# Long distance movement in Turkana
Leonie Barabas-Weil, Universität Leipzig

**Introduction:** Novel long distance wh-movement data from the Eastern Nilotic language Turkana pose a problem for current ideas of locality and phases. Turkana is a wh in-situ language without covert movement. Wh-elements can also stay in-situ with long distance licensing. Thus, CPs do not to act as an intervener. However, in sentences with three CPs, at least two wh-elements are obligatory which suggests that locality constraints in Turkana are less strict but not absent. While in standard phase theory it is assumed that vPs and CPs are phases. (Chomsky 2000, Chomsky 2001), I argue that vPs are never phases in Turkana while CPs are. I furthermore argue that in long distance movement on CP can be skipped which reminds of the subjacency condition (Chomsky 1973, Chomsky 1977)

**Data & analysis:** Unless otherwise indicated, the data come from my own fieldwork with five speakers in Kenya. The unmarked word order in Turkana is VSO (Dimmendaal 1983). Wh- and focal elements can occur ex-situ (1a) or in-situ (1b).

The pattern of in- and ex-situ wh-elements has also been observed in Igbo (Amaechi & Georgi, 2021) (2). Amaechi & Georgi (2021) argue that the wh-element in Igbo always undergoes movement but only one copy gets realised. Because of covert movement, Igbo also shows island sensitivity if the wh-element is in-situ (3). However, Turkana does not show these island violations. Wh in-situ is possible in adjunct clauses (4). Thus, I argue that Turkana does not have covert wh-movement. This has also beeen claimed for Hindi (Beck 2006, Keine 2017). However, sentences with wh in-situ with long distance wh-licensing are ungrammatical in Hindi since CPs act as an intervener (5). Keine (2017) argues therefore that vPs are not phases since they act not as interveners but CPs are. I adapt his view on vPs for Turkana but argue furthermore that CPs do also not necessarily act as interveners in Turkana. Sentences with wh in-situ with long distance wh-licensing are grammatical in Turkana (6).

If neither vPs nor CPs act as interveners, what are the locality constraints in Turkana? At first glance, it seems that Turkana does not have any locality constraints, but this is not the case. In sentences with two CPs with wh-movement from the lower CP, the lower CP may have a copy of the wh-element in the pre- (7a) or post-verbal position (7b) but the copy is not obligatory (7c). However, as soon as there are three CPs, at least one copy of the wh-element becomes obligatory, otherwise the sentence is ungrammatical (8a). This copy can either be in the intermediate or the lowest CP in either the pre- or post-verbal position. The longest distance between two wh-elements is shown in (8b). The following picture emerges: In long distance wh-movement, a wh-element does not move through the typically assumed phase edges on vP and CP (Chomsky 2000, Chomsky 2001) but not more than one CP can be skipped in the movement process. Skipping one but not two CPs reminds of the subjacency condition (Chomsky 1973, Chomsky 1977): *In a chain formed by movement, the path connecting two neighbouring links must not contain more than one barrier.* If we see phases as the minimalist approach to barriers, (7) and (8) are the pattern we would predict if CPs but not vPs are phases in Turkana.

**Conclusion & outlook:** I presented novel data from Turkana which show an interesting long distant movement pattern. Current approaches of phasality have difficulties accommodating the data presented in this abstract. In order to account for this data under a minimalist approach, I argued that vPs never act as phases in Turkana while CPs do. However, I showed that every other CP can be skipped in long distance movement.

**Examples:**

(1)   a.  **ŋáé**      é-mín-à      ákàyì
          **who.ABS** 3-like-TAM Akai.NOM
          'Who does Akai like?'                                          (wh ex-situ)
      b.  é-mín-à      ákàyì      **ŋáé**
          3-like-TAM Akai.NOM **who.ABS**
          'Who does Akai like?'                                          (wh in-situ)

(2) a. Òbí hù-rù **ònyé** n'-áhị́á
Obi see-RV who P-market
'Who did Obi see at the market?' (wh-DO in-situ; Amaechi & Georgi 2021, 300)
b. **Ònyé** Òbí hù-rù n'-áhị́á
who Obi see-RV P-market
'Who did Obi see at the market?' (wh-DO ex-situ; Amaechi & Georgi 2021, 300)

(3) *àdá hù-rù Òbí [ túpú ọ̀ zú-rú **ínị̄** n'-áhị́á]
Ada saw Obi [ before she buy-RV what P-market
Lit.: 'Ada saw Obi before she bought what at the market?' (Amaechi & Georgi 2021, 312)

(4) á-bùn-ì ákìrù ŋàðáìŋ [CP n-á-ŋá-ɛ́r-ì ákàì **ɲɔ́** ]
3-come.PST-TAM Akiru.NOM time.LOC when-3-open-ITV-TAM akai.NOM **what.ABS**
'Akiru came at a time when Akai opened what?'

(5) *siitaa-ne soc-aa [CP ki ravii-ne **kis-ko** dekh-aa]
Sita-ERG think-PERF-M-SG that Ram-ERG **who-ACC** see-PERF-M-SG
'Who did Sita think ravi saw?' (Mahajan 2000,319, retrieved from Keine 2017)

(6) í-tám-ì ákìrù [CP átámàr é-kér-ì ákàyì ká **ŋáé**]
3-think-TAM akiru.NOM that 3-run-TAM Akai.NOM with who.ABS
'Who does Akiru think that Akai is running with?'

(7) a. [CP **ŋáé** í-tám-ì ádʒìkòn [CP átámàr **ŋáé** é-mín-à ákàyì __]]
**who.ABS** 3-think-TAM Ajikon.NOM that **who.ABS** 3-like-TAM Akai.NOM
'Who does Ajikon think that Akai likes?'
b. [CP **ŋáé** í-tám-ì ádʒìkòn [CP átámàr é-mín-à ákàyì **ŋáé**]]
**who.ABS** 3-think-TAM Ajikon.NOM that 3-like-TAM Akai.NOM **who.ABS**
c. [CP1 **ŋáé** í-tám-ì ádʒìkòn [CP átámàr é-mín-à ákàyì __ ]]
**who.ABS** 3-think-TAM Ajikon.NOM that 3-like-TAM Akai.NOM

(8) a.*[CP **ŋáé** é-bál-à ákìrù [CP í-tám-ì ádʒìkòn [CP átámàr é-mín-à
**who.ABS** 3-say-TAM Akiru.NOM 3-think-TAM Ajikon.NOM that 3-like-TAM
ákàyì __ ]]]
Akai.NOM
b. [CP **ŋáé** é-bál-à ákìrù [CP í-tám-ì ádʒìkòn [CP átámàr é-mín-à
**who.ABS** 3-say-TAM Akiru.NOM 3-think-TAM Ajikon.NOM that 3-like-TAM
ákàyì **ŋáé** ]]]
Akai.NOM who.ABS
'Who does Akiru say that Ajikon thinks that Akai likes?'

**Selected references**: Amaechi, Mary Doreen Georgi. 2021. On optional wh-/focus fronting in igbo: A syn-sem-phon interaction. *Zeitschrift für Sprachwissenschaft* 39(3). 299–327; Beck, Sigrid. 2006. Intervention effects follow from focus interpretation. *Natural Language Semantics* 14(1). 1–56; Chomsky, Noam. 1973. Conditions on transformations. In Anderson, S. and Kiparsky, P., editors, *A Festschrift for Morris Halle* 232–286; Chomsky, Noam. 1977. On wh-movement. In Akmajian, A., Culicover, P. and Wasow, T., *Formal syntax 65*; Chomsky, Noam. 2000. Minimalist inquiries: The framework. *Step by step: Essays on minimalist syntax in honor of Howard Lasnik* 89–155; Chomsky, Noam. 2001. Derivation by phase. *Ken Hale: A Life in Language 1–52*; Dimmendaal, Gerrit Jan. 1983. *The turkana language*. Dordrecht: Foris; Keine, Stefan. 2017. Agreement and vp phases. *A schrift to fest Kyle Johnson* 1. 177–185.