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AUTHOR Boswell, Freddy
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ABSTRACT

Speech genres in Cheke Holo (CH) have not been studied extensively. Speech genres related to shouted speech in CH deserves more study because it is commonly used. Culturally speaking, shouted speech is a natural expression of the importance and centrality of CH community and surrounding authority structures, and has a very strong hortatory function based on the authority of village chiefs. Shouted speech serves as a vehicle by which the language community is called into action, and thus is a catalyst for organizing and moving ahead as a community-wide unit, both in daily business and in certain special functions. The three genres of CH shouted speech are loku fodu (morning wake-up and muster), tufa gano (distribute the food, usually at a feast), and cheke thagru (show respect and honor for a departing guest). Shouted speech in CH is important because it helps those who investigate to see clearly how this use of language reflects the cultural values of community, sharing, authority, and respect. (KFT)

The Genres of 'Shouted Speech' in Cheke Holo

By Freddy Boswell, SIL (copyright, 2001)

0. Introduction

Speech genres in Cheke Holo (CH)[1] have not been studied extensively, though analyses are under way.[2] Speech genres of CH related to shouted speech deserve more thorough study, since they are in such common use. The term *cheke poapola* is used in CH to describe this language event in general, and literally means "talk-ordering", and is ordering done with a shouting voice. Culturally speaking, shouted speech is a natural expression of the importance and centrality of CH community and corresponding authority structures. Shouted speech, as will be discussed below, has a very strong hortatory function, based upon the authority of village chiefs. Basically, this speech phenomenon serves as a vehicle by which the language community is called into action, and thus is a catalyst for organizing and moving ahead as a community-wide unit, both in daily business and for certain special functions. Shouted speech is marked by public proclamation, definite purpose, and distinctive and somewhat unique phonological features. While *cheke poapola* is the cover term for describing this language phenomenon in general terms, the most profit comes from analysing and comparing three distinct genres which arise from *cheke poapola*, as these are the parts which enable the linguist to understand the whole, so to speak. The three genres of CH shouted speech which are analysed in this paper are *loku fodu, tufa ḡano*, and *cheke thaḡru.*[3]

1.0 Context and function

1.1. Loku fodu

[1] Cheke Holo (CH) is an Austronesian, Malayo-Polynesian, Western Oceanic language of Solomon Islands primarily spoken on Santa Isabel island, and numbers 10,840 speakers.

[2] As part of my Ph.D. research at the University of New England (Australia), I have been compiling a repository of literary genre. A collection of stories authored by Cheke Holo native speakers was published by the National Literacy Committee in 1991 (Boswell 1991). This volume included poetry. As a religiously homogenous community, namely Anglican, the prayer book and hymn book have been translated into CH and reprinted numerous times. These are in constant use in the language communities. The New Testament was published in 1993, and fifteen percent of the Old Testament is currently being readied for publication. I have also been compiling a collection of personal letters written in the Cheke Holo language. The book of 20 stories, *Life in our Village*, edited by my SIL colleague David Bosma (Bosma 1981), provides an excellent corpus of data for analyzing oral narrative speech genre in the language. For a 1990 workshop on discourse features in Cheke Holo, I analyzed audio recordings of several different types of speech genres, including narrative, hortatory, conversation, and expository. The *Lingua Links* software produced by SIL has proved to be a useful tool for data collection. Geoffrey White, former senior fellow of the East-West Center in Honolulu and currently dean of students, has recorded and analysed numerous oral histories (White, 1991).

[3] I note that neither *loku fodu* nor *tufa ḡano* in their shortened forms (compared with a fuller description below) are ethnopragmatically used terms of description in CH for these shouted speech events in the same way that CH speakers talk about *cheke thaḡru*, and who designate it as such. Cheke Holo speakers, if asked to describe the events that are going on, would use a phrase such as *cheke poapola mala loku fodu* (talk-ordering for the purpose of gathering us to work) and *cheke poapola mala tufa ḡano* (talk-ordering for the purpose of distributing food at the feast) In this paper, I have assigned these two labels of *loku fodu* and *tufa ḡano* in keeping with the two word 'frame' that is used for *cheke thaḡru*. I use these terms for the purpose of marking their functionality, and for easy reference.

Here is a typical contextual framework for one occurrence of this oral speech genre, namely *loku fodu*. The morning stillness, which for several minutes has been gently and increasingly interrupted by the ever-present village roosters greeting the rising sun, is suddenly and definitively shaken by the loud clanging of a vintage World War II natural gas cylinder hanging by a rope on a large hardwood tree. A village chief, or his designate, is banging on the cylinder with a small metal pipe. Suddenly, he begins shouting:

(1)
Mavitu![4]
Mei si gotilo!
Agne mei fagose *hu*!
Mei mala paladi ḡaju ḡre *hu*!

Translation:
You-people!
Come you-pl!
Come here quickly!
Come in order to carry all this wood!

Members of the community are urged to prepare to take immediate action, such as to gather to commence the work project of carrying timbers, most likely for a local building project. I designate this particular genre of shouted speech as *loku fodu*, which means 'work together'.[5] Calling people to gather to work is the intended function of the genre in this case, and thus is hortatory.

Depending on the pre-planning of such an event, the response time by members of the community to the call for *loku fodu* can be immediate or delayed. If folks have been waiting for this event, they will quickly come, and generally come in large numbers. If this announcement reflects fairly new information, then the men of the community may already have other plans, and the turnout will be much less. I have noticed over the years that community response to such shouted speech hortatory is generally very high for events that are built around participation in special days in the life of the community such as the *narane suḡa*, or village church feast day. This is the special feasting time that occurs in each village, honoring the patron saint of that village.[6] A common use of the shouted speech around those events might be for everyone to assemble at the lagoon to prepare to travel down the coast to work at the special gardens planted well in advance to feed guests who will be attending a major event. Or, the men of the community need to assemble to depart for the fishing trip, the catch of which will be used to feed the guests

[4] The word *mavitu* is a loan word from the neighboring Bughotu language.
[5] CH communities may have a regular day for such *loku fodu* activities. In Nareabu, which was the village of our residence on Santa Isabel, Wednesday was the usual day.
[6] In Nareabu, St. Barnabas is the patron saint. It would be safe to say that next to Christmas and Easter, the annual honoring of St. Barnabas on June 11 is the high point of community life. Shouted speech is a common language phenomenon for the months leading up to this big day, and on the day itself.

at the feast day. In this case, the hortatorical shout serves a similar function as a boarding call at an airport.[7]

1.2 Cheke thaḡru

A second genre of shouted speech in CH is that of *cheke thaḡru*, which is literally 'talk-back'.[8] While *loku fodu* has the hortatory function of calling people to action, *cheke thaḡru* is used to show respect and honor to the departing guest, and this is quite a common event among the CH. Similarly, it is used upon the arrival of important people, but much less frequently.[9] It is also used in customary dances to announce the arrival of the next group of male dancers and their readiness to perform. In abbreviated form, it is used to mark the conclusion of certain festive dances, particularly those performed by men.[10]

After what may be a brief and fairly standard sort of speech honoring a guest who is departing the village ('we are glad you came, thank you for your effort, we are duly grateful, we probably haven't taken very good care of you but you understand that we are limited in our abilities), the leader of the session, who most likely is either a village chief, the local Anglican priest or the senior catechist, suddenly begins the *cheke thaḡru*:

(2)
Leader: Le le le le!
People: Ḡri!

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[7] Because the shouted speech comes from the chief, who is duly elected and appointed by the community, the members of the village seem to pay special attention to obeying his injunction.

[8] Interestingly, *taḡru* means the "second cut, which is made on the reverse side of the tree being felled" (White, 1988). However, the nominalised form, which is *thaḡru* (nominalisation features of CH discussed in Boswell, 1999), means back, backside, or buttocks. It is also used in that sense for the underside of a canoe or the top of a house.

[9] During the translation of the New Testament into CH, the senior translator Fr. Aduru Piaso wanted to substitute the *cheke thaḡru* antiphony for the word 'Hosana' which occurs in the Palm Sunday passages in the Greek New Testament, and is usually transliterated as 'Hosana' in English versions. He reasoned that since the function of *cheke thaḡru* is to show community honor and respect to an important man, that was exactly what the Jews were doing when Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey on that occasion. So, within the parameters of the theoretical model of meaning-based translation, he wanted to translate the meaning of Hosana with *Le le le le, ḡri hu!* This attempt at naturalness, however, failed in the CH translation review committee. Before the vote to doom this inclusion, though, Fr Aduru reminded them, "When the Catholic bishop landed at Buala on the ship, how did the people greet him when he set foot on shore? And when the Australian High Commissioner visited our island, how was he greeted?!" The members grudgingly admitted that while these dignitaries were indeed greeted on separate occasions with the common *cheke thaḡru*, they steadfastly insisted that they did not want it inside the CH New Testament. Within the principles of meaning-based translation theory, Biblė translators strive for accuracy, clarity, and naturalness, and while the committee members did agree that *cheke thaḡru* fit those three criteria in this case (assuming that the function of 'Hosana' was indeed to show respect to a big man), it was not *acceptable*. Basically, the *cheke thaḡru* was too common and did not reflect the 'holy' church word 'Hòsana.' Interestingly, one of the newest English translations on the market, the Contemporary English Version (New York: American Bible Society), renders 'Hosana' as "Hip hip hooray!" This parallels the CH inclusion which Fr Aduru was pushing for.

[10] SIL ethnomusicologist Vida Chenowith noted that music and dance in CH is an excellent study, particularly because of the unique cadence and pitch of the singing and the way that this is woven into the customary dances.

Leader: Le le le *hu*!
People: Ḡri hu!
Leader: Ḡri!
People: Hu!
Leader: Ḡri!
People: Hu!
All: Ḡri hu!

A line by line translation would be much different than the one for the *loku fodu* shouted speech event in example 1. Here, the *le le* sequence is merely the rhythmic opening. Even though lexically *ḡri* in CH can designate a young shoot or sprout, here it is simply the first part of the antiphonal response. In some contexts, *hu* is actually a noun in CH used to designate a distant shout to someone, or perhaps used to call for a dog off in the distance, but here it is simply the second part of the antiphonal response. (The phonological use of *hu* will be discussed below in more detail.)

For most of the twentieth century, the Solomon Islands were a British protectorate. A further observation on this particular language phenomenon under investigation is to indeed note how British culture has influenced the *cheke thaḡru*. Namely, the singing in English of "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow" is commonly heard in CH villages. At the end of the song, the leader shouts in English, "Hip hip!" and the people respond "Hooray!" This usually goes on back and forth three times. Then, the people break out into three rounds of "*Ḡri! Hu!*" in CH, with the *ḡri* enthusiastically said by the leader and the *hu* by the crowd. The *ḡri hu* sequence is at the heart of the *cheke thaḡru*. One can see this in the main example previously given, and should note that the *le le le le* is more or less a warm up to the climatic series of *ḡri hu*.[11]

1.3 Tufa ḡano

The third genre briefly described in this paper is that which I call *tufa ḡano*, which is literally 'distribute food [at the feast]'. Typically, at the conclusion of a special event, the host village will distribute food to the members of the various surrounding villages who have come for the occasion. The leader's sole shouted speech in this case will be to announce the names of the villages or the important people in attendance who receive their own piles of food. This shouter, or 'town crier,' is not necessarily a village big man as in the other two genres, but may be *fiti mae kolho*, or 'a common man of the village'. He, and usually a co-worker, will simply proceed down a line of food spread on the ground on dozens of large banana tree leaves. The co-worker will speak to him in normal tones the name of the recipient of that pile, and then the 'shouter' will immediately shout the names of the villages, indicating whose food is located next to whom:

[11] I further note that the "Hip hip hooray" in English even carries its own distinctive pragmatic weight among CH speakers. At times, the initial "hip hips" (as they are called) are shouted very loudly, but they can be quickly toned down to almost a whisper by the obligatory third round. The leader might explain to the departing guest, "We are starting loud, but finishing soft because this is our way of saying we are sad to see you go." The same pheomenon can be observed for the *cheke thaḡru*. The leader thus adjusts the intonation and volume in order to convey his feelings as host.

(3)
Buala! Buala!
Tithiro! Tithiro.
Maḡla-u! Maḡla-u!
Jerigi!
Narea-bu! Narea-bu! Nareabu.
Bara-hu! Bara-hu!
Barasile! Barasile! Barasile!
Vavaranitu!
Salio!
Kologa-ru. Kologa-ru!

Often at a village feast, separate piles of food have been prepared for certain distinguished guests, as opposed to simply piles of food for each village. In these cases, personal names along with that individual's position are shouted when the announcer arrives at that pile, such as "Mae velepuhigna Nareabu!" (the church lay-leader of Nareabu village!) or "Mama Piaso, mae bi'o gna translation!" (Father Piaso, the big man of translation!).

He carries on with the shouting until he has finished calling out the names of all villages or important people represented that day. In the above example, certain village names occur more than once because the turnout of participants from that particular village at the feast was of such number that multiple piles were required to honor them.

The people begin to gather and collect their food and then depart the feast. And so, in a real sense, this use of shouted speech signals the conclusion of the celebration. The phonological and other structural characteristics of *tufa ḡano* will be noted in the brief grammatical and phonological sections below.

1.4 Summary comparison

In comparing these three genres of shouted speech, one notices both the overlapping and the distinctive features. The actual shouted speech in the *loku fodu* is only performed by the village leader, and the people respond to the hortatorical injunction by assembling and then carrying out the work duties. The *cheke thaḡru* on the other hand, involves full community participation in the shouting as a leader begins the announcing process and then the assembled group responds. The *tufa ḡano* is a mixture of both the context and function of the other speech events. That is, it is both announcing, like the *cheke thaḡru*, but also hortatory, like the *loku fodu*. The shouter announces the food that is now available for taking, and by the very act of calling out the names of recipients, the signal is sent to the hearers that is it time to take action and actually collect the food. Also, the shouter himself in the *tufa ḡano* functions in an overlapping role: he functions both as village leader, since the event hinges upon his leadership, and also he represents the entire community, since the community is the one giving the food.

2.0 Grammatical features

2.1. Loku fodu

2.1.1. Vocative

Grammatically, there is an obligatory use of a certain vocative within the *loku fodu,* namely, *"Mavitu*!" meaning, "You-people!". Example 1 above shows this common occurrence. It always occurs initially in this speech genre, and sends a signal that it is time for community involvement. Clearly, the leader is announcing "This is a job that all of us will do together. This is not time for individual effort."[12] This use of this word to launch the speech genre also corresponds well to its over all hortatory function. The leader could be announcing a call to come carry the belongings of a big man who has just arrived, a call to go fishing, a call to gather for an assembly at which time instructions for work projects will be discussed, or any other context regarding a multitude of community work projects. But in each instance, the use of this vocative in utterance-initial indicates that this announcement concerns every one.[13]

2.1.2. Verbal imperatives

There is also a repetitive use of certain verbs in the imperative such as *mei* (come), and often that in conjunction with an adverb such as *fagosei!* ('quickly!'), as found in example 1. The subject pronoun *gotilo* is in emphatic position, as indicated by the use of *si* preceding it, with the verb as imperative occurring sentence initial. Also, the short imperatives which are used in this particular genre all fit well with the overall urgency encoded by the utterance. Besides 'come', another high frequency action verb used in the imperative is *atha mei* (lit. 'take-come' or 'bring'), in such cases as *atha mei ḡobigna lepore* ('bring all the things [needed for this task]').

2.2. Cheke thaḡru

There are no verb or noun grammatical features found in *cheke thaḡru*. The antiphony used could be classified as more or less a series of leader-response interjections, with the actual content consisting of 'cheer' words.

2.3 Tufa ḡano

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[12] In another Melanesian society in which we lived in Papua New Guinea, we discovered this strong cultural value of community. I was concerned one day that I was taking a young man of the village away from a community work project on a coconut plantation to help me with a linguistic project, and thus I thought that he would not get paid. However, he told me very quickly that it was the village that was being paid for this work, not him individually. Melanesian societies in general have a very strong sense of community work ethic, and the use of this speech genre in CH reflects this cultural factor.

[13] An interesting study would be that of shouted speech between individuals in CH. Generally, the person calling another would sound the name, "Fihu...FIHU!" (the second in caps to indicate that it is shouted, whereas the former is not quite as pronounced. The ellipsis dots indicate that there is a brief pause between the two utterances). The responder calls back, "Unha?" (What?), and the brief instruction or information session quickly gets underway and then abruptly finishes. I would note that in comparing this sub-category with the shouted instruction in *tufa ḡano*, the addressee's name is shouted first in *tufa ḡano* and is softer in the second, but the opposite is standard procedure in the individual shouted speech.

In the *tufa ḡano* in example 3, village names are the primary content of this genre, and these nouns, which are geographical place names, are used in a real sense as imperatives. That is, the shouting of the name sends an imperative command for the hearer to respond.

3.0 Phonological features

Phonologically, there is usually a sharp, rising intonation at the end of each imperative or informational clause in these various genres of shouted speech.[14] Quite noticeably, there is often present in all three of these genres a particular clause-final phonological particle (*hu*) which does not occur in any other genre in the language, or in any other position in shouted speech, and which has no grammatical function. It serves as a phonological interjection, and as a rhyming mechanism, as in

(4)
...fagose hu!
...Nareabu!

Words which form the boundary of the shouted clause and which end in [u] do not need the addition of the phonological *hu.* But those which do not in [u] usually have the *hu* added to the final word of the clause (though see a variation in the brief analysis of the *hu* feature of *cheke thaḡru* below). It has not been determined that the *hu* is borrowed in *loku fodu* and *tufa ḡano* from the *cheke thaḡru* with its predominant *ḡri hu*, but nonetheless it certainly is a consistent phonological feature in the genre of shouted speech.[15] Perhaps in the *loku fodu,* the obligatory use of *mavitu* and its final [u] set up a predominant rhyming pattern both for that category and the others.

In looking again at the *cheke thaḡru* example below, one notes where the *hu* occurs. It does not occur at all in the warm-up interchange, which is lines 1-2, but then at the end of both lines 3 and 4, and then not at all in lines 5 and 7, but does appear at the end of lines 6, 8, and 9. One notices at the end of line 3 that the *hu* replaces the fourth *le* in the expected sequence found in line 1. In line 4, both the *ḡri* and the *hu* are said by the people in one sequence, but the *hu*, which is missing in lines 5 and 7, reappears as the people's total response in lines 6 and 8. Thus, the *ḡri hu* response is simply divided in this case between speakers, and the [u] or the *hu* is not obligatory at the end of each utterance, or as frequent as in *loku fodu.*

Example (2)
1: Leader: Le le le le!
2: People: Ḡri!
3: Leader: Le le le *hu*!
4: People: Ḡri hu!

[14] The one exception is during *tufa ḡano*, as the announcer reaches the final pile of food among multiple piles for that village. For example, there may be three piles of food for Nareabu village, and the announcer will characteristically shout the name Nareabu for the first two piles, but the final will be more or less in normal voice.
[15] This is true for individual shouted speech also, where the responder will often call back after the opening utterance, "*Hu*?"

5: Leader: Ḡri!
6: People: Hu!
7: Leader: Ḡri!
8: People: Hu!
9: All: Ḡri hu!

4.0 Summary and conclusion

4.1 Summary

This chart gives a summary look at the features of shouted speech discussed in this paper:

	Function	**Grammatical**	**Phonological**
Loku fodu	Hortatory	Vocative *mavitu* plus verbal imperatives	Short final bursts of [u], or *hu*. Pronounced, rising intonation on last syllable of clause
Cheke thaḡru	Announcing	Interjectionary "cheer" words	1 syllable phonological words shouted, with pronounced, rising intonation on final word in the sequence
Tufa ḡano	Hortatory, announcing	Predominant use of proper names used as imperatives	Pronounced, rising intonation on last syllable of clause, often *hu* added

4.2 Conclusion

Shouted speech in Cheke Holo is an important study because it helps those who investigate to see clearly how this use of language reflects the cultural values of community, sharing, authority and respect. It is such an integral part of daily life in Holo villages, that it is hard for one who is part of that culture to imagine life without it. While the CH rural inhabitants might be short on such modern wonders as technology, they are certainly long on community and on shared responsibilities. Shouted speech is used as a trigger to launch people into action, whether it is to go on a fishing trip, to honor a departing government official, or to call visitors to collect their gifts. It is a reminder to those in Western societies that this language phenomenon reflects the way that people who live in such rural situations commonly interact on a daily basis. For their entire livelihood depends on mutually responsive activities such as those described in this paper.

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