11

Literacy Instruction in a Samoan Village*

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INTRODUCTION

Literacy has been examined in many ways, particularly for the cognitive transformations it effects on acquirers in Western and non-Western societies. Major themes in this regard are the development of abstract reasoning and thought, the development of decentering—that is, the capacity to take the perspective of another—and the development of the ability to decontextualize one's language, all three interrelated topics (cf. Greenfield, 1972; Goody, 1977; Scribner & Cole, 1978).

Scribner and Cole (1978, 1981) have raised the issue of the relation of literacy to schooling, suggesting that many of the cognitive orientations discussed are consequences of the schooling experience rather than literacy per se. This suggestion has placed greater attention on uses of literacy and the ways in which literacy is instructed. Cognitive skills will depend on these two variables.

The focus of this paper is on literacy instruction. We will be examining the transmission of literacy in a traditional village in Western Samoa. Our point is simple, but one with far-reaching consequences: In the course of transmitting literacy skills, the instructor exposes and socializes children to new expectations surrounding the adult-child relationship and task accomplishment.

The role and behavior of adult and child in the class of events we might call "literacy classroom instructions" match that characteristic of many adult-child social interactions in Western middle class society (Heath, 1982). On the other hand, they do not match certain traditional Samoan beliefs, values, and social norms that underlie the relationship between adult and child. We posit that a global effect of literacy instruction is a change in the social identity of the child in Samoan society.

A more specific effect of literacy instruction concerns the notion of accomplishment or achievement. Instruction is organized in such a way that the child alone is pictured as having accomplished a particular task. While the instructor has assisted the child, his contribution is not acknowledged by participants within the interaction. In contrast, traditional tasks outside the classroom setting are not organized along these lines. Tasks are seen as cooperatively rather than individually accomplished. In this paper, we will consider differences in these two notions of accomplishment through comparison of the acts of acknowledging and praising in literacy instruction and in a variety of social contexts in daily Samoan life.

The consequences of exposing young Samoan children to Western patterns of adult-child interaction and task accomplishment are difficult to document but are as dramatic and pervasive as the other effects of literacy and formal schooling that have been considered. In transmitting literacy skills, the instructor transforms the way in which these children view themselves with respect to others. The particular emphasis on individual achievement in literacy instruction is compatible not only with Western notions of classroom achievement but with notions of economic achievement as well. We suggest that literacy instruction in this village provides the child with social and cultural knowledge necessary to participate in a Western-style economy: to obtain employment, carry out one's job, and be rewarded monetarily according to individual accomplishment.

This paper is organized in the following way: In the first section, we introduce the contexts of use of literacy and the basic features of the written materials used in literacy instruction (viz. Bible reading). In the next section, we describe the social organization of tasks and the concept of achievement in village settings outside the classroom. The following section analyzes the discourse patterns of literacy instruction. These patterns reveal attitudes, expectations, and values not characteristic of social interaction in other village settings. In particular, we focus on the child-centered nature of the verbal interaction and the orientation toward individual rather than collective achievement. In the

final section, we summarize our findings and our perspective on the effects of literacy instruction.

The discussion presented in this paper is based on two field projects: a longitudinal study of language acquisition and socialization in a traditional village in Western Samoa carried out by Alessandro Duranti, Elinor Ochs, and Martha Platt in 1978–79; and a film documentary project carried out by Duranti and Ochs in the same community in the spring of 1981.

CONTEXTS AND SOURCES OF LITERACY IN A RURAL VILLAGE OF WESTERN SAMOA

In a rural village in Western Samoa, there are two main sources of written material in Samoan: (1) the Samoan version of the Bible, and (2) weekly newspapers that come from the capital, Apia. There are also a number of religious and educational publications put out, respectively, by various religious denominations and by the Education Department; the former are to be used within Church activities and the latter in the public schools. Texts for secondary education are in English.

In everyday life, we find writing used for a number of reasons and in a number of social contexts. The most common use is probably for listing names of people, especially for the purpose of money collections and contributions, and fines to be paid to the village judiciary committees or to religious congregations. Writing is also used for corresponding with relatives who have gone to work (or sometimes permanently live) overseas, in New Zealand, in Australia, or in the United States.

There are also institutional records, for instance, church records kept by local pastors and priests who document dates of births, deaths, and special religious services for some particular family or group. Local hospitals also keep records of patients and treatments, births, deaths—it is worthwhile noticing that in the hospital records, people are listed under the name of the titled man (*matai*) who is the head of the extended family (see pp. 220-221) rather than alphabetically by individual names.

Within the household, with the exception of the above-mentioned family correspondence, and some secret books in which older men keep family genealogies and ceremonial greetings (*fa'alupega*)[1], writing is not a common activity.

Learning How To Read and Write
Much before the age for public education, at the age of 3 or 4, children are sent to the local pastor's school where they first learn the alphabet, Arabic and Roman numbers, and to recite a few passages from the Bible. With the help of an illustrated alphabet table (see Figure 1), young children recite the name of the letter and the name of the picture contained in the same box. Thus, for instance, they say aloud "a *ato*, e *elefane*, i

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[1] There is a taboo, in fact, for anyone else but the one who wrote them to read these lists of names and ceremonial greetings. The violation of such a taboo is believed to cause misfortune or even death to the transgressor. Such a restriction reinforces (reflects?) the basic Samoan belief that one should learn from direct experience, that is, from watching and listening to competent people.

Figure 1.   Literacy Instruction in Samoa

O LE PI TAUTAU

ipu," etc. for the vowels, and "fa *fanu*, ga *gata*, la *logo*, mo *moa*," and so on for the consonants.

Given the age range of the pupils, the younger ones are immediately exposed to the more complex tasks and routines performed by the older children. They participate in such routines according to their competence. At first they may be able to perform only part of a given routine; as they mature, they perform in a more competent way, providing a model for younger and less experienced peers.

In Table 1 we have listed the words that correspond to the picture associated with each letter of the alphabet. For each word, we have listed their present spelling[2] and their actual careful pronunciation.

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[2] As can be seen by comparing the "written" version of each word and its corresponding careful pronunciation, current educational publications in Western Samoa tend not to use glottal stops, despite the fact that the missionaries originally introduced a conventional sign for it, namely, the inverted apostrophe ('). This sign is used, although inconsistently, in the Samoan Bible and in newspaper articles.

Table 1.   Key to Figure 1

LETTER	WORD (as written)	WORD (as pronounced in reading)	GLOSS	
A	ato	?ato	'basket'	
E	'elefane	?elefane	'elephant'	(loan)
I	ipu	?ipu	'cup'	
O	ofu	?ofu	'dress'	
U	uati	wati	'watch'	(loan)
F	fagu	fagu	'bottle'	
G	gata	gata	'snake'	
L	logo	logo	'bell'	
M	moa	moa	'fowl'	
N	nofoa	nofoa	'chair'	
P	pusi	pusi	'cat'	(loan)
S	solofanua	solafanua	'horse'	
T	taavale	ta?avale	'car, truck'	
V	vaa	va?a	'boat, vessel'	
H*	Herota	herota	'herod'	(loan)
K*	kirikiti	kirikiti	'cricket'	(loan)
R*	rapiti	rapiti	'rabbit'	(loan)

*found only in loanwords).

There are several reasons for wanting to consider in some detail the alphabet table reproduced in Figure 1. It tells us some important things about literacy instruction in Samoa and it also confirms what is already known about literacy in other societies. We will focus on two aspects of the alphabet table: the Western orientation of its content (by "content" we mean both what is represented in the table and the particular way in which it is represented), and the conventions for transcribing Samoan sounds and words.

Western Orientation of the Alphabet Table.   Even without knowing much about Samoan culture, one can easily infer a Western orientation in the illustrated alphabet as shown in Figure 1. More generally, however, there is a clear preference for an imagery that evokes nontraditional settings, referents, and values. Out of the 17 pictures chosen to represent current Samoan words, none of them represent a "traditional" Samoan referent—"traditional" at last from an historical viewpoint: none of the pictures represents something that existed or was known to Samoans before contact with Europeans. This could have not been avoided for the last three letters (h, k, and r), which correspond to sounds introduced by Europeans for borrowed words: thus we find Herod, Samoan *Herota*, (from the Bible), cricket, Samoan *kirikiki*, and a rabbit, Samoan *rapiti*. What is striking, however, is that even for those words that could have been represented by an image of something "traditional" or familiar to a Samoan child, a corresponding less familiar object or artifact is chosen. This is the case, for instance, for the first picture on the top right corner, where, for the Samoan word *ato* 'basket' we find a kind of basket which is sold to tourists in the capital rather than the traditional basket

used in everyday activities for carrying goods or collecting garbage. To represent *ipu* 'cup', we find a China cup rather than the traditional Polynesian cup, that is, half of a coconut shell. The dress, *ofu*, is an end-of-the-century British missionary's wife's dress (notice the short sleeves covering the shoulders, an unfitting feature for the hot and humid climate of Samoa). Finally, the picture of the boat, for the word *va'a*, is an ocean liner rather than the more familiar Samoan outrigger.[3]

These facts suggest that when a Samoan child is first exposed to literacy instructions he or she is taught something more than the alphabet. From the very first day of school, literacy is accompanied by an attention to a world of objects and values that either are removed from the immediate context of the child's everyday life or suggest Western alternatives within a range of possible choices that would include more traditional objects and values. We find reference to Western codes for dressing, Western products (viz. the bottle of "cola"), Western artifacts and technology (e.g. the sedan car rather than the more useful and familiar pick-up truck, the big ship rather than the outrigger). Finally, some of the words anticipate unknown characters (e.g. Herod, the snake—there are no such snakes in Samoa) soon to be encountered in the reading of the Holy Scriptures.

Features of the Literacy Register. To illustrate the main feature of the sound system portrayed by written Samoan, let us take as an example the word that is used to illustrate the letter/sound *t*, namely, *ta'avale* 'car' but also 'truck' (literally 'rolling thing').

Especially where a village is located along a road, with trucks, buses, pick-ups, and cars passing by at all times of the day, the Samoan child must learn from his very first steps to watch for the often speeding motor vehicles. The word referring to 'car, truck' is thus often heard along and around the road, usually shouted as a warning to young children by older siblings or adult bystanders. *Va'ai ka'avale!* 'watch (for the) car/truck!' one hears, or simply *ka'avale!* 'car/truck!'. In these situations, the word is pronounced with a /k/ rather than with a /t/ (*ka'avale* instead of *ta'avale*). Such a difference between the way the word is written and read and the way it is pronounced in most of daily interaction reflects an important distinction between two sharply marked phonological registers.

In Samoan communities, these registers are called 'Good Speech' (*tautala lelei*) and 'Bad Speech' (*tautala leaga*). Figure 2 illustrates the differences between the two phonemic inventories.

As summarized in Figure 3, in 'Bad Speech' the alveolar segments /t/ and /n/ merge with the velar segments /k/ and /g/ respectively (N.B. Given that Samoan does not have a velar stop, we have here adopted the Samoan orthographic convention of using the

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[3] In making these remarks, we are not suggesting that imported artifacts or concepts be considered "non-Samoan." We do take sedan cars, China cups, European dresses, clocks, and so on, to be part of contemporary Samoan culture and environment. We are simply pointing out that the choices made in illustrating the alphabet reflect a bias toward those elements of contemporary Samoan culture that are still overtly bound to Western lifestyle and values.

Figure 2. Phonemic Inventories of "Good Speech" and "Bad Speech." (/g/ stands for a velar nasal)

"Good Speech:"						"Bad Speech":			

A) Consonants:

P	t		k*	?	P			k	?
f,v s		l,r*			f,v s	l			
m	n		g	h*	m			g	

B) Vowels:

	i		u	
	e	o		
		a		

*found only in loanwords.

letter g for representing a velar nasal—the voiceless velar segment replaces the voiced one in loanwords, for example, English *gallon* — Samoan *kalone*). Furthermore, /r/ and /l/ merge into /l/, and /h/ is often not realized in 'Bad Speech' or pronounced as a glottal stop.

As pointed out by Shore (1977, 1982), the contexts in which "good speech" predominates are strictly related to "imported" Western-oriented activities. Typically, such activities or interactions involve or presuppose the use of literacy. Thus, we find "Good Speech" used in writing, reading, school instruction, praying, singing, radio broadcasting, and talking to foreigners (who are prototypically seen as missionaries or teachers). 'Bad speech', on the other hand, is found in most of everyday spoken interaction, ranging over both formal (cf. also Duranti, 1981a, 1981b, 1983) and informal situations (cf. Ochs, 1982a, 1982b; Platt, 1982) (cf. Duranti, 1981a; Ochs, in press; and Shore, 1977, 1982 for a general discussion of the variation between the two registers).

Figure 3. Correspondences Between 'Good Speech' and 'Bad Speech'

"Good Speech	"Bad Speech"
t, k	k
ex.: *lota* 'my,'	
	/loka/ 'my' or 'lock'
loka 'lock'	
n, g	g
ex.: *fana* 'gun,'	
	/faga/ 'gun' or 'bay'
faga 'bay'	
l, r	l
ex.: (no minimal pairs)	
kirikiti	/kilikiki/
natura	/gakula/

(N.B. The number of minimal pairs for the t/k and n/g oppositions is very low).

THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION OF TASK ACCOMPLISHMENT
OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

We would like to focus now on one particular aspect of Samoan society and culture, namely, on the concept and practice of task achievement. To illustrate this concept, it is necessary to introduce certain aspects of Samoan social organization, specifically, its traditional stratified structure and collective responsibility for task accomplishment.

Social Stratification

Samoan society has been rightly characterized as "stratified" (cf. Sahlins, 1958), that is, as a society in which distinctions with respect to decision power and prestige are made not only in terms of the universal features of age, sex, and personal characteristics, but also, and crucially, according to the rank of particular "titles" that adult individuals may hold from a certain moment of their lives on, usually until their death. A very basic distinction is thus made in Samoan society between titled people, called *matai*, and untitled people or commoners, called *taulele'a*. A title is conferred to a person by a special session of the extended family (*'aaiga potopoto*) and gives its holder privileges and duties with respect to an extended family and to the village political structure. More specifically, a *matai* title gives its holder control over a plot of land and its products (taro, breadfruit, bananas, coconuts), decision power and responsibilities both within the family and in larger contexts, for example, village affairs. A *matai* title carries with it the right and duty to attend the meetings of the village council (*fono*), where important decisions are made and solutions to social dramas are negotiated among the most influential members of the community (cf. Duranti, 1981a).

Social stratification is seen in the division of labor within the family. Generally untitled men and women are the ones who cultivate food on family land, go out fishing, or nowadays work in the capital, and then bring the product of their labor back to be shared among all family members according to social status and the needs of the family at large. The highest ranking chief in the family generally has first rights to choose quality and amount of food; younger, lower status adults and children share what is left.

High rank is associated with stationary behavior, controlled, dignified (*mamalu*) posture (the term used to refer to the ceremony of installation of a title is *saofa'i*, the respect vocabulary word for 'to sit'). Low rank people instead are movable, run errands, carry objects or messages. The dichotomy between high rank-stationary and low rank-active is realized in many different ways, across all kinds of situations.

For example, when we observe people remodeling an old house, we see young untitled men of the family move long and heavy posts, while a much older woman is weaving new blinds with leaves from pandanas trees. Similarly, a young titled man and his wife may be supervising closely those carrying out the heavy labor, giving advice and directing children to help; in the meantime, the oldest man of the house and highest ranking orator in the compound sits silently in a nearby house, watching now and then the others working, while routinely making string from sennit (*'afa*). The string will be used to secure the new blinds and roofing to the house. Participation in this task, then, is differentiated according to social rank.

As this description suggests, more than activity level distinguishes relative status. Generally there is an expectation that low ranking persons will attend to and accommodate those of higher rank. The accommodation is at the same time mental and physical in the sense that lower ranking persons are expected to take the perspective of others to serve them.

At a very early age, young children are both explicitly and implicitly socialized into a disposition of attention and accomodation (Ochs, 1982b). Caregivers often hold and feed infants and toddlers so that they face outwards to others present. Chilren in the early stages of acquiring language are expected to notice activity of others and report on it to others. Further they are expected to speak intelligibly. Unintelligible utterances will generally not be unraveled by older persons present in the manner described for middle-class Western caregiver-child interaction (Ochs & Schieffelin, 1984). By the time children reach the age of three-and-a-half to four years, they will be asked to transmit orally lengthy messages to persons in other compounds. This task will demand of them competence in politeness conventions and respect vocabulary appropriate to the social status of the addressee.

Generally in carrying out these tasks, children are not praised or complimented. The child's accomodation to older persons is part of showing *fa'aaloalo* (respect), a crucial dimension of Samoan social life.

Collective Accomplishment: The Concept of *Taapua'i* ('Supporter')

Having briefly considered the organization of daily activities according to social rank and the socialization of children into such a system, we can start introducing a very important notion in Samoan culture, namely that of *taapua'i*, which can be translated as 'supporter' or 'sympathizer.'

In all kinds of daily activities, Samoans see other people as needing someone else to sympathize with them. Very rarely does a Samoan do something without someone next to him to provide recognition of his actions, attempts, or accomplishments. Whether building a house, singing a song, fixing a broken tool, or driving a car, Samoans know that they can usually count on the company of one or more sympathizers. The relationship between the actor and the supporter is truly reciprocal rather than unidirectional. When someone's work or accomplishment is valued and recognized by a suppoter, the supporter's "work" at recognizing the accomplishment is also recognized by the actor. This relationship is symbolically and routinely instantiated by the use of what we will call "a *maaloo* exchange." If the driver avoids a collision with another vehicle, the passengers will recognize his presence of mind with a *maaloo*. The driver will then acknowledge their support by answering with another *maaloo*.

The exchange goes as follows:

(1) (Context: driver does something that shows skill, presence of mind)

Passenger(s): *Maaloo le fa'auli!* 'Well done the steering!'
Driver: *Maaloo le taapua'i!* 'Well done the support!'

If the driver is able to see a hole in the road and avoid it in time, the exchange might be as follows:

Passenger(s):   *Maaloo le silasila!* 'Well done the looking!'
Driver: *Maaloo le taapua'i!* 'Well done the support!'

This kind of routine is found in situations that at first appear more difficult to understand for a non-Samoan. Thus, as illustrated in (3), when a party of people who have been away on a trip returns home, those who stayed home welcome them with a *maaloo* greeting and those who just arrived reply with another *maaloo*:

(3)

People at home: *Maaloo le malaga!* 'Well done the trip!'
Travelers: *Maaloo le fa'amuli!* 'Well done the staying back!'

To understand this exchange, we must realize that in the Samoan view, the travelers' reply not only acknowledges the sympathy of those at home (some of whom might have worried about the outcomes of the trip), but also they recognize the fact that a trip is made into something valuable, deserving recognition, by the very fact that someone stayed home and did not go on the trip. The same is true for the exchange between the driver and the passengers. The driver is skillful to the extent to which his suppoters are willing to recognize his skills.

More generally, something is an accomplishment because of and through the recognition that others are willing to give it. Any accomplishment can then be seen as a joint product of both the actors and the supporters. In the Samoan view, if a performance went well it is the suppoters' merit as much as the performers. This is so true that if the performer receives a prize or some previously established compensation, he will have to share it with his supporters.

Concluding, the notion of 'supporter' and the *maaloo* routine reiterate the Samoan view of accomplishment as a collective and cooperative enterprise, in which the individual's competence is defined by his audience appreciation and his merit is framed within the merit of his group. Being skillful (*poto*) at something does not mean to stand out with respect to everyone else as much as to be able to create the conditions for a successful collective endeavour (cf. Mead, 1937). By sharing the products of his labor or his earnings (if any) with his supporters, a person gives goods back to those who gave him sympathy first.

LITERACY INSTRUCTION IN CLASSROOM SETTINGS

The Setting

As noted earlier, generally Samoan children first acquire literacy skills in a village pastor's school. They enter this school two to three years before entering the kindergarten class in the village public school. The classes meet in the late afternoon and many children of the congregation attend until their early teens. The interactions analyzed here

are drawn from both pastor's and public schools, however our primary focus will be on literacy instruction in the pastor's school.

While the youngest children spend time learning the alphabet table, older children in the pastor's school concentrate on two important tasks: oral reading from the Bible and interpretation of Bible passages. The children typically sit cross-legged on mats, facing the instructor (the pastor, the pastor's wife, the pastor's assistant), who is also seated cross-legged on a separate mat, facing the children. Every child holds his Bible in his lap or places it on the mat in front of him. The lesson begins with Bible reading. In this part, each child reads one verse from the Bible, with the pastor's assistance (see example 4). Following this, the pastor questions the children concerning their understanding of the written material they have just read. Three stretches of classroom interaction between a pastor and his students illustrate the character of these events.

(4) Pastor's School: Reading Aloud (Context: A child reading aloud from the Bible misreads the word *faaliu* 'to turn towards'—spelled *faliu*—as *fa'aliliu* 'to translate'. Such a mistake is probably related to the fact that in the Bible the glottal stop (') is often left out and *fa'aliliu* could have been written *Faaliliu*)

1.   Child: ((* Error)) 'But Jesus translating to—'

2.   Pastor: *Sipela le 'upu!* 'Spell the word!'

3.   (3.0)

4.   Child: *Fa-a-la-i-u.* 'F-a-l-i-u.' (N.B. the word is spelled with one *a*)

5.   Pastor: *Ia. Le aa laa?* 'So. What is it then?'

6.   (6.0)

7.   Child: '*A 'ua fa'ai'u**. ((* Error)) 'But (he) ended.'

8.   Pastor: ('*A 'ua—) (1.5) *Sipela le 'upu!* '(But he)—(1.5) Spell the word!'

9.   Child: *Fa-a-la-i-u.* 'F-a-l-i-u.'

10.   (1.0

11.   Pastor: *Faa.* 'Faa,'

12.   Child: *Fa'aliliu** (* Error) 'Translated'

13.   Pastor: *Leo tele!* 'Speak loud!'

14.   Child: *Fa'aliliu.* (* Error) 'Translated.'

15.   Pastor: '*E lee se fa'aliliu! Fa'aliliu fa'afefea?* 'It's not 'translate'! How come translate?

16.   *Fa-a-la-i-u* 'F-a-l-i-u.'

17.   (4.5)

18.   Pastor: *'O le 'faa' ma le 'liu.' 'O le aa le 'upu?* 'Faa' and 'liu.' What is the word?'

19.   (2.0)

20.   Child: (Unclear)

21.   Pastor: *Le aa?* 'What?'

22.   Child: *Faaliu.* 'Turn.'

23.   Pastor: *Faaliu. Le kele!* 'Turn. Speak loud!'

24.   (1.0)

25.   Child: *'A 'ua fa'al—faaliu lesuu i—iaa te 'i—* 'But Jesus transl— turning to—

26.   *ia—iaa te 'i laatou 'ua fetalai (0.3) atu* 'up—upon them said'

(5) Pastor's School: Discussion of Herod

1.   Pastor: *'O ai Herota?'* 'Who is Herod?'

2.   Teresa: *Tupu.* 'King.'

3.   Pastor: *'O le aa?* 'It is what?'

4.   Teresa: *'O le tupu.* '(He) is the king.'

5.   Pastor: *'O le tupu. Lelei.* '(He) is the king. Good.'

6.   *'E iai se si e 'ese sana tali?* 'Is there anyone else with a different answer?'

7.   Boy: *'O le tagata lea na fia fasi fua iaa Iesuu:* 'The person who wanted to kill Jesus for no reason.'

8.   Pastor: *Lelei fo'i.* 'Good also.'

9.   *'A 'o le aa lona—lona tofiga?* 'But what is his—his occupation?!

10.   *'O le tupu aa,* 'The king, isn't he?'

11.   *Tupu lea saa—saa lee fiafia iaa Iesuu* '(The) king who did—didn't like Jesus'

12.   *ina 'ua fanau mai Iesuu* 'because Jesus was born'

13.   *ma 'ua folafola mai e tagata* 'and was proclaimed by the people'

14.   *'o ia 'o le tupu o tagata Iutaia aa,* '(that) he is the king of the Jews, right?'

15.   *saa—saa lee fiafia la iai* '(he) di—didn't like him then'

16.   *'ona 'o le manatu o Herota* 'because Herod's idea (was that)'

17.   *na 'o ia lava le tupu aa.* 'only he himself is the king, right?'

18.   *'e lee ai se si tagata e tatau* 'there is no other person (who) should'

19.   *ona—ona fai ma tupu* 'become king.'

20.   *Se'i vaganaa 'o ia lava.* 'Except he himself.'

(6) Pastor's School: Discussion of Barabbas

1.   Pastor: . . . *Parapa saa fouvale i le—i le nu'u.* 'Barabbas had rioted in the—in the city'

2.   *Saa tele fo'i ana amio leaga na fai.* 'Many were the bad actions he had done.'

3.   *'Ona 'ave ai lea tu'u i le fale—. . . .* 'so that (he) had been put in the pri—,. . . '

4.   Children: *—puipui* '—son!'

5.   Pastor: *Falepuipui!* 'Prison!'

6.   *Ia. 'O lona uiga 'a tu'u tagata* 'So. That is to say, if someone is put'

7.   *i le falepuipui 'o le aa le tagata legaa?* 'in a prison, what is that person?'

8.   *'O le paago—. . .. .. .* 'A priso—,. . . '

9.   Children:
*Paagota.** (* Error: the last *a* should be long, *aa*) 'Paagota.'

10.   Pastor: ((Correcting the pronunciation)) *PaagotAA!* 'Prisoner!'

11.   *Po 'o le paagota?'* 'What is a paagota?'

The Role of Literacy Instruction in Redefining Adult-Child Social Relationships

Examining the verbal interaction in these examples, we can see that the pastor/instructor enters into the activity of reading and interpreting at many points. Very much like contemporary Western pedagogues, the pastor in this village school grants permission to speak, selects topics, points out errors, correcting certain of them, and clarifies terms and passages.

Three constructions are heavily relied upon to introduce and clarify topics: *rhetorical questions* (Example (5), line 9), *test questions* (Example (5), line 1), and *incomplete sentence frames* (Example (6), lines 3 and 8). Rhetorical and test questions are similar in that, in both cases, the speaker knows a possible answer to the question posed. They are distinguished in that the rhetorical question is intended to be answered by the speaker, whereas the test question is intended to be answered by a selected addressee. The incomplete sentence frame functions as a question as well in that the instructor elicits through prosodic means missing information in a sentence he has initiated. Both the

test question and incomplete sentence frame involve the instructor and student in the expression of an idea. The instructor provides the first part and the student the second part of the idea.

These pedagogical procedures are very familiar to the readership of this paper. These constructions and strategies parallel those found in classrooms following Western or European tradition of formal education (cf. Mehan, 1979; Philips, 1983). Indeed the parallel is not coincidental. The pastor's school is organized through the Christian church. Training in Western pedagogical techniques is provided to pastors and their spouses over a four-year period in a theological seminary.

The procedures characteristic of teachers in Western classrooms are extensions of practices of caregivers in Western middle-class households. In other words, *teacher talk* (Cazden, 1979; Coulthard, 1977) has something in common with middle-class caregiver speech to young children. In both situations, speakers simplify and clarify for the child (Ferguson, 1977). For example, rhetorical questions simplify a proposition by breaking it into two separate utterances. The child's attention is drawn to certain information (topic) in one utterance and then a predication (comment) concerning that information is made in a separate subsequent utterance (see Keenan & Schieffelin, 1976; Ochs, Schieffelin, & Platt, 1979; Scollon, 1976). Test questions and sentence frames simplify by helping the child to express an idea; typically caregivers/teachers produce the first part of the idea (topic) and the child completes the predication (comment) (Keenan, Schieffelin, & Platt, 1978; Greenfield & Smith, 1976). In Western middle-class societies, these procedures are part of a broader set of simplifying features that distinguish language addressed to young children from many other sociolinguistic situations. When a middle-class child enters the classroom, then, there is quite a lot of continuity with his or her early experiences in talking to adults.

In contrast, these features are not characteristic of traditional Samoan caregiver speech. *While these features reflect and express in middle-class society the expectation that adults should accomodate their language in relating to small children* (Ochs & Schieffelin, 1984), *the traditional Samoan expectation is the reverse—that children, not adults, should accomodate their behavior, including their speech* (Ochs, 1982b).

Samoan caregivers generally do not simplify their speech in addressing small children. Relevant to this discussion, they do not characteristically break down propositions into rhetorical questions and answers, nor do they jointly express propositions with children through test questions/answers and sentence frames/completions. As a rule, caregivers do not ask children questions to which they know the answers. For example, Samoan caregivers do not engage in labeling routines with small children, asking the child questions, such as 'What's this?', to which the caregiver knows the answer.

As noted earlier, in contrast to Western middle-class caregivers, Samoan caregivers place far greater responsibility for acquisition of knowledge with the child. Children are expected to watch and listen. Samoans say that the way to knowledge and power is to serve (i.e., attend).

When a three- or four-year-old Samoan child enters the classroom for literacy instruction, then, he or she participates in verbal interactions that differ in important

ways from interactions with adults outside the classroom. *Most critically, in the classroom, the adult verbally accomodates (in terms of simplification and clarification) to the child to a greater extent than do adults outside this setting. In the classroom, the interactions are more child-centered; in other village settings, the interactions are more adult-centered.* The net result is a shift in social expectations surrounding the roles of adult and child.

The Role of Literacy Instruction in Redefining Task Accomplishment

In this section, we will consider how accomplishment or achievement is expressed in literacy instruction and contrast this with expectations outside the classroom setting. We will see that the notion of task accomplishment in the classroom further enhances the child-centered orientation of the interaction.

In the previous section, we have indicated ways in which the pastor/instructor facilitates the tasks of reading and comprehending written material. Examining the transcripts, we can see the achievement of these tasks has drawn on the efforts of both instructor and student. Indeed in certain cases the instructor and student together have produced the correct reading or missing information. Curiously, however, these accomplishments are not seen as cooperative in this social context. *Rather, tasks are treated as individually accomplished, specifically, as accomplished by a particular child.*

Support for this claim comes from the set of positive assessments—compliments or praises—that can mark the successful completion of particular tasks. Before proceeding with a comparison of complimenting/praising in and out of the classroom, we need to point out that, across societies, these forms of verbal behavior codify perspectives on task and achievement. Complimenting and praising can indicate *that* something has been accomplished, *what* has been accomplished, *who* has accomplished it, and *in what manner*. They are, then, good sources for understanding how members of a society conceptualize task. Where young children are involved, complimenting and praising socialize them into seeing task from a particular perspective or 'world view'.

We have noted earlier in this paper (pp. 221–222) that the successful accomplishment of tasks in day-to-day village life is often acknowledged through a verbal ritual—the *maaloo* exchange. Task accomplishment in the classroom is also associated with a verbal ritual. The successful completion of a task is often acknowledged by the instructor uttering praises such as *lelei* 'good' or *lelei tele* 'very good'. Example (5) illustrates two instances of this pattern. Lines 5 and 8 contain the assessment *lelei* 'good'. In these instances, the pastor praises two children for successfully answering a question. Below we provide another example of these assessments. Example (7) is drawn from the kindergarten/first grade class in the village public school. In this example the instructor acknowledges accomplishment through the predicates *lelei tele* 'very good' (lines 5, 10).

(7) *Kindergarten/first grade class* (Context: It is the second week of school. The teacher has just taken the class for a walk around the school yard. Once back in the classroom, she asks the pupils questions about what they have just seen.)

1.   Teacher: *Lima i luga lima i luga lima i luga!* 'Hands up hands up hands up!'

2.   *Si'i luga lima o le tagata* 'Raise a hand the person (who)'

3.   *e iloa ta'u mai se mea (iaa) te a'u!* 'can tell me something!'

4.   ((A boy raises his hand)).

5.   Teacher: *Lelei tele. "O ai fo'i le igoa laa?* 'Very good. What is the name there?'

6.   Boy: *Salani.* 'Salani.'

7.   Teacher: 'O ai? 'Who?'

8.   2 Girls: Salagi. 'Salagi.'

9.   Teacher: *Salagi tama lelei Salagi. Tu'u i luga Salagi.* 'Salagi good boy Salagi.
                            Stand up Salagi.

10   *Ta'u mai se mea na "e va'ai iai.* 'Tell (us) something you saw.'

11.   Salagi: *'Ulu!* 'Breadfruit(s)!'

12.   Teacher: *Lelei tele.* (Cont.) 'Very good.'

We turn now to a comparison of *maaloo* and *lelei* in the different social settings in which they are used. *Maaloo* is used pervasively in social situations outside the classroom setting; it is rarely used in the classroom. *Lelei* is used consistently in the speech of instructors in the course of literacy instruction; it is rarely used as a form of praise in social situations outside this setting.¹ In our discussion we will focus on one variable, the recipient of the compliment or praise (the one/ones who take(s) credit for the task accomplished.)

Comparing examples (1), (2), and (3) with examples (5) and (7), we can see that *maaloo* ("well done") and *lelei* ("good") have different conversational consequences. As noted earlier (pp. 221–222) *maaloo* is part of a verbal exchange. In conversation analysis terminology, the first utterance containing *maaloo* (*maaloo* #1: 'well done') is the first pair part of an adjacency pair and the second utterance containing *maaloo* (*maaloo* #2: 'and well done to you') is the second pair part (Sacks, Schegloff, & Jefferson, 1974). The important property is that once *maaloo* #1 is produced, there is a strong expectation that *maaloo* #2 will be produced.

Lelei ('good'), on the other hand, is not a first pair part of an exchange/adjacency pair. It is instead the last act of a three-part sequence, typical of classroom interaction, which Mehan (1979) called "Initiation-Reply-Evaluation." What is relevant for our discussion is that when the instructor acknowledges the child's achievement by uttering *lelei*, the child does not reciprocate and acknowledge the instructor's accomplishments in the so-

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⁴ Outside the classroom, *lelei* is used primarily to express agreement and conclude a topic, muck like the English *okay, sure, fine.* In these contexts, *lelei* is typically preceded by the particle *ia'*, a boundary marker of discourse units, roughly corresponding to the English *well, so, then. Lelei* in the classroom also operates as a boundary marker, but performs a different speech act (praise rather than agreement). In addition, there are prosodic differences between the utterances in which *lelei* is used as a praise and those in which it is used as an agreement.

cial event at hand. The child does not say, for example, *Lelei fo'i* or *Lelei fo'i "oe* ('You did well too.'). In contrast to *maaloo*, *lelei* closes an interactional sequence.

Simply in terms of their sequential organization, *maaloo* and *lelei* reflect differences in giving credit for task accomplishment. When a speaker uses *maaloo*, credit is typically reciprocally given (two-directional.) When *lelei* is used, credit is unidirectional.

There are additional properties of *maaloo* that distinguish it from *lelei*. The *maaloo* exchange is not simply an exchange of compliments/praises. It expresses the idea that both parties to the *maaloo* exchange have contributed to the same task. As noted earlier, the initial expression of *maaloo* itself defines the speaker as a *taapua'i* 'supporter' and supporters should be given credit for accomplishing the task. Hence the speaker of *maaloo* #1 becomes the recipient of *maaloo* #2. The use of *lelei* apparently carries with it no such conditions. The instructor who uses *lelei* is not acknowledged by a child for his or her role in facilitating the achievement of literacy skills. Outside this setting, the same child told *maaloo* does *maaloo* back, acknowledging the contribution of others in achieving a goal.

Young Samoan children experience a type of secondary socialization in the course of becoming literate. They learn sociolinguistic norms that differ from those operating in family interactions within the village. In their primary socialization, they learn not to expect praises and compliments for carrying out directed tasks. Children are expcted to carry out these tasks for their elders and family. In their secondary socialization, they learn to expect recognition and positive assessments, given successful accomplishment of a task. In their primary socialization, Samoan children learn to consider tasks as cooperatively accomplished, as social products. In their secondary socialization, they learn to consider tasks as an individual's work and accomplishment.

This particular difference is not experienced by most western middle-class children entering school. These children are accustomed to praise (LeVine, 1980). Further, from infancy onwards, these children are socialized through language to see tasks as individually accomplished. They have experienced daily interactions in which jointly accomplished tasks of adult and child are evaluated by the adult as an accomplishment of the child (Ochs & Schieffelin, 1984). Adults provide the means for a child to accomplish a task, but then treat that task as the child's own achievement. Western middle-class caregivers repeat this pattern over and over in playing games, drawing, constructing (Bruner, 1975), putting away toys, telling a story jointly with their children. The behavior of teachers in contemporary Western classrooms is continuous in this sense with that of caregivers. In both cases, the adult does not take (or get) credit for her or his part in accomplishing a task; rather, the child is given full credit through unidirectional praising.

We can see from this description that the secondary socialization of Samoan children may extend beyond norms of classroom interaction. Samoan children may be acquiring certain attitudes that characterize Western middle-class relationships, including, most importantly economic relationships.

Rural Samoans acquire literacy skills primarily to be competent in reading the Bible and to be employable. The ability to read and write fluently is a requirement of most

salaried jobs in the capital. But to participate successfully in the urban cash economy, a Samoan needs more than literacy skills in the strict sense of reading and writing. The urban economy is heavily influential by Western values. In particular, the urban economic system relies on the notion of individual accomplishment. This is what a salary represents. The salary symbolizes recognition and approval of an individual's achievements, that an individual has done what was expected (or more than expected) of him. The Western-style pedagogic procedures used in transmitting literacy skills prepare young children for the Western-style economy in which many will eventually participate. With a school certificate in hand, they have acquired (to some measure) *both* social and linguistic competence demanded in these economic contexts. However, secondary socialization may be superseded by primary socialization as long as the traditional social context stays unchanged. When the emigrant Samoan comes back to his village for a visit, he is expected to share his earnings with his family, friends, and *taapua'i*. The fruits of his labor are redistributed among those who helped him at some earlier time in his life or were thinking of him while away.

CONCLUSIONS

In a recent collection on literacy and historical change, Graff (1981, p. 258) has written: "Literacy's importance can not be understood in isolation, or in terms of self-advancement or skills; rather, its significance lies in its relation to the transmission of morals, discipline and social values." Graff and other social scientists (e.g., Galtung, 1981, Gintis, 1971) have argued that, in teaching literacy, educators have been simultaneously engaged in "the reshaping of character, behavior, morality and culture" (Graff, 1981, p. 257). Industrialists apparently recognized this activity long before social scientists and in the nineteenth century encouraged schools to promote values that are harmonious with economic productivity, for example, self-motivation, punctuality, regularity.

These observations are compatible with those of Scribner and Cole (1981). While the historians may ascribe more importance to social than to cognitive transformations (if such a distinction can be made), both perspectives indicate the importance of the *uses* of literacy. The consequences of literacy are related to the activities in which it is used in and outside the classroom. Children acquiring literacy are acquiring competence in these activities.

This paper has pursued this hypothesis in a somewhat different manner than has either the historian or the psychologist. It has proposed two important consequences of Samoan children's participation in literacy instruction activities and then has analyzed the discourse structure of these activities, relating specific uses of language and the sequential organization of discourse to attitudes, expectations, and values.

In particular, the paper has been concerned with the attitudes, expectations, and values surrounding the adult-child social relationship and the concept of task accomplishment. We have proposed that, in the classroom, adults (instructors) accomodate their behavior to children in conveying information. Such accomodation is not characteristic of adult-child verbal interactions outside the classroom. We can see this differ-

ence through a comparison of adult-child discourse in household and school settings (+/- test questions, +/- incomplete sentence frames, +/- rhetorical questions). We have also proposed that the discourse of literacy instruction reveals an orientation towards task accomplishment. We have focused on the structure of complimenting/praising and argued that in literacy instruction such speech acts are unidirectional, from instructor to child. Even though the instructor has participated in the task of reading and understanding, this participation is not verbally acknowledged by the child. In contrast, complimenting/praising in most other village settings is reciprocal. Achievement of a task is seen as a social product, dependent on the participation of different people carrying out different roles, including that of supporter.

Through such an examination, we come closer to understanding the effects of literacy and schooling on children. Children are socialized through participating in such verbal interactions into certain perspectives and values. The extent to which these children are affected depends on the extent of their education and the extent to which they continue to participate in village social life. Those who go on to secondary schools, and those who leave the village to work or study elsewhere are obviously affected more than others. For the majority of rural Samoans, the Western view of adult-child relationships and task accomplishment is restricted to particular settings, namely, school and work in the capital. This view coexists with more traditional views. Members of a Samoan village can shift their conduct and interpretative frame regarding children and tasks just as they can shift in and out of the literate register.

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