Abstract: In this paper, I describe a novel property of a certain wh-word found in San Marín Peras Mixtec: though bare wh-words can pied-pipe, which-phrases cannot. Bare wh-words appear in the scope of a question particle, due to their semantic deficiency; which is not semantically deficient, does not appear in the scope of Q, and consequently cannot pied-pipe. Instead, which introduces a variable over choice functions (Reinhart 1997) and takes the ordinary semantic value of its restrictor as an argument. This property contributes to our understanding of how which-phrases are interpreted cross-linguistically, and how their unique semantic and pragmatic properties influence their syntactic behavior.

Keywords: Pied-piping, which-questions, Choice Functions, Q Particles, Mixtec

1 Intro

In many languages, which-phrases can be distinguished from other wh-words syntactically and semantically. In English, for example, they can violate Superiority (1) and can extract out of weak islands, such as wh-islands (2).

(1) a. Which book did which person buy __?

(2) a. Which car were you wondering ⟨how to fix __⟩?
   b. ??What were you wondering ⟨how to fix __⟩?  Kroch (1998): 24

The contrast between which-phrases and bare wh-words is not restricted to English. In Chamorro, movement of bare wh-words out of embedded clauses displays obligatory wh-agreement on the main clause predicate (3), taken by (Chung 1994) to be evidence of successive cyclic movement. Extracting complex wh-phrases — corresponding to which-phrases in English — out of embedded clauses triggers optional wh-agreement on the main clause predicate (4). Chung thus concludes that which-phrases can either move successive cyclically, or undergo ‘long wh-movement ’ in the language.

* I am very grateful to Natalia Gracida Cruz and Roselia Durán Cruz for generously sharing their knowledge with me by providing the judgements presented here. I am also grateful for additional judgements provided by Margarita Cruz Salazar, Eraclio Gracida Cruz, Juan Gracida Ortiz, Irma López Basurto, and one additional consultant that helped inform this project. I also thank Ben Eischens, Ivy Sichel, Maziar Toosarvandani, and audiences at UC Santa Cruz and WSCLA 25 for helpful feedback.

Contact info: ahedding@ucsc.edu

(3) a. Hafa malago'-mu [t u-mafa’maolik t]?
   what? WH[OBJ].want AGR WH[NOM].AGR-be.fixed
   ‘What do you want to be fixed?’

   b. *Hafa malāgu’ hao [u-mafa’maolik t]?
   what? AGR.want you WH[NOM].AGR-be.fixed
   Intended: What do you want to be fixed?
   Chung (1994): 17

(4) Hafa na patti gi atumobit ma’āgu’ hao [u-mafa’maolik t]?
   what? l. part loc car AGR.want you WH[NOM].AGR-be.fixed
   ‘Which part in the car do you want to be fixed?’
   Chung (1994): 18

Often, the syntactic differences between which and other wh-words have been attributed to the semantic or pragmatic properties of which; it can signal D-linking (Pesetsky 1987), be “referential” (Cinque 1990; Kroch 1998; Rizzi 1990), or “specific” (É. Kiss 1993). In other words, the particular syntactic properties of which are due the way it is interpreted or used in discourse.

In this paper, I extend this line of thinking to a novel syntactic property of which-phrases in San Martín Peras Mixtec (henceforth: SMPM), an Otomanguean language of Southern Mexico. In SMPM, wh-phrases headed by ntsyā (which) cannot pied-pipe when they move. For example, a which-phrase that originates as the complement of a preposition obligatorily strands the preposition when it moves to a preverbal position (5). This contrasts with other wh-words in the language, which generally pied-pipe optionally (6).

(5) a. Ntsyā rā tāte yó’o tāsh’a Maria shi’in __ vikō
   which CLS man here danced M. with party
   ‘Which of these men was Maria dancing with at the party?’

   b. *[Ntsyā rā tāte yó’o shi’in] tāsh’a Maria __ vikō
   which CLS man here with danced M. party
   Intended: With which of these men was Maria dancing at the party?

(6) [Yóó shi’in] tāsh’a Maria __ vikō
   who with danced M. party
   ‘Who was Maria dancing with at the party?’

I propose that this syntactic difference stems from a difference in the way that wh-words are interpreted compositionally in the language. Bare wh-words are semantically deficient (Beck 2006), and consequently must appear in the scope of a Question Particle to be properly interpreted (Cable 2010). When the phrase headed by this particle undergoes phrasal movement, it moves its entire c-command domain, including the wh-word and any other phrase it c-commands. Unlike bare wh-words, ntsyā is not semantically deficient and, consequently, it cannot appear in the scope of a Q particle. This suggests that ntsyā and its restrictor are directly attracted to the C-domain, precluding the possibility that it will pied-pipe.

This paper has two goals, one empirical and one theoretical. Empirically, I aim to broaden our understanding of the typology of which-questions by investigating their use in an understudied
language. Only by comparing *which*-questions in a wide range of languages can we hope to come
to a more complete understanding of the properties that they share as well as the source of those
properties. Theoretically, I aim to show that this particular syntactic property of *which* in SMPM
has a semantic source. This follows a long line of work that argues that the semantic or pragmatic
properties of *which* can affect its syntax (e.g. Cinque 1990; Comorovski 1989; É. Kiss 1993; Kroch
1998; Pesetsky 2000; Rizzi 1990: a.o.). In addition, it provides evidence for a particular analysis of
*which*-phrases as introducing a choice function (Reinhart 1997).

In what remains of this paper I will provide some background on SMPM (section 2), introduce
the main theoretical puzzle in more depth (section 3), discuss the QP analysis of pied-piping (section
4), and outline my main proposal (section 5) before concluding (section 6).

2 San Martín Peras Mixtec

San Martín Peras Mixtec (ISO: JMX) (called Tu’un Sávi or Tu’un Ndá’vi by speakers) is a Southern
Baja Mixtec language spoken in the Mexican state of Oaxaca by roughly 11,000 people and by dias-
pora communities in the United States, particularly in California (Instituto Nacional de Estadística
y Geografía 2020). The data presented in this paper come from ongoing fieldwork with 2 native
speakers living in California. Some initial generalizations about the language and wh-movement
were also made working with speakers living in the town of Ahuejutla in the state of Oaxaca.

SMPM is a verb initial language. The default word order in “out-of-the-blue” contexts is VSO
(Mendoza 2020; Ostrove 2018), like other Mixtec languages Macaulay (2005).

(7) Kotô Agustina chichí
    likes A. avocado
    ‘Agustina likes avocados.’

Wh-words move obligatorily to a preverbal position in the language, as has been observed for
other Mixtec languages (Caponigro, Torrence, and Cisneros 2013). I assume for concreteness that
wh-words move to spec-CP.

(8) a. Yóó shàshi __ kwì’i?
    who ate fruit
    ‘Who ate the fruit?’

b. Nǎ shì Marta __
    what bought M.
    ‘What did Marta buy?’

c. Nashá yávi yá __
    how.much costs it.neut
    ‘How much does it cost?’

d. Ntsyá chichí ndó __
    where bathe 2pl
    ‘Where do you (pl) bathe?’
2.1 which-questions in SMPM

2.1.1 Structure

which-questions in SMPM are formed using the wh-determiner *ntsya*. In most cases, *ntsya* is followed by a classifier which agrees with the noun class of the restrictor. The use of a classifier, while not required, seems to be preferred in most contexts where which-questions are used. Preliminary investigation suggests that using a classifier is correlated to the perceived salience of the members of the restricted set: using a classifier indicates that the members of the restricted set are particularly salient in the discourse (D-linked). This is consistent with previous work on classifiers in SMPM and other Mixtec varieties which indicates that they are used to mark specificity and familiarity in a range of contexts (Cisneros 2019; Hofmann and Ostrove 2020).

(9) a. *Ntsyá rà táte* which *CLS.MASC* man
   ‘Which man’

b. *Ntsyá rí chele* which *CLS.AML* rooster
   ‘Which rooster’

c. *Ntsyá tún káro* which *CLS.WOOD* car
   ‘Which car’

Classifiers, when they occur, mark one of 6 noun classes that are present in SMPM. These classifiers are homophonous with pronouns in the language.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feminine</td>
<td>ñá</td>
<td>ná</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masculine</td>
<td>rà</td>
<td>rà</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral (Singular)</td>
<td>ñá / yá</td>
<td>ná</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal</td>
<td>rí</td>
<td>rí</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wooden</td>
<td>tún</td>
<td>tún</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liquid</td>
<td>rá</td>
<td>rá</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Within *ntsya*-phrases, the classifier can be followed by a pronoun (10a), a noun marked with a demonstrative (10b), and a noun modified by numerals and definite markers (10c). Given this, I assume that the classifier can be followed by a full DP, not simply a bare NP.

(10) a. **Context: I have two cats. I tell you that one of them is sick. You respond:**
   Vá’a míí! *Ntsyá rí rí?*
   bad **EMPH which** *CLS it.AML*
   ‘How horrible! Which one?’
b. Ntsyâ ṛa tâte yó’o...
    which CLS man here
    ‘Which of these men...’

c. Ntsyâ rí ibí mií chútu shishi
    which CLS two EMPH cat eat
    ‘Which two cats are eating?’

For concreteness, I assume the following basic structure for *which*-phrases in SMPM, though nothing in my analysis hinges on this point.

(11)

A final important note about the wh-determiner *ntsýâ*. Between the two native speakers that I consulted, there was disagreement about whether this word is homophonous with the wh-word *where*. According to one consultant, the two words are tonally distinct; *which* ends in a falling tone (*ntsýâ*) and *where* ends in a high tone (*ntsýá*). According to the other main consultant, the two words are completely homophonous. Though these two speakers come from different towns within the municipality of San Martín Peras, in general their pronunciation is quite consistent.

While I leave a more precise phonetic and phonological comparison between these two words to future investigation, it is important to note that, even if homophonous with *where* for some speakers, *ntsýâ*-questions of the type described in this paper do not ask about locations. First, they can be used to ask about abstract entities that are not located in space, as in (12). Second, the most natural response to *ntsýâ* questions is to identify a member of a contextually restricted set (13).

(12) Ntsyâ discúrso kòt=ón chákon?
    which speech liked=you more
    ‘Which speech did you like the most?’

(13) a. Ntsyâ ṛa látn=ón shikichon kámpo?
    which CLS grandfather=your worked field
    ‘Which of your grandfathers worked the fields?’

b. Tátà tát=i
    father father=my
    ‘My father’s father.’
2.1.2 Movement

Like other wh-words in SMPM, there is evidence that *ntsya*-phrases undergo Ā-movement to a preverbal position. First, they leave a gap in argument position. This can be observed with strongly transitive predicates like *build*, which requires an object in SMPM (14a). Despite this requirement, *build* can have a gap in object position when a *ntsya*-phrase is preverbal (14b).

(14) a. Kâsá’a Maria *(íí vè’e)*
    built M. one house
    ‘Maria built *(a house)*’

   b. *Ntsyâ ve’è kâsa’a Maria __?*
    which house built M.
    ‘Which house did Maria build?’

Second, like other wh-words, *which*-phrases can move across multiple clauses (15).

(15) *Ntsyã yà kwì’í yó’ó ntsi’ibi Maria yó’ò kwa’=on ki’ì=on __ nuhù ya’ví?
    which CLS fruit here sent M. you go=you buy=you in market
    ‘Which of these fruits did Maria send you to go buy in the market?’

Third, like other Ā-movements, movement of *which*-phrases can trigger weak crossover violations (16).

(16) *[Ntsyã rà rà lo’ó]i tśìn tśìnà sana rà __i?*
    which CLS he small bit dog POSS.AML he
    Intended: Which boy did his dog bite?

Fourth, they cannot move out of strong islands, such as relative clause islands (17).

(17) *[Ntsyã rà rà lo’ó]i shin=on ([mií maestro] j kana’a __j shí’i __i)?
    which CLS he small saw=you MII teacher scolded with
    Intended: Which child did you see the teacher that scolded __?

They can, however, extract out of weak islands, as in many other languages (cf. 2).

(18) *Ntsyã ve’è sa-nakanin=ón (yóó nà kàsa’a __)?*
    which house CAUS-think=you who 3.NEUT build
    ‘Which house do you wonder who built?’

3 A pied-piping puzzle

In SMPM, bare wh-words can pied-pipe when they move. A wh-possessor can pied-pipe its posses-sum (19a) and a wh-word that is the complement of a preposition can pied-pipe that preposition (19b).
As is the case with many languages of Mesoamerica, SMPM displays “Pied-piping with Inversion.” Bare wh-words that pied-pipe must move from their base position to initial position within the pied-piped constituent. This process forces wh-possessors to precede their possessa (20a) and wh-words complements to prepositions to precede the preposition that selects them (20b) when they pied-pipe. Following previous work on other languages of Mesoamerica, I assume that inversion is a type of Ā-movement that occurs within the DP or PP (Aissen 1996; Coon 2009).

(20) a. 

\[ [Yóó sè’e] ~ kishá A. ] Ahuejutla 

\[ who child arrived A. ] ‘Whose child arrived in Ahuejutla?’

b. 

\[ [Yóó shi’in] ~ kàsa’a Juan íí vè’e ] 

\[ who with built J. one house ] ‘Who did Juan build a house with?’

Despite the general acceptability of pied-piping in SMPM, pied-piping when ntsyá moves is completely impossible. A ntsyá phrase can, for instance, subextract out of an unaccusative subject (21a) or a transitive object (22a). Pied-piping with inversion is ungrammatical in both cases (21b & 22b)

(21) Unaccusative Subject

a. Ntsyá ű̀n=nìtsiví káro ű̀n ‘Which of your brother’s car broke down?’

b. *[Ntsyá ű̀n=nìtsiví káro ű̀n] ‘Which of your car broke down?’

(22) Transitive Object

a. Ntsyá ű̀n=nìtsiví káro ű̀n ‘Which woman’s mole did you like the most?’
b. *[Ntsyâ ñá náne ndyajyí vá’a ñá’á __] kot=ôn chák=on __
   which CLS woman broth good poss like=you more=you
   Intended: Which woman’s mole did you like the most?

Movement of ntsyâ must also strand a preposition (23a). Pied-piping the preposition leads to ungrammaticality (23b).

(23) Prepositional Phrase
a. Ntsyâ rà tâte yó’o tâshá’a Maria shi’in __ vikõ
   which CLS man here danced M. with __ party
   ‘Which of these men was Maria dancing with at the party?’

b. *[Ntsyâ rà tâte yó’o shi’ìn __] tâshá’a Maria __ vikõ
   which CLS man here with danced M. party
   Intended: With which of these men was Maria dancing at the party?

More striking is the fact that ntsyâ must also subextract out of unergative subjects and transitive subjects. As discussed in Hedding (2020), subextraction of bare wh-words is generally possible except out of these two positions, suggesting that the specifier of vP is an island in the language.

(24) a. *Yóó ka’an [sè’e __]
   who speaks child
   Intended: Whose child is speaking?

b. *Yóó shàshi [tsìnà sana __] kõñù
   who ate dog possaml meat
   Intended: Whose dog ate the meat?

However, despite the fact that subject islands are classically considered to be strong islands and their effects are not expected to be ameliorated by D-linking (Szabolcsi and Lohndal 2017), ntsyâ-phrases can, and indeed must, subextract out of them.

(25) Unergative Subject
a. Ntsyâ ñá náne shìta chêle sana __
   which CLS woman sings rooster possaml
   ‘Which woman’s rooster is singing?’

b. *[Ntsyâ ñá náne chêle sana __] shìta __
   which CLS woman rooster possaml sings
   Intended: Which woman’s rooster is singing?

(26) Transitive Subject
a. Ntsyâ rà rà=jâ shàshi tsìnà sana __ chêle san=i
   which CLS he=DEM ate dog possaml rooster possaml=my
   ‘Which of those men’s dog ate my rooster?’

b. *[Ntsyâ rà rà=jâ tsìnà sana __] shàshi __ chêle san=i
   which CLS he=DEM dog possaml ate rooster possaml=my
   Intended: Which of those men’s dog ate my rooster?
The data above demonstrate that *ntsya*-phrases cannot pied-pipe and invert; neither can they pied-pipe with no inversion.

(27) a. *[Káro ñâ’á *ntsya* ñáñ=ón] nitsivi __ car poss which brother=your broke.down
   Intended: Which of your brother’s car broke down?

b. *[Ndya yi vá’a ñâ’á *ntsya* ñá náne] kot=óñ chák=ón __ broth good poss which CLS woman like=you more=you
   Intended: Which woman’s mole did you like the most?

c. ??*[Shi’in *ntsya* râ tâte yó’o] tâshâ’a Maria __ vikô
   with which CLS man here danced M. party
   Intended: With which of these men was Maria dancing at the party?

d. *[Chéle sana *ntsya* ñá náne] shîta __ rooster poss.AML which CLS woman sings
   Intended: Which woman’s rooster is singing?

e. *[Tsìnà sana *ntsya* râ râ=jà] shàshi __ chéle san=i
dog poss.AML which CLS he=DEM ate rooster poss.AML=my
   Intended: Which of those men’s dog ate my rooster?

This is important to confirm, as not all wh-phrases trigger inversion in SMPM. For instance, complex wh-phrases introduced by *nashá* do not invert when they pied-pipe.

(28) *[Shi’i *nashá* ñá yívi] tâsha’=on vikô?
    with how many they people danced=you party
    ‘With how many people did you dance at the party?’

This is important for two reasons. First, it demonstrates that it is not mere complexity of the wh-phrases that prevents pied-piping, instead it is something particular about *ntsya*. Second, it shows that inversion is not prerequisite for pied-piping. This argues against a possible analysis where *ntsya* cannot pied-pipe because it can’t invert.

The data in this section show that the wh-determiner *ntsya* is unique in the fact that it can never pied pipe. So absolute is this restriction that *ntsya*-phrases can extract out of positions that are islands in the language. In the next section, I begin to develop my account for this pattern by discussing my theoretical assumptions about pied-piping.

4 QPs and pied-piping

I assume, following Cable (2010), that movement of bare wh-words is triggered by attraction of a phrase headed by a Question Particle (Q) that c-commands a wh-word. When the wh-word is the sister of Q, attraction of the QP moves only Q and the wh-word. In languages such as SMPM that do not overtly realize Q, this attraction will appear on the surface as movement of the wh-word alone (29a). If, however, Q takes a larger constituent that contains a wh-word as its sister, then when QP moves it will front more than just the wh-word (29b). Thus, pied-piping structures and non-pied-piping structures are distinguished by the position where Q is merged into the structure.
4.1 Bare wh-words are semantically deficient

Cable’s theory relies on the idea that wh-words are semantically deficient in a particular way. Following previous work by Beck (2006), Cable assumes that wh-words have a focus semantic value (they introduce focus alternatives), but they have no ordinary semantic value (denotation). Thus, who introduces a set of alternatives (the set of humans), but does not denote anything.

\[(30) \quad a. \text{Who, } [yôô]^F = \{ x: \text{human}(x) \} \\
    b. \text{Who, } [yôô]^o = \text{Undefined}\]

Assuming that every LF must have a well-defined ordinary semantic value (Beck’s *Principle of Interpretability*, pg. 15), this semantic deficiency forces wh-words to appear in the scope of some operator which is sensitive to the alternatives they introduce. Cable argues that this is the function of the Q particle: it takes the focus semantic value of its sister as an argument, thus allowing semantic composition of sentences with wh-words. Specifically, Q introduces a variable over choice functions (31). A choice function takes a set as an argument and returns a member of that set (Reinhart 1997). Some representative examples are given in (32).

\[(31) \quad \text{Semantics of Q} \\
    \[ [Q_i]^g = g(i) \in D_{cf} \]

Cable (2010): 67
(32) Examples of Choice Functions
   a. \( f(\{\text{Maria, Juan, Eraclio, Natalia}\}) = \text{Natalia} \)
   b. \( f'(\{\text{dog, cat, rooster, donkey}\}) = \text{rooster} \)
   c. \( f''(\{\text{Ahuejutla, Tlapancingo, Juxtlahuaca}\}) = \text{Ahuejutla} \)

The meaning of a QP then, is the result of some choice function \( f \) assigned to Q by the variable assignment function \( g \), applied to the focus semantic value of Q’s complement.

(33) QP
    \[
    f(\{\text{Natalia, Juan, Eraclio, Margarita...}\})
    \]

The choice function variable introduced by Q is then existentially bound by an interrogative force operator. This composition rule ensures that wh-questions receive the proper interpretation as a set of propositions (Hamblin 1973; Karttunen 1977).

(34) Special Composition Rule for Force\(_Q\)
\[
[\text{Force}_Q, \text{XP}]^g = \lambda p[\exists f.p = [\text{XP}^{d(i/f)}]]
\]
Cable (2010):78

Thus, the wh-question *Who did you see?* receives the following interpretation in SMPM: a set of propositions \( p \) such that there exists some choice function \( f \) such that \( p \) has the form ‘You saw \( f(\{x : \text{human}(x)\}) \).’

(35) Force\(_Q\) [[Q Yo] shinon]? = \( \lambda p[\exists f.p = [\lambda w: \text{you saw } f(\{x : \text{human}(x)\}) \text{ in } w]] \)

5 Proposal

5.1 The semantics of *ntsya*-questions

I propose that *ntsya* is not semantically deficient in the same way as other wh-words in SMPM. Specifically, unlike other wh-words, it has a well-defined ordinary semantic value. Following (Reinhart 1997)’s analysis of wh-NPs in English, I argue that *ntsya* introduces a choice function variable which takes the ordinary semantic value of its restrictor as an argument. Thus, a complex wh-phrase like *which woman* is interpreted as a choice function that takes the set of woman as an argument.
Under this proposal, which woman denotes a choice function applying to the set of woman in a similar way that who denotes a choice function applying to the set of all humans. Crucially however, unlike who, which introduces the choice function variable itself, rather than relying on Q to introduce it.

Because both Q and ntsyâ denote choice function variables, they can both be bound by the same Force_Q Operator. Thus, the question Which woman did you see? receives the following interpretation in SMPM: a set of propositions p such that there exists some choice function f such that p has the form ‘You saw f(λx.woman(x)).’

I follow Cable in assuming that Q particles are only used when necessary (i.e. when their sister has an undefined ordinary semantic value) (The Principle of Full Interpretation, Cable 2010: 75). Because ntsyâ-phrases have a defined ordinary semantic value, merging a c-commanding Q particle is superfluous, and therefore disallowed for reasons of economy. In other words, because Q and ntsyâ perform the same semantic function (introducing a choice function variable), ntsyâ cannot be dominated by a QP and consequently cannot pied-pipe when it moves.1

5.2 The Syntax of ntsyâ-Questions

5.2.1 Movement

Recall from section 2.1 that ntsyâ-phrases undergo syntactic movement. I propose that ntsyâ bears a formal syntactic feature [Q] which allows it to be attracted to the specifier of CP. When an uninterpretable feature of C probes and finds the phrase headed by ntsyâ, it will move it.

1 This analysis predicts that a ntsyâ-possessor should be able to pied-pipe if its possessor is a bare wh-word. In this case, the bare wh-word would give the entire possessive DP an undefined ordinary semantic value, allowing it to appear in the scope of a QP. Aside from the challenges coming up with an appropriate context for DPs like which woman’s what, this prediction is difficult to test in SMPM because multiple wh-questions are generally highly degraded or ungrammatical in the language.
At first glance, this may seem at odds with Cable (2010)’s account of wh-movement. According to Cable, wh-movement is indirect, mediated by the semantic need of wh-words to appear in the scope of Q. However, Cable assumes that wh-words do bear formal features in some languages (see also Kratzer and Shimoyama 2002), which can enter into Agreement relationships. Additionally, there is some Mixtec internal evidence to suggest that wh-words in the language do bear formal syntactic features that can trigger their movement. As discussed above, bare wh-words invert within pied-piped constituents, suggesting that they can be attracted independently of the movement of QPs.

Because bare wh-words have a semantic requirement to be within the scope of a Q particle, their attraction can only be seen within the QP. ntsyâ, on the other hand, cannot be within the scope of Q and thus it can be attracted directly by C. This suggests that all wh-words bear some syntactic feature in SMPM.

5.2.2 Lack of Pied-Piping

Part of the motivation for Cable (2010)’s account of pied-piping was to get rid of mechanisms such as feature percolation from the grammar. Under his account, “pied-piping” is something of a misnomer, as there is complete isomorphism between the phrase that bears the movement feature and the phrase that undergoes movement. Thus, under this account, the very fact that ntsyâ cannot appear within a QP ensures that it will not be able to pied-pipe. The probe on C will move the closest phrase that bears the feature it is looking for; it will not move phrases that do not bear [Q], such as PPs.
6 Conclusion

In this short paper I have shown that *which*-phrases cannot pied-pipe in SMPM. While this particular phenomenon is novel to the best of my knowledge, it is consistent with a long line of research which has noted syntactic distinctions between *which*-phrases and bare wh-words. Continuing in the spirit of that line of research, I have proposed that a difference in interpretation between *ntsya* and other wh-words ensures that it cannot appear in the scope of a QP, and thus cannot pied-pipe.

While there are many areas to explore in future work, I will highlight two that seem particularly ripe for investigation. The first is the precise role that notions such as D-linking play in the interpretation of *ntsya* and its pied-piping behavior. This will likely require a more careful exploration of the pragmatic uses of classifiers in SMPM, as well as exploring if the use of classifiers correlates with pied-piping. The second involves identifying the locus of variation between languages like SMPM and languages like English, which freely allow pied-piping of *which*-phrases. If *which*-phrases represent choice functions in English (as argued by Reinhart 1997), then it is perhaps surprising that they can trigger pied-piping when they move. I hope that future investigations into the nature of wh-movement in SMPM will help clarify this issue.

References


Hofmann, Lisa, and Jason Ostrove. 2020. Míí and classifiers in SMPM. WLMA Presentation at UCSC.


