</sub> cí Nfòr nòŋ \*njó<sub>1</sub>/\_\_\_\_.  
 FOC in bed COMP N. sleep there/\_\_\_\_  
 ‘It is in the bed that Kofi is lying.’

In contrast to VP-focalization, however, PP-focalization from inside an island is possible if a resumptive pronoun appears instead of a gap (80a). This conforms to the observation that at least in some languages resumptive pronouns alleviate island violations (Kroch 1981; Chomsky 1986; Shlonsky 1992; McDaniel and Cowart 1999; Ackerman et al. 2018).

- (80) Á [ní pkũh]<sub>1</sub> cí mè mū yō? [DP nsũŋ [CP zhĩ-nē Nfòr nòŋ njó<sub>1</sub>/\*\_\_\_\_ ]].  
 FOC in bed COMP 1SG PST2 hear rumour 3SG-COMP Nfor sleep there/\_\_\_\_  
 ‘It is in the bed that I heard a rumour that Nfor is lying.’

Thus, island constraints in Limbum hold for VPs and PPs. Apparently, however, they do not restrict extraction of (pro)nominal arguments (arguably of category N or D). Crucially, the PP-data in particular, show that island constraints can be circumvented by leaving a resumptive pronoun. In case there is none, as with VPs, focalization from an island is entirely impossible.

## 4.2 Islands must be category sensitive

Korsah and Murphy (2020) observe an intriguingly similar pattern in Asante Twi focus/wh-extractions (Kwa, Niger-Congo). As noted by Saah (1994); Saah and Goodluck (1995); Goodluck et al. (1995), focalization of a nominal object is island-insensitive independent of whether there is a resumptive pronoun or a gap in the base position (81). In contrast to Limbum, the choice between the two is governed by animacy rather than specificity with animate objects leaving a

resumptive (81a) and inanimates leaving a gap (81b). Saah (1994) analyzes this as base generation of the object in the left periphery which binds a resumptive pronoun in the base position. For inanimates, this pronoun is then taken to be a null resumptive.

(81) *Island insensitivity with resumptives and gaps* (Saah 1994: 172)

- a. Hwáń<sub>1</sub> na wo-hú-u [<sub>DP</sub> onipa ko [<sub>CP</sub> áa ɔ-bó-ɔ nɔ́<sub>1</sub> nó ]] ?  
 who FOC 2SG-see-PST person DEF REL 3SG.SBJ-hit-PST 3SG CD  
 ‘Who did you see the person who hit?’
- b. Déén na wo-ním [<sub>DP</sub> onipa ko [<sub>CP</sub> áa ɔ-tó-ɔ-é —<sub>1</sub> nó ]] ?  
 what FOC 2SG-know person DEF REL 3SG-buy-PST-YE CD  
 ‘What do you know the person that bought?’

However, as Korsah and Murphy (2020) point out, both overt resumptives and apparent gaps show a variety of reconstruction effects and a tonal reflex associated with  $\bar{A}$ -movement, which indicates that Saah’s base generation approach is on the wrong track, that resumptives can be generated by movement and that movement from islands must be possible. But as was the case in Limbum, this does not mean that island constraints are void in Twi. Focalization of elements that lack a resumptive pronoun, such as VP and PP, although possible in non-island contexts, is ungrammatical from inside an island, as shown for VPs in (82) and PPs in (83).

- (82) a. [<sub>VP</sub> Dán sí]-é na Ámá káa sé Kofi á-yó {—<sub>VP</sub> / \*nó} anɔ́pá.  
 house build-NMLZ FOC Ama say.PST that Kofi PFV-do 3SG.O morning  
 ‘Ama said that Kofi BUILT A HOUSE in the morning (not bought a car).’
- b. \*[<sub>VP</sub> Dán sí]-é na mé-n-tée [<sub>DP</sub> atétésém bíará [<sub>CP</sub> sé Kofi  
 house build-NMLZ FOC 1SG-NEG-hear.PST rumour.PL any that Kofi  
 á-yó —<sub>VP</sub> ]].  
 PFV-do  
 ‘I didn’t hear any rumours that Kofi has BUILT A HOUSE.’ (Hein 2017: 38)
- (83) a. [<sub>PP</sub> Akonwá nó mú ] na Kofi dá {—<sub>PP</sub> / \*hɔ} anɔ́pá.  
 chair the in FOC Kofi lie there morning  
 ‘Kofi is lying IN THE CHAIR in the morning.’
- b. \*[<sub>PP</sub> Akonwá nó mú ] na Ama ním [<sub>DP</sub> neá ntí [<sub>CP</sub> áa Kofi dá —<sub>PP</sub> ]].  
 chair the in FOC Ama know thing because.of REL Kofi lie  
 ‘Ama knows the reason why Kofi lies IN THE CHAIR.’  
 (Korsah and Murphy 2020: 847f.)

Korsah and Murphy (2020) take this to mean that island constraints are active in the language and that the island-insensitivity of nominal extraction can be explained independently. Following Korsah (2017), they argue that inanimate objects do in fact leave a resumptive pronoun that, like regular inanimate object pronouns, is subject to a PF-deletion rule. This approach is corroborated by the fact that in some contexts, i.e. with clause-final adverbs (84a, b), secondary predicates (84c, d), and change-of-state verbs (84e, f), the inanimate pronoun, both regular (84a, c, e) and resumptive (84b, d, f), is obligatorily realized overtly.

(84) *Contexts for inanimate pronoun realization* (Korsah and Murphy 2020: 845-847)

- a. Kofi be-tɔn \*(no<sub>i</sub>) ɔkyena.  
 Kofi FUT-sell 3SG.OBJ tomorrow  
 ‘Kofi will sell it (e.g. the tree) tomorrow.’
- b. [Aduane nó]<sub>1</sub> na Kofi pé \*(no<sub>1</sub>) anɔ́pá.  
 food DEF FOC Kofi like 3SG.OBJ morning

- ‘It’s the food that Kofi likes in the morning.’
- c. Kuukua té [SC \*(no<sub>i</sub>) mónó ].  
 Kuukua pluck 3SG.OBJ fresh  
 ‘Kuukua plucks it (e.g. the flower) fresh.’
- d. [DP Aduane nó<sub>1</sub> [CP áa Kofi pé \*(no<sub>1</sub>) hyehyééhyé nó ]] nie  
 food DEF REL Kofi like 3SG.OBJ very.hot CD this  
 ‘This is the food that Kofi likes very hot.’
- e. Kofi bu-u \*(no<sub>i</sub>).  
 Kofi break-PST 3SG.OBJ  
 ‘Kofi broke it (e.g. the chair).’
- f. [Akonwa nó<sub>1</sub>]<sub>1</sub> na Kofi bú-u \*(no<sub>1</sub>).  
 chair DEF FOC Kofi break-PST 3SG.OBJ  
 ‘It’s the chair that Kofi broke.’

In these contexts, Korsah (2017); Korsah and Murphy (2020) suggest that the PF-rule is suspended. The effect that resumptives circumvent island constraints is then analyzed as a result of the latter being PF-constraints (cf. Merchant 2001; Lasnik 2001; Hornstein et al. 2007; Boeckx 2012; Griffiths and Lipták 2014) that militate against certain representations, i.e. those representations that contain a gap in the base position. As long as the base position is occupied by a resumptive pronoun, the PF-constraints will not be violated. The island-obviating effect of the pseudo-gaps with inanimate objects is accounted for by PF-ordering: the island constraints are checked before the PF-deletion rule applies to the resumptive pronoun of a moved inanimate object, therefore, no island violation is incurred.

Given the parallel behaviour of extraction with regard to islands in both languages, an immediate question is whether Limbum is amenable to an analysis along the lines presented for Asante Twi. In the following, I will provide some evidence that this is not the case, at least not in an obvious fashion.

First, recall that in contrast to Asante Twi, focus extractions in Limbum occur preferably with a gap in the base position. Only in very narrow contexts, i.e. specific indefinites, is a resumptive pronoun licensed at all. Other indefinites as well as any other type of nominal element (pronouns, proper names, definites) disallow resumption. That is, while gaps in Twi nominal extraction occur in a natural class of contexts, namely with inanimate objects, the contexts for gaps in Limbum do not form a natural class. Rather, the opposite is true. If we were to treat resumption in Limbum on a par with resumption in Asante Twi, that is as the default output of extraction from object position, we would have to restrict the domain of application of a purported PF-deletion rule to all nominals except specific indefinites. In other words, in Twi the domain of the rule is characterizable by a single feature [–anim] whereas in Limbum, a similar rule would have to be specified for a variety of different features in order to cover all distinct noun types to which it applies. In addition, the rule would have to be optionally applicable to specific indefinites since, as was shown in (23) and (25) above, a gap is compatible with both a specific and non-specific indefinite.

Aside from this conceptual consideration, unlike in Twi there is no evidence that an alleged underlying resumptive pronoun appears overtly in any other contexts except specific indefinites. In particular, clause-final adverbs do not force an overt resumptive instead of a gap, as evident from the ungrammaticality of answer A2 in (37) and (38), repeated as (85) below.

- (85) #Á [ɲwè-ryē?nì fɔ]<sub>1</sub> cí í bí kōnī yē<sub>1</sub> ntómbzà.  
 FOC man-teach DEF COMP Nfor FUT1 meet 3SG.O first  
 ‘He will meet THE TEACHER first.’ (OK under a subject extraction reading)

What is more, there seems to exist a deletion rule in Limbum that is almost identical to the one proposed for Asante Twi. It applies to regular object pronouns in discourse-anaphoric use and optionally deletes them (86) (cf. object (pro-)drop).

- (86) a. Yaa à mū yē rkār zhì í kòŋ. Ndū zhì bí yū (zhì)  
 Yaa SM PST2 see car REL.SG 3SG like husband 3SG.POSS FUT1 buy 3SG.INAN.O  
 àyàŋsè.  
 tomorrow  
 ‘Yaa saw a car that she likes. Her husband will buy it tomorrow.’  
 b. Yaa à mū yē mŋkòb bvì í kòŋ. Ndū zhì bí yū (bvì)  
 Yaa SM PST2 see suitcases REL 3SG like husband 3SG.POSS FUT1 buy 3PL.INAN.O  
 àyàŋsè.  
 tomorrow  
 ‘Yaa saw suitcases (that she likes). Her husband will buy them tomorrow.’

However, it is restricted to inanimates. Deletion of animate object pronouns leads to ungrammaticality (87).

- (87) a. Yaa à mū yē Shey. Ndū zhì bífu kōnī \*(yē) àyàŋsè.  
 Yaa SM PST2 see Shey husband 3SG.POSS FUT3 meet 3SG.O tomorrow  
 ‘Yaa saw Shey. Her husband will meet him tomorrow.’  
 b. Yaa à mū yē Shey ba Ngala. Ndū zhì bífu kōnī \*(wō) àyàŋsè.  
 Yaa SM PST2 see Shey and Ngala husband 3SG.POSS FUT3 meet 3PL.O tomorrow  
 ‘Yaa saw Shey and Ngala. Her husband will meet them tomorrow.’

If, as in Twi, this rule were responsible for the deletion of resumptive pronouns and the occurrence of pseudo-gaps, it should spare animate resumptives. Under the assumption that every nominal extraction first left a resumptive pronoun to later be deleted at PF, we would therefore expect that pseudo-gaps were restricted to inanimate objects. However, this is not the case. As examples (63) and (64) show, animate object focus behaves exactly like inanimate object focus: It may appear with a gap allowing both a specific and non-specific interpretation or with a resumptive pronoun and an obligatorily specific reading. The PF-deletion approach, therefore, cannot account for availability of gaps inside islands. Consequently, the absence of a resumptive pronoun in island focalization indicates a proper syntactic gap (for animate objects at least). Thus, in spite of the parallels of the two island-sensitivity patterns in Asante Twi and Limbum, the analysis provided in Korsah and Murphy (2020) for the former cannot be transferred to the latter. The island insensitivity of nominal focus, in turn, cannot be explained by an underlying resumptive and the treatment of islands as PF-constraints.

In light of these observations, it seems to be the case that island constraints must be regarded as inactive for nominal (argument) focalization. If one can focus a nominal object via movement from inside an island and leave a true gap (as opposed to a silent resumptive pronoun) the island simply cannot hold.

In fact, novel data from Asante Twi indicate that the pattern is even more complex than described such that Korsah and Murphy’s (2020) analysis does not capture all the relevant facts and something like the above also has to hold for Twi.

Recall that all nominals in Twi are claimed to leave a resumptive when extracted, which is deleted at PF for inanimates, but only after the PF-island constraints have been checked. This was corroborated by data showing that in some contexts (e.g. clause-final adverbs) the deletion is suspended. Georgi and Hein (2020) observe that there are some special noun types, including predicate nouns, kind/generic expressions, and parts of idioms, whose extraction always results in



a gap even if they are animate (in which case the deletion rule should be inapplicable) or inanimate appearing in the deletion-suspending contexts (88).

(88) *Some noun types leave true gaps in Asante Twi* (Georgi and Hein 2020)

- a. Tíkya<sub>1</sub> na Kofi bé-yé {—<sub>1</sub> / \*nó<sub>1</sub>} afe yí.  
teacher FOC Kofi FUT-be 3SG.O year this  
'It is a teacher that Kofi will become this year.'
- b. Nípa<sub>1</sub> na Kofi sùró {—<sub>1</sub> / \*nó<sub>1</sub>} páa.  
person FOC Kofi fear 3SG.O really  
'It's people that Kofi really fears.'
- c. Ne-nán<sub>1</sub> na ɔ-gyáε {—<sub>1</sub> / \*nó<sub>1</sub>} [PP wɔ dán nó mú ].  
his-leg FOC 3SG.S-leave.PST 3SG.O LOC room the inside  
Id.: 'It's defecating that he did in the room.'  
Lit.: 'It's his leg that he left in the room.'

They thus do not seem to involve an underlying resumptive pronoun. Nonetheless, like the gaps that occur in Limbum focalizations, those gaps do not incur an island violation (89).

(89) *True gaps appear in islands in Asante Twi* (Georgi and Hein 2020)

- a. Ne-nán<sub>1</sub> na m-á-té [DP atésém bí [CP sé ɔ-gyáε {—<sub>1</sub> / \*nó<sub>1</sub>}  
his-leg FOC 1SG.S-PFV-hear rumour a that 3SG.S-leave.PST 3SG.O  
wɔ dán nó mú ]].  
LOC room the inside  
Id.: 'It's defecating that I have heard a rumour that he did in the room.'
- b. Tíkya<sub>1</sub> na m-á-té [DP atésém nó [CP sé Kofi bé-yé {—<sub>1</sub> / \*nó<sub>1</sub>} afe  
teacher FOC 1SG-PERF-hear rumour the that Kofi FUT-be 3SG.O year  
yí ]].  
this  
'It is a teacher that I have heard the rumour that Kofi will become this year.'
- c. Nípa<sub>1</sub> na wo-té-e [DP atésém nó [CP sé Kofi sùró {—<sub>1</sub> / \*nó<sub>1</sub>} páa ]].  
person FOC 2SG.S-hear-PST rumour the that Kofi fear 3SG.O really  
'It's people that I have heard the rumour that Kofi really fears.' (not animals)

This indicates that the presence of a resumptive pronoun that undergoes deletion at PF is not the sole property of Twi that renders argument focalization insensitive to islands (as suggested by Korsah and Murphy 2020). Rather, like in Limbum, island constraints seem to be inactive in the extraction of (some types of) nominal arguments.

To summarize, nominal argument focalization in Limbum may take place from inside an island. The existence of reconstruction (for variable binding, relative scope, and Principle C at least for gap-dependencies) and of reconstruction conflicts (for gap- and resumptive-dependencies) I take to indicate that  $\bar{A}$ -movement from and reconstruction into strong islands is possible (*pace* Panitz 2018). Nonetheless, islands hold for VP- and PP-focus, indicating that they are not absent from the language. An approach in terms of a resumptive that checks representational island constraints at PF and is then deleted was shown to be inapplicable to the Limbum case (and maybe even not sufficient for all cases of island-insensitive focus in Asante Twi). I conclude from this that island constraints in Limbum (be they derivational syntactic constraints or representational PF-constraints) are category-sensitive allowing extraction of DPs and NPs, but not VPs (and non-resumptive PPs).

## 5 Subject focus

### 5.1 Obligatory resumption

This section discusses some specifics and features of subject focus. In contrast to objects, subjects obligatorily leave a resumptive pronoun when they are focussed in the *á*-focus construction. This pronoun appears independent of the noun type of the subject and covaries with the  $\phi$ -features of the latter. Thus, it occurs with proper names (90a), pronouns (90b), definites (90c), specific and non-specific indefinites (90d), and inherently non-specific expressions (90e).

- (90) a. *Á Nfòr<sub>1</sub> cí í<sub>1</sub> mū zhé bzhí.*  
 FOC Nfor COMP 3SG.RP PST2 eat food  
 ‘Nfor<sub>F</sub> ate food.’
- b. *Á mē<sub>1</sub>/wē<sub>1</sub>/í<sub>1</sub> cí mē<sub>1</sub>/wē<sub>1</sub>/í<sub>1</sub> mū fàʔ.*  
 FOC 1SG/2SG/3SG COMP 1SG/2SG/3SG PST2 work  
 ‘I/you(sg)/(s)he<sub>F</sub> worked.’
- c. *Á [njínwè fō]<sub>1</sub> cí í<sub>1</sub> mū fá ɲwàʔ fō nì bō fō.*  
 FOC woman DET COMP 3SG PST2 give book DET PREP children DET  
 ‘THE WOMAN gave the book to the children.’
- d. *Á njínwè<sub>1</sub> cí í<sub>1</sub> mū fā ɲu nì Nfor.*  
 FOC woman COMP 3SG PST2 give wood PREP Nfor  
 ‘A (SPECIFIC/NON-SPECIFIC) WOMAN gave some firewood to Nfor.’
- e. *Á [ɲwè nsip]<sub>1</sub> cí í<sub>1</sub> mū shàʔ nì mē.*  
 FOC person every COMP 3SG PST2 greet 1SG  
 ‘EVERYBODY greeted me.’

As was the case for objects, subjects may also be focussed from inside an island without any degradation. This is indicated in (91) for the complex noun phrase island and in (92) for the adjunct island.

- (91) *Á mē<sub>1</sub>/wē<sub>1</sub>/yē<sub>1</sub> cí Nfòr à mū yōʔ [DP nsūɲ [CP zhǐ-nē*  
 FOC textsc1sg/2sg/3sg.o COMP Nfor SM PST2 hear story 3SG-COMP  
*mē<sub>1</sub>/wē<sub>1</sub>/í<sub>1</sub>/\*—<sub>1</sub> mū lib ɲwē fō ]].*  
 textsc1sg/2sg/3sg.o/ PST hit dog DEF  
 ‘It is I/you/she that Nfor has heard a rumour that I/you/she hit the dog.’
- (92) *Á mē<sub>1</sub>/wē<sub>1</sub>/yē<sub>1</sub> cí Nfòr à mū būmī káʔ [CP ànjóʔ mē<sub>1</sub>/wē<sub>1</sub>/í<sub>1</sub>/\*—<sub>1</sub>*  
 FOC textsc1sg/2sg/3sg.o COMP Nfor SM PST sleep NEG because textsc1sg/2sg/3sg.o/  
*mū šǐ bōʔ nsà míkì ].*  
 PST3 PROG play music high  
 ‘It is I/you/she that Nfor didn’t sleep because I/you/she were/was playing loud music.’

This comes as no surprise. As we have already seen before, islands generally pose no obstacle to the focalization of nominal arguments in Limbum. For objects, it could be shown that the dependency between the focussed element and the corresponding resumptive pronoun is one of  $\bar{A}$ -movement. I will take this to also hold for subjects here.

## 5.2 Subject marking

In addition to obligatory resumption, subjects also show morphological marking. As observable in (93), an in-situ subject triggers the presence of a subject marker *à*. Without this marker, the sentence is ungrammatical.

- (93) Nfòr *\*(à)* mū zhé bzhí.  
 N. SM PST2 eat food  
 ‘Nfor ate food.’

This marker, however, is absent in (94) where the subject is extracted for focus. In fact, if it occurs in addition to the resumptive pronoun *í* the marker renders the sentence ungrammatical.

- (94) Á Nfòr<sub>1</sub> cí í<sub>1</sub> *\*(à)* mū zhé bzhí.  
 FOC N. COMP 3SG SM PST2 eat food  
 ‘Nfor<sub>F</sub> ate food.’

Fransen (1995: §10.2) classifies this *à* element as concord marking between subject and verb for noun class 1. She documents other forms of this marker given in (95), where *à* is a variant of  $\emptyset$  occurring in past tenses only.

(95) *Concord markers in Fransen (1995)*

class	1a	2	5	6	7	10
marker	$\emptyset$ / <i>à</i>	vú	lzá	mí	í/zú	í/zú

As pointed out above, data and judgements by the speaker consulted for this work in general diverges from the data presented in Fransen (1995). This is also to quite an extent the case with regard to these concord markers. In past tense, the marker invariably takes the form *à* across noun classes (96)–(99), i.e. is not restricted to class 1. It also coherently vanishes when the subject is extracted for focus.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>(96) a. Cē fō à mū gwê.<br/>                 7.tree DEF SM PST2 fall<br/>                 ‘The tree fell.’</p> <p>      b. Á cē<sub>1</sub> fō cí í<sub>1</sub> mū gwê.<br/>                 FOC 7.tree DEF COMP it PST2 fall<br/>                 ‘It’s the tree that fell.’</p>   | <p>(97) a. Nkwàà fō à mū fà?.<br/>                 7a.slave DEF SM PST2 work<br/>                 ‘The slave worked.’</p> <p>      b. Á [nkwàà fō]<sub>1</sub> cí í<sub>1</sub> mū fà?.<br/>                 FOC 7a.slave DEF COMP he PST2 work<br/>                 ‘It’s the slave who worked.’</p> |
| <p>(98) a. Rtāā fō à mū gwê.<br/>                 5.cap DEF SM PST2 fall<br/>                 ‘The cap fell.’</p> <p>      b. Á [rtāā fō]<sub>1</sub> cí í<sub>1</sub> mū gwê.<br/>                 FOC 5.cap DEF COMP it PST2 fall<br/>                 ‘It’s the cap that fell.’</p> | <p>(99) a. Nà fō à mū būmī.<br/>                 10.cow DEF SM PST2 sleep<br/>                 ‘The cow slept.’</p> <p>      b. Á [nà fō]<sub>1</sub> cí í<sub>1</sub> mū būmī.<br/>                 FOC 10.cow DEF COMP it PST2 sleep<br/>                 ‘It’s the cow that slept.’</p>            |

Assuming that *à* nonetheless encodes some very impoverished form of subject agreement here, the fact that it is absent with extracted subjects is reminiscent of the so-called antiagreement effect (Ouhalla 1993, 2005). This effect has first been observed for Berber and describes a situation in which the regular subject agreement on the verb is suppressed just in case the subject undergoes displacement. It has since been claimed to hold in a variety of languages including among others some Bantu languages (see Baier 2018 for an overview). As Limbum is a Grassfields Bantu language,

the occurrence of antiagreement would not be entirely unexpected. However, the effect in Limbum is only apparent and derives from a further, subject-internal asymmetry. While nominal subjects (98) as well as plural pronominal subjects (100) trigger the presence of a subject marker, singular pronominal subjects do not (101).

- (100)a. Wèr \***(à)** mū fàʔ.  
1PL.EXCL \*(SM) PST2 work  
'We(excl) worked.'
- b. Sì \***(à)** mū fàʔ.  
1PL.INCL \*(SM) PST2 work  
'We(incl) worked.'
- c. Yì \***(à)** mū fàʔ.  
2PL \*(SM) PST2 work  
'You(pl) worked.'
- (101) a. Mè \***(à)** mū fàʔ.  
1SG \*(SM) PST2 work  
'I worked.'
- b. Wè \***(à)** mū fàʔ.  
2SG \*(SM) PST2 work  
'You(sg) worked.'
- c. Í \***(à)** mū fàʔ.  
3SG \*(SM) PST2 work  
'She/he worked.'

For third person plural subjects, both pronouns and full NPs, the subject marker appears in an exclusively plural form *ó* (102).

- (102) a. Wōyè \***(ó)** mū fàʔ.  
3PL \*(3PL.SM) PST2 work  
'They worked.'
- b. Bō fō \***(ó)** mū zhé bzhí.  
children DET \*(3PL.SM) PST2 eat food  
'The children ate food.'

The overall pattern, exhibiting an asymmetry between nominal and pronominal elements in the singular, is given in (103).

(103) *Distribution of subject markers in Limbum*

		sg		pl	
Pronouns	1.excl	mè	∅	wèr	à
	1.incl			sì	à
	2	wè	∅	yì	à
	3	í	∅	wōyè	ó
NPs		à		ó	

Coming back to the purported antiagreement effect, this follows from the pattern above because as a singular pronoun, the resumptive pronoun *í* that occurs in a displaced singular subject's base position independently disallows the presence of the subject marker *à*. This explanation is corroborated by the fact that the resumptive pronoun that occurs in extractions of plural subjects, which independently require the presence of the subject marker (100), cooccurs with the subject marker (104).

- (104) Á wèr<sub>1</sub>/sì<sub>1</sub>/yì<sub>1</sub> cí wèr<sub>1</sub>/sì<sub>1</sub>/yì<sub>1</sub> \***(à)** mū fàʔ.  
FOC 1PL.EXC/1PL.INC/2PL COMP 1PL.EXC/1PL.INC/2PL \*(SM) PST2 work  
'We(exc)/we(inc)/you(pl)<sub>F</sub> worked.'

As expected, focalization of singular (pronominal) subjects, which also leave a singular resumptive pronoun, disallows the subject marker (105).

- (105) Á mē<sub>1</sub>/wē<sub>1</sub>/yē<sub>1</sub> cí mē<sub>1</sub>/wē<sub>1</sub>/í<sub>1</sub> (\*à) mū fà?  
 FOC 1SG/2SG/3SG.O COMP 1SG/2SG/3SG (\*SM) PST2 work  
 ‘I/you(sg)/she<sub>F</sub> worked.’

Fransen (1995), without going into much detail, terms the subject markers ‘dependent pronouns’. If they were indeed pronominal elements, their absence with pronominal subjects would receive a straightforward explanation: They would be in competition with regular pronominal subjects for the same syntactic position. However, note that they do in fact occur with plural pronominal subjects (100). I will therefore treat them as agreement marker rather than as pronominal elements.

As the reader might have noticed, I have not given examples of displaced third person plural subjects yet. The reason is that those behave yet another way, that is, there is a further within-subject split that distinguishes third person plural subjects from everything else. When a 3rd plural subject, be that a nominal or pronominal one, undergoes displacement, it does not leave a resumptive pronoun. Rather, it seems that a gap occurs in the root of the dependency (106). The subject marker *ó* still cooccurs with this gap.

- (106)a. Á [bō fō]<sub>1</sub> cí Nfòr à mū lā í-nē (\*wōyē<sub>1</sub>) ó mū zhé bzhí.  
 FOC children DET C Nfor SM PST2 say 3SG-C \*3PL.RP 3PL.SM PST2 eat food  
 ‘The children<sub>F</sub>, Nfor said, ate food.’  
 b. Á wōyē<sub>1</sub> cí Nfòr à mū lā í-nē (\*wōyē<sub>1</sub>) ó mū zhé bzhí.  
 FOC 3PL C Nfor SM PST2 say 3SG-C 3PL.RP SM PST2 eat food  
 ‘They<sub>F</sub>, Nfor said, ate food.’

Again, as for singular subjects, this pattern holds across noun classes (107)–(110).

- (107) a. P-cē fō ó mū gwê. (108) a. P-kwàà fō ó mū fà?  
 2-tree DEF 3PL.SM PST2 fall 2-slave DEF 3PL.SM PST2 work  
 ‘The trees fell.’ ‘The slaves worked.’  
 b. Á [p-cē fō]<sub>1</sub> cí —<sub>1</sub> ó b. Á [p-kwàà fō]<sub>1</sub> cí —<sub>1</sub> ó  
 FOC 2-tree DEF COMP 3PL.SM FOC 2-slave DEF COMP 3PL.SM  
 mū gwê. mū fà?  
 PST2 fall PST2 work  
 ‘It’s the trees that fell.’ ‘It’s the slaves who worked.’
- (109) a. M-nà fō ó mū būmī. (110) a. Mtāā fō ó mū gwê.  
 6-cow DEF 3PL.SM PST2 sleep 6-cap DEF SM PST2 fall  
 ‘The cows slept.’ ‘The caps fell.’  
 b. Á [m-nà fō]<sub>1</sub> cí —<sub>1</sub> ó b. Á [m-tāā fō]<sub>1</sub> cí —<sub>1</sub> ó mū  
 FOC 6-cow DEF COMP 3PL.SM FOC 6-cap DEF COMP SM PST2  
 mū būmī. gwê.  
 PST2 sleep fall  
 ‘It’s the cows that slept.’ ‘It’s the caps that fell.’

I will come back to this observation in section 5.3.

It should also be noted that the subject marker *à* is restricted to the three past tenses (111a–c), the perfective aspect (111d), and optionally occurs in the progressive aspect (111e).

- (111) a. Nfòr \*(à) bā zhé bzhí. b. Nfòr \*(à) mū zhé bzhí.  
 Nfor SM PST1 eat food Nfor SM PST2 eat food  
 ‘Nfor ate food.’ ‘Nfor ate food.’

c. Nfòr \*(à) m̃ zhé bzhí.  
Nfor SM PST3 eat food  
'Nfor ate food.'

d. Nfòr \*(à) Ø zhé bzhí.  
Nfor SM PFV eat food  
'Nfor has eaten food.'

e. Nfòr (à) cí zhé bzhí.  
Nfor SM PROG eat food  
'Nfor is eating food.'

Its appearance in other tenses, like the future (112a), or aspects, like the habitual (112b) renders the sentence ungrammatical.

(112) a. Nfòr \*(à) bí zhé bzhí.  
Nfor SM FUT1 eat food  
'Nfor will eat food.'

b. Nfòr \*(à) kí zhé bzhí.  
Nfor SM HAB eat food  
'Nfor regularly eats food.'

c. Wèr \*(à) bí kōnī Nfor.  
1PL.EXC SM FUT1 meet Nfor  
'We will meet Nfor.'

d. Wèr \*(à) kí kōnī Nfor.  
1PL.EXC SM HAB meet Nfor  
'We regularly meet Nfor.'

In contrast, the plural subject marker *ó* is available in all tenses and aspects (showing the future here for exposition) with both a pronominal and a full NP subject.

(113) a. Wōyè *ó* bí kōnī Nfor.  
3PL 3PL.SM FUT1 meet Nfor  
'They will meet Nfor.'

b. Bō f̃ *ó* bí kōnī ɲwè-ryē?ni bvi.  
children DET 3PL.SM FUT1 meet man-teach 3PL.POSS  
'The children will meet their teacher.'

In Fransen (1995: 194), *à* is a past tense variant of the regular subject marker *Ø*. I will follow this line of thought and assume that in non-past tenses, there is a *Ø* subject marker for all non-third person plural subjects.

### 5.3 The third person plural

As already mentioned in the previous section, the third person plural behaves somewhat differently than local person plural. First, 3rd plural shows a distinct subject marker *ó* (114) compared to *á* in local person (115).

(114) a. Bō f̃ \*(*ó*) mū zhé bzhí.  
child.PL DET SM PST2 eat food  
'The children are food.'

b. (Wōyè) \*(*ó*) mū fà?  
3PL 3PL.SM PST2 work  
'They worked.'

(115) a. Nfòr *à* mū zhé bzhí.  
Nfor SM PST2 eat food  
'Nfor ate food.'

b. Wèr/si/yì *à* mū fà?  
1PL.INC/1PL.EXC/2PL SM PST2 work  
'We(inc)/we(exc)/you(pl) worked.'

Second, when a 3rd plural subject undergoes displacement for focus, in contrast to local person plural subjects (104) it leaves a gap rather than a resumptive pronoun (116).

- (116) a. Á [bō fō]<sub>1</sub> cí Nfòr à mū lā í-nē \*wōyè<sub>1</sub>/\_\_\_<sub>1</sub> ó mū zhé bzhí.  
 FOC children DET C Nfor SM PST2 say 3SG-C 3PL/\_\_\_ 3PL.SM PST2 eat food  
 ‘The children<sub>F</sub>, Nfor said, ate food.’  
 b. Á wōyè<sub>1</sub> cí Nfòr à mū lā í-nē \*wōyè<sub>1</sub>/\_\_\_<sub>1</sub> ó mū zhé bzhí.  
 FOC 3PL C Nfor SM PST2 say 3SG-C 3PL/\_\_\_ SM PST2 eat food  
 ‘They<sub>F</sub>, Nfor said, ate food.’

However, I would like to argue here that the gap, in contrast to gaps in object positions, is in fact a null resumptive pronoun and, thus, that the third person pronouns are the only ones that show an overt strong-weak distinction. There is a cross-linguistically largely valid generalization that the forms of resumptive pronouns are generally drawn from the set of regular (personal) pronouns (Asudeh 2011, 2012; Salzmann 2017; McCloskey 2017; though see Adger 2011 for counter-examples). Salzmann (2017: 187) introduces the further qualification that if there are more than one set of pronominal forms, resumptive usually correspond to the unmarked, i.e. weak/clitic forms. As we have already observed, for non-third person plural the forms of personal pronouns (in non-resumptive contexts) are the same as those of resumptive pronouns, hence there is no strong-weak distinction. In contexts where we would expect a weak version, e.g. in discourse anaphoric use, the regular forms of non-third person plural pronouns occur (117). Also note that (117) evidences that a silent animate pronoun is not available in Limbum.

- (117) a. Nfòr à Ø níñī. \*(Í) bā kōnī wèr à ngàbtfō?  
 Nfor SM PFV arrive 3SG PST1 meet us in morning  
 ‘Nfor has arrived. He met us in the morning.’  
 b. Mè bá yà bàá à Ø níñī. \*(Wèr) à bā kōnī Nfòr à ngàbtfō?  
 I and my father SM PFV arrive 1PL.EX SM PST1 meet Nfor in morning.  
 ‘Me and my father have arrived. We met Nfor in the morning.’

In contrast, if the third person plural indeed has a weak Ø-version besides the strong *wōyè* form, we would expect the former to occur in discourse anaphoric uses. As evidenced by (118), this is the case.

- (118) Bfər ó Ø níñī. \*Wōyè/Ø ó kē? ā mū?shī mḱkòb.  
 relatives 3PL.SM PFV arrive 3PL.S/3PL.W 3PL.SM start to open suitcases  
 ‘The relatives have arrived. (They) have already started unpacking their suitcases.’

For completeness’ sake it should be pointed out that extraction of 3rd plural subjects behaves just like extraction of non-third plural subjects in being island insensitive despite the presence of an apparent gap (119). However, as argued above, this does not provide further evidence for there being a Ø resumptive pronoun since Limbum arguably allows proper gaps inside syntactic islands (see also the discussion in section 4).

- (119) Á wōyè<sub>1</sub> cí mē mū yō? [DP nsūŋ [CP zhǐ-nē \*wōyè<sub>1</sub> ó mū  
 FOC 3PL COMP I PST2 hear rumour 3SG.INAN-COMP 3PL 3PL.SM PST2  
 fà? ]].  
 work  
 ‘I have heard the rumour that they have worked.’

To complete the argument, contexts which require the presence of a strong pronoun, e.g. coordinations and focus (amongst others, see Cardinaletti and Starke 1996, 1999), should force the use of *wōyè* and preclude  $\emptyset$ . For new information focus, we have seen this already, e.g. in (119) and (116b). Example (120) provides further evidence from focus particles *káʔ* ‘even’ and *kū* ‘only’.<sup>5</sup> The impossibility of a weak pronoun in coordinations is shown in (121).

- (120) *even and only*
- a. *Káʔ wōyè/\* $\emptyset$  ó bā zhē bāā.*  
 even they 3PL.S/3PL.W PST1 eat fufu  
 ‘Even they ate fufu.’
- b. *Kū ba wōyè/\* $\emptyset$  ó bā zhē bāā.*  
 only FOC they 3PL.S/3PL.W PST1 eat fufu  
 ‘Only they ate fufu.’
- (121) *Coordination*
- a. *[ Nfòr bá wōyè/\* $\emptyset$  ] ó  $\emptyset$  níni.*  
 N. and them 3PL.SM PFV arrive  
 ‘Nfor and they have arrived.’
- b. *[ Wōyè/\* $\emptyset$  bá Nfòr ] ó  $\emptyset$  níni.*  
 they and N. 3PL.SM PFV arrive  
 ‘They and Nfor have arrived.’

Interestingly, for the third person singular pronouns, similar observations can be made. While the regular 3rd singular subject pronoun is *í* (122), it is replaced by *yē* in focus-fronting (123a), coordinations (123b), and with the focus particles *káʔ* ‘even’ (123c) and *kū* ‘only’ (123d).

- (122) *Í mū fàʔ.*  
 3SG PST2 work  
 ‘She/he worked.’
- (123) a. *Á yē<sub>1</sub> cí í<sub>1</sub> mū fàʔ.*  
 FOC 3SG COMP 3SG PST2 work  
 ‘(S)HE worked.’
- b. *[ Wè bá í/yē ] bí yū msāŋ àyàŋsè.*  
 2SG and 3SG FUT1 buy rice tomorrow  
 ‘You and her will buy rice tomorrow.’
- c. *Káʔ í/yē bā zhē bāā.*  
 even 3SG PST1 eat fufu  
 ‘Even she ate fufu.’
- d. *Kū bá í/yē bā zhē bāā.*  
 only FOC 3SG PST1 eat fufu  
 ‘Only she ate fufu.’

It thus seems that a weak-strong distinction is also present in the forms of the third singular pronoun. In contrast to the third plural, however, where the strong form is *wōyè* and the object form is *wō*, the strong form *yē* of the third singular is identical to the one found in object position.

Taken together, I conclude that the third person is the only one that shows distinct forms for strong and weak pronouns, namely *yē* vs. *í* in singular and *wōyè* vs.  $\emptyset$  in plural (124).

<sup>5</sup>The focus particle *kū* ‘only’ requires the presence of a further focus particle *bá* which encodes exhaustive/contrastive focus (see Becker et al. 2019).



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(124) *Regular and resumptive pronouns*

	regular		resumptive	
	sg	pl	sg	pl
1.exc	mè	wèr	mè	wèr
1.inc	–	sì	–	sì
2	wè	yì	wè	yì
3.anim	í	wōyè/Ø	í	Ø
3.inan	í	bvī	í	bvī

Hence, while all other person-number combinations require an overt resumptive pronoun to occur in the base position of a subject-displacement dependency, in third person plural contexts there appears to be a gap due to the phonologically null weak version of the respective pronoun.

Taken together, we have so far discussed three asymmetries. (i) Subjects obligatorily require a resumptive pronoun in their base position when they undergo displacement for focus. (ii) While nominal subjects as well as plural pronominal subjects trigger the presence of a subject marker (in past tenses, perfective aspect and optionally also in progressive aspect) singular pronominal subjects do not. In conjunction with (i) this gives rise to an apparent antiagreement effect in displacements of singular nominal subjects. (ii) The third person plural exhibits a distinct form for strong (*wōyè*) and weak (Ø) pronouns. No such distinction is made in any of the other person-number combinations.

#### 5.4 Nouns and pronouns must be featurally different

Given this pattern of subject resumption and subject marking how can we account for it theoretically? First, note that in contrast to object resumption, resumption in subject position is obligatory for any kind of subject independent of its specificity or definiteness. It can therefore not be due to NP-subextraction from DP-nominals because this would falsely predict only specific indefinites to show resumption. Instead, it seems that there is a constraint demanding that the element in the derived subject position SpecTP is realized in the sense that there is an exponent inserted into the position (even if that exponent is phonologically null, as is the case for 3rd person plural pronouns). In case of subject extraction, this element is an intermediate copy of the subject, which would regularly undergo copy deletion at PF (conceived as marking it invisible for Spell-Out rules, including Vocabulary Insertion, cf. Saab 2008, 2017; Arregi and Pietraszko 2020). However, in order to satisfy the constraint, it is exceptionally realized.

A more interesting problem is posed by the subject marking system. As we have seen, in certain tenses and aspects there is a subject marker *à* cooccurring with the subject in case it is a singular noun or a local plural pronoun. For 3rd plural nouns and pronouns, the respective marker takes the form *ó* and is independent of tense and aspect. I would like to suggest here that in addition to those two morphologically overt forms there is a Ø form that occurs with singular pronouns in the relevant past tenses and aspects (cf. Fransen 1995). Since the 3rd plural subject marker *ó* occurs in all tenses, it seems reasonable to assume that absence of the *à* marker in non-past tenses is not tantamount to there not being any subject agreement. Rather, I will assume that the subject marking in those contexts is realized by a (yet another) Ø marker.

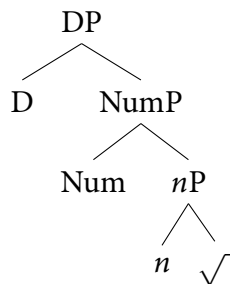
The overall subject marking pattern thus looks like in (125).

(125) *Distribution of subject markers in Limbum*

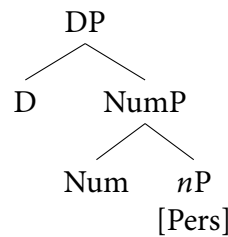
		singular		plural	
		[-pst]/[+pst]		[-pst]/[+pst]	
Pronouns	1.excl	mè	∅/∅	wèr	∅/à
	1.incl			sì	∅/à
	2	wè	∅/∅	yì	∅/à
	3	í	∅/∅	wōyè	ó/ó
DPs			∅/à		ó/ó

The difficulty in accounting for this distribution lies in the fact that the form of the marker (at least in singular) seems to be dependent on whether the subject is nominal or pronominal. In particular, this is problematic for the different marking for 3rd singular subjects, which take ∅ if they are pronouns but à if they are nouns. If the subject marker constitutes some form of subject agreement (involving the operation Agree) this difference is hard to account for as Agree for category is hardly attested if at all possible (Weisser 2019). Ideally, one would like to make use of some independent difference between nouns and pronouns. However, the common view in (Minimalist) theoretical syntax nowadays is that both nominal and pronominal arguments are D-elements. The only difference being that the former contain an NP-complement, i.e. a lexical root (126), while the latter do not (127) (Postal 1969; Elbourne 2001, 2005; Moskal 2015; Smith et al. 2018; van Urk 2018).

(126) *Structure of full DPs*

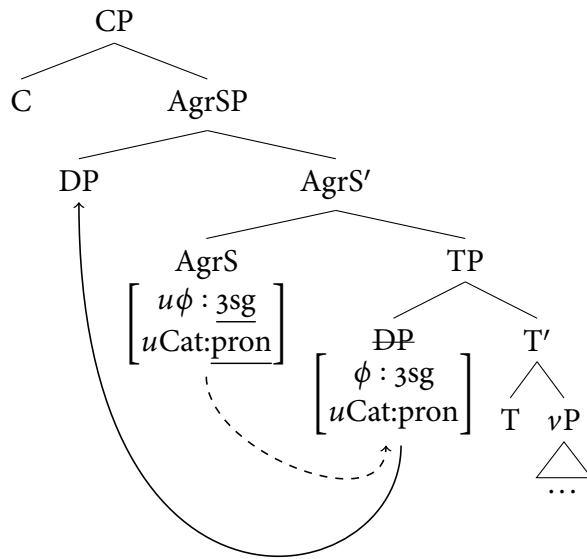


(127) *Structure of pronouns*



The  $\phi$ -features relevant for Agree are present on both elements (either as features on the D-head or as their own heads, Num, Pers). It thus seems necessary for an account of the Limbum pattern to encode the nouniness and pronouniness directly on the D head itself in form of either a distinct categorial feature or as an additional feature on pronouns/nouns. Given this, we can assume that the head hosting the subject marker (for concreteness, I assume that this is an AgrS-head above T) agrees with the subject for  $\phi$ -features (number and person) and pronominality and triggers movement of the subject into its specifier (128). The tense sensitivity of subject marking can then be modelled as an instance of allomorphy sensitive to the content of the T head.

(128) *Agree between AgrS and the subject triggers movement of the subject to SpecAgrS*



As the distribution of *à* does not form a natural class (i.e., it occurs with both 3rd sg nouns and local person plural pronouns) it would have to be conceived as the elsewhere marker. The respective marker entries would then have to be the following.

(129) *Vocabulary entries for AgrS in Limbum*

/ó/	↔	[3rd, plural]
/ø/₁	↔	[pronoun, singular]
/à/	↔	∅ / __ [past]
/ø/₂	↔	∅

Note that a unification of both /ø/ markers is conceivable in the form of an impoverishment rule deleting the [past] feature on T in the context of a [pronoun, singular] feature combination on the element in SpecTP. However, this would also predict that the any past tense markers should be absent with singular pronominal subjects, contrary to fact.

Alternatively, following Weisser (2019), one could model the whole subject marking as allomorphic variation. The AgrS head would then have to be sensitive to features of the T-head and of the constituent in SpecAgrS. The relevant allomorphs for this analysis are given in (130).

(130) *Allomorphs of the subject marker in AgrS in Limbum*

/ó/	↔	AgrS / __ [3rd, plural]
/ø/	↔	AgrS / __ [pronoun, singular]
/à/	↔	AgrS / __ [past]
/ø/	↔	AgrS

This analysis avoids positing an Agree relation for a pronominal/categorial feature and might seem more appealing because allomorphy is generally freer concerning the features that it is sensitive to. However, it does not obviate the need for this feature itself.

In any case, the peculiar sensitivity of subject marking to the type of nominal (i.e. noun vs. pronoun) in Limbum requires the postulation of a featural distinction of nouns and pronouns.

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## 6 Conclusion

This paper presented novel data on displacement in the understudied language Limbum. Focussing on the ex-situ focus strategy termed *á*-focus here, it was first argued that despite its appearance, the construction does not have a bi-clausal cleft structure but is underlyingly monoclausal. Evidence that movement is involved comes from the fact that there are reconstruction effects for variable binding and relative quantifier scope. In addition, the construction exhibits so-called reconstruction conflicts (Guilliot and Malkawi 2009; Rouveret 2008; Moulton 2013) tantamount to reconstruction for variable binding into an intermediate position, which can be taken as a strong diagnostic for successive-cyclic  $\bar{A}$ -movement.

While generally, *á*-focalization of a nominal object results in a gap in the base position, the occurrence of a resumptive pronoun is optionally possible for indefinites, where it forces a specific interpretation of the object. This property of optional resumptives is known from relative clauses (Doron 1982; Sharvit 1999; Bianchi 2004; Sichel 2014). As Limbum shows, it may also hold in other  $\bar{A}$ -dependencies like focus and *wh*. While resumptive focalizations lack reconstruction effects they do exhibit reconstruction conflicts. It was, thus, argued that they involve  $\bar{A}$ -movement (in line with other work that treats resumption as being a possible result of movement, e.g. McCloskey 1990; Shlonsky 1992; Bianchi 2004; Salzmann 2011; Rouveret 2011). The apparent absence of other reconstruction was proposed to be due to the restriction of resumptives to specific indefinites which independently obligatorily take exceptional wide scope. Any reconstruction would therefore not lead to observable effects giving rise to the impression of a lack of actual reconstruction. The restriction to specific indefinites is analyzed as a consequence of a structural difference between specific and non-specific nominals. While the former contain a D-shell above NP, the latter do not. Subextraction of the NP-complement then strands a D-head only with the former. Under the view that (resumptive) pronouns are realizations of D-heads (Postal 1969; Abney 1987; Elbourne 2001, 2005) this derives the lack of resumption with non-specific indefinites. For proper names, pronouns, and definite nominals, subextraction is blocked for independent reasons, namely, N-to-D incorporation, an elided NP-complement, and the phasal status of overt D-heads, respectively. On the basis that this successfully derives the observed pattern in Limbum, it constitutes support for a syntactic correlate of the semantic ambiguity of indefinites with regard to specificity.

The paper also documented a pattern of selective island-insensitivity with nominal arguments that is similar to the one described in Korsah and Murphy (2020) for Asante Twi. While nominal arguments may freely undergo  $\bar{A}$ -movement from strong islands leaving a gap or a resumptive pronoun, VP and PP-extraction results in ungrammaticality. This undermines claims made by Panitz (2018) that movement from and reconstruction into strong islands is impossible. An explanation in terms of default resumption coupled with a PF-deletion rule and the assumption that islands are representational constraints at PF (as suggested for Asante Twi) was argued to be implausible for Limbum. Rather, it was concluded that island constraints are category-sensitive selectively targeting VP and PP but not DP and NP constituents.

Lastly, it was shown that subject resumption follows a different pattern, being obligatory for any type of nominal element that undergoes focalization, in particular also non-specific indefinites. It could therefore not be derived by the same mechanism that accounts for optional object resumption, thus accenting the different status of obligatory and optional resumption cross-linguistically. Further, the fact that the form of subject agreement is dependent on tense/aspect and, in particular, the status of the subject as a noun or a pronoun was proposed to necessitate the postulation of a featural in addition to a structural distinction between the two.

By a detailed investigation of the extraction patterns of several different types of nominal arguments and verbal as well as prepositional categories, this paper hopes to contribute on issues

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surrounding the interplay between resumption and specificity, resumption and movement, as well as the nature of still only poorly understood syntactic islands.

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