A grammar of Cheke Holo
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1   Introduction to the language

1.1   Introduction

This chapter presents in sections 1.2 and 1.3 a basic overview of the Cheke Holo language, including geographical setting, extent of its current use, and background research and methodological approach relevant to the study. In 1.4 are notes on the socio-cultural aspects of the language. In 1.5 language use and viability are briefly surveyed, including discussion on current contexts of use and the influx of multlingualism. Section 1.6 catalogues previous linguistic investigations on Cheke Holo and in 1.7 the investigative materials produced for other Isabel languages. Section 1.8 offers an overall survey of the grammatical aspects of the Cheke Holo language, particularly those which are discussed in this book.

1.2   Basic overview of the language setting

Cheke Holo, often referred to by its speakers in shortened form as Holo, and referred to throughout this book as CH, is an Austronesian language found primarily on most of the southern geographical third of Santa Isabel[1] island of Solomon Islands.

CH is spoken by at least 10,840 people as their first language, with perhaps 1,500 of these speakers classified as monolingual.[2] It is one of seven languages spoken on Santa Isabel. Potentially, a couple of thousand people speak CH as a second or third language, particularly as it is the dominant language of Isabel, both in terms of numerical strength and in population expansion to other language areas.[3] Among themselves, CH speakers often refer to their own language as *Cheke Tahati*, 'our (incl) talk/language'. But in talking about their language and identifying it to an outsider, they would never refer to it this way (one reason being that the pronoun *tahati* includes the one being spoken to). CH as a language name means 'language

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[1]   Before Solomons independence in 1978, Isabel was spelled Ysabel. One notes this frequent spelling on maps. In every day usage, Santa Isabel is shortened to "Isabel".

[2]   Over the past many years, there has been a fair-sized population of CH speakers living in the capital city Honiara, historically in the Vura/Naha and Kukum residential areas, and as of this writing, in the sections of Tuavaruhu, Gegema, and Talise. The population of CH-speaking residents in Honiara is unknown.

[3]   Speakers of the other languages of Isabel have attested during the last 40 years that they have worried that CH would 'take over the island' (particularly noted at the beginning of this period in Simons 1978). As members of other language groups considered beginning Bible translation work, and conveyed that interest to me, one of their reasons for doing so was because they were afraid that if their language was not preserved and used in worship, then CH would overtake them. Palmer discusses the dominance of CH (Palmer 2009a:2) as do Whiteman and Simons (1978:6).

of the bush' or 'language of the interior of the island.' The two major dialects, Maringe and Hograno, are located in the southern half of Isabel on the eastern and western sides of the island, respectively. They differ only by very few lexical items.[4] Their phonological structures are almost identical, though one major difference is noted.[5] CH, whose ISO 639-3 language identifier code is mrn, is classified in the *Ethnologue* (Lewis 2009) as Austronesian, Malayo-Polynesian, Western Oceanic. The boundaries of the language group stretch from the village of Gnulahaghe southeast to Kuma'ihaui. It is located on the Hograno coast in several villages in Kia District, and also in scattered villages in Gao-Bughotu Region (Lewis 2009).[6]
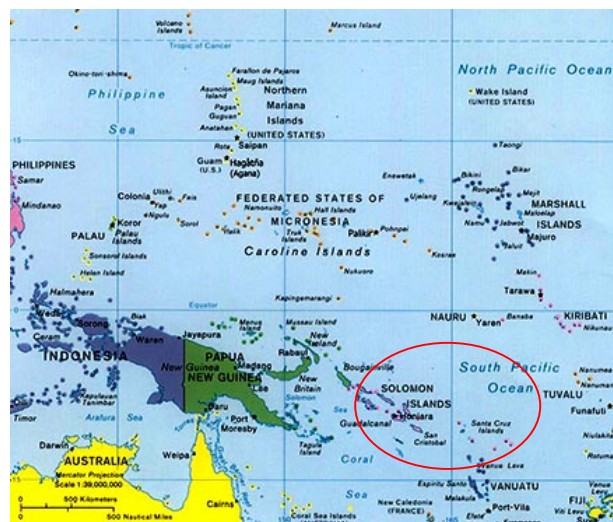

Figure 1: Map of Solomon Islands within South Pacific Region
(used by permission of www.worldatlas.com)

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[4]   The lexical differences are listed in the preface of the Cheke Holo New Testament. Historically, the language was called 'Maringe' (and now spelled Mariñe), but the Hograno dialect speakers would not read anything with this term as the identifier. As a result, a neutral language name, Cheke Holo, or just Holo, was agreed upon. There is ongoing evidence that the two dialect groups are working much closer together than they ever have before, and this is quite encouraging, particularly as they are joined together in one church diocese which depends on effective cooperation.

[5]   David Bosma noted (personal interview, 1999) that in the Hograno dialect, /b/ can occur as the implosive /bɦ/, in a few words such words as /nabɦai/, 'light'. The Maringe dialect cognate word is /napʰae/. I do not have further data on this, nor know of any rules or predictable environments for the occurrence of this implosive in Hograno.

[6]   The significant break between Western and Eastern Oceanic is found at the southern border of the Cheke Holo language area where Cheke Holo meets the Bughotu language (Tryon and Hackman 1983, Lewis 2009).

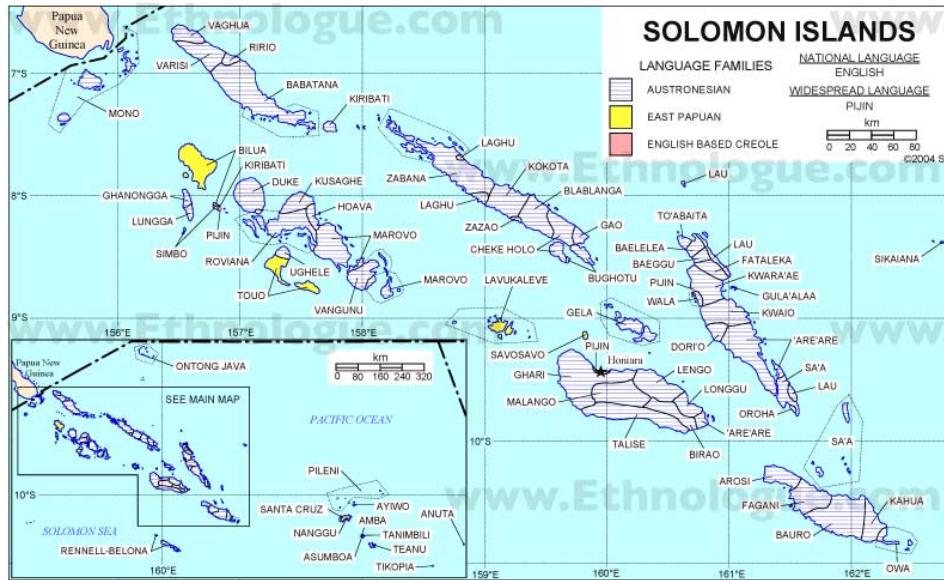**Figure 2: Language map of Solomon Islands (courtesy of www.ethnologue.com)**

CH is indicated just above the exact center of the illustration, at 8.5 degrees south, and 159.5 degrees east (Lewis 2009). The Hograno dialect is on the southern and western geographical areas of the language group, while Maringe encompasses the remainder of the language area.

Figure 3: Map of Santa Isabel (courtesy of CartoGIS Services, College of Asia and the Pacific, The Australian National University)

The fieldwork related to this book occurred in the populated areas just south of Buala, which is noted above on the map on the southeastern side of the island. The Anglican diocesan office is located in an area adjacent to Buala.

In the listing of Oceanic Languages by Sub-Groupings (Lynch, Crowley, Ross 2002:884),[7] CH falls within the Meso-Melanesian Cluster, St. George Linkage, Northwest Solomonic Linkage, New Georgia/Isabel family.

1.3   Background research and methodological approach

I moved with my family from the USA to Solomon Islands in 1988. We initially spent four months in Madang, Papua New Guinea in a culture and language orientation programme and then eventually arrived in Honiara, the capital of Solomons, in February of 1989. After making initial journeys to the village of Nareabu in April 1989, which is just south of the provincial capital of Buala, we began our official residency in May, 1989, and I began language learning of CH. We occupied the house which had been built by SIL's David Bosma, who preceded me

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[7] I point out that 'Maringe' is misspelled in their classification as 'Mainge'.

there in residence, working in linguistics and translation at the request of the Anglican diocese.

My primary task was to serve as a translation advisor to the CH Translation Committee, and to work closely with Anglican priest Rev. Fr. Andrew Piaso, who has served since 1986 as the main CH Bible translator. My work has included providing exegetical help and checking of Fr. Piaso's manuscripts. In order to do this, I had to learn to read, write, and speak the CH language. Building upon materials produced by those who had preceded me in analyzing the language, notably Bosma and American anthropologist Geoffrey White of the East-West Center in Honolulu, and personal interaction with both men, I began my own journey into the language.

Initial fieldwork was conducted in residence among the CH people just south of Buala in Nareabu village for three years from 1989-1992. From 1992-1998, I lived in the capital of Honiara, and continued to work in CH linguistics and in translation related work, often making trips back to Santa Isabel. I remained heavily involved with the team that completed the translation of The New Testament and its subsequent publication in 1994 by The Bible Society in the South Pacific. The volume immediately sold out, and was reprinted two years later, and again promptly sold out. A third printing was delivered to the island for distribution in June 2007. From 1994 to the present, I have continued to work on Old Testament translation materials with Fr. Piaso, handling these through intensive on-site work with him, and also through off-site checking by correspondence. Fifteen percent of the Old Testament was published in 2005, and as of June 2018, more than 90% of the entire Old Testament is in various stages of drafting and revision. These translation materials continue to undergo consultant and community improvement.

Since leaving Solomon Islands' residency in 1998, I have made eight field trips to the Solomons, returning in 2002, 2004, 2006, 2008, 2012, 2015, 2017, and 2018. I also met with Fr. Piaso in Melbourne in 2001. We have also consulted by Skype telephony on aspects of the book that surfaced during my writing. I have been delayed until now in completing this project due to other work duties which prevented me from giving any significant attention to its furtherance.

This grammar description contains over 1000 numbered language examples based on data collected from two main sources: 1) several hours of recorded CH texts of various genres, ranging from short greetings to 45 minute talks on a variety of topics, and 2) approximately 40 written texts of various genres, including poetry, personal letters, myths, and narratives. For the audio recordings, it is noted that most speakers were educated on the village/provincial level, except for Fr. Piaso, who is a Solomons seminary graduate. Most of the recordings are from 2006, during which the most focused period of linguistic research took place, though many date back to the late 1970s/early 1980s. There are a number of recordings that technically form part of the available corpus, but at the time of writing they were not transcribed or entered into SIL's FieldWorks software for further analysis. The cataloguing of this

data is contained in Appendix B: Catalogue of Texts Corpus. The entire database and record of CH texts will be deposited with the SIL Language and Culture Archives. These archives use a DSpace repository (www.dspace.org) to manage long-term preservation and access to digital materials. Elicitation for discovery or documentation of specific grammatical features was used, but very infrequently. Except for the written materials listed in Appendix B which were compiled by Bosma, the transcriptions were done both by myself, and also with a variety of assistants.

Additionally, dictionary examples from White (1988) were occasionally used. White's dictionary, published in the *Pacific Linguistics* series, is a major contribution to the field of linguistics studies in the Solomons. Due to the availability of this dictionary, there is not a glossary accompanying this book.

This grammatical description is theory neutral, utilizing a basic linguistic theory. Comparative examinations are made as appropriate with other languages within the Austronesian (AN) family and Oceanic (Oc) sub-groupings. As Gravelle (2004:22) mentioned for Meyah, "it attempts to describe the language on its own terms, rather than force the language into a theoretical model." Like Gravelle, I do not attempt to describe how the language came into being or focus on historical comparative analysis.

Joel Fagan (1986:1), in compiling his research of the Mono-Alu language which is to the northwest of CH, noted that "of the more than 50 Austronesian languages spoken in the Solomon Islands, few have been described in detail." The purpose of this book is to provide a description of the phonology, word classes (including various semantic categories of classification), morphology, and syntax of one of those 50-plus Austronesian languages, the Cheke Holo language.

1.4   Notes on the socio-cultural aspects of the CH people

1.4.1   The impact of the Anglican church

"The people of Santa Isabel are heirs to one of the great stories of socio-religious transformation in the Pacific Islands region" (White 1991). One can easily say that to be a member of the CH language group is to be an Anglican. The island was vigorously evangelized by Church of Melanesia missionaries in the late 1800s and early 1900s, and a comprehensive and systematic network of Anglican teaching, forms of worship and church administration were implemented. Indeed the influence of the church has penetrated and influenced all aspects of daily life, from the morning and evening prayer services held in every CH village, to the blessing of the crops, to the recognition and following of 'big men', or leaders, who for the most part are church men. I have yet to meet anyone on the island who did not profess to be a Christian. Since the church influences so much of daily village life, it is perhaps natural that a fairly significant number of lexical items relating to the Church of Melanesia have become embedded in the lexicon, and these are briefly discussed in

section 3.2.5.4. Also, the pervasive influence of the Anglican Church and Christianity is reflected in many examples used as evidence in this book.

1.4.2   Sources of livelihood

For the most part, the CH people are subsistence farmers and fishermen. Salaried jobs are few on Isabel, mostly available to those working for the provincial government in some capacity, such as school teachers. Every family seems to be connected in some way to a wage earner, and within Solomons' social norms the wage earner is expected to pass on to the family at least part of the fruit of their labor. Money is important for paying school fees, food, buying petrol for outboard motors, purchasing fares on ships running between the island and the capital, and other regular events of life.

1.4.3   Clans and origins

The CH declare that there were originally two clans from which all CH speakers descended, *Thauvia* 'white parrot', and *Phosamogo* 'green parrot.' Oral transmission of CH history suggests that perhaps due to incest, a third clan arose, called *Nakmeru Funei* 'eagle'. The clans are not distinguished by language. There are normally two chiefs per village, one each from the original two clans. Chiefs would appoint a son as successor, but as noted in my research, currently the election of chiefs is a democratic process based on voting in those who demonstrate leadership, organization, good communication skills, and mediation of problems.

1.4.4   Land ownership

Land use is one of the most important facets of life in Solomon Islands. For the most part, land is controlled by the family line system. On Isabel, the controlling line is matrilineal.

1.5   Language use and viability

1.5.1   Contexts of use and language choice

The use of CH as a first language among CH speakers is perhaps best described as 'vigorous'. Except for school, and that due to government mandates on nation-wide instruction in English, CH is the language of choice in every major area of life, including home, work, and church. The language is vigorously spoken by children. What could be described as 'language pride' permeates every aspect of CH society.

1.5.2   Multilingualism and language attitudes

Whiteman and Simons (1978) described the pervasive multilingualism throughout Isabel. Since the publication of their linguistic survey, there is no indication that speakers of CH or any other Isabel language have lessened their ability to at least

"hear" (their term), if not converse, to a limited degree in neighboring languages of the island.

Whiteman and Simons further said that CH was the most important and dominant language of the island, as it has the highest number of speakers. During their survey, many of those interviewed said they believed that one day CH would be spoken throughout the island. This is an indication of the pervasive spread of CH.

For the older male population, Bughotu at the far southern end of Isabel is perhaps more familiar than others due to the fact that Bughotu was the church language incorporated in worship and religious instruction (and presumably early schooling) throughout the island by the early Anglican missionaries. Occasionally in CH worship services, a catechist will still rely on early scripture translation materials in Bughotu for reading or prayer. However, these materials are no doubt non-communicative to most in attendance, particularly the youth. I did notice that prior to the publication of the CH New Testament, the use of Bughotu did decrease when the Solomons Pijin New Testament was released to the public in 1993, as catechists chose it over Bughotu. Though certainly not universally true in the language group, there was a marked tendency to prefer any Solomons language reading over English. While English is certainly a prestige language, it is used to communicate (by those few who are able) primarily with visiting "whiteskins" and is not used between CH speakers.

The following factors are noted as contributing to multilingualism among speakers of Isabel languages. 1) Regular ship travel to and from Honiara enables multilingual contexts, as members of different language groups travel in close proximity and regularly hear and converse not only in their own but also in neighboring languages (should they have language facility to do so). 2) The incredibly active church programs of the Church of Melanesia (COM) enable cross-linguistic fertilization in various contexts. 3) The high school youth who are chosen to attend provincial secondary schools spend a few, if not several, years in cross-linguistic situations with members of other language groups of Isabel. 4) The provincial capital of Buala and neighboring village of Jejevo, which are located in CH-speaking territory, form a hub of activity for buying, selling, and church and government business. This activity center has a constant flow of speakers of the various Isabel languages. 5) Intermarriage with speakers of other Isabel language groups.

1.5.3   Viability

In light of the fact that CH remains in vigorous use throughout the language group in every context, and also that the population has increased 30% from the late 1980s, CH does not appear to be in danger of losing its viability in the current generation. CH will no doubt continue to change with the times, particularly with the ageing of younger speakers who have incorporated an increasing range of English-based or Solomons Pijin lexical items (and even grammatical features) into their everyday

speech. Because of its recognized dominance on Isabel, CH is widely regarded as the trade language of the island.

1.5.4   Loan words

There are several loan words noted in the corpus and used in the language examples in this book. These are primarily and markedly, though not exclusively, used by speakers under age 35. The texts recordings of a female school teacher in her early 20s is quite noticeable for the loan words in widespread use in her personal lexicon.

Many of the loan words in use are for those which do not have a ready equivalent in CH, such as an outboard engine, or *injini*. At the same time, creeping multilingualism among younger speakers also demonstrates a departure from 'standard' words such as *thabukna* 'family' and the substitution of loan words, as noted in section (3.2.9). Even so it is noted in that section that in telling his story, the speaker used both *thabukna* and *family* in the same text. My observation is that this code-switching is quite pervasive and unpredictable among younger speakers. A focused diachronic and synchronic study of loan words and language viability in CH would be viewed as a very important contribution to the documentation of language use on Isabel.

There are a number of English loan words found in CH language examples throughout this book. In the CH language lines, these are rendered orthographically as English words, as illustrated by the use of *dictionary* in (1). One indicator that these are English words is the identical rendering of the word in both the language example line and the gloss line. An illustration of Solomons Pijin words in a CH utterance is (2), where the Pijin term *kastom* is found. Such loans are given an English gloss. For *kastom*, the gloss is 'custom'.

(1) *Mare   neke eni kaisei u   dictionary*
     3PL   PST do one   DEM dictionary
     'They made a dictionary.'

(2) *Iara   fatutuani ka   kastom*
     1SG   believe   LOC   custom
     'I believe in custom ways.'

1.6   Previous linguistic investigations of Cheke Holo

Sidney Ray (1926) compiled basic lexical and grammar notes on several languages of Isabel, including CH. No one has ever published an extensive typological description of CH nor has anyone published on the discourse features of the language.

Anthropologist Darrel Whiteman and linguist Gary Simons (1978) conducted a socio-linguistic survey on Isabel in the late 1970s. Their findings were not published beyond a mimeographed report. The survey data which they gathered was useful for

determining language boundaries, language affinities, and speaker preferences regarding language use. Their basic conclusions are still valid, highlighted by the fact that CH remains the predominant language among the seven spoken on Isabel. They did not see the influence lessening of the impact and spread of CH.

David Bosma undertook basic linguistic field work on Isabel for several years (1979-1986). Bosma's major focus was training of mother-tongue Bible translators throughout the island, and he did not do extensive linguistic documentation. Besides basic word lists, Bosma (1981) published in mimeo form *Life in our Village*, which was a written compilation of oral narratives from four different villagers on various aspects of daily life, such as men's and women's work, fishing, and house building. He provided semi-literal English translations as part of the volume.

Darrel Whiteman (1983) documented his research of CH culture from his base at Gnuluhage village, which is just north of the provincial capital of Buala. He combined his wider experience of Melanesian cultural investigation in his work at the Melanesian Insitute in Goroka, Papua New Guinea, with his specific observations on CH. For CH, he noted as did White, the predominant cultural factor and influence of the Anglican church upon social organisation, activities, and leadership.

Richard Naramana (1987), a CH Anglican priest, published a paper on CH culture in a Solomons' journal. He documents a wide range of topics, though apparently his opening discussion on the origins of the clans on Isabel reflects one of his main interests. Naramana describes (1987:41) the problems he encountered in accessing the information:

> I had great difficulty in trying to get the precise information about the lines in the areas studied. The few old men interviewed were suspicious of what I was doing, because no one had done it before. I didn't belong to their family clans; it was thought that I was digging up past stories in order to raise disputes between them and their descendants. Suspicion has resulted from our fear of being victimised by people who practice black magic for revenge, not only for current disagreements, but also for past troubles. Currently, disputes over land have become a root of suspicion, so much so, that elders refused to tell me things, hoping to avoid starting more trouble.

But Naramana eventually broke through the barriers and was able to document the origin of the clans, the history of chiefs and behavior protocols associated with them, various general ceremonies and feasts, historical weapons, dances, prostitution used for acquisition of custom jewels, current social activities, marriage decisions related to finding suitable mates for children, and ceremonies associated with marriage. Publications by indigenous CH authors are rare. Two other notable examples are Lagusu's (1986) article regarding ceremonies associated with the ancient Knabu gods, and Vilasa's (1986) on sacrifice. Both Lagusu and Vilasa are university-educated, and their articles were published in English.

As noted previously in section 1.3, Geoffrey White (1988) published a CH dictionary as part of the *Pacific Linguistics* series. White relied on research conducted by David Bosma to complement his own. Included in the beginning of that volume is a brief twenty-five page grammar sketch. His sketch focuses on a basic description of features of morphology and word classes. As an anthropologist, White's purpose was to document culture and describe the ethnography, but he felt that he could not do that adequately without good linguistic research. Hence, his brief grammar observations and 4,700 word dictionary came into being. Though he himself notes in his preface that he is aware of his shortcomings, I have found his observations and conclusions to be very insightful and they have proved tremendously helpful to me as I learned the language. Over the years, I have been making notes as I have interacted with White's published observations and my work is intended to fill in gaps which he noted. In many places in this book, I interact with White's published conclusions via content footnotes. Apart from his published anthropological research, which is quite extensive, White published a consonant chart in Tryon (1995).

1.7 Investigative materials on other Isabel languages

After R.H. Codrington's (1885) linguistic survey recorded in *The Melanesian Languages,* which for Isabel focused on Bughotu and Gao, investigations of Isabel languages apart from Cheke Holo have been undertaken mainly by three major contributors. Bill Palmer has by far been the most active of the three. Palmer's most thorough work to date on another Isabel language is his dissertation on the grammar of Kokota (Palmer 2009a), a neighboring language to the north of CH. Throughout this book, comparisons are made between CH and Kokota, as they are related languages, though Kokota is definitely more closely related to Zabana. CH and Kokota are quite different in many aspects. He limits the scope of his work to grammatical features which are sentence level and below. Among several other studies, he has published on Kokota sonorants (1999).

Additionally, Matthew Fitzsimmons completed an M.A. thesis at Auckland University in 1989 on the grammar of the Zabana language, which is spoken on the far northern end of Isabel. John Bruner of SIL lived among the Bughotu-speaking people of southern Isabel from 1997-2008, and produced four brief papers outlining basic grammar and culture analysis of the Bughotu people. The translation of the New Testament in Bughotu was completed in 2009, and the translation of the New Testament into Zabana is nearing completion as of this writing.

1.8 Summary of this grammatical description

There are 31 CH consonantal phonemes and five vowel phonemes. CH phonology includes several outstanding features, including consonant clusters, voiceless continuants, and phonological phenomena involved in verb nominalization.

Regardless of word class, the underlying position of phonological stress on the word root is on the penultimate syllable. The predominant syllable pattern is one of open syllables.

In CH grammar, nominalization of verbs occurs in four different phonemic environments: 1) those which begin with voiceless stops, 2) verbs that begin with liquids /l/ and /r/, 3) verbs which begin with a voiced velar fricative, /ɣ/, and 4) verbs that begin with the voiceless glottal fricative /h/. There is an additional nominalization process, and it is one that is not phonologically motivated. This process involves the prefixing of /na/ to a certain set of verbs to realize a nominal form.

Reduplication of the verb stem is quite common in CH. The verb is the predominant word class which reduplicates, and usually serves the purpose of intensification or prolonging of action. There are three types of reduplication: full, partial, and syllable.

CH words are analyzed in open and closed classes. The open classes in CH are nouns, verbs, and adjectives. The nature of CH adjectives is such that there is a very large inventory, with White cataloguing more than 200 lexical items as adjectives in his CH dictionary. The closed classes are pronouns, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions, interjections, interrogatives, numerals, quantifiers and determiners, of which in CH there are four distinct types of demonstratives. Pronouns, interrogatives, demonstratives, numerals and quantifiers can function as heads of phrases.

CH does have an inventory of compound nouns, though certainly not nearly as rich as some other Austronesian languages. There is also an inventory of nouns which are compounded with adjectives to yield metaphorical, figurative expressions. CH has four singular pronouns. A gender distinction is made in the third person singular, though this contrast is very rare in Oceanic languages. In fact, CH is the only known Oceanic language in Solomon Islands where this occurs. There are 16 non-singular pronouns showing distinction between plural, dual, and trial, as well as inclusivity and exclusivity in first person, and masculine and feminine in third person. Emphasis and reflexivity are marked in CH by the same pronoun. Reciprocity is expressed in CH not by a pronoun but by a circumfix.

Two CH determiners, namely demonstratives and quantifiers, prominently distinguish nouns from verbs. Four types of demonstratives are attested in CH. Basic distinctions occur between specificity and number, and whether or not the noun modified is distinguished by either being proximal or distal. Secondly, the distinction for the proximal demonstrative is based on relative distance, and is either proximal spatially from deictic center or proximal contextually from the nominal argument which has already been stated in the communication event. Articles are not attested in CH.

Possession is a prominent feature of CH. CH nouns demonstrate fairly typical Oceanic distinctions between alienability and inalienability. In terms of alienable possession, CH alienable nouns consist of two classes: those which are edible and those which are non-edible. Each class is marked by a separate possessive inflected pronoun preceding the noun. In terms of inalienable possession, these nouns can be categorized by kin relationships, part-whole relationships, and some human emotions. Inalienable possession is marked by seven possessive enclitics hosted by the inalienable noun. A grammatical construction of possession is used in CH to indicate negation, and can also be used to mark specificity. Possession is marked within the predicate for the experiencer of certain CH verbal and non-verbal event notions, with patterns similar to the marking for possession within the NP for alienable and inalienable noun classes.

CH has an inventory of two sets of demonstrative pronouns. The pronouns in each set have the root *teu-* plus an enclitic which signifies number and either specificity or proximity of the noun which it modifies.

CH verbs express actions, processes, and states. Verbs in CH are distinguished from nouns by a combination of syntactic and morphological properties. Verbs in CH are categorized as both transitive and intransitive, and the distinctions are syntactically motivated or derived. Additionally, there is an inventory of ambitransitive verbs. Morphologically, verbs differ from nouns in that aspect-marking enclitics are cliticized to verbs. CH has a fairly broad inventory of semantically derived verb classes, including states of being verbs, motion verbs, position verbs, and utterance verbs.

CH has a fairly broad inventory of adjectives which can be described both as limiting and descriptive. Instead of its members being uninflected, certain semantic sub-classes of CH adjectives are inflected by possession-marking enclitics, completive aspect enclitics, and derived by the causative prefix *fa-*. Adjectives can be used in both predicate and attributive functions when following the nominal head they modify.

Adverbs occur extensively in CH, modifying mostly verbs and adjectives, and also modifying a clause. Semantic classifications of adverbs are recorded for various sub-classes including modality, direction, and epistemic.

It is not possible to describe CH as predominantly either a left-headed language or right-headed language, in that various inventories of modifiers of the head of the NP are distributed both to the left and right of the head noun.

The CH noun phrase (NP) is a structure headed by a noun, pronoun, or a proper noun. The NP can include a variety of modifiers, and function as an argument of a verb in the clause. It can also operate as a non-verbal predicate. Noun phrase coordination is expressed by coordinating conjunctions and by juxtaposition.

The CH verb phrase (VP) is a structure headed by a verb. The VP does not require but can include a variety of modifiers, a single category of verbal inflection, and the presence of enclitics which mark transitivity or aspect. By itself the CH VP can form a clause. The structure of the VP includes a significant number of pre-verbal and post-verbal constituents. Among these are the pre-verbal elements which mark aspect, tense, negation and purpose. The post-verbal elements include an array of enclitics in various environments, such as those which mark direct objects. Aspect markers occur extensively in CH, marking completive, continuative, inceptive and non-specific aspect.

The two-way distinction of past and non-past is the most useful descriptor for the CH tense system. One of the main justifications for classifying CH as past/non-past rather than future/non-future is that past is the most prominent time action indicated by CH tense markers. Adjuncts are usually used to indicate non-past. Clause types are described as verbal and non-verbal, equative, copular, attributive, adverbial, subordinate, imperative, interrogative, and negatives.

Various other outstanding features of CH include: 1) CH is an SVO language. 2) The causative prefix *fa-* is the main verbal derivation occurring in CH. 3) Serial verbs are quite common in CH. The most commonly occurring serial verb constructions in CH involve motion verbs in second position. 4) Focus, or prominence within a single clause, is signaled by the focus marker *si*. 5) There is a quotative marker *egu* which is fairly ubiquitous in the language. Its four functions range from simple quote or speech content margins to signaling inquiry of confirmation of information. 6) Pragmatic emphasis in CH is often signaled by the presence of the emphatic marker *e* or by the ordering of words in the clause or sentence.