

# Remnant movement and the position of the Marshallese question particle\*

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## 1 Introduction\*\*

This paper discusses the position of the Marshallese question particle *ke* in yes/no questions.<sup>1</sup>

The use of a question particle in yes/no questions is not uncommon in Austronesian languages.

For example, both Kosraean, a closely related Micronesian language, and Chamorro, a related Austronesian language, have a sentence initial question particle.<sup>2</sup>

(1) Kuh kom mas?  
Q you be.sick  
'Are you sick?'  
(Kosraean; Lee 1975: 328)

(2) Kao esta un-li'i nilitratu-hu siha ni linao.  
Q already infl.2s-see picture-agr.1s pl obl earthquake  
'Have you seen pictures of mine of the earthquake?'  
(Chamorro; Chung 1991: 107)

Not all Austronesian languages have a sentence initial question particle. For example, the Malagasy the question particle *ve* occurs between the predicate and the subject or topic (Paul 2001).

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<sup>1</sup> Marshallese (Austronesian, Oceanic, Micronesian) is spoken in the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI). The RMI consists of 34 atolls comprising two island chains: the Ratak Chain in the east and the Ralik Chain in the west. Each chain has a distinct dialect, although the two dialects are mutually intelligible. There are about 60,000 native speakers of Marshallese. This work will examine the Ratak dialect.

<sup>2</sup> Abbreviations used in examples are as follows: Q = question particle, pl = plural, s = singular, T(fut) = future tense, T(pres) = present tense, T(past) = past tense, neg = negative, AgrS = subject agreement clitic, TAM = tense, aspect, modality marker.

- (3) Rasoā ve no manapaka bozaka.  
 Rasoā Q no at.cut grass  
 'Is it Rasoā who is cutting grass?'  
 (Paul 2001: 136)

However the distribution of the Marshallese question particle differs from these other Austronesian languages in that it has a relatively free distribution generally speaking. While it may not occur sentence initially, it may occur in a number of different sentential positions, as shown in (4):<sup>3</sup>

- (4) Herman e-n ke bajjek ke kōmṃan ke bade eo ke n̄an er ke?  
 Herman 3s-should Q just Q make Q party the.s Q for 3pl Q  
 'Should Herman just throw the party for them?'

In (4), the multiple occurrences of *ke* are not meant to indicate that the question particle may occur more than once in a sentence. Rather (4) indicates that one instance of *ke* may occur in any of the positions shown. But if the question contains a negative element, such as *jab* 'not,' the question particle must be sentence final:

- (5) TR e-kar jab le-wōj wa eo ke?  
 TR 3s-T(past) neg give-toward.listener car the.s Q  
 'Didn't TR give you the car?'

In order to explain these facts regarding the position of *ke*, I argue that the question particle is merged as the head of the interrogative phrase (IntP) in the left periphery. Since *ke* is contained in the left periphery, it must be the case that its sentence internal position is a result of movement of phrasal elements into the left periphery. Adopting the expanded structure of the left periphery proposed by Rizzi (1997, 2001, 2002), I argue that the sentential elements following the question particle have raised to the specifier position of the focus phrase (FocP) below IntP, creating a remnant subject agreement phrase (AgrSP) and that the remnant AgrSP then moves to the

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<sup>3</sup> In Marshallese orthography, *n* represents [n] and *n̄* represents [ŋ], while *o* represents a mid back rounded vowel and *ō* represents a mid back unrounded vowel.

specifier of a phrase above IntP. This analysis is supported by the fact that those sentential elements preceding *ke* are a constituent in yes/no questions but do not appear to be a constituent in declaratives. In addition, this analysis provides an explanation for the sentence final position of the question particle in negative questions, since the movement of a phrase to spec FocP across a negative phrase will result in a relativized minimality violation.

The remainder of this paper is organized as follows. In section 2, the syntax of Marshallese declaratives is briefly described, followed by a discussion of question particle position in negative and non-negative yes/no questions in section 3. Section 4 investigates the constituency of Marshallese declaratives and interrogatives and shows that there are significant differences in the constituency of these two types of sentences. Following section 4, section 5 introduces the analysis of yes/no questions and shows that the constituency of yes/no questions is explained by the formation of the remnant subject agreement phrase and its subsequent movement into the left periphery. Finally, section 6 examines negative yes/no questions and shows that the prohibition against a sentence internal question particle is a result of a relativized minimality effect.

## **2 Declarative sentences**

Marshallese is a head initial language with SVO word order, a subject agreement clitic (AgrS) and pro-drop. It has the following basic word order in transitive sentences:

(6) Subject AgrS-TAM Neg Adv V Adv Object PP

Minimally, a transitive sentence may consist of the AgrS, a verb and an object. AgrS may cliticize to the tense, aspect or modality marker (TAM), as shown in (6) and (7).

(7) Jikit e-kar deñōt Kajimenloñ.  
Jikit 3s-T(past) hit Kajimenloñ  
'Jikit hit Kajimenloñ.'

However, in sentences lacking TAM, AgrS may cliticize to an adverb, as in (8) or, if the sentence lacks TAM and an adverb, the verb, as in (9).

(8) **E-lukkuun** mōk.  
3s-really be.tired  
'He is really tired.'

(9) Herman **e-kōṇaan** kiki.  
Herman 3s-want sleep  
'Herman wants to sleep.'

The word order of intransitive sentences differs from that of transitives in that subjects may be postverbal in both unergative (10) and unaccusative (11) sentences:

(10) a. **Irooj ro** re-naaj ettōr.  
chief the.pl.human 3pl-T(fut) run  
'The chiefs will run.'

b. Re-naaj ettōr **irooj ro**.  
3pl-T(fut)run chief the.pl.human  
'The chiefs will run.'

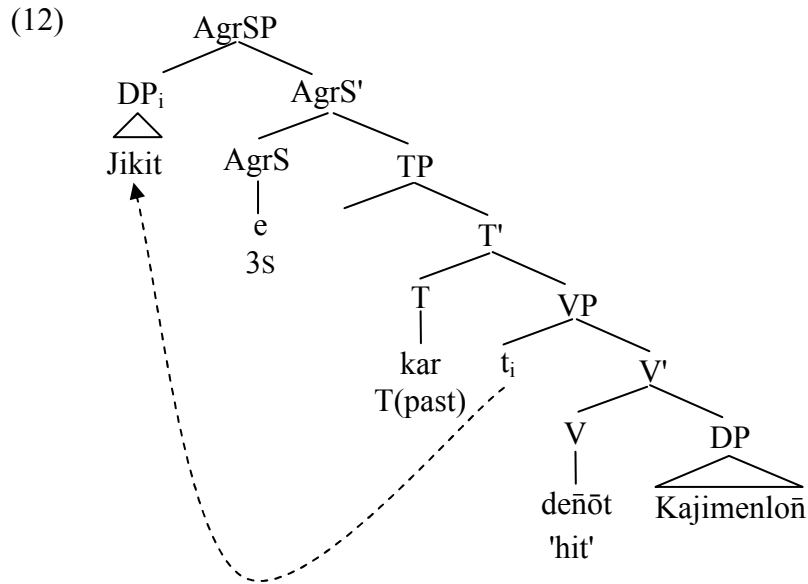
(11) a. **Irooj ro** re-kar būromōj.  
chief the.pl.human 3pl-T(past) be.sad  
'The chiefs were sad.'

b. Re-kar būromōj **irooj ro**.  
3pl-T(past) be.sad chief the.pl.human  
'The chiefs were sad.'

Since the position of the subject in Marshallese declaratives will not play a role in the analysis of yes/no questions, I will set aside this issue for now.

In this paper, I assume the basic structure of Marshallese declaratives sentences shown in (12), which is adapted from Hale (1998). This structure differs from Hale's in that I assume that the verb does not raise to AgrS°. While I do not rule out the possibility of verb movement in Marshallese, I assume that the verb cannot be raising to a position as high as the head of AgrSP because this analysis predicts that AgrS, T and V are a constituent. Contrary to this prediction,

constituency tests indicate that AgrS, T and V are not a constituent and that the verb forms a constituent with the object and any sentential elements which follow the object. The constituency of declaratives will be discussed in more detail in section 4.



With an analysis of declaratives structure, it is now possible to turn to the topic of yes/no questions.

### 3 The position of the question particle in yes/no questions

The Marshallese question particle may occur in yes/no (13) and embedded (14) questions but not in *wh*- questions:<sup>4</sup>

- (13) a. E-kar      ke ka-ire      kauḷaḷo?  
          3s-T(past) Q    make-fight spider  
          'Did he spider-fight?'<sup>5</sup>
- b. Aet, e-kar      ka-ire      kauḷaḷo.  
          yes, 3s-T(past) make-fight spider  
          'Yes, he spider-fought.'

<sup>4</sup> Embedded questions may also be formed using the embedded question complementizer *ñe* 'if', but unlike *ke*, *ñe* must be clause initial. See Oda (1976) for a discussion of Marshallese embedded questions.

<sup>5</sup> Spider fighting is a Marshallese children's game in which spiders are put on the bottom of a string and race their way to the top.

c. Aet, e-kar.  
 yes, 3s-T(past)  
 'Yes, he did.'

(14) I-jaje e-j ke ka-ire kauḷalo.  
 1s-don't.know 3s-T(pres) Q make-fight spider  
 'I don't know if he's spider-fighting.'

The distribution of *ke* is the same in both yes/no and embedded questions. It may follow AgrS and the sentential element it cliticizes to:

(15) Leddik ro re-j ke lukkuun jeḷā kajin M̄ajel?  
 girls the.pl.human 3pl-T(pres) Q really know language.of Marshalls  
 'Do the girls really know Marshallese?'

or it may occur between a preverbal adverb and a verb:

(16) Leddik ro re-j lukkuun ke jeḷā kajin M̄ajel?  
 girls the.pl.human 3pl-T(pres) really Q know language.of Marshalls  
 'Do the girls really know Marshallese?'

following a verb:

(17) Leddik ro re-j lukkuun jeḷā ke kajin M̄ajel?  
 girls the.pl.human 3pl-T(pres) really know Q language.of Marshalls  
 'Do the girls really know Marshallese?'

or following an object

(18) Re-n kōm̄man bade ke n̄an er?  
 3pl-should throw party Q for 3pl  
 'Should they throw a party for them?'

The question particle may appear sentence finally:

(19) Leddik ro re-j lukkuun jeḷā kajin M̄ajel ke?  
 girls the.pl.human 3pl-T(pres) really know language.of Marshalls Q  
 'Do the girls really know Marshallese?'

So far, I have not found that a change in the position of *ke* corresponds to a change in meaning.

So (15), (16), (17) and (19) all appear to mean the same thing.

In spite of its free distribution, there are three positions in which *ke* may not occur. These include sentence initially:

- (20) \***Ke** leddik ro re-j lukkuun jeḷā kajin Majeḷ?  
 Q girls the.pl.human 3pl-T(pres) really know language.of Marshalls  
 'Do the girls really know Marshallese?'

between the subject and the subject agreement clitic:

- (21) \*Leddik ro **ke** re-j lukkuun jeḷā kajin Majeḷ?  
 girls the.pl.human Q 3pl-T(pres) really know language.of Marshalls  
 'Do the girls really know Marshallese?'

and between the agreement clitic and TAM.

- (22) \*Leddik ro re **ke** j lukkuun jeḷā kajin Majeḷ?  
 girls the.pl.human 3pl Q T(pres) really know language.of Marshalls  
 'Do the girls really know Marshallese?'

Of all the possible *ke* positions, sentence finally is the only possible position of *ke* if the question contains a negative, such as *jab* 'not.'

- (23) a. E-kar jab etal n̄an Chuuk **ke**?  
 3s-T(past) neg go to Chuuk Q  
 'Didn't he go to Chuuk?'
- b. \*E-kar **ke** jab etal n̄an Chuuk?  
 3s-T(past) Q neg go to Chuuk  
 'Didn't he go to Chuuk?'
- c. \*E-kar jab **ke** etal n̄an Chuuk?  
 3s-T(past) neg Q go to Chuuk  
 'Didn't he go to Chuuk?'
- d. \*E-kar jab etal **ke** n̄an Chuuk?  
 3s-T(past) neg go Q to Chuuk  
 'Didn't he go to Chuuk?'

Given the distribution of *ke*, questions arise as to where it is merged and how its sentence internal or sentence final position is derived. These questions can be answered by examining Rizzi's expanded structure of the left periphery, as shown in (24):

(24) [ForceP [TopicP\* [InterrogativeP [TopicP\* [FocusP [TopicP\* [ModifierP\* [FiniteP

From a theoretical perspective, any of these positions could but need not be filled in Marshallese. However there are only two positions in which the question particle could be generated: ForceP and InterrogativeP (IntP), as these two positions are the left periphery positions associated with questions. Under the further assumption that rightward movement is not possible, we may also conclude that *ke* may not move to a position below the one in which it is generated. If these two assumptions are correct, then any sentential elements preceding the question particle must have moved into the left periphery to a position above *ke*. If *ke* were merged as the head of ForceP, we would expect that the question particle would always be sentence initial, since the doubly filled comp filter would prohibit the possibility of movement of sentential elements to the specifier of ForceP (see Chomsky and Lasnik 1977, Koopman 1993). However, if the question particle is generated in IntP, there are a number of possible landing sites above IntP to which sentential elements could move. If *ke* is merged and remains in IntP, then those sentential elements preceding it must have moved into the left periphery to a position above *ke*. There are two possible analyses which could explain how these elements move into the left periphery. One involves the movement of sentential elements as independent units; the other, the movement of these elements as a phrase.

At first glance the structure of Marshallese declaratives presented in section 2 seems to rule out the second possibility since the subject, AgrS and T in sentence like (15) repeated here do not form a constituent in declarative sentences.

(15) Leddik ro re-j ke lukkuun jeļā kajin Majeļ?  
 girls the.pl.human 3pl- T(pres) Q really know language.of Marshalls  
 'Do the girls really know Marshallese?'



However, before we can reach any conclusions regarding the derivation of yes/no questions, it is necessary to take a closer look at the constituency of declaratives and yes/no questions.

#### 4 Constituency of declaratives and questions

As briefly mentioned in section 2, in Marshallese declaratives, the verb and those elements following it are a constituent. These elements can be coordinated, as in (25), and ellided in response to a question (26).

(25) Jikit e-kar [deñōt Kajimenloñ] im [ṃane TR].  
 Jikit 3s-T(past) hit Kajimenloñ and kill TR  
 'Jikit hit Kajimenloñ and killed TR.'

(26) a. Re-kar ke dāpij kuuj eo?  
 3pl-T(past) Q hold cat the.s  
 'Did they hold the cat?'

b. Aet re-kar.  
 yes 3pl-T(past)  
 'Yes, they did.'

It is also possible to coordinate T, V, and object phrase with another T, V, and object phrase.

(27) John e-[kar deñōte Bill] im [naaj uṃaiki Susan].  
 John 3s-T(past) hit Bill and T(fut) kiss Susan  
 'John hit Bill and will kiss Susan'

However neither the subject, AgrS-T and V (28) nor the subject and AgrS-T (29) may be coordinated with a string of like elements, which seems to indicate that neither the subject, AgrS-T and V nor the subject and AgrS-T is a constituent.

(28) \*[Ricky e-kar lolok] ak [Mary e-kar kūr] lerooj eo.  
 Ricky 3s-T(past) visit but Mary 3s-T(past) call queen the.s  
 'Ricky visited but Mary called the queen.'

(29) \*[Ricky e-kar] im [Mary e-kar] kauteij lerooj eo.  
 Ricky 3s-T(past) and Mary 3s-T(past) honor queen the.s  
 'Ricky and Mary honored the queen.'

Thus constituency tests seem to indicate that tree (12) of section 2 accurately depicts declarative constituency, since it indicates that T and the elements following it are a constituent and V and the elements following it are a constituent. It also correctly shows that neither the subject, AgrS-T and V nor the subject and AgrS-T is a constituent.

If we turn to the constituency of yes/no questions, we find that, as in declaratives, the string *V-object* may be coordinated with another *V-object*:

- (30) Ricky e-kar ke [lolok lerooj eo] im [kauteij e]?  
 Ricky 3s-T(past) Q visit queen the.s and honor 3s  
 'Did Ricky visit the queen and honor her?'

However, unlike in declaratives, the subject and AgrS-T may be coordinated with another subject AgrS-T string when these strings are immediately followed by the question particle.

- (31) [Ricky e-kar] im [Mary e-kar] ke kauteij lerooj eo?  
 Ricky 3s-T(past) and Mary 3s-T(past) Q honor queen the.s  
 'Did Ricky and did Mary honor the queen?'

The same appears to be the case for *subject AgrS-T V*:

- (32) [Ricky e-kar kōmate] im [kw-ar kañ] ke bao eo?  
 Ricky 3s-T(past) cook and 2s-T(past) eat Q chicken the.s  
 'Did Ricky cook and did you eat the chicken?'

However, when these elements are not immediately followed by the question particle, coordination is not possible.

- (33) \*[Ricky e-kar] im [Mary e-kar] kauteij ke lerooj eo?  
 Ricky 3s-T(past) and Mary 3s-T(past) honor Q queen the.s  
 'Did Ricky and did Mary honor the queen?'

- (34) \*[Ricky e-kar kōmat] im [kwo-kar kañ] bao eo ke?  
 Ricky 3s-T(past) cook and 2s-T(past) eat chicken the.s Q  
 'Did Ricky cook and did you eat the chicken?'

We seem to be left with the conclusion that the constituency of declaratives differs from that of yes/no questions. Specifically, in yes/no questions the elements immediately preceding *ke* are

a constituent, while these same elements are not a constituent in declaratives. But if these elements are not immediately followed by the question particle, they are not a constituent. It seems that the only way to resolve this apparent contradiction is to posit a structure in which the elements preceding *ke* in yes/no questions are a constituent. In both declaratives and yes/no questions, these elements under discussion are dominated by AgrSP. Thus we must adopt an analysis in which AgrSP consist of maximally either *subject AgrS-T* or *subject AgrS-T V* in yes/no questions and in which AgrSP in a declarative contains more elements than the subject and AgrS-T or the subject, AgrS-T and V. The analysis I will propose in section 5 involving the formation of a remnant AgrSP is just this type of analysis.

### **5 A remnant movement analysis of yes/no questions**

In the previous section, I spelled out how the constituency facts of Marshallese declaratives and yes/no questions are essential clues to the structure of yes/no questions. The only way to resolve the apparently contradictory constituency facts is to adopt an analysis involving remnant phrasal movement, as discussed by Müller (1998), Mahajan (2003) and Koopman and Szabolcsi (2000). While remnant phrasal movement is often proposed as a way of eliminating head movement operations, I am not suggesting that head movement can be done away with all together. Rather, I am suggesting that remnant phrasal movement is necessary to derive Marshallese yes/no questions.

Remnant phrasal movement essentially consists of two steps. The first step is the movement of a phrase, XP in (35), out of a larger phrase, ZP. The movement of XP leaves behind a remnant phrase (ZP). The second step involves the movement of the remnant ZP to a position above the XP.

- (35)  $[_{YP} Y [_{ZP} WP Z XP]] \rightarrow$   
 Step 1: Movement of XP  $[_{YP} XP_i Y [_{ZP} WP Z t_i]] \rightarrow$   
 Step 2: Movement of the remnant YP  $[_{ZP} WP Z t_i] [_{YP} XP_i Y t_j]$

After the movement of XP, the remnant ZP is a constituent consisting of WP and Z, whereas in the pre-movement structure, WP and Z do not form a constituent to the exclusion of other sentential elements.

An analysis that could derive the surface order of (35) and rely on head movement would have to assume that three separate movement operations occur: the phrasal movement of XP; the head movement of Z; and the phrasal movement of WP:

- (36)  $[_{YP} Y [_{ZP} WP Z XP]] \rightarrow$   
 1: Movement of XP  $[_{YP} XP_i Y [_{ZP} WP Z t_i]] \rightarrow$   
 2: Movement of Z  $[_{KP} [Z_j+Y]_{j+K} [_{YP} XP_i t_j [_{ZP} WP t_j t_i]]] \rightarrow$   
 3: Movement of WP  $[_{KP} WP_i [Z_j+Y]_{j+K} [_{YP} XP_i Y [_{ZP} t_i t_j t_i]]]$

Importantly, in (36), WP and Z are not a constituent to the exclusion of all other sentential elements after movement occurs, whereas in (35), they are.

An analysis of Marshallese yes/no questions involving head movement could assume that AgrS, T, and in some cases V raise into the left periphery as a complex head, followed by movement of the subject. This proposal is sketched out in (38), the derivation of (37). However, this analysis makes the wrong predictions about constituency. At the end of the derivation, the elements preceding the question particle are not a constituent.

- (37) Leddik ro re-j jeļā ke kajin M̄ajel?  
 girls the.pl.human 3pl-T(pres) know Q language.of Marshalls  
 'Do the girls know Marshallese?'

- (38)
- |                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
|                        | [ArgSP leddik ro re [TP j [VP jela kajin Majōl]]]→  |
| 1: Mvmt of V to T      | [ArgSP leddik ro re [TP j+jela <sub>i</sub> [VP t <sub>i</sub> kajin Majōl]]]→  |
| 2: Mvmt of T+V         | [ArgSP leddik ro re+[j+jela <sub>i</sub> ] <sub>j</sub> [TP t <sub>j</sub> [VP t <sub>i</sub> kajin Majōl]]]→   |
| 3: Merge <i>ke</i>     | [IntP ke [ArgSP leddik ro re+[j+jela <sub>i</sub> ] <sub>j</sub> [TP t <sub>j</sub> [VP t <sub>i</sub> kajin Majōl]]]→  |
| 4: Mvmt of AgrS+T+V    | [IntP [re+[j+jela <sub>i</sub> ] <sub>j</sub> ] <sub>k</sub> +ke [ArgSP leddik ro t <sub>k</sub> [TP t <sub>j</sub> [VP t <sub>i</sub> kajin Majōl]]]→                                    |
| 5: Mvmt of the subject | [XP [leddik ro] t <sub>i</sub> [IntP[re+[j+jela <sub>i</sub> ] <sub>j</sub> ] <sub>k</sub> +ke[ArgSP t <sub>i</sub> t <sub>k</sub> [TP t <sub>j</sub> [VP t <sub>i</sub> kajin Majōl]]] → |

Setting aside the fact that (38) makes the wrong predictions about constituency, the head movement analysis encounters serious problems when faced with questions involving preverbal adverbs and post-object question particles. Both these cases involve phrasal elements which intervene between elements of the complex head AgrS+T+V+*ke*, as shown in (16) and (18) repeated below:

- (16) Leddik ro re-j lukkuun ke jela kajin Majel?  
 girls the.pl.human 3pl-T(pres) really Q know language.of Marshalls  
 'Do the girls really know Marshallese?'

- (18) Re-n kōmman bade ke nan er?  
 3pl-should throw party Q for 3pl  
 'Should they throw a party for them?'

So it can be concluded that a head movement analysis cannot explain the word order of Marshallese questions, since this analysis would have to assume that AgrS+T+V+*ke* form a complex head while at the same time allowing phrasal elements such as adverbs and objects between elements of the complex head. However neither constituency nor the position of objects and adverbs are a problem in an analysis involving remnant movement, as will be illustrated below.

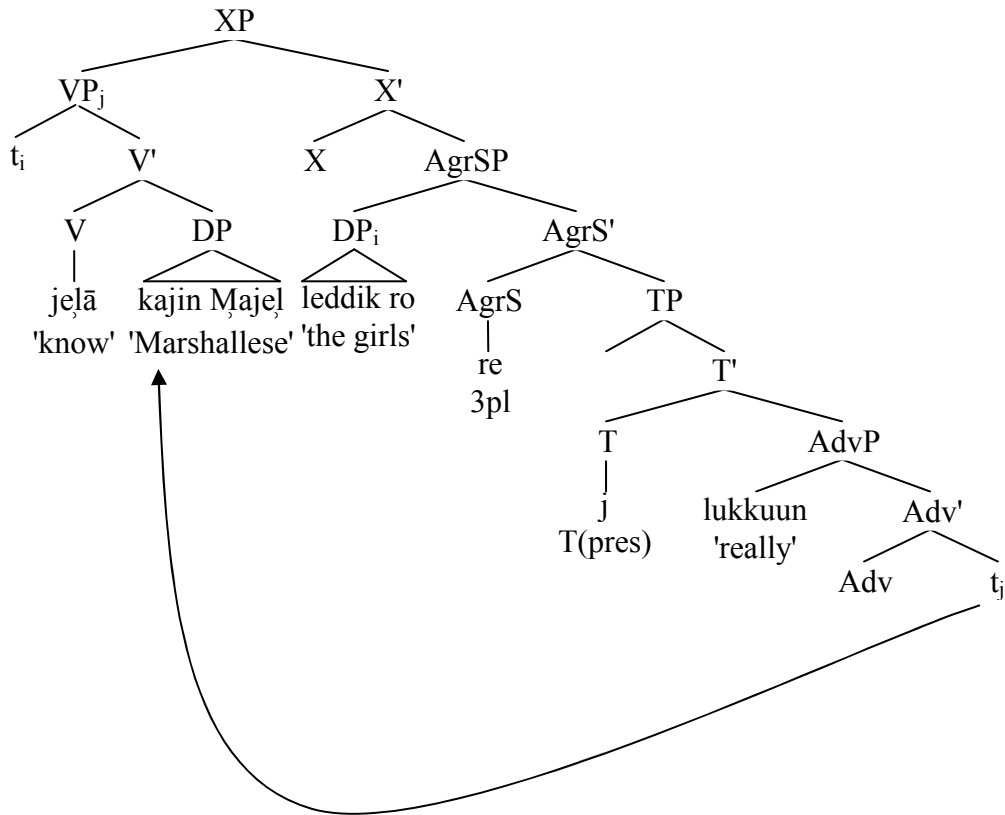
The analysis of Marshallese yes/no questions involving remnant movement assumes that two steps occur in the formation of these questions:

- Step 1: movement of the elements following *ke* to a position in the left periphery below IntP  
 Step 2: movement of the remnant AgrSP to a position above *ke*

### 5.1 Step 1: Movement of the elements following *ke*

Take a sentence such as (16), in which the question particle precedes the verb. In step 1, the elements following the question particle, in this case the VP consisting of the verb *jeḷā* and the object DP *kajin Majeḷ*, move to the specifier of a phrase above AgrSP. For the time being, I will refer to this phrase as XP.

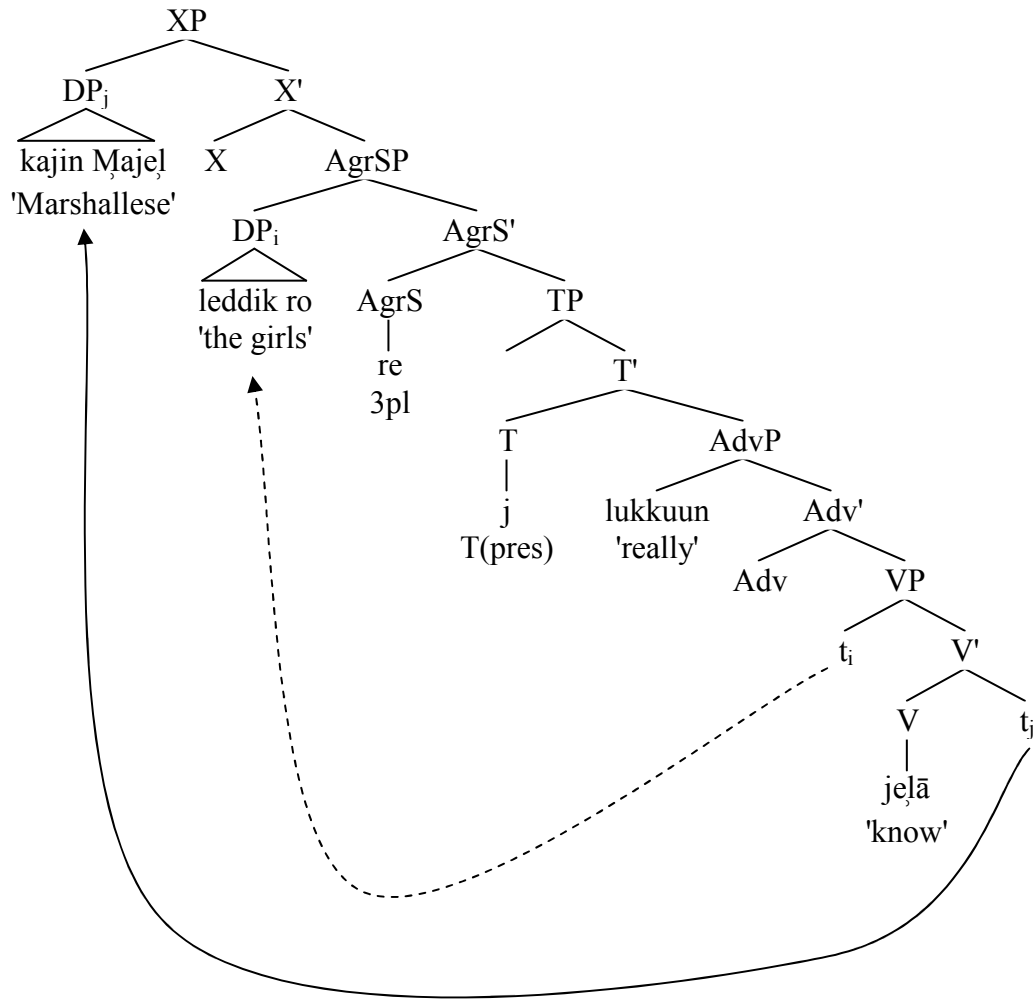
(39) an intermediate stage of the derivation



If the question particle follows rather than precedes the verb, as in (17), only the object DP, rather than the entire VP, moves to the specifier of XP:

(17) Leddik ro re-j lukkuun jeḷā ke kajin Majeḷ?  
 girls the.pl.human 3pl-T(pres) really know Q language.of Marshalls  
 'Do the girls really know Marshallese?'

(40) an intermediate stage of the derivation



Finally, suppose the question particle precedes a preverbal adverb, such as *lukkuun* 'really', as in

(15):

- (15) Leddik ro re-j ke lukkuun jeļā kajin Majeļ?  
 girls the.pl.human 3pl- T(pres) Q really know language.of Marshalls  
 'Do the girls really know Marshallese?'

In sentences like (15), AdvP moves to spec XP.

In turning to the question of the category of XP, Rizzi's expanded left periphery includes three possible landing sites for the moved DP, VP or AdvP. These include the specifiers of ModifierP (ModP), TopicP (TopP) and FocucP (FocP). As the landing site for elements which modify the sentence, including fronted adverbials, ModP can be immediately eliminated since the

moved phrase does not appear to be modifying the sentence in any way. The next possibility, TopP, seems more plausible. If the moved phrase occupies spec TopP, the phrase would be expected to have topic features and therefore a connection to previous discourse. However in Marshallese questions, the moved phrase does not seem to have any connection to the discourse. For example, if the phrase following *ke* occupies a topic position, a question such as (41) should be most appropriate when there had been discussion of a party, since the VP *kōmman bade eo ñan e* 'throw a party for him' follows the question particle. But (41) is most appropriate when there has been no discussion of a party at all.

- (41) Re-naaj    **ke** kōmman bade eo    ñan e?  
       3pl-T(fut) Q throw party the.s to 3s  
       'Will they throw a party for him?'

This being the case, it doesn't appear that the phrase following *ke* is a topic or occupies a topic position.

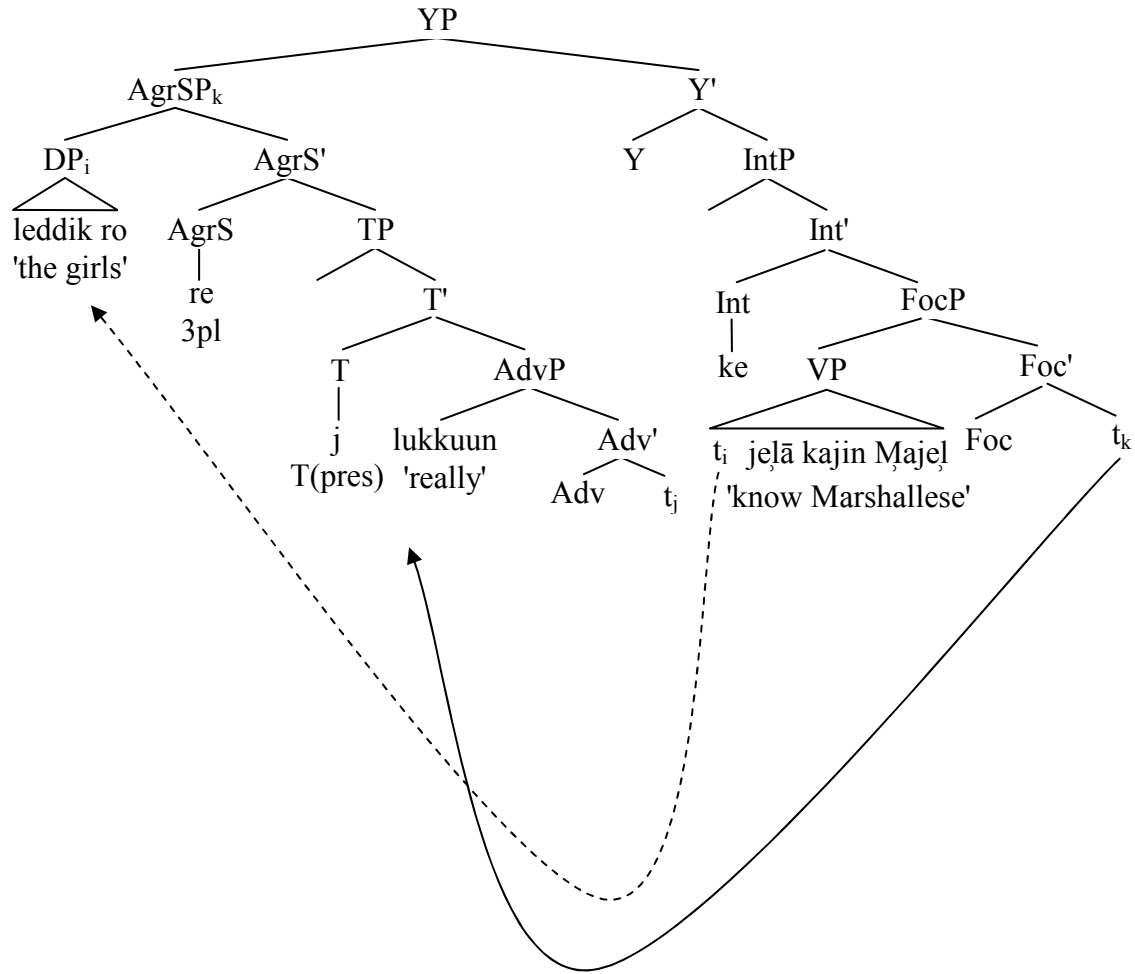
The third and final possibility is that the phrase moves to the specifier of FocP. If spec FocP is the landing site for the moved phrase, that phrase should bear focus features and represent new information. Given that the VP in (41) appears to be new information, this seems a plausible conclusion. I will therefore conclude that the moved phrase has moved to the specifier of FocP.

## 5.2 Movement of the remnant AgrSP

The movement of sentential elements to spec FocP creates a remnant AgrSP, which then moves to a specifier position above IntP following the merge of *ke*, as shown in (42). Importantly, this remnant AgrSP is a constituent, which can explain the constituency of yes/no questions.

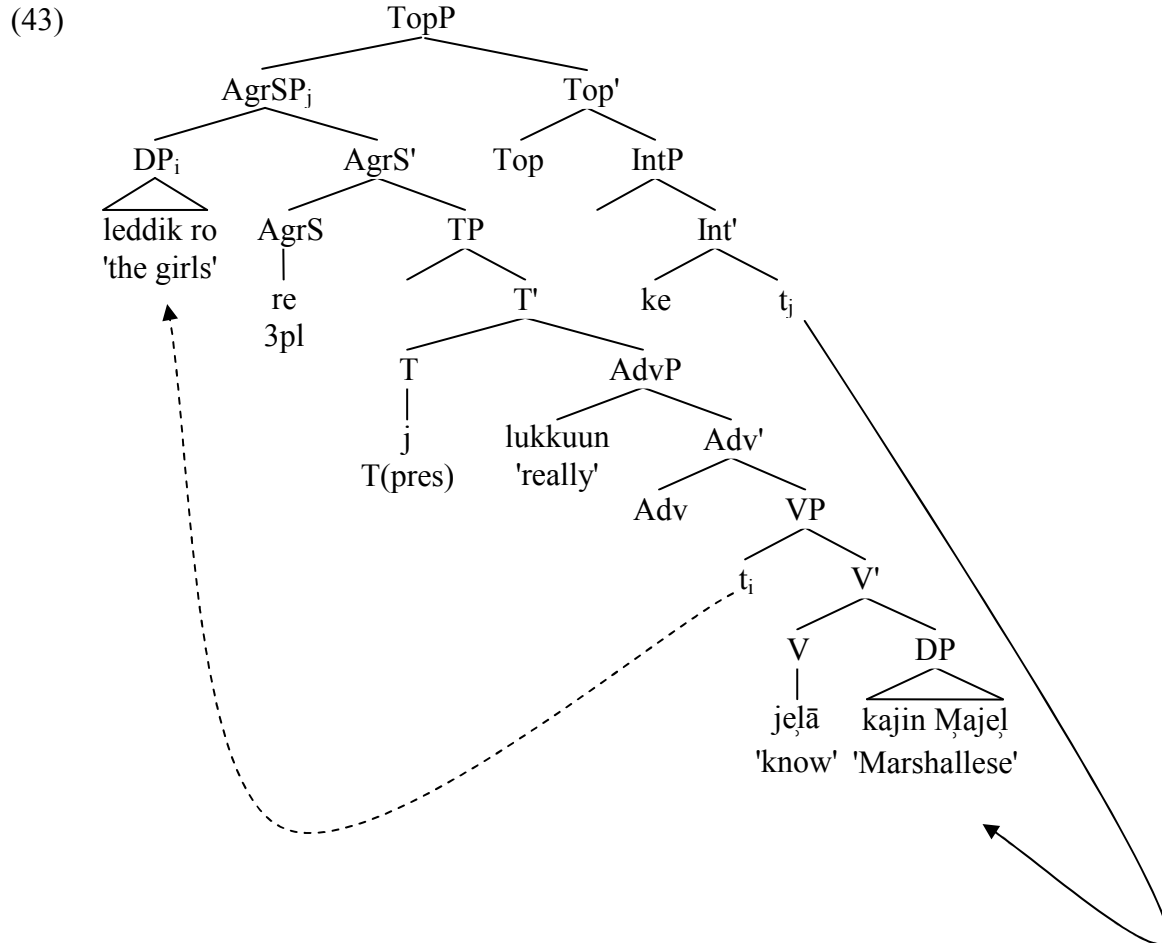


(42)



According to Rizzi's expanded left periphery, there are three specifier positions above Int<sup>o</sup> which might serve as the target for movement of the remnant AgrSP. These include the specifiers of IntP, TopP or ForceP. Since the specifier of IntP is occupied by a null operator in yes/no questions, this position can be immediately ruled out (Rizzi 2001). ForceP distinguishes various clause types, including relative, interrogative and declarative (Rizzi 1997), and therefore could conceivably serve as the landing site for the moved AgrSP. If the remnant AgrSP moves to the specifier of TopP, AgrSP should have a connection to the previous discourse. This is possible to verify if we examine sentences with final question particles. If the sentential elements preceding

the question particle move to TopP, then the entire AgrSP is moving to this position in these types of sentences, and, movement does not occur to the spec FocP, as shown in (43).



If (43) is the correct structure, then the entire sentence should have a connection to previous discourse since it is occupying spec TopP. This turns out to be the case. For example, a question like (44) is most appropriate when there had been discussion of whether the players were honored.

- (44) Re-kar kauteij ri ukkure ro ke?  
 3pl-T(past) honor one.who play the.pl.human Q  
 'Did they honor the players?'

Given this fact, I conclude that TopP is the target for movement of the remnant AgrSP.

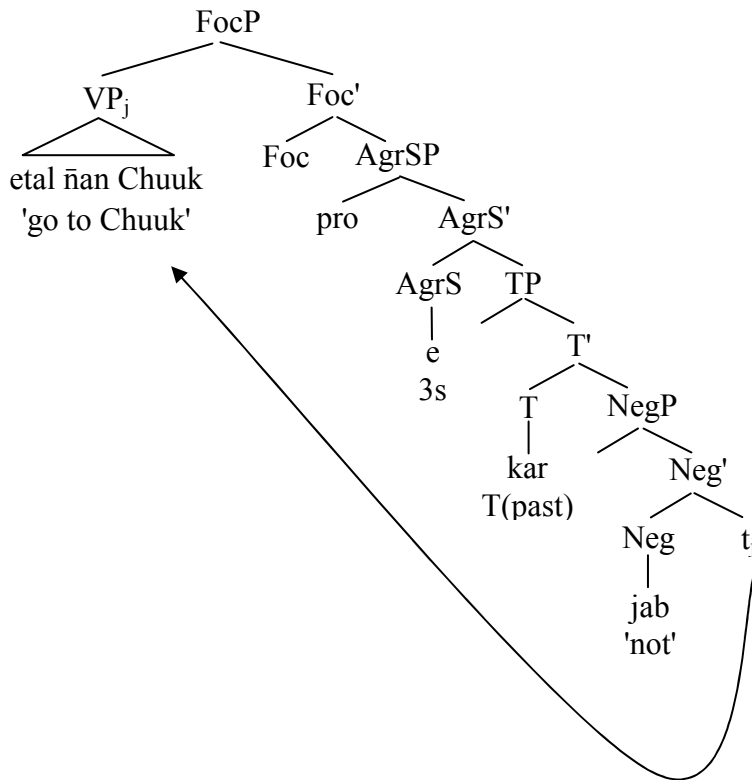
As should be apparent, the remnant movement analysis of yes/no questions can explain the constituency of yes/no questions. Since the movement of a phrase to spec FocP leaves behind a remnant AgrSP, the remnant AgrSP is a constituent, which can then be coordinated with another remnant AgrSP. But in addition to explaining constituency, this analysis also provides an explanation as to why the question particle must be sentence final in negative questions. It is to this topic that I will now turn.

### **6 Negative Yes/No Questions**

Recall that negative yes/no questions must have a sentence final question particle. In order to explain why this is the case, it must be remembered that the remnant movement analysis of Marshallese questions involves the movement of a phrase to the specifier of a focus phrase. For a sentence like the ungrammatical (23c), the moved phrase would be the VP, as shown in (45):

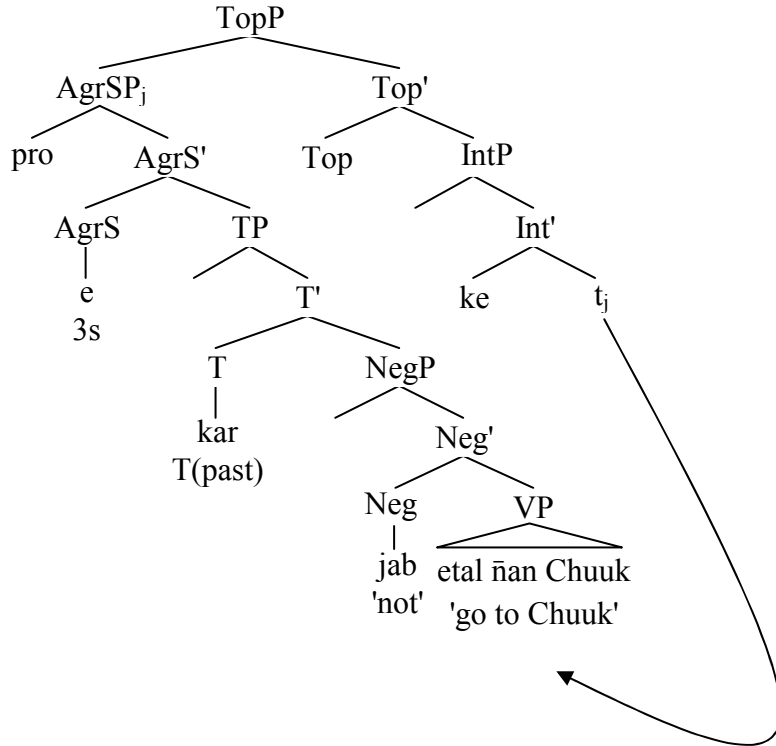
- (23) c. \*E-kar jab ke etal ñan Chuuk?  
3s-T(past) neg Q go to Chuuk  
'Didn't he go to Chuuk?'

(45) an intermediate stage of the derivation



It is the movement to FocP which is the source of the ungrammaticality of these sentence. According to relativized minimality (RM), both FocP and NegP bear quantificational features (Rizzi 1990, 2002). RM proposes that the movement of an element to a position bearing one type of features across another element bearing the same type of feature results in a RM effect and renders the sentence ungrammatical. Since FocP and NegP bear the same type of features, RM predicts that the movement of a phrase to FocP across NegP will be ungrammatical. So as long as NegP is present in a yes/no question, no phrase may be moved to spec FocP. The only option that remains is to move the entire AgrSP to the specifier of TopP, which results in a sentence final question particle, as shown in (46). Therefore, it is only possible to have a final question particle in a negative yes/no question.

(46)



## 7 Conclusion

This paper has discussed the position of the Marshallese question particle *ke* and shown that while it has a relatively free distribution in most yes/no questions, it must appear sentence finally in negative yes/no questions. I have argued that this is a result of the movement of sentential elements following the question particle to the specifier of a focus phrase below *IntP*, followed by movement of the remnant *AgrSP* to the specifier of a topic phrase above *IntP*. I have also shown that this analysis can explain both the constituency of yes/no questions and the sentence final position of the question particle in negative yes/no questions. While this analysis does not rule out head movement as a possible operation, it does show that remnant phrasal movement must be a possible movement operation available to the syntax.

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