Economy of derivation vs economy of interpretation: Resumption in Medumba

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In Medumba, resumption is obligatory in island violation contexts (1) and optional in contexts in which there is no island violation, specifically in root clauses where resumption is optional and alternates with a gap (2a&b).

(1) Extraction out of an adjunct island

(a) ***á** **wú** Nùⁿgɛ̀ nɔ́ɔ̀ʔ   nɛ́ɛ̀n ⁿtɔ́n [káà Wàtɛ̀ɛ́t tʃɔ́ɔ̀ʔdə̀ ___]   à?
(b) **á** **wú** Nùⁿgɛ̀ nɔ́ɔ̀ʔ   nɛ́ɛ̀n ⁿtɔ́n káà Wàtɛ̀ɛ́t tʃɔ́ɔ̀ʔdì **í**   á?

FOC	WH	Nuga	AGR.AUX.T2	N-go	market	before	Watat.H	AGR.greet	3SG.H	C
			T.**HL**					V.**HL**		

Lit.: 'who did Nuga go to the market before Watat greeted *(him/her)?'

(2) Root clause extraction

(a) **á** **wú** Wàtɛ̀t nɔ́ɔ̀ʔ   ⁿ-sʷɛ́ɛ̀n   ___   á
(b) **á** **wú** Wàtɛ̀t nɔ́ɔ̀ʔ   ⁿ-sʷɛ́ɛ̀n   **í**   á

FOC	WH	Watat	AGR.AUX.T2	N-AGR.sell	3SG.H	C.Q.H
			T.**HL**	V.**HL**		

'Who did Watat betray (him/her)?'

The data in (14) raise the following questions:

I propose that resumption in Medumba is derived by the economy principle of Last Resort drives (see a.o. Koopman and Sportiche 1986; Rizzi 1990; Chomsky 1991, 1998; Shlonsky 1992; Bobaljik 1995, Lasnik 1995; Ura 1996; Pesetsky 1997; Collins 2001; Boščović 2011). In proposing a unified account of the resumptive strategies involved in islands and root clauses, I argue that Last Resort conditions can be syntactically or semantically conditioned. Syntactic Last Resort derives resumptive pronouns in island violation contexts to salvage A′-dependencies that would otherwise result in ungrammaticality. Semantic Last Resort is a condition on interpretation that derives resumption in configurations that would otherwise result in ambiguity. More precisely, extraction from a root clause is compatible with the *de dicto* and the *de re* interpretation if the tail of the A′-chain is a gap, and is only compatible with the *de re* interpretation when the tail of the A′-chain is a resumptive pronoun.

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