

## VERB MOVEMENT, WORD ORDER AND AGREEMENT IN MARSHALLESE DECLARATIVES

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This paper examines the word order and agreement patterns of Marshallese transitive and intransitive sentences. While transitive sentences must have SVO order, intransitive sentences may have either SV or VS order. Regardless of whether the subject is preverbal or postverbal, there must be person and number agreement between the subject and the subject agreement clitic. I argue that the preverbal position of the subject is a result of verb movement out of the VP, to a relatively low position in the structure, followed by raising of the subject to the specifier of the subject agreement phrase. But that the postverbal placement of the subject in intransitives is due to the subject remaining VP internal. Given the VP internal position of the subject in intransitives with VS order, it cannot be the case that agreement between the subject and the agreement clitic occurs in a spec head relationship. Rather agreement must be occurring as a result of an Agree relationship. This analysis is supported by the fact that the verb forms a constituent with postverbal subjects and any sentential elements following the subject and by the fact that the verb must follow most adverbials.

### 1. INTRODUCTION<sup>1</sup>

In many Micronesian languages, there appears to exist a general pattern of allowing both preverbal and postverbal subjects in intransitive sentences, while allowing only preverbal subjects in transitive sentences. This pattern is often noted in the descriptive grammars of these languages, as the following quotes cited by Hale (1998) indicate:

- "A subject NP is obligatorily postposed if not focused and if the main verb is intransitive..." (Sohn and Bender 1973:358, Ulithian)
- "The subject NP is obligatorily extraposed in certain circumstances, and optionally extraposed in others..." (Oda 1977:149, Pulo Annian)
- "In a predicative sentence, the subject noun phrase is often placed after the predicate (normally before an adjunct if there is any)." (Sohn 1975:15, Woleaian)
- "SUBJECT + INTRANSITIVE VERB > INTRANSITIVE VERB + SUBJECT: When the predicate of a sentence is an intransitive verb and the verb appears in the complete aspect, the word-order of the subject and the predicate can be changed... When the verb appears in the incomplete aspect, the inversion is not common, but possible..." (Lee 1975:319, Kosraean)

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Marshallese (Austronesian, Oceanic, Micronesian) is no different. It does differ from many of these languages in that it has a subject agreement clitic (AgrS) which agrees with the subject in person and number.<sup>2</sup> It has been argued, that agreement with AgrS may be used as a diagnostic for movement of the subject out of the VP into the specifier of the subject agreement phrase and that agreement with the subject is a result of a spec head relationship (Hale 1998). However, I will argue that while the preverbal subject does occupy the specifier of a subject agreement phrase, the postverbal subject is VP internal. Since the subject remains VP internal, the postverbal position of the subject is due to verb movement out of the VP to a position below most adverbials. As a result, agreement between the subject and AgrS may occur through an Agree rather than spec head relationship. This analysis can explain both the position of the verb with respect to adverbials and the constituency of Marshallese declaratives.

The outline of this paper is as follows. A brief introduction to Marshallese syntax, including word order, is given in section 2. Section 3 details the agreement patterns of declaratives, followed by a discussion of declarative structure in section 4. In section 4, a number of other alternate analyses of Marshallese declaratives will be proposed, including the possibility that the subject raises to spec AgrSP in all Marshallese sentences. However it will be shown that these alternate analyses make the wrong predictions regarding constituency and basic word order. Section 5 is a brief discussion of agreement.

## 2. MARSHALLESE DECLARATIVE SENTENCES

Marshallese is a head initial language with the following basic word order:<sup>3</sup>

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

This example is not meant to indicate that all the sentential elements listed in (1) must be present in a transitive sentence. For example, Marshallese is a pro-drop language, so the subject may be excluded when it is salient from the discourse. In addition, preverbal elements such as TAM, Neg and preverbal adverbs are not always all present in a sentence. Minimally a transitive sentence may consist of AgrS-V Object.

(1) shows that the Marshallese subject agreement clitic, which agrees with the subject in person and number, immediately follows the subject when the subject is sentence initial. AgrS cliticizes to the first sentential element which follows it. This is often TAM, as shown in the third person plural marker *re* in (2).

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<sup>2</sup> Marshallese is an Austronesian language 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>3</sup> Abbreviations used in this paper are as follows: AgrS = subject agreement clitic; TAM = Tense, Aspect, Modality; Neg = negative marker; T(past) = past tense marker; T(fut) = future tense marker; T(pres) = present tense marker; s = singular; pl = plural;

- (2) Iroj ro re-naaj ettōr n̄an kwelok eo.<sup>4</sup>  
 chief the.pl 3pl-T(fut) run to meeting the.s  
 'The chiefs will run to the meeting.'

If there is no overt TAM marker, AgrS may also cliticize to an adverbial (3) or, when there is no preverbal adverb, a verb (4).

- (3) Herman e-lukkuun kōnan men in mour.  
 Herman 3s-really love thing of life  
 'Herman really loves animals.'

- (4) Herman e-buromij.  
 Herman 3s-be.sad  
 'Herman is sad.'

This pattern of cliticizing to the first element immediately following is not common in Oceanic languages. In other oceanic languages the subject agreement is often realized as a prefix or proclitic on the verb (Ross 2004).

Provided the subject is not focused, Marshallese is rigidly SVO in transitive sentences:

S V O

- (5) a. Leddik ro re-kar rabij kuj eo.  
 girl the.pl 3pl- hold cat the.s  
 T(past)  
 'The girls held the cat.'

\*V S O

- b. \*Re-kar rabij leddik ro kuj eo.  
 3pl-T(past) hold girl the.pl cat the.s  
 'The girls held the cat.'

However, unergative (6) and unaccusative (7) intransitive sentences may have either SV or VS order, provided that the subject immediately follows the verb.

S V PP

- (6) a. Iroj ro re-naaj ettōr n̄an kwelok eo.  
 chief the.pl 3pl-T(fut) run to meeting the.s  
 'The chiefs will run to the meeting.'

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<sup>4</sup> In Marshallese orthography, orthographic *o* represents a mid back rounded vowel, while *ō* represents a mid back unrounded vowel, and *n* represents [n], while *n̄* represents [ŋ].

## V S PP

- b. Re-naaj ettōr iroj ro n̄an kwelok eo.  
 3pl-T(fut) run chief the.pl to meeting the.s  
 'The chiefs will run to the meeting.'

## S V PP

- (7) a. Iroj ro re-kar buromij ilo pade eo.  
 chief the.pl 3pl-T(past) be.sad during party the.s  
 'The chiefs were sad during the party.'

## V S PP

- b. Re-kar buromij iroj ro ilo pade eo.  
 3pl-T(past) be.sad chief the.pl during party the.s  
 'The chiefs were sad during the party.'

Sentence final subjects are possible in both transitive (8) and intransitive (9-10) sentences only when the subject is focused.

## V O S

- (8) Re-kar rabij kuj eo leddik ro.  
 3pl-T(past) hold cat the.s girl the.pl  
 'The girls held the cat.'

## V PP S

- (9) Re-naaj ettōr n̄an kwelok eo iroj ro.  
 3pl-T(fut) run to meeting the.s chief the.pl  
 'The chiefs will run to the meeting.'

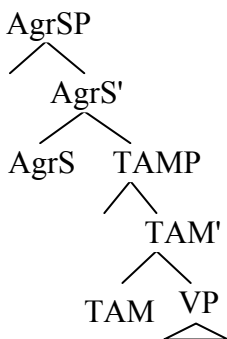
## V PP S

- (10) Re-kar buromij ilo pade eo iroj ro.  
 3pl-T(past) be.sad during party the.s chief the.pl  
 'The chiefs were sad during the party.'

In (8-10), the sentence final subjects must be new information. For example, (10) is only grammatical either in response to the question *Who was sad during the party?* or in a context in which there has been some discussion of a party or of someone being sad at the party. These facts indicate that Marshallese has a right peripheral focus position, which is not subject to any definiteness effect, as both definite and indefinite subjects may occur sentence finally. If this is the case, sentences with final subject sentences must have different structures than the sentences with sentence initial or postverbal subjects. For this reason, I will set aside the structure of sentences with final subjects.

I will assume a structure for Marshallese sentences similar to that of Hale (1998), as shown in (11). In addition to those phrases shown in (11), there are also a number of phrases which may be generated between TAMP and VP. These include phrases headed by the negative phrase and a number of adverbial phrases. I will largely set aside the ordering of these phrases for the purposes of this paper. Likewise, since there does not appear to be any unergative/unaccusative distinction in regards to word order, I will not address VP structure, including the vP/VP distinction and the question of where unergative and unaccusative subjects are generated.

(11)



### 3. SUBJECT AGREEMENT

The subject agreement clitic always agrees with the subject, even when the subject is postverbal (see (6b) and (7b)). In this respect, my research differs from what is reported in most of the published literature. For example, Erland (1914), Zewen (1977) and Hale (1998) all report that postverbal subject do not agree in number with AgrS. Rather these sources state that the 3s agreement clitic is used with postverbal plural subjects, as shown in (12) and (13).

(12) E-buromij iroij ro.  
 3s-be.sad chief the.pl  
 'The chiefs are sad.' (lit. 'It is sad the chiefs.') (Erland 1914:198)

(13) E-ju no ko.<sup>5</sup>  
 3s-stand wav the.pl  
 e  
 'The waves are high.' (lit. 'It stands the waves.') (Zewen 1977:100)

However my consultants report that (12) and (13), as well as other sentences with postverbal plural subjects and singular agreement, are ungrammatical. They report that the ungrammaticality of these sentences is due to the use of a singular agreement clitic is used with a

<sup>5</sup> There is a human/non-human distinction in Marshallese plural determiners. *Ro* is used with human nouns, while *ko* is used with non-human nouns. While this distinction also exists in the demonstrative system, it does not exist with singular determiners.

plural subject. Instead they prefer to always use the plural agreement marker with plural preverbal and postverbal subjects.

While discussing subject agreement, Zewen notes that, while there is no number agreement between the postverbal subjects and the agreement marker in Marshallese, "contemporary" Marshallese often employs the 3<sup>rd</sup> person plural marker with the postverbal plural subject. This comment seems to suggest that the discrepancy between the published literature and my research may be due to language change. Erland, Zewen and Hale, who uses Zewen's data as his example sentences, all studied an earlier dialect of Marshallese, and it is possible that this earlier dialect did not require number agreement with postverbal subjects. Marshallese may have changed, however, such that agreement with postverbal subjects is now required. Having proposed this possibility, I should also state that at this point I am unsure of what sort of change could have taken place in the language that would account for this difference. I will leave the topic for future study.

#### 4. DECLARATIVE STRUCTURE

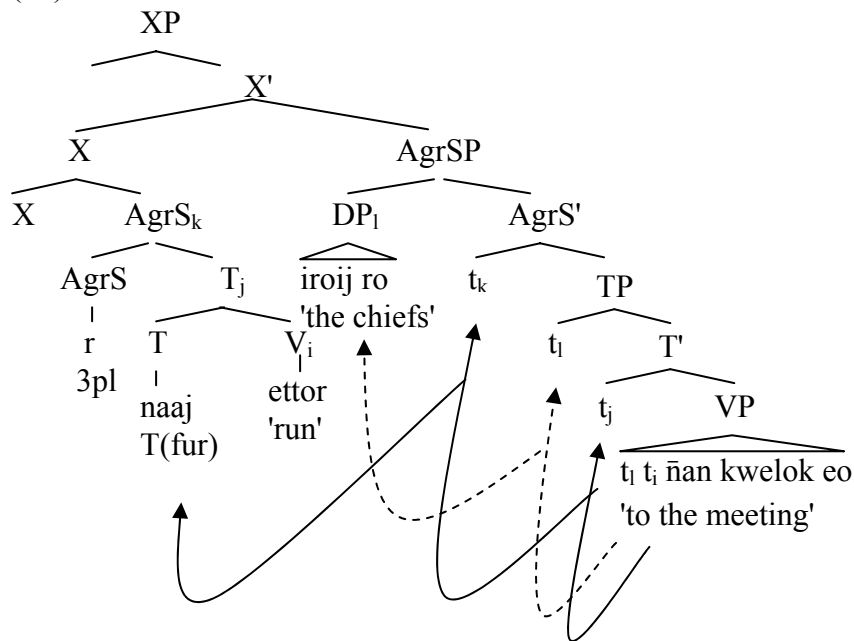
In this section, I will explore possible analyses of Marshallese declaratives that may be able to explain the word order and agreement patterns of Marshallese declaratives. Given the structure for Marshallese declaratives I proposed in section 2 and the fact that the subject precedes AgrS, TAM and adverbials when it is preverbal, it seems logical to conclude that the subject moves to the specifier of AgrSP when it is preverbal. If this is the case, the first question that is raised regarding sentences with postverbal subjects is the question of what position the subject occupies. If we assume the VP internal subject hypothesis, there are two possibilities which I wish to explore. First it might be the case that the subject has moves to the specifier of AgrSP, followed by movement of AgrS, TAM and V above it. Second, the subject might remain VP internal, in which case the verb must have moved out of the VP. I will begin by addressing the first.

##### 4.1. *Raising of the Subject to Spec AgrSP*

In sentences like (6), repeated here, the subject is preceded by AgrS, T and V, all of which appear to be heads. Since these elements are all heads, it might be the case these elements precede the subject as a result of head movement. The verb could be raising to T, followed by the raising of T+V to AgrS and subsequent movement of AgrS+T+V to a position above AgrSP, as shown in (14):

- (6) b. Re-naaj    ettōr    iroj    ro    n̄an    kwelok    eo.  
           3pl-T(fut)    run    chief    the.pl    to    meeting    the.s  
           'The chiefs will run to the meeting.'

(14)



The virtue of a structure like (14) is that it can explain subject agreement occurs with postverbal subjects. Since, in this analysis, the subject always moves to the specifier of the subject agreement phrase, agreement occurs as a result of a spec head relationship.

This structure cannot be the correct analysis of Marshallese declaratives, however. First it wrongly predicts that AgrS, T and V are a constituent, while the verb, postverbal subject and PP are not. If we examine coordination facts, we find that the subject and the prepositional phrase form a constituent, as do the verb, subject and PP.

(15) R-ar        tutu    [leddik ro    i    lik]    im    [laddik ro    i    iar].  
 3pl-T(past) swim girl    the.pl in ocean and boy    the.pl in lagoon  
 'The girls swam in the ocean and the boys in the lagoon'

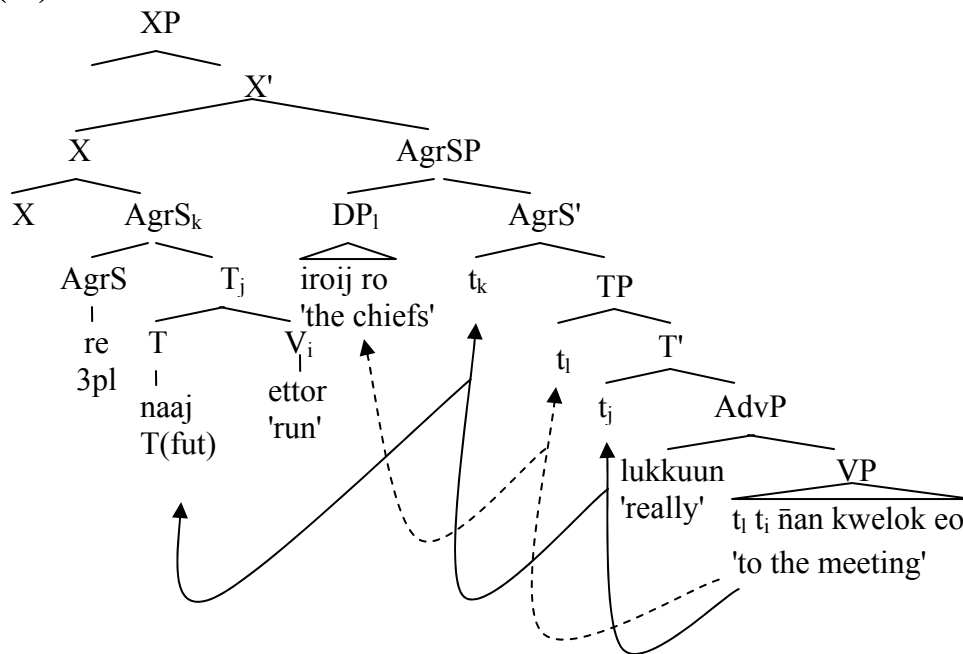
(16) R-ar        [mwijmwij kora    ran    inne]        im    [ettor kora    rein  
 3pl-T(past) cut            woman these yesterday and ran    woman these  
 rainin].  
 today  
 'These women cut (something) yesterday and those women ran today.'

(17) also seems to indicate that AgrS, T and V are not a constituent, since they cannot be coordinated.

- (17) \*[R-ar tutu] im [r-ar eñwor] emman ro boñ.  
 3pl-T(past) swim and 3pl-T(past) fish man the.pl last.night  
 'The men swam and fished last night.'

Second, this analysis makes incorrect predictions about the position of adverbs in sentences with postverbal subjects. If (14) is the correct analysis for VS intransitives, adverbial which are generated between TAM and VP should appear between the subject and the PP, since both the subject and the verb have raised to positions above these adverbials:

(18)



However, it is not possible for adverbs, such as *lukkuun*, to follow the postverbal subject. Instead they must occur between the tense marker and the verb.

- (19) a. Re-naaj lukkuun ettōr iroj ro ñan kwelok eo.  
 3pl-T(fut) really run chief the.pl to meeting the.s  
 'The chiefs will really run to the meeting.'
- b. \*Re-naaj ettōr iroj ro lukkuun ñan kwelok eo.  
 3pl-T(fut) run chief the.pl really to meeting the.s  
 'The chiefs will really run to the meeting.'

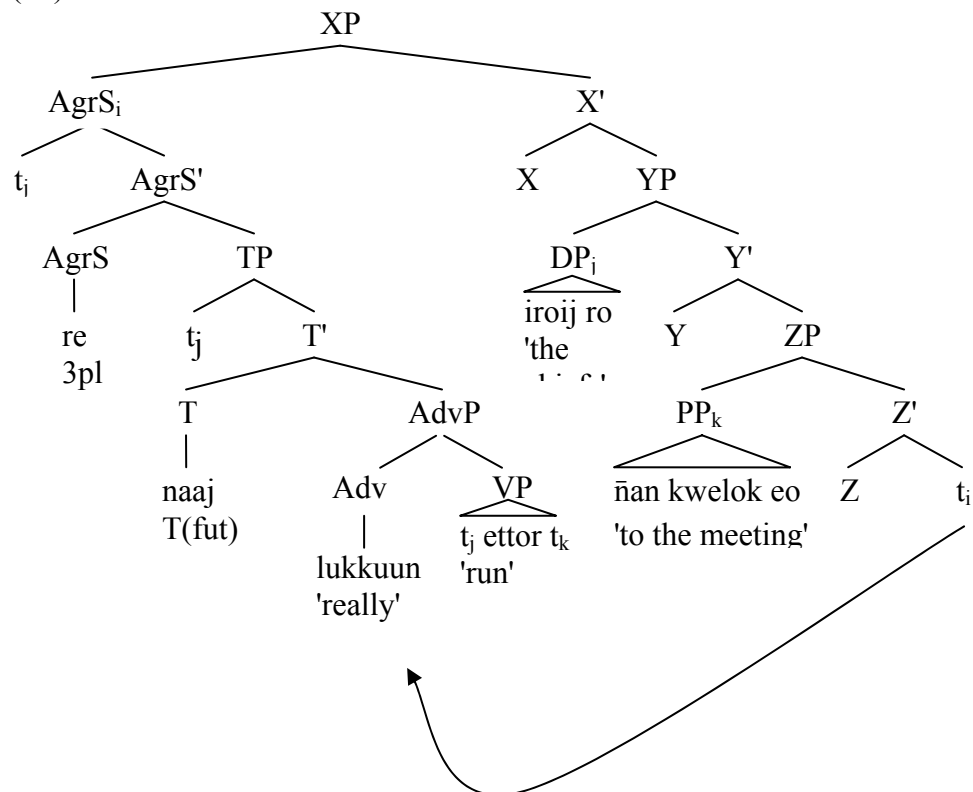
Based on these facts, it seems that this type of analysis can be ruled out.

The problem of adverb placement could be eliminated in an analysis in which the elements preceding the subject moved as a phrase rather than heads. Given the structure in (11), the only



phrase containing the positions in which AgrS, T, Adv and V are generated is AgrSP. It might be the case that AgrSP moves to a position above the subject, resulting in postverbal subject position. However the subject and the PP are also contained within AgrSP. Thus the subject and PP must first move out of AgrSP, followed by movement of the remnant AgrSP. This type of analysis is depicted in (20), in which the PP *n̄an kwelok eo* moves to the specifier of a phrase above AgrSP, labeled ZP (20), followed by movement of the subject to the specifier of a phrase above ZP, labeled YP. Finally, the remnant AgrSP moves to a specifier position above YP.

(20)

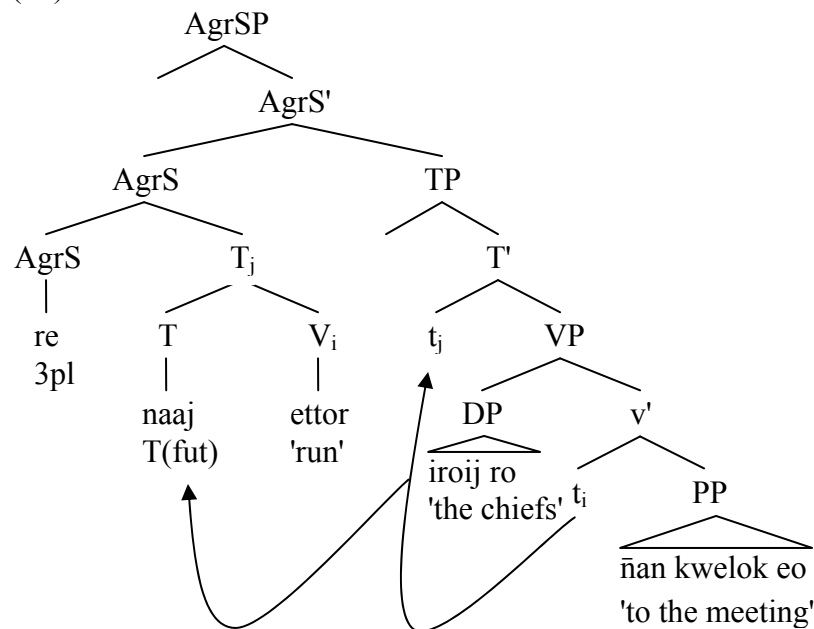


While (20) does resolve the problem of adverb placement, it still incorrectly predicts sentence constituency, since the verb does not form a constituent with the subject and the PP. This being the case, it does not seem possible to salvage an analysis in which the subject raises to the specifier of AgrSP in sentences with postverbal subjects. I therefore precede to the alternative analysis, in which the subject remains VP internal.

#### 4.2. VP Internal Subjects

If the subject remains VP internal in sentences with postverbal subjects, then it must be the case that the verb is raising to a position above VP. This is the sort of analysis that is argued for by Hale (1998). In Hale's theory, the Marshallese verb raises to AgrS in both transitive and intransitive sentences. However in intransitive sentences, Hale argues that the subject has the option of raising to spec AgrSP or of remaining VP internal, as shown in (21).

(21)

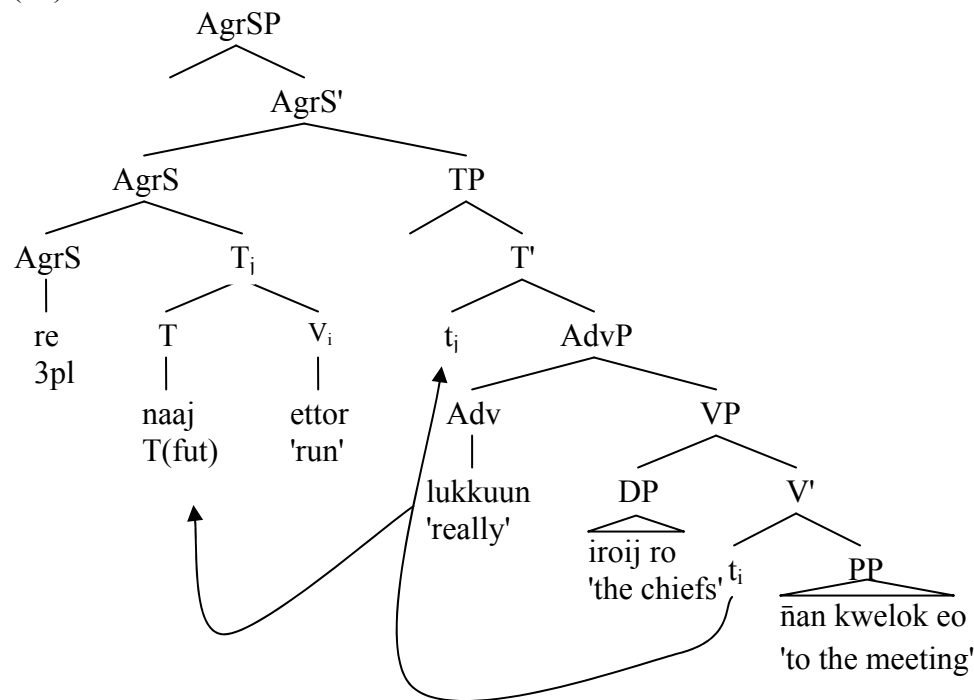


In (21), the verb raises to right adjoin to T, followed by movement of T+V to AgrS. Since the verb raises in both transitive and intransitive sentences, subject raising to spec AgrSP must only be optional in intransitive sentences.

In Hale's theory, agreement between the subject and the agreement maker is triggered by the spec head relationship resulting from subject movement. However, his data includes singular agreement with postverbal plural subjects. This being the case Hale ties the absence of number agreement with postverbal plural subjects to the merge of a null expletive in spec AgrSP, followed by agreement between the null expletive and AgrS. Hale then concludes that the prohibition of VSO order is simply due to the "rarity of transitive expletive constructions" throughout the world's languages. I will set aside any issues regarding agreement due to the fact that there are more important issues regarding constituency and adverb placement which should be addressed.

It should be apparent from the structure of (21) that this analysis makes the wrong predictions regarding constituency. In (21) the verb does not form a constituent with the postverbal subject and PP. Likewise (21) predicts that all adverbs should follow the verb, since the verb raises above the position in which adverbs are generated, as shown in (22).

(22)

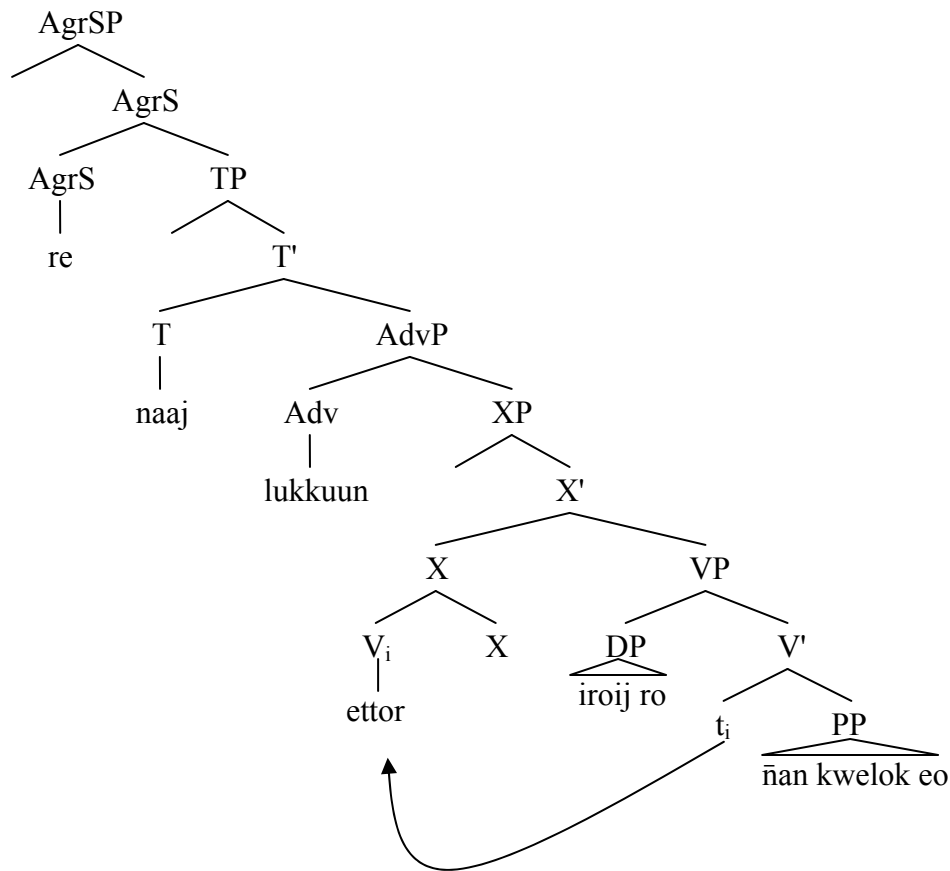


However, it is not possible for adverbs, such as *lukkuun* to intervene between the verb and the postverbal subject:

- (23) a. Re-naaj lukkuun ettōr iroij ro ñan kwelok eo.  
 3pl-T(fut) really run chief the.pl to meeting the.s  
 'The chiefs will really run to the meeting.'
- b. \*Re-naaj ettōr lukkuun iroij ro ñan kwelok eo.  
 3pl-T(fut) run really chief the.pl to meeting the.s  
 'The chiefs will really run to the meeting.'

Given these two facts, it doesn't seem possible that the verb raises to a position as high in the structure as **AgrSP**. I propose to modify Hale's theory by arguing that, while verb does raise out of the **VP**, it moves to a position below most adverbs. This position is labeled **XP** in (24).

(24)



The structure in (24) can explain both constituency, since the verb, subject and PP are a constituent, and the position of adverbs, since XP is generated below the adverb *lukkuun*. However the position of XP becomes more complicated, when verb position with respect to postverbal adverbials is explored.

#### 4.2.1. Where is XP generated?

While the position of the verb with respect to most adverbs does seem to indicate that the verb raises to a position below adverbs, there are two postverbal adverbials. These adverbials are *wōt* 'still' and *bajjik* 'just/for no reason.' While *bajjik* may be either preverbal (25a) or postverbal (25b), *wōt* must be postverbal (26).

- (25) a. Ajri ro r-ar bajjik tutu iar.  
 child the.pl 3pl-T(past) just swim lagoon  
 'The children just swam in the lagoon.'
- b. Ajri ro r-ar tutu bajjik iar.

child the.pl 3pl-T(past) swim just lagoon  
'The children just swam in the lagoon.'

- (26) a. Likao ro r-ej jambo wōt n̄an Laura.  
young.man the.pl 3pl-T(pres) cruise still to Laura  
'The young men are still cruising to Laura.'
- b. \*Re-j wōt jambo n̄an Laura.  
3pl-T(pres) still cruise to Laura  
'They are still cruising to Laura.'

In sentence with both postverbal adverbials, the verb may intervene between the adverbials (*bajjik* V *wōt*) or precede both of them (V *bajjik* *wōt* or V *wōt* *bajjik*).

- (27) a. Re-j bajjik jambo wōt.  
3pl-T(pres) just cruise.around still  
They are still just cruising around.
- b. Re-j jambo bajjik wōt.  
3pl-T(pres) cruise.around just still  
They are still just cruising around.
- c. Re-j jambo wōt bajjik.  
3pl-T(pres) cruise.around still just  
'They are still just cruising around.'

When the subject is postverbal, it must follow these adverbials:

- (28) a. Re-j jambo bajjik likao ro n̄an Laura.  
3pl-T(pres) cruise.around just young.man the.pl to Laura  
'The young men are just cruising to Laura.'
- b. \*Re-j jambo likao ro bajjik n̄an Laura.  
3pl-T(pres) cruise.around young.man the.pl just to Laura  
'The young men are just cruising to Laura.'

I take this to show that these postverbal adverbials are generated above the VP. In summary, (29) shows the possible orderings of the verb with respect to these adverbials.

- (29) a. *bajjik* > verb  
b. verb > *bajjik* > (DP/PP)

- c. verb > *wōt* > (DP/PP)
- d. *bajjik* > verb > *wōt* > (DP)
- e. verb > *bajjik* > *wōt* > (DP/PP)
- f. verb > *wōt* > *bajjik* > (DP/PP)

Since the verb must precede *wōt*, it seems that the XP to which the verb moves is located above *wōt*, but the optional placement of the verb after *bajjik* seems to show that XP is located below *bajjik*. The verb must then be able to optionally raise to out of XP to a position just above or near *bajjik*.

If we adopt a structure in which XP is generated between the adverbials *wōt* and *bajjik*, then most of the orderings shown in (29) are easily derivable. However (29e&f) are a bit more challenging. In order to show how these orders may be derived, I will first argue that these two adverbials are heads and not specifiers.

#### 4.2.2. *Bajjik* and *wōt* are heads

My argument that these two adverbials are heads relies on the position of the question particle with respect to these adverbials and from constituency. A full discussion of the distribution of the Marshallese question particle is not possible in this work. A rather simplified description of its distribution is that it may occur in a number of positions sentence internally. These include between preverbal adverbials, such as *lukkuun*, and the verb (30a) or immediately following the verb (if there are no postverbal adverbials) (30b).

- (30) a. Re-j            lukkuun **ke** jela    kaji-n            majōl?  
 3pl-T(pres)    really    Q    know    language-of    Marshall  
 'Do they really know Marshallese?'
- b. Re-j            lukkuun jela    **ke** kaji-n            majōl?  
 3pl-T(pres)    really    know    Q    language-of    Marshall  
 'Do they really know Marshallese?'

However the question particle may not occur between the verb and postverbal adverbials. Instead the question particle must either precede the verb or follow the postverbal adverbial.

- (31) a. Kwo-j            **ke** jekob            bajjik?  
 2s-T(pres)    Q    play.checkers    just  
 'Are you just playing checkers?'
- b. \*Kwo-j            jekob            **ke** bajjik?  
 2s-T(pres)    play.checkers    Q    just

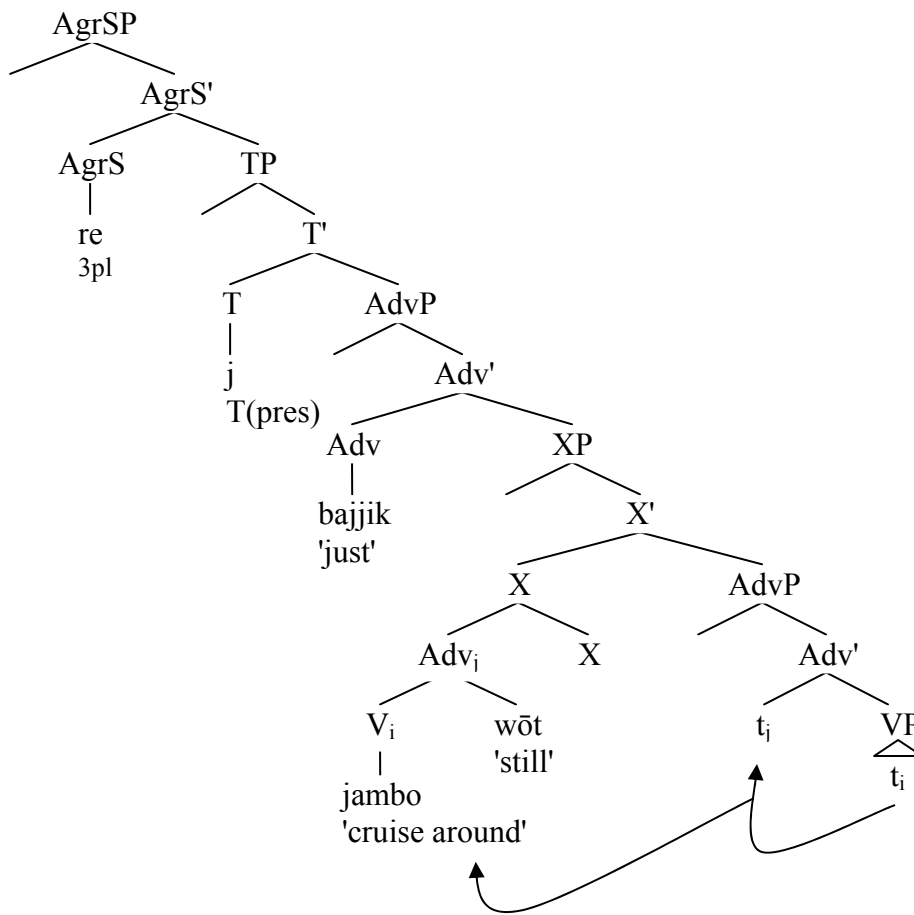
'Are you just playing checkers?'

- (32) a. Leo e-j                    **ke** etal wōt    n̄an    imon wia?  
 guy 3s-T(pres) Q go still to store  
 'Is the guy still going to the store?'
- b. Leo e-j                    etal wōt    **ke**    n̄an    imon wia?  
 guy 3s-T(pres) go still Q to store  
 'Is the guy still going to the store?'
- c. \*Leo e-j                    etal    **ke**    wōt    n̄an    imon wia?  
 guy 3s-T(pres) go Q still to store  
 'Is the guy still going to the store?'

Since the question particle may follow the verb when there is no postverbal adverbial, it cannot be the case that the prohibition against immediately postverbal question particles in sentences with postverbal adverbials is related to the fact that the question particle may never follow the verb. However, this prohibition is explained if the postverbal adverbials are heads. If the verb raises to adjoin to these adverbials, the verb and postverbal adverbials would form a complex. Since no elements, including the question particle, should be able to intervene between them, this prohibition is explained.

Take an ordering such as (27d), *bajjik V wōt*. In this sentence, the verb has raised left adjoin to *wōt*, followed by raising of *V+wōt* to the head of XP:

(33)

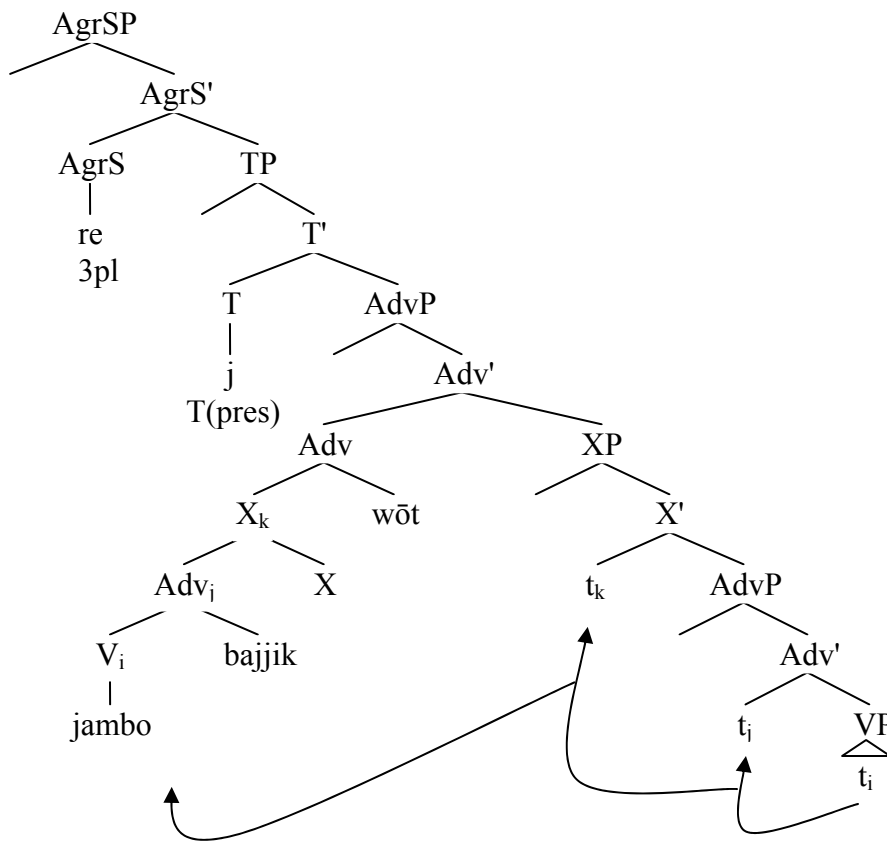


It is also possible for  $V + w\bar{o}t + X$  to then raise to left adjoin to *bajjik* which would result in the order  $V w\bar{o}t bajjik$ .

While this analysis explains most of the possible orders,  $V bajjik w\bar{o}t$  is still a problem, as the above structure does not appear to be able to derive this ordering. However it is possible that in some sentences, the adverbials could be generated in the reverse order — *wōt* above *bajjik*. This is supported by the fact that there appears to be scope difference between sentences with the ordering  $V w\bar{o}t bajjik$  and those with  $V bajjik w\bar{o}t$  order. If this is the case, sentences with the ordering  $V bajjik w\bar{o}t$  would have the derivation shown in (34).

(34)





In addition to explaining why the question particle may not intervene between the verb and postverbal adverbials, the analysis of these two adverbials as heads is supported by the coordination facts, which seem to indicate that the verb and the postverbal adverbial are a constituent.

(35) Leddik eo e-j [rabij wōt] im [najidiki wōt] niñniñ eo.  
 girl the.s 3s-(Tpres) hold still and feed still baby the.s  
 'The girl is still holding and feeding the baby.'

(36) Kora eo e-kar [mane bajjik] im [kōmate bajjik] pik ko.  
 woman the.s 3s-(Tpast) kill just and cook just pig the.pl  
 'The woman just killed and just cooked the pig.'

## 5. AGREEMENT

Given that the subject never occupies the specifier of the AgrSP in this analysis, it cannot be the case that agreement between the subject and AgrS results from a spec head relationship. An alternative to an analysis involving a spec head relationship is one in which an Agree relationship

occurs between the subject and AgrS through a probe goal relationship as argued for by Chomsky (2001).

## 6. CONCLUSION

I have argued that the postverbal position of the subject in Marshallese intransitive sentences is due to the raising of the verb to an XP below most adverbials and the optionality of subject raising to spec AgrSP. While this analysis may explain subject position in intransitives, it does not provide an account as to why the subject may not be postverbal in transitives. It is possible that verb raising may only occur in Marshallese intransitives. However, at this point there is no evidence to support such an analysis. I will therefore leave this topic for future research.

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