

GRAMMATICAL SKETCH

1. Pronouns

Cheke Holo has, like English, three sets of pronoun forms --subject, object, and possessive. However, the pronominal system is more accurately described as a single set of (subject) pronouns with corresponding sets of object and possessive case markers. A further complication arises insofar as both object and possessive forms occur in the subject role in certain types of sentences, as discussed below.

As in other Melanesian languages and in Solomons Pijin, four kinds of 'number' are distinguished (singular, dual, trial and plural), although in practice the trial form is used infrequently and often interchanged with the plural. Also typical of the Melanesian model, an inclusive/exclusive distinction is made in the first person pronouns, marking whether or not the person addressed is included in the plural *we*. In addition, male speakers make a gender distinction in third person forms, whereas female speakers use only one set of third person pronouns regardless of gender. Male speakers employ a distinctive form in referring to male persons, and use another (that spoken by females) in all other third person usages. These distinctions are carried through subject, object and possessive constructions as shown below:

1.1 Subject Pronouns

Person	sg.	dl.	tl.	pl.
1st. inclusive	lara	tapa	tatilo	tahati
1st. exclusive	**	gepa	getilo	gehati
2nd	lago	gopa	gotilo	gotilo
3rd. masc. (male speaking)	mana	phia mare	tilo mare	(hati) mare
3rd. other	na'a	repa	retilo	rehati, re'e

The regularity in these forms is apparent, with the notable exception of second person plural where the trial form, **gotilo**, is used. This patterned regularity in number distinctions is built upon Cheke Holo numerals: the dual pronouns take the form **-pa**, reflecting the numeral **phia two**; the trial forms **-tilo**, based on the numeral **tilo three**; and plurals **-hati**, resembling **fatl four**. In addition, the third person pronouns incorporate the singular/plural markers **na** (singular) and **re** (plural).

1.2 Object Forms

Object pronouns are the direct object of transitive verbs. The full form of object pronouns consists of a direct object marker followed by a pronoun marked for person and number corresponding with the forms listed above. However, in practice, these forms are frequently dropped and only the object markers occur, indicating distinctions of person and number (singular/plural) as outlined below:

Person	sg.	pl.
1st. inclusive	gau iara **	gita (tapa, tatilo, tahiti)
1st. exclusive		gami (gepa, getilo, gehati)
2nd	nigo iago	gami (gopa, gotilo)
3rd. masc. (male speaking)	ni mana	di (phia mare, tilo mare, mare)
3rd. other	ni na'a	di (repa, retilo, re'e, rehati)

hara ni mana
search om he
search for him

Fagero gau (iara) si mana ia.
jinx om I sm he art.
He jinxed me.

John na ne nago di mare re
John sg pst swear om they pl
John swore at them.

1.3 Possessive Forms

Possessive constructions are built upon the same set of distinctions for person and number outlined above for subject and object forms. However, three different sets of possessive forms are used, depending upon the nature of the object possessed. First, there is the broad distinction of 'alienable' and 'inalienable' common in Austronesian languages. Without attempting to give an exhaustive cataloguing of the resulting classification, objects such as body parts, thoughts or close kin take 'inalienable' forms, while plants, animals and common objects are possessed as 'alienable'. It should be noted, however, that the distinction is far from clear-cut, and many objects, such as one's house, in-laws or emotions, may take either form. In addition, Cheke Holo adds a third set of possessives applied to edibles or 'consumables', for example, food, drink, tobacco, and the like. These three sets of possessive forms, with example constructions, are shown below.

Possessives applied to alienable objects place the noun between a possessive form marked for person and number (singular/plural) and one of the above pronouns. The resulting set of possessives is:

Person	sg.	pl.
1st. inclusive	nogu (noun) iara **	noda (noun) (tapa, tatilo...)
1st. exclusive		nomi (noun) (gepa, getilo)
2nd	nou (noun) iago	nomi (noun) (gopa, gotilo)
3rd. masc. (male speaking)	nogna (noun) mana	nodi (noun) (phia mare...)
3rd. other	nogna (noun) na'a	nodi (noun) (repa, retilo...)

The forms used for possession of food, drink and other consumables follow exactly the pattern above, except that the initial possessive is built upon the particle *ge-* rather than *no-*. Thus, *my taro* is indicated by the form *geḡu* in the slot where *noḡu* appears above, *his taro* by *gegna*, etc.

Pronouns indicating reflexive emphasis such as *myself* or *my own* are also based on this pattern. They are formed by combining the root **the-** with the possessive suffixes listed above. Thus, *myself* becomes **theḡu** and *themselves* (dual) **thedi repa**.

The following examples illustrate these various possessive forms:

noḡu naflahi iara	<i>my knife</i>
nodi naflahi repa	<i>their (dual) knife</i>
geḡu hma'u iara	<i>my taro</i>
gedi hma'u repa	<i>their (dual) taro</i>
noḡu naflahi theḡu	<i>my own knife</i>

In practice, these forms may be shortened by dropping the final (reflexive) pronoun so that *my knife* becomes simply **noḡu naflahi**. The possessive markers may also be used as verbs of possession, as in the example below where **noḡu+iara** are merged as **noḡulara**, with the sense of *is mine*:

Noḡulara	si	khara'o	igneā
poss+I	sm	<i>basket</i>	<i>this</i>
<i>This basket is mine.</i>			

Possession of inalienable objects is indicated by affixing a possessive suffix directly to the noun, followed by the appropriate pronoun form. Attachment of the possessive to the noun reflects the fact that many of these nouns cannot stand alone. For the most part, they must be possessed by someone. As can be seen below, the (inalienable) possessive suffixes are the same as the final syllable of the forms for alienable objects:

Person	sg.	pl.
1st. inclusive	(noun)+ḡu iara	(noun)+da (tapa, tatilo...)
1st. exclusive	**	(noun)+mi (gepa, getilo...)
2nd	(noun)+mu iago	(noun)+mi (gopa, gotilo)
3rd. masc. (male speaking)	(noun)+gna mana	(noun)+di (phia mare...)
3rd. other	(noun)+gna na'a	(noun)+di (repa, retilo...)

Examples of inalienable possession are:

khameḡu iara	<i>my hand</i>
dogeḡu iara	<i>my mother</i>
khamegna mana	<i>his hand</i>

Although Cheke Holo pronouns reflect clear distinctions of subject, object and possession, both object and possessive forms may in practice be used to fill or intensify the subject role. I describe these usages as intensifiers because in most sentences the usual subject forms are at least optionally present, preceded by the subject marker **si**. These usages depend upon semantic considerations beyond the scope of this sketch.

Use of object and possessive markers to augment subject forms alters the 'voice' of the sentence, intensifying the degree of involvement of the subject, the *I/me/mine* or the *we/us/our*, in the action expressed. First person pronouns appear to be especially frequently supplemented in this way. These usages are taken up further below in the section on word order. Some examples are:

(lara) tel noḡu Buala.
I go poss Buala
I am going to Buala.

Mamaja noḡu (si lara ia).
ashamed poss sm I art
I am ashamed.

Aḡe noda ka thoḡna gno.
go poss to ocean there
Let's go to the ocean.

Krutha la tel nogna si khokorako ia.
untied imm go poss sm chicken art
The chicken came untied and went.

Involvement of the subject is intensified further with the use of edible/consumable forms instead of the more common alienable forms shown above. The verb *heta* *assert, struggle* almost always takes the possessive form, as in *heta gegna* *he/she struggles*. Other examples include:

Ne thono rorho geḡu sara ia.
pst really sting poss sm+I art
I really got stung.

Tethegu geḡu si ḡa lara gne.
Strain poss sm indf I dem
I am really straining.

In the case of object forms, subject usage occurs only with certain types of verbs, generally those indicating actions or experiences which may be seen as happening to the subject, even though the English meaning would be phrased as an agent rather than a recipient. A few examples of the use of object forms in the subject role will serve to illustrate:

(lara) ne au'u gau fara
(I) pst tempt om very
I was very tempted.

Ruru gau.
heartburn om
I feel heartburn.

Loku koba ne foḡra gau (si lara ia)
work adv pst sick om sm I art
I worked all the time and got sick.

Krikri ni fara (si mana ia)
angry om very sm he art
He got very angry.

2. Demonstratives

Another set of Cheke Holo pronouns is based on deictic forms that point things out. There are four demonstrative pronouns that make two kinds of distinctions, singular/plural and proximal/distal:

	Proximal	Distal
singular	igne <i>this</i>	igno <i>that</i>
plural	igre <i>these</i>	igro <i>those</i>

When used to modify a noun, adjectival forms are created by dropping the initial vowel, *i*. Thus:

suḡa gne	<i>this house</i>
ḡlepo ḡre	<i>these things</i>

These forms approximate the English pronouns *this, that, these, those*, but there are important differences. The Cheke Holo demonstratives are more limited insofar as they are not used to exclaim the presence of objects being shown or pointed out. The following set of exclamatory forms is used in the more immediate sense of showing or pointing to visible objects, as in the English *Here (this is)!* or *There (those are)!* -- either as pronouns or as adjectival modifiers.

	Proximal	Distal
singular	ao <i>this (here)</i>	ana <i>that (there)</i>
plural	aro <i>these (here)</i>	are <i>those (there)</i>

Cheke Holo adverbs of place, **agne** *here* and **agno** *there*, parallel the demonstrative forms. **Agne** *here* refers to the location of the speaker, while **agno** *there* refers to a specified location removed from speaker and listener. Further distinctions of place are made by **jare** and **jaro**, with **jare** referring to the *there* of the location of the listener, or one known to the listener; while **jaro** (less commonly used) refers to an unspecified distant location.

Mei agne!	<i>Come here!</i>
Gnhokro jare!	<i>Sit there!</i>

3. Nouns

3.1 Nominalisation

There are two common means by which Cheke Holo nouns may be formed from verbs. On the one hand, nominalisation may be accomplished by adding the suffix **gna** to a verbal base. (Note that this is the same form as the third person singular possessive marker.) Adding **gna** has an effect like that of adding '-ing' to

English verbs. For example,

<i>eat/eating</i>	gamu/gamugna
<i>burn/burning</i>	bruḡa/bruḡagna
<i>look/looking</i>	fifilo/fifilogna

Where transitive verbs are so nominalised the resulting verbal noun is marked as subject and the patient (which would otherwise be the direct object of the verb) follows it immediately in the sentence:

Fagano fara si gamugna nadali na ia.
be-nice very sm eating eel sg art
Eating eel is very nice.

Lumu gau fara gamugna phapati ia.
give -indigestion om very eating pudding art
Eating the pudding gave me indigestion.

On the other hand, many nouns related to verbs as outcome to activity or instrument to action are formed by morphological shifts in the initial consonant. These shifts are highly regular, following phonological rules which specify paired oppositions for each type of initial consonant. Verbs beginning with the voiceless stops, **k, p, t**, are nominalised by aspirating the initial sound forming **kh, ph** or **th** respectively:

ko'u/kho'u	<i>drink / water</i>
kago/khago	<i>husk / husking stick</i>
pukri/phukri	<i>twine rope / rope</i>
poloru/pholoru	<i>compensate / compensation</i>
tataḡru/thataḡru	<i>pound tapa / tapa pounder</i>
teteḡo/theteḡo	<i>cook in an oven / (stone) oven</i>

Verbs with the initial liquid consonants *l* or *r* have complementary noun forms beginning with a voiced velar stop, making the initial syllable *ḡl* or *ḡr*, respectively. For example:

lehe/ḡlehe	<i>die / death</i>
lalahu/ḡlalahu	<i>play / game</i>
roge/ḡroge	<i>discuss / discussion</i>
ragi/ḡragi	<i>dance (v.) / dance (n.)</i>

Verbs with an initial voiced velar fricative, *g*, nominalise by substituting a velar stop, *ḡ*:

gorha/ḡorha	<i>paddle (v.) / paddle</i>
gaogato/ḡaogato	<i>think / thoughts</i>
gapa/ḡapa	<i>step over / step</i>

Lastly, a small number of verbs beginning with *h* have nominal counterparts with an aspirated *n*, *nh*:

hamu/nhamu	<i>scoop out / scoop</i>
huḡe/nhuḡe	<i>swell up / boil (infection)</i>
huga/nhuga	<i>put on a belt / belt</i>

Verbs with initial sounds other than those already mentioned generally form result nouns by adding the nominalising prefix *na*:

haru/naharu	<i>tie / knot</i>
fnera/nafnera	<i>injure / injury (wound)</i>
blau/nablau	<i>steal / theft</i>

3.2 Articles

Nouns rarely occur without some specification of location or relation to the speaker. In addition to the demonstrative forms already mentioned, Cheke Holo includes four articles which may be used to indicate whether the noun is singular or plural, and whether it is previously known to the listener. This latter distinction is similar to (but not the same as) the definite/indefinite distinction in the English *the* and *a*. A significant difference in Cheke Holo articles is that they are used to mark proper names as well as common nouns.

The article for singular objects not previously known is *na*, placed after the noun. If a singular object is one already known or discussed, it is followed by the form *ia*, similar to the Pijin form which serves the same function. The plural forms corresponding to these distinctions are *re* and *ra* respectively.

hore na	<i>a canoe</i>
hore ia	<i>the canoe</i>
hore re	<i>canoes</i>
hore ra	<i>the canoes</i>

In addition to *na*, the numeral *one* (*kaisel*) may also be used to refer to a single entity not previously known or mentioned. Other, less frequently used articles are the universalising *u* placed before abstract nouns such as *love* (*nahma*); and *i* or *i'i* used to mark personal names.

3.3 Quantifiers

There are a variety of forms which specify quantity or amount. Unlike other adjectives, these words generally precede the noun. The most frequently used quantifiers indicate whether a single entity or an unspecified number is referred to. Single entities are signified by the numeral *one* (*kaisel*), collectivities with the terms *keha* (*some but not others*), *goro* (*all [of a group]*) and *gobi* (*all [of a very large number]*), from the numeral *one hundred*.

<i>kaisel sua na</i>	<i>one child</i>
<i>keha sua re</i>	<i>some children</i>
<i>goro sua re</i>	<i>all the children</i>
<i>gobi sua re</i>	<i>all the many children</i>

Tei ka sikulu keha sua re, nha'au kolho keha sua re.
go to school some child pl stay simply other child pl
Some children go to school, other children simply stay (at home).

Ne hauhau nala goro khuma gna namono gne ka glaba ia.
pst bark just all dog of village this at moon art
All the dogs of this village were just barking at the moon.

There are several nearly synonymous terms that function like the English universal quantifier *every*. These forms, built upon verbal bases indicating *gone* or *finished*, are placed after a noun or pronoun to indicate *all* or *every*. Four nearly synonymous terms are: *fathe'o*, *fahui*, *fagnafa* and *fanhigo*.

<i>sua fathe'o re</i>	<i>all the children (every one)</i>
<i>tahati fahui</i>	<i>every one of us</i>

There are a large number of descriptors used to refer to the quantity or quality of exchange items in speeches and songs on ceremonial occasions. Feast presentations require a rhetoric of humility which refers to large amounts of fine food or goods as small and inadequate. Diminishing the items in this way has the effect of calling attention to their significance while at the same time adhering to cultural expectations of outward humility in feast presentations. For example, two forms signifying *single* or *solitary* are frequently used in this way:

<i>kaisel pheda sillini</i>	<i>one single shilling</i>
<i>kha'ilo rai si na</i>	<i>a solitary (grain of) rice</i>

Numerous other diminutive quantifiers are formed by affixing the nominalising prefix *na* to verbs such as *break*, *tear* or *crumble*, thus forming the terms *broken piece*, *torn shred* or *crumb*:

<i>naklethu bisiketl</i>	<i>a broken bit of biscuit</i>
<i>nabreku phoko</i>	<i>a shred of cloth</i>
<i>na'nhuja bredi</i>	<i>a crumb of bread</i>

Numerals are given in the Appendix. Cheke Holo makes use of distinct forms for describing number and for counting. Ordination (*first*, *second*, etc.) is generally achieved by adding the causative prefix *fa* to the numeral. Thus, *kaisel one* becomes *fakaisel first*. This rule parallels the Pijin usage in which *wan* becomes *mekewan*.

4. Adjectives/Statives

Descriptive terms characterising persons or things generally follow the nouns they modify. Such adjectival terms as *bi'o* *big*, *brahu* *long* or *rifu* *cold* are applied as follows:

mae bi'o	<i>big man</i>
khakla brahu	<i>long hair</i>
kho'u rifu	<i>cold water</i>

There is no Cheke Holo verb *to be* which attributes properties such as *big* or *long* to objects. Descriptive terms such as the above frequently function as verbs, taking on the sense of *is big* or *is long*. These verb forms, or stative verbs, may be predicated of some entity simply by linking the two with the subject marker *si*:

Bi'o fara si mana ia.
big very sm he art
He is very big.

Brahu si khaklagna na.
long sm hair+poss sg
His hair is long.

In these usages, terms which function as adjectives in noun phrases become stative verbs attributing their quality to the designated subject. Most of the dictionary entries marked as adjectives may also function in this way.

Adjectives or statives may also be formed from (intransitive) verbs by affixing them with the nominalising prefix *na*, or by certain shifts in the initial consonant (such as *f* to *fn* or *s* to *sn*). The following verb/adjective pairs illustrate the process (several examples were also given in the section on quantifiers above):

mhagu/namhagu	<i>fear/fearful</i>
klopa/naklopa	<i>break/broken</i>
firi/fniri	<i>tangle/tangled</i>
fotho/fnotho	<i>close/closed</i>
siḡla/sniḡla	<i>shine/shiny</i>
samhu/snamhu	<i>pull out/detached</i>

5. Verbs

5.1 Transitive/Intransitive

There are several ways in which Cheke Holo marks for transitivity. Most apparent is the use of object pronouns or markers that explicitly indicate the person or thing being acted upon. The two direct object markers, *ni* and *di*, are the same forms used in third person object pronouns indicating singular or plural objects respectively:

atha ni na	<i>get it</i>
atha di re	<i>get them</i>

Certain verbs which may be either transitive or intransitive are marked for transitivity by the addition of the transitive suffix *-i*, particularly when the object is not specified in the sentence. This form may be tacked on to the end of the verb stem or it may actually replace the final vowel as the following examples show.

aknu	<i>hit</i>	akni	<i>hit (it)</i>
koko	<i>drop</i>	kokoi	<i>throw</i>
apu	<i>bathe</i>	apui	<i>wash</i>
nomho	<i>listen</i>	nomhi	<i>hear</i>

5.2 Causative Prefix

Another major way in which Cheke Holo transforms intransitive verbs into transitive ones is by attaching the causative prefix *fa*. Having the sense of *cause to...*, the addition of *fa* has a predictable effect upon a whole range of intransitive verbs. For example,

lehe	<i>die</i>	falehe	<i>kill (cause to die)</i>
cheke	<i>talk</i>	facheke	<i>tell, tell off</i>
karha	<i>live</i>	fakarha	<i>save</i>
tei	<i>go</i>	fatei	<i>send</i>

The causative prefix has the same effect upon stative verbs. The addition of *fa* transforms them into transitives.

di'a	<i>bad</i>	fadi'a	<i>damage, ruin</i>
brahu	<i>long</i>	fabrahu	<i>lengthen</i>
maku	<i>firm</i>	famaku	<i>make firm</i>
doglo	<i>straight</i>	fadoglo	<i>straighten</i>
bi'o	<i>big</i>	fabi'o	<i>enlarge</i>

There is, however, an important ambiguity in transitive verbs formed by prefixing *fa* to a stative base. In most cases, the very same form may function as an adverb, qualifying an action. Hence.

di'a	<i>bad</i>	cheke fadi'a	<i>speak badly</i>
brahu	<i>long</i>	au fabrahu	<i>stay for a long time</i>
doglo	<i>straight</i>	tei fadoglo	<i>go straight</i>
bi'o	<i>large</i>	eha fabi'o	<i>shout loudly</i>

In most cases the potential for ambiguity between the transitive or adverbial readings of prefixed verbs is resolved by context and sentence meaning.

In the dictionary, only base forms are consistently listed as separate entries. A form derived by addition of the causative prefix is listed when it is at least as common as the base, or when its meaning is not readily predictable from it. In many cases causative forms are noted as part of the base entry; in others they occur as sub-entries.

5.3 Reduplication

Reduplication is a very common device in verb construction which may have several effects on verb meaning. On the one hand, reduplication is another means by which intransitive forms may be made into transitive ones. For example,

fruni/fufruni	<i>be covered over / cover over</i>
goflo/gogoflo	<i>form a dent / put a dent in</i>
filiti/fifiliti	<i>peel off (v.i.) / peel off (v.t.)</i>

On the other hand, reduplication may simply increase the intensity or intentionality of an action. Thus, while *fadi'a* is *to damage*, *fadidi'a* is *to damage deliberately* or *to damage maliciously*. Note that reduplication of the verb stem also clarifies the transitive reading of the form *fadi'a*. *fadidi'a* could not be used as an adverb as the unreduplicated form may be (*fadi'a badly*).

The other major effect of reduplication is, as in Pijin, to indicate a lengthening of the action or event referred to. Just as the verb form is repeated, so reduplication indicates that the action may be repeated or prolonged over a longer duration. Thus,

tei/tetei	<i>go/travel</i>
aknu/a'aknu	<i>strike/beat</i>
dalha/dadalha	<i>cut skin/butcher</i>
riu/riuriu	<i>move/fluctuate</i>
churu/chuchuru	<i>pierce/sew up</i>
vigo/viovigo	<i>shake/wobble</i>

5.4 Reciprocal Prefix

The reciprocal prefix *farl* indicates that an action is done mutually, back and forth between two parties. Hence, verbs formed with the reciprocal prefix must be transitive with plural subjects, describing an action mirrored by two or more people, each responding to the other. For example,

tugu/faritugul	<i>replace/exchange</i>
cheke/farichekei	<i>talk/discuss</i>
tafo/faritafoi	<i>meet/rendezvous</i>
phoapola/fariphoapolai	<i>shout at/argue loudly</i>

Note that transitivity is marked on the reciprocal forms by the addition of the transitive suffix *-i*. Since the object(s) of the verb are in fact the subjects or agents, it does not occur separately in the sentence:

Repa re faritafoi koba ka thobi Igno holo.
they+dl pl recip+meet+om always at garden there upland
They are always meeting each other at the garden up there.

5.5 Tense/Aspect

Tense is frequently not marked explicitly in Cheke Holo sentences. Once established, in a sentence or conversation, tense may be understood from context and left unstated. In many instances, tense is signified only by the use of time designations such as *now, later, yesterday, next month*, and the like. However, Cheke Holo does have both future and past tense markers as well as numerous aspect markers which may be used singly or in combination in a great variety of ways. Only the primary forms are reviewed here.

Simple future tense is indicated by the marker *na*, placed before the verb:

Iago na poloru ka John ia.
you fut pay-compensation to John art
You will pay compensation to John.

Na te tei Nareabu sara ia.
fut asp go Nareabu sm+I art
I am going to Nareabu.

Indefinite future events are frequently indicated by use of the time marker *ḡinau* (or *ḡinou*) *later*, together with *na* and the indefinite aspect marker *ḡa*. This phrasing places the event at an unspecified *later* time.

Ġinau na ke tei ĩa sara ia.
later fut rpt go indf sm+I art
I will go again later.

Ġinau na fa'age ĩa iara nou roĥo re.
later fut send indf I your money art
I will send you money later.

Future actions or events which are to follow a specified time or precondition are marked by *ame* (and frequently the indefinite aspect marker *ĩa*). *Ame*, then, has the sense of *before then* in sentences as *Do x before then doing y*.

Kulu gaogaho gu ame goġrei ĩa suġa na egu.
first plan rcpt fut erect indf house sg rcpt.
(We) should first make a plan before erecting the house.

Ġinau ġrafi ame faidu ĩa.
later evening fut meet indf
(We) will meet later in the evening.

Niha ame mei ĩa egu si gotillo ia?
when fut come indf rcpt sm you-all art
When are you all coming? (How long before you all come?)

To give a sentence a past orientation, the tense/aspect marker *ne* may be placed before the verb. However, *ne* is not a general purpose past-tense marker. It signals that an event has occurred in the near past and is usually indefinite regarding completion of the event. If an action or event is completed and/or located at a specific point in the past, such as by saying 'yesterday' or 'earlier today', the tense/aspect marker *neke* is used. Hence:

Ne tei ugra.
pst go fish
(He) went fishing.

Hamerane iara neke ijulju buka sia.
morning I pst read book emph
This morning I read a book.

In addition to *na* and *ne* there are several particles which occur before the verb, marking it for time and aspect. These particles, together with other post-verbal aspect markers may combine in a great variety of ways to make subtle distinctions of temporal process, and of the speaker's knowledge of the actions described. The major pre-verbal aspect/tense markers are as follows:

ke	repetitive, definite
la	immediate
me	inceptive
na	future
ne	past, incomplete
te	present, existing state

ke hage holo
rpt go-up bush
go back up to the bush

Nabrou na la fruni.
road sg imm block
The road is blocked.

Thogel me ke nolo egu iara gne.
slowly incpt rpt walk rcpt I here
I will start slowly walking again.

Kaisei mae chari te la tel gno.
one man run prs imm go there
A man is running off over there.

It should be noted here that both *ke* and *te* are polysemous, with *ke* also used in comparative constructions (such as 'bigger than', 'better than', etc.) and *te* used mostly as a relative pronoun (as in the English 'that', 'which', 'who') to introduce a subordinate clause completing a predicate. However, it is also used to mark actions and events as an existing state of affairs, indefinite and impinging on the present. *Te* is sometimes used in combination with the tense/aspect markers *la* (immediate) and *na* (future).

Of the forms listed above, *me*, *ne* and *te* form a contrast set. These forms do not co-occur and undergo similar transformations. *Meke*, *neke*, and *teke* are all pre-verbal particles which add an indication of specific time (or single occurrence) to the qualities designated by *me*, *ne* and *te* respectively. And *meu*, *neu*, *teu* all affix the continuative *u* (see below) to add a sense of duration. Unlike the aspect markers noted so far, these latter three particles occur after the verb or at the end of a verb phrase. Finally, *neku* and *teku* are emphatic forms that also follow the verb or verb phrase, with *neku* used to assert a contrary proposition, and *teku* marking a proposition as already known by the listener.

Built upon the tense/aspect particle *ne*, the forms *neu* and *neku* also locate actions in the past. However, each form conveys a distinctive aspectual quality. Contrasts in their meanings and differences in syntactic roles are illustrated below.

Mana na ne cheke gau iara.
he sg pst talk om I
He told me off.

Cheke gau iara neu si mana ia.
talk om I pst sm he art
He was telling me off (e.g., during the meeting).

Blalu neu ne uka sara ia.
slippery pst pst fall sm+I art
(It) was slippery and I fell.

Ne kora nu suplu neu si suspen ia.
pst have-hole then leak pst sm pan art
The pan had a hole so it leaked.

Mala tel tobi neku si iara ia.
supposed go clear emph sm I art
I was supposed to go and clear a garden (but didn't).

Note that *neu* and *neku* occupy similar syntactic slots (in contrast with *ne*) located after the verb or verb phrase. In this position, these particles serve to recapitulate or underscore the veracity of the preceding assertion. Both particles are intensifiers, with *neku* the more emphatic.

Parallel distinctions to the contrast between *ne* and *neu* are found in the pairs *te/teu* and *me/meu*. The forms *teu* and *meu*, occurring after the verb or verb phrase like *neu*, may also add an element of duration to the particles *te* (present or existing state) and *me* (inceptive):

Jame tel raru gognaro gne na te bobotu gami meu gehati gre.
if go out-sea now here fut prs wet om incpt we here
If we go out to sea now we would get wet.

Dalha bosu meu mare.
butcher pig incpt they
They were starting to butcher the pig.

Mae bi'o na gnakra teu ka suḡa na.
Man big sg sit-firmly prs at house sg
The big man is staying put at the house.

To digress for a moment to consider two forms that are not, strictly speaking, aspect markers, both **egu** and **gu** commonly occur after a verb or verb phrase to recapitulate and qualify a previous assertion, similar to **meu**, **neu**, **teu**, **neku** and **teku** discussed above. Placed after the predicate (and frequently immediately before the subject in verb-initial sentences), **egu** carries the instructive sense of 'this is the way it is', affirming a certain (present) state of affairs. For example,

Dale egu si pha'u iago gne.
bald rcpt sm head you here
Your head is bald.

The'ome maku signe, kmakmasa egu signe.
neg strong sm+this frayed rcpt sm+this
This isn't strong, it's frayed.

Fanomho ni vaka ia egu gotilo ia.
Listen om ship art rcpt you-all art
Listen for the ship, you all.

Whereas **egu** affirms or underscores a proposition for the listener, **gu** recaps a preceding verb or statement as a probability or a suggested course of action:

Tei aho gu ka suḡa gno.
go get-shelter rcpt prep house there.
(Let's) go take shelter in that house over there.

Tiroḡu tei iara gne ne fasniki gu iara.
not-want go I here pst get-lost rcpt I
I don't want to go, I would get lost.

Taetaḡe gu noḡu hirama gne ame tei n̄a mata egu sara ia.
sharpen rcpt my axe here fut go indf bush rcpt sm+I art
I am going to sharpen my axe here before going to the bush.

To return to forms which function solely as aspect markers, there are several particles that occur immediately after the verb. These forms frequently co-occur with the pre-verbal aspect markers discussed above. The major post-verbal forms are:

hi	completive
n̄a	indefinite
u	continuative
n̄au	persistive
n̄ala	limiter

The indefinite marker **n̄a** is used especially in future constructions and in conditionals (see below under Conditionals):

lara ginau tei n̄a ka suḡaḡu.
I later go indf to house+poss
I am going to my house later.

Nathul ame tel n̄a.
 tomorrow fut go indf
Tomorrow (I) will go.

ne di'a n̄a igne nu
 if bad indf this then
if this is bad then

Another commonly used post-verbal particle is the completive aspect marker hi. Hi may co-occur with both neke and la to indicate completed past actions and completed immediate actions, respectively. The sense of completed immediate actions signified by the 'la _____ hi combination is similar to the meaning conveyed by the Pijin term nao, as in Hemi go nao (*He just went* ' or *He has already gone*):

lara neke tel hi.
 I pst go cpt
I already went (or I have gone).

La deni hi mana la.
 imm find cpt he art
He already found it.

The continuative form u stands in contrast to the completive hi, occurring in nearly the same syntactic slots. u, however, is often suffixed to the verb or adverb. It may also stand alone elsewhere in the sentence, such as following a direct object.

Ofou sago agne gile ke mel lara ḡrafl.
 wait+cnt sm+you here until rpt come I evening
You wait here until I come back in the evening.

Gegho fad'iau thaba gne.
 warp badly+cnt board this
This board is still warped badly.

Au geu ḡa'usa u ba sago.
 have poss betel nut cnt psbl sm+you
You probably still have some betel nut. (Don't you have some betel nut left?)

The post-verbal particle n̄au, like u, expresses continuation. However, n̄au, further specifies 'persisting, not yet ceasing', similar to the Pijin *let yet*.

Hara n̄au mana gne.
 search cnt he adj
He is still searching.

the'ome gnafa n̄au.
 neg finish cnt
not finished yet

lara the'ome tel n̄au.
 I neg go cnt
I haven't gone yet.

Finally, n̄ala diminishes the effect of an action by limiting its duration and intensity, or by describing it as sudden and unplanned. For example:

Chakhi n̄ala mana ka ḡaiju ana.
caught lmt he on stick that
He suddenly got caught on that stick.

Mana ne rarhaja n̄ala khoje na.
he pst disrupt lmt song sg
He abruptly disrupted the song.

6. Adverbs

As described previously, adding the causative prefix *fa* to Cheke Holo stative verbs and adjectives transforms them into adverbs, when used in the appropriate grammatical context (after the verb to be modified). Although the morphological change (prefixing *fa*) is the same as that used to derive transitive forms from intransitive bases, the ambiguity is resolved by context or, in many cases, the reduplication of transitive forms. To add to the examples given above,

maku	<i>firm</i>	loku famaku	<i>hold firmly</i>
kell	<i>good</i>	eni fakeli	<i>do well</i>
gnafa	<i>finish</i>	ko'u fagnafa	<i>drink completely</i>
jafra	<i>wrong</i>	riso fajafra	<i>write wrongly</i>
jifla	<i>go out</i>	atha fajifla	<i>take out</i>

Another manner in which Cheke Holo accomplishes adverbial functions is by compounding verbs, usually by following the main verb with a directional term, such as *up*, *down*, *toward* or *away*. In addition to the primary directional forms *mei* *hither* (*toward the speaker*) and *lao* *thither*, *ahead* (*away from the speaker*), the verbs *hage* *go up*, *ascend* and *so'o*, *so*ru or *sukha* *go or come down*, *descend* are commonly used in this way:

apo hage	<i>bubble up</i>
blu'e soru	<i>sag down</i>
tuga sukha	<i>move down</i>
tusu lao	<i>hand away</i>

There are a small number of verbs which fit into the same adverbial slots as these directional terms, including *fodu* *be together*, *be full*, *sopa* *be apart*, *separate*, and *koko* *throw away*, *cast off*:

loku fodu	<i>work together</i>
au sopa	<i>stay separately</i>
kalkari koko	<i>scrape off</i>

There is one specific semantic class of adverbial forms which deserves particular mention. That is, terms which modify the intentional, planful or goal-directed quality of action. By far the most commonly used modifiers are those which de-emphasise or downplay the deliberate, serious character of personal action, although there is an equally large set of emphasisers. Among the forms used to dilute or de-emphasise verbal significance, the following forms precede the verb they modify.

khoḡla	<i>just, simply</i>
roi	<i>somewhat, slightly, sort of</i>
fiti	<i>just, without proper consideration</i>
the'ome ra'e	<i>not really, not very</i>

Other forms which are very similar in meaning to those listed above occur after the verb:

kolho	<i>only, simply</i>
ñala	<i>just, quickly, without forethought</i>
tafri	<i>aimlessly, haphazardly</i>

There are complementary forms that have the opposite effect of those listed above, i.e. which serve to emphasise the seriousness of an action or the veracity of a statement. Among those which precede the verb are:

thono	<i>really, very much</i>
ra'e	<i>really, extremely</i>
thofno, pukuni	<i>really, genuinely, actually</i>

Amplifying forms which follow the verb include:

fara	<i>very</i>
tahu, bi'o	<i>extremely</i>

7. Prepositions

There are two prepositional forms which do most of the directional/locative work in Cheke Holo: **ka** and **ke**. Of the two, **ka** is the more versatile, with a range of uses spanning locational *to/at*, temporal *on, at the time of*, instrumental *with/by* and cause/source *from/because of* meanings. These different senses of **ka**, corresponding to many of the uses of the Pijin long, are illustrated below.

ka suḡaḡu gno	<i>to/at my house over there</i>
ka Fraede	<i>on Friday</i>
fnera ka naflahi	<i>wound with a knife</i>
ka teuana	<i>because of that</i>
lehe ka foḡra	<i>die from sickness</i>

In contrast to the polysemy of **ka**, **ke** is more restricted in meaning to directionality, and must be used in combination with a specific locational term, such as *inside, top* or *bottom* to form a prepositional phrase with meanings such as *inside of, above* and *underneath*.

ke lamna	<i>inside</i>
ke kligna	<i>above</i>
ke pari	<i>underneath</i>

Most other Cheke Holo prepositional constructions consist of a base form with an obligatory possessive suffix. Where the prepositional (noun) object is not mentioned explicitly, the singular (**gna**) and plural (**di**) possessive suffixes are used. The base **balu** *with* only requires a suffix when applied to persons. Listed with the singular possessive suffix **gna**, the most commonly used base forms are:

rhogna	<i>beside, next to, near</i>
tagna	<i>in (container, part of)</i>
eigna	<i>about, because of</i>
naugna	<i>because of</i>
balugna mana	<i>with him</i>
balu frane	<i>with bravery</i>

One of the few forms that takes a direct object is the recipient marker **rañhi**, used to indicate a person receiving a gift, message or other object transferred from someone else.
tusu rañhi gami gəhati.

give prep om we-excl
give to us

loku rañhi nigo
work prep om+you
work for you

8. Sentence Construction

8.1 Word Order

Cheke Holo speakers construct both subject-first and verb-first sentences with equal facility. Both verb-initial sentences (either verb-subject-object [VSO] or verb-object-subject [VOS]) and sentences using the subject-verb-object [SVO] order familiar to English and Pijin speakers occur with great frequency. The placement of either the verb or the subject first often reflects topical emphasis, foregrounding or focussing attention on a particular part of the sentence.

Where the verb is the initial constituent of a sentence, its subject is often preceded by the subject marker *si* (often forming contractions with subject pronouns beginning with a vowel: *si+iara=sara*, or *si+ana=sana*). The use of the subject marker is illustrated most simply with a sentence consisting only of a verb and its subject:

- (1) *Nheta fara si mae Merika re.*
 v adv sm subj pl
 American men are very strong.
- (2) *Nolo tafri kolho si iara ia.*
 v adv adv sm subj sg
 I am simply walking around.
- (3) *Iara nolo tafri kolho sia.*
 subj v adv adv emph
 I am simply walking around.

Note that the emphatic particle at the end of the subject-first sentence (3) above is a contraction of the subject marker *si* + the singular familiar *ia*, yielding *sia*, as if the subject, *iara*, in the verb-initial sentence (2) had been removed and placed at the beginning.

Word order becomes more complicated once objects are introduced into the sentence. Object markers (such as *ni* singular and *di* plural third person forms) generally follow the verb, in the order: *v + om + subj + obj*.

Gatho peapea ni sara chekegna na.
 v adv om sm+subj obj sg
 I doubt (think twice about) his words.

Ĝeĝe ni ñala iara khegra ao.
 v om lmt subj obj adj
 I simply doubt (the strength of) this post here.

Object markers also follow the verb in subject-first sentences, producing the order: *subj + v + om + obj*:

Iara ginau hata di geĝu re sia.
 subj adv v om obj pl emph
 I am getting my food later.

Iara la foli ni hi viri ia.

subj imm v om cpt obj sg
I just bought the tobacco.

There are, however, sentences in which a pronominal form may intercede between the verb and object marker. This insertion frequently occurs in sentences using a possessive pronoun to amplify or intensify personal involvement of the subject. The possessive form is generally inserted *in addition* to the normal subject pronoun, although deletion of the latter may leave the possessive as the only representation of subject.

Ġinau hata noġu di sara rea
 adv v subj om sm+subj pl
I will get them later.

Tel fillo noġu ni vaka gno.
 v v subj om obj adj
I am going to see the ship over there.

Aġe noda fagusna ni ka mana.
 v subj v om prep ind-obj
Let's go ask it of him.

The VSO ordering also pertains to more complicated sentences in which the object of the verb is a nominalised verb or an embedded verb phrase. For example, in the sentence below the verb *glouloku* *work at* incorporates the transitive suffix *l* and takes the nominalised *burning* of the garden as its object.

Ġloulokul si mare bruġagna na thobi bi'o gno.
 v sm subj obj sg ind-obj adj adj
They are working at burning the big garden over there.

Complement constructions fit readily into this pattern, with the object of the main verb being itself an embedded verb phrase. Hence, in the sentence *I don't believe that the ship is coming later* the object of believing is the verb phrase *the ship is coming later*, marked below by the complementiser *te*:

The'ome fatutuani ni lara te mel vaka ġinau na.
 neg v om subj cmp v2 sbj2 adv sg

In this sentence both the main verb phrase and the subordinate clause both follow the verb-initial pattern. This pattern may also apply where the subordinate verb phrase includes a direct object. For example, in the sentence *The arrow which I shot simply missed*, in which the subject, *the arrow*, is also the object of the embedded phrase *I shot the arrow*, Cheke Holo marks *arrow* with the subject marker *si* and follows it with the relative pronoun *teke* *which*:

Jafra kolho si kuali teke fada lara na ia.
 v demph sm subj prn v2 sbj2 sg sg

Subject-first type sentences sometimes insert the predicate marker *e* prior to the verb phrase. As evident from some of the examples of subject-first sentences above, the *e* is not obligatory. Where it is used, it is positioned between subject and object. Thus,

Richard na e tusu mel radio na ka lara.
 subj sg pm v obj sg prep ind-obj
Richard gave the radio to me.

Sobo gna Ligomo na e kukuku fara.
 subj poss n sg pm v adv
The Ligomo's anchor is very rusty.

Related to this usage of *e* is its role as a predicate marker in compound sentences. In sentences with coordinate clauses *e* functions to conjoin the two clauses. For example,

Dani tei ña John u e gamu geda fathe'o.
 conj v1 indf subj1 cnt pm v2 poss adv
While John is gone (let's) eat all our (food).

In sentences with a single subject and two dependent verb phrases, *e* marks both phrases:

- (1) Mola igne e the'ome doḡlo theigna na e Jiḡo tafri.
 subj adj pm neg v1 subj sg pm adv
This canoe's movement isn't straight, (it) veers all over.
- (2) Mae te fogra ia e fa'ho'iho sia e kakamora tafri.
 subj cmp v sg pm v1 emph pm v2 adv
The sick man is dying, (he's) thrashing all around.

8.2 Connectives

In many sentences where English inserts a conjunction such as *and* or *then*, Cheke Holo relies on the simple juxtaposition of phrases. For example,

Sua na ne mhonogna ni mae vaka na ne tanhi.
 child sg pst fear om whiteman sg pst cry
The child was afraid so he cried.

Tibri mana ne fogra ña sua na.
 curse he pst sick indf child sg
He made a curse and a child got sick.

However, there are several particles that conjoin phrases or clauses, and several standard constructions built out of these particles together with tense/aspect markers that convey various combinations of temporality and modality.

The work of the omnibus English *and* is done by several more context-specific conjunctions. Proper names, whether of persons or places, are connected with *ge*:

Florence <i>ge</i> Henry	Florence and Henry
Togasalo <i>ge</i> Kolosori	Togasalo and Kolosori (villages)

When one of the members of a conjunction of persons is a personal pronoun (as in *you and John*), Cheke Holo makes use of the relevant dual (or trial) pronoun to indicate the compounding. Hence, 'gopa John', literally, 'you two John', is equivalent to *you and John*. Another connective is *nei*, used to join coordinate noun or verb phrases. For example,

Noḡu mola nei enjini lara re au ñala Honiara.
 poss canoe and engine I pl be-at lmt Honiara
My canoe and engine are still in Honiara.

The most general and commonly used conjunction indicating temporal sequence is *nu*. *Nu* links two clauses where one describes an event that precedes or causes the other. This is similar to the English *and* where it has the sense of *and then* in sentences like *It was slippery and he fell*. Examples of this usage of *nu* are:

Ne kora nu suplu neu suspen ia
 pst have-hole conj leak pst pan art
The pan had a hole so it leaked.

Mana ne jufu ka kho'u nu me bobo'o hage na.
 He pst dive in river conj incpt bubble rise sg
He dived into the river and bubbles came rising up.

A related usage of the conjunction *nu* has the meaning of the English *but*. In this sense, *nu* links a prior event with a subsequent, contrary event, as in the following.

Kuru n̄a nu the'ome fa'uve egu si sua gre.
 order indf conj neg obey rcpt sm child adj
(We) give orders but these children don't obey.

Fariurlu iara nu the'o kolho neu.
 try I conj neg demph pst
I tried but simply failed.

Iara roḡu tei n̄au nu the'o mola egu.
 I want go cnt conj neg canoe rcpt
I still want to go but there is no canoe.

In addition to *nu*, there are a number of more specific temporal connectives with analogs in English. Other than the prepositional *ka* discussed above, these include *ani* and *dani* *while*, *gile* *until*, and *tahugna* *since*.

Ani au teku lago ia.
 while be asp you art
During that time you were (here).

Ofou sago agne gile ke mei iara ḡrafi.
 wait+cnt sm+you here until rpt come I evening
Wait here until I come back in the evening.

Tahugna August gu mana ke la blahi famei roḡo ia.
 since August rcpt he rpt imm neg send money art
Since August he hasn't sent any more money.

Another conjunction as versatile as *nu* is the disjunctive *ba*, similar in meaning to the English *or*. The most common use of *ba*, like *or*, is to indicate alternative possibilities, frequently associated with the choice of things, actions or events.

geu moli ba geu chau
 poss orange or poss banana
your orange or your banana

Na tel apu nodā ba ke lokul n̄ala?
 fut go bathe we or rpt work int
Should we go bathe or work a bit more?

Related to its role as a marker of alternatives, *ba* functions as a modal particle signifying possibility or uncertainty (see below), and as a question tag as well. In the latter usage, interrogative sentences frequently end in *ba*, shortened from *ba the'o?* or *not?*.

There are a number of connectives that specify implicational relations. Most common are the causatives. As mentioned above, the polysemous preposition *ka* may have the sense *because of*.

The Cheke Holo terms most like the general English *because* are the nearly synonymous terms *naugna* and *eigna* (borrowed from Bughotu), formed with possessive pronominal suffixes (hence, *because of them* would be *naudi* instead of *naugna because of it*). In contrast with these expressions which attribute cause to past events is the 'forward-looking' purposive construction *mala in order to, so that ...*

Ka teuana
prep *that*
because of that

Iara tiroḡu hi eigna iago ne chagi.
I not-want cpt because you pst lie
I don't want to because you lied.

Tore roḡo mala foli pasisi tei Honiara.
ask money for buy ticket go Honiara
Ask for money in order to buy a ticket to go to Honiara.

9. Contingency and Possibility

There is no single term that does all the work of the English *if*. There is, however, a standard construction composed of tense/aspect markers and the connective *nu* which renders the sense of *if/then* contingency. By placing the tense/aspect marker *ne* (recent past) before the verb, followed by the indefinite *ḡa* and the temporal *nu*, a clause takes on the sense of the English *if (verb) then ...*:

Ne di'a ḡa igne nu ke fapuphulo egu.
pst bad indf this then rpt return rcpt
If this is bad then return it.

Piha ne fati'a ḡa nu bosu egu.
parcel pst inside-out indf then pig rcpt
If the parcel (leaf) is turned outward then it is pork.

There are several other standard connective phrases which add tense/aspect markers to the temporal *nu* or the disjunctive *ba* to form conditional expressions. These include *na egu nu lest, otherwise, or else* (frequently shortened to *na*), *neu ḡa nu since, if that is the case, then*, and *neu ba ne or kell ba ne even though, it doesn't matter if*.

Tei de lei na egu nu thunu iago egu.
go away otherwise burn you rcpt
Move away otherwise you will get burned.

Fasosobo ni hore, na elo.
anchor(v) om canoe, fut drift
Anchor the canoe or else it will drift.

Fatha igne peko neu ḡa nu rave koko ka pheko gna na.
beam this crooked since then cut away at curve poss sg
Since this beam is crooked, cut away at its curve.

Neu ba ne nakete, ari apu ḡala.
even-though rain go bathe lmt
Even though it is raining, (let's) go bathe anyway.

Furthermore, **ba** occurs with the subject marker **si** in the stereotyped phrase **si la ba**, indicating possibility or probability of the predicate. For example,

La lothi hi si la ba te kabru ni iago gne gema.
 imm infect cpt sm imm psbl cmp hurt om you adj emph
(The sore) that is hurting you is probably infected.

ba also functions as a politeness marker in commands or requests. In sentences directing or requesting a single individual (**iago you**), the contraction **bago** (**ba+iago**) is typically used.

Tei ruḡe bago belo gno.
 go beat psbl+you drum adj
Why don't you go and beat the drum over there.

Fakni ni naṅhagna na bago.
 reveal om name+poss sg psbl+you
Why don't you reveal his name?

10. Negation and Necessity

The simple negative **the'o** is used to assert the absence of some object or the failure of some activity.

The'o mola.
 neg canoe
There is no canoe.

Aḡa kolho sago ne the'o kapu.
 swig lmt sm+you pst neg cup
You just take a swig, there is no cup.

Fariuriu iara nu the'o kolho neu.
 try I but neg lmt pst
I tried but simply couldn't.

Negation is also expressed by placing a negative marker or phrase at the end of a positive assertion, frequently in the form of a recapitulation which reverses the proposition asserted. For example,

Neke au mamagra foafota teuana the'o.
 pst be fight divide that neg
There wasn't any fighting or division.

Other forms which build on the base **the'o** are **the'oli** *nothing, not anything* and **the'othe'o** *not enough*.

When a verb is negated, the form **the'ome** (or its contraction **thome**) is inserted before the verb, similar to English *not*.

Neke the'ome tei Buala sara ia.
 pst neg go Buala sm+I art
I didn't go to Buala.

Mafra kolho, the'ome kora.
 solid lmt neg have-hole
(It's) simply solid, doesn't have holes.

A more emphatic negative **blahl** *not at all, not once* is used to indicate complete omission or withdrawal from some activity. This form functions like the Pijin term **nating**, which is also placed before the verb it negates to indicate lack of performance or involvement. For example,

Iara blahl ke tel va'e.
I neg rpt go net-fish
I haven't gone net-fishing at all.

Negative desire or will is commonly expressed with the more specific base **tiro** *not want, refuse* (in contrast with the base **ro** *want, desire*). Both of these forms must be appended with a relevant possessive suffix (e.g. **tirogu** *I don't want to*).

Tirogna mei agne mana.
Not-want come here he
He doesn't want to come here.

Negative commands begin with **thosel** *don't*:

Thosel vigo khebu, the'ome gano sarea.
neg shake mango neg ripe sm+dem
Don't shake the mango tree, they aren't ripe.

Expressing necessity or obligation in Cheke Holo is simply a matter of adding another negative to these forms. Double negatives are formed by inserting **the'o** after **the'ome** or **thosel**. The compound **the'ome the'o** produces a statement of necessity; while negating the negative command **thosel** yields the Cheke Holo version of obligation. Thus,

Mana the'ome the'o la mae khuku'e hi.
He neg neg imm man be-old cpt
He must be an old man by now.

Mana thosel the'o te mei na.
He neg neg cmp come art
He must come.

11. Questions

Questions are frequently asked in Cheke Holo by shifts in intonation, without explicit question words. This is usually accomplished with a rise in pitch starting at the beginning of the final subject phrase, sustained to the end of the sentence, and falling over the final particle. For example, in the sentence **Tei Buala si mana ia?** *Is he going to Buala?*, pitch would rise over **si** and continue until lowered again for the final **ia**. In the case of tag questions employing the particle **ba** or discussed above, the interrogative is marked by rising intonation over **ba** itself, as in **Age noda, ba?** *Let's go, okay?*

There are, however, a small number of interrogative pronouns which are commonly used to ask questions. These are: **hei** *who?*, **unha** or **enha** *what?*, **niha** *how much?* or *when?*, **neha** *why?* and **heva** *where?*. The English glosses approximate the sense of Cheke Holo question words, but there is not complete correspondence. For example, **unha** may also be used in *why?* sentences similar to **neha** (both of which translate in Pijin as **waswe**).

There is considerable flexibility in the syntactic patterns used in asking questions, allowing these forms to occur in various places in interrogative sentences. First position is the most common location.

Hei si te eha ia?
who sm cmp shout art
Who shouted?

Unha si te eni iago ia?
what sm cmp do you art
What are you doing?

Unha ne the'ome horoi nou suḡa na?
what pst neg build+om your house sg
Why haven't you built your house?

Niha mae te au Buala na?
how man cmp be-at Buala sg
How many men are in Buala?

Niha ame mei ṅa egu si mana ia?
When fut come indf rcpt sm he art
When is he coming?

Ne neha si te tanhi mana na ia?
pst why sm cmp cry he sg art
Why is he crying?

Heva si daho ia?
Where sm bowl art
Where is the bowl?

However, question terms also occur elsewhere in the sentence. The terms *niha how many, when* and, to a lesser extent, *heva where*, are frequently placed in the final position.

Neke mei mana niha?
pst come he when
When did he come?

Iago au heva?
you be-at where
Where are you (staying)?

When the question word *unha what?* refers to the object of a verb, it is often placed after that verb in the sentence.

Ḡle'a unha sago ia?
happy what sm+you art
What are you happy about?

Ne gamu unha ḡano ne blokha sago ia?
pst eat what food pst fat sm+you art
What did you eat that you got fat?

The derived term *fa'unha how* follows a similar pattern:

Fa'unha egu sia?
how rcpt emph
How (am I) going to do (that)?

Eklo fa'unha si ḡaiju ana ia?
Float how sm log adj art
How is that log floating?

The question word *hei* glossed above as *who?* includes a wider range of meanings and uses, including queries to elicit personal names and time of day, for which English employs *what?:*

Hei sago nañhamu na la?
what sm+you name+poss sg art
What is your name?

Tanhi ni hei gōgnaro na la?
time om what now sg art
What time is it now?

Hei is also used in possessive constructions to ask the question *whose?*. When used in this way, hei fills the slot otherwise occupied by the possessive pronoun following the possessed noun:

Nogna khuma hei si te lehe ka kho'u gno la?
poss dog who sm cmp die at river adj art
Whose dog died by the river over there?

Nogna mola lhei?
poss canoe whose
Whose canoe?

In similar fashion, the question word *heva where?* may be substituted for a place name in locational expressions such as *man of ... or group from ...* to ask about origins or location:

Nobe gna heva te mei ana la?
group poss where cmp come dem art
Where is that group from—the one coming over there?

PACIFIC LINGUISTICS
Series C - No. 97

CHEKE HOLO (MARINGE / HOGRANO)
DICTIONARY

by

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First Published 1988

Printed by A.N.U. Printing Service

Maps drawn by Theo Baumann

Bound by Adriatic Bookbinders Pty Ltd

The editors are indebted to the Australian National University for assistance in the production of this series

This publication was made possible by an initial grant from the Hunter Douglas Fund.

ISSN 0078-7558 ISBN 0 85883 368 9