Overview. This paper addresses partial wh-movement in Shona ([sna], Bantu, Zimbabwe), which is sensitive to islands below but not above the pronunciation site of the wh-word. I argue for a composite derivation of this phenomenon: the wh-word moves overtly to its pronunciation site at an intermediate clause boundary, where it is unselectively bound (Pesetsky 1987) by a null operator in the scopal position.

Evidence for the overt movement step. I present three pieces of evidence that the wh-word moves from its base position to its pronunciation site: (i) Partially moved wh-words must be marked with an allomorph of focus/copular ndi- (1a), like fully moved wh-words (1b) and unlike in-situ wh-words (1c).

(1) a. Wai-fung-a [kuti *(ndi-)Ø-ani *(wa-)taka-teng-er-a]__Ø-rokwe]? 2SG.SM-IPFV-think-FV that COP-1a-who 1a.NSE-1PL.SM-REM.PST-buy-APPL-FV 5-dress
b. *(Ndii-)Ø-ani *(wa-)wai-fung-a [kuti taka-teng-er-a]__Ø-rokwe]? COP-1a-who 1a.NSE-2SG.SM-IPFV-think-FV that 1PL.SM-REM.PST-buy-APPL-FV 5-dress

c. Wai-fung-a [kuti taka-teng-er-a] Ø-ani 0-rokwe]? 2SG.SM-IPFV-think-FV that 1PL.SM-REM.PST-buy-APPL-FV 1a-who 5-dress

(Who(m) did you think we bought a dress (for)?)

(ii) When a non-subject wh-word is partially moved, the verb in the clause in which the wh-word is pronounced must agree with it in φ-features (in addition to bearing φ-agreement with the subject) (1a); this non-subject extraction morphology (NSE) occurs with full wh-movement (1b) but not wh-in-situ (1c). (iii) Partial wh-movement of a non-subject out of an island is impossible (2a); the same is true for full wh-movement (2b) but not wh-in-situ (2c).

(2) a. *U-no-fung-a [kuti nde-ku-Ø-ani kwa-a-no-farir-a __] 2SG.SM-PRS-think-FV that COP-17-which 17.NSE-1.SM-PRS-like-FV 7-team 7.SM-PRS-be.from-FV
b. *Nde-ku-Ø-ani kwa-u-no-fung-a [kuti a-no-farir-a __] 2SG.SM-PRS-think-FV that COP-17-which 17.NSE-2SG.SM-PRS-think-FV 7-team 7.SM-PRS-be.from-FV

c. U-no-fung-a [kuti a-no-farir-a __] 2SG.SM-PRS-think-FV that 1.SM-PRS-like-FV 7-team 7.SM-PRS-be.from-FV

(Who do you think he likes the team that is from ___?)

Evidence for the unselective binding step. Partial wh-movement is acceptable within an island (3a), like wh-in-situ (3c) and unlike full wh-movement (3b).


(Where does s/he like the team that you think is from ___?)

Analyzing Shona partial wh-movement. This lack of sensitivity to islands above the pronunciation site distinguishes Shona from other languages with partial wh-movement, such as Singaporean Malay and Kĩtharaka, in which examples like (3a) are impossible. As a result, the Shona pattern is incompatible with analyses involving a movement relation between the pronunciation site and the scopal position, whether covert movement (Cole & Hermon 1998), overt movement with pronunciation of the lower copy (Richards 2001), or overt movement of a null operator (Abels 2012). Instead, the Shona facts provide novel support for proposals that posit a non-movement relation between the scopal position and the pronunciation site (Sabel 2000:441, Sabel & Zeller 2006:280, Abels 2012:155–156).

Conclusion. Shona partial wh-movement can be reduced to a hybrid of full wh-movement and wh-in-situ, a composite derivation that has been predicted to be possible but for which clear empirical support has been lacking until now.
References


