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12. From feelings to grammar: a Samoan case study

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Introduction

In 1822, after traveling throughout the Pacific, the Reverends Tyerman and Bennett reported a certain problem that many Christian families were experiencing. Writing to London, they referred to the head of one such family:

As a Christian parent, he [Mr. Chamberlain] is naturally very anxious to preserve the minds of his offspring from the moral contamination to which they are liable from the inevitable exposure to the society (occasionally at least) of native children of their own ages, whose language they understand, and whose filthy talk they cannot but hear at times. The abominable conversation (if such it may be called) of infants as soon as they begin to lisp out words, is such a jargon of grossness and obscenity as could not be imagined by persons brought up even in those manufacturing towns of our country where manners are the most depraved. And, so far from reproving the little reprobates, their fathers and mothers, both by voice and example, teach them what they are most apt to learn, the expression and indulgence, at the earliest possible period, of every brutal passion. The subject is one of great delicacy and perplexity to faithful Missionaries in all stations among uncivilized heathen, but particularly in these islands. (1822:465–6)[1]

Without the particular moral interpretation of the good Reverends Tyerman and Bennett, emotional intensity among Pacific peoples, particularly among Polynesians, has been noted and expressed in art, literature, and numerous ethnographic descriptions. The Pacific has often been treated as a haven of passion, a romantic alternative to Victorian repression and morality.

When I began a longitudinal study of language acquisition in a Western Samoan village, I had in mind a documentation of the morphologically and syntactically interesting features of Samoan as they emerged in children's speech over developmental time.[2] I was concerned with those features that have been described for adult Samoan, such as the ergative case-marking system and a word order of verb–subject–object. I had an idea of the concep-

tual categories and processes that have been related to grammatical relations. I would be looking at notions such as the expression of agent, patient, action, change of state, object undergoing change of state, and the like. I would also be looking at the way in which given and new information are expressed and interact with word-order patterns. These are the bases of grammar that have been considered over the years among those interested in language acquisition and they are the legitimate topics of most grant proposals in this area.

When I began transcribing the tapes of children's speech, however, I was struck by many of the things that impressed the Reverends Tyerman and Bennett. So much of the talk was intensely emotional. Caregivers and children talked *about* feelings and emotional states a great deal, as in the following examples:

(1) Mother to N, 3;4
    Mo: N! Don't do like that again, otherwise I'll be angry at you. Otherwise I'll be angry at you and I won't give you another milk biscuit.

(2) Mother speaking to family members about infant when she cries
    Mo: Oh! Oh! Her willfulness is exceptional!

(3) N, 3, to older sister, M, after M does not give a biscuit to N or to infant sister
    N: M, (?), give something
        give something/
        okay, M, the baby is angry/
        [laughs]
        the baby/

(4) Mother telling other children that N, 3, is behaving badly
    Mo: N is conceited. Let's shame, let's shame N. He is conceited.

(5) Mother to daughter M, 4;10
    Mo: Are you upset, M? What is the thing that upsets you?
    M: I'm angry only with you because I said "Let's us play," but you refuse.

In addition, most of the speech acts engaged in were affect-loaded, such as appeals, rejections, refusals, teasing, accusations, bluffing, shaming, cursing, expressions of respect, sympathy, shock, disappointment, fear, and pleasure. It was clear that display and recognition of emotion were terribly important to these families in this community. This appraisal was reinforced when I looked at caregivers' speech and found that caregivers frequently provoked or elicited the expression of particular affect-loaded speech acts. Caregivers would, for example, ask children to repeat phrases to a third party to convey feelings, as illustrated below.

(6) M, 4;4, has previously called to her friend V to come, but V goes elsewhere. M's mother, L, instructs M what to tell V
    M. ((softly)) L, there's V/

Why does she go there?/

Mo: Say "Don't come here again!"
M: DON'T COME HERE AGAIN!
Mo: "If you come now, (I) will smack your eyes."
M: IF YOU COME NOW, (I) WILL SMACK YOUR EYES!

Or a caregiver would elicit a challenge from one sibling towards another, socializing the children explicitly into confrontation:

(7) N, 3, accuses other kids of stealing shoes the night before. Mother turns to N's sister M

N   Others
                                           Mo: Is that true, M?
                                           M: No, (he) is lying/
                                               (?)/
(she) is lying/

                                           M: (he) is lying (emphatic particle)/
                                           M: he's like X, always lying/

And, if this in itself was not enough to convince me of the role of affect in language acquisition, there was an additional body of material, a veritable treasure trove of emotional riches. Emotional feelings can be encoded at all levels of Samoan grammar – phonological, morphological, and syntactic. Surely, even in the most conservative of perspectives on language development, to understand the acquisition of Samoan grammar one would need to document the evolving production and comprehension of feelings through language.

At this point, a string of questions came to mind demanding answers: How do we talk about emotions and feelings? How do we talk about the linguistic encoding of these phenomena? With their overwhelming concern with the logical dimensions of language, both anthropological and psychological linguistics provided me with insufficient tools to carry out the task of relating affect to language. Fortunately, psychologists and anthropologists have recently revived the interest in emotions. Several Social Science Research Council seminars and American Anthropological Association symposia as well as a series of workshops at the Australian National University have generated or drawn attention to a number of papers on the interface of culture, cognition, and emotional experience. I am considerably in debt to these materials in the formulation of my ideas on Samoan expression of emotion. In the following discussion, I draw from these sources as well as from research on affect in Samoa carried out by Gerber (1975), Mead (1928), and Shore (1977, 1982).

The expression of emotion

Affect: a working definition

Many of the recent research papers on emotion have considered emotion as a physiological process associated with the nervous system. Several researchers

have argued for the universality of a core set of emotional states, including fear, anger, grief, and embarrassment (Scheff 1977). Other research has focused on the expression and conceptualization of emotions within particular cultures. All human beings experience a core set of emotions sometime in their lives, but how they interpret and manifest those experiences differs across cultures. Levy (1984), for example, suggests that certain emotions may be objects of considerable attention and knowledge. They are what Levy calls "hypercognized," richly expressed within the culture. Other emotional responses may be underplayed or "hypocognized." Often a hypocognized emotion will be repressed and/or reinterpreted as some other experience such as physical illness.

The concern with expression of emotion has led to an interest in a wide range of emotional processes, structures, and concepts; for example, feelings, moods, dispositions, attitudes, character, personality, masking, double binds, undercutting, and the like (see Irvine 1982 for a review of this domain). To generalize, this semantic domain is often referred to as *affect,* and this is the term I will be using in the remainder of this discussion. *My particular concern will be with linguistic conventions associated with affect in Samoan and how young children acquire knowledge of these conventions over developmental time.* To pursue this question, let us turn to Samoan itself and consider those dimensions of affect that are richly encoded or, as Levy would say, hypercognized.

Affect: child development

In the introduction to this chapter, I indicated that Samoan caregivers are concerned with the child's affective competence, particularly with the child's capacity to produce and recognize conventional expressions of emotions, both verbal and nonverbal. This concern is of course not limited to Samoan society, as is evidenced by the current literature on socialization and social development (Bowlby 1969; Bretherton & Beeghly 1982; Dunn & Kendrick 1982; Eibl-Eiblesfeldt 1970; Heath 1983; Hoffman 1981; Levy 1973; Lutz 1981; Much & Shweder 1978; Schieffelin 1979; Seymour 1980; Super & Harkness 1982; Zahn-Waxler, Radke-Yarrow & King 1979). The concern is universal, and apparently children quite early in their lives attend to, recognize, and act on displays of emotion by others in their social environment. Klinnert et al. (1983) report that by 9 months of age infants can monitor the facial expression of affect of mothers and will act differently towards some third object according to the affect displayed. Through this type of monitoring, termed *social referencing* (ibid.), infants are socialized into associating particular events (e.g., the co-presence of a particular object, a change of state, etc.) with particular feelings on the one hand and particular expressions on the other.

Infants come to know for particular situations what they should feel and how to display or mask that feeling (Schieffelin 1979). These frames lay the groundwork for attitudes, opinions, values, and beliefs that evolve in one's lifetime.

EVENT → AFFECT i → DISPLAY AFFECT i
                → DISPLAY AFFECT ii (MASK AFFECT i)

Recognition and use of lexical and grammatical structures for conveying feelings are a more sophisticated extension of this early form of production and appraisal of affect expression. The work of Bretherton & Beeghly (1982), Dunn & Kendrick (1982), and Zahn-Waxler, Radke-Yarrow & King (1979) demonstrates that verbal competence in this domain is regularly displayed before the age of 2 (as early as 18–20 months). This research concerns primarily children's acquisition of lexical terms of emotion (in English only). If we include prosody, we can see conventional linguistic expression of affect through intonation even before a child's first words, and it is certainly widely in evidence throughout the single-word stage (Cruttendon 1982; Halliday 1973; Peters 1977).

An important difference between the use of lexical terms of emotion and intonation is that typically the lexical terms assert or predicate a quality of self or others whereas intonation presupposes or implies that quality. Relative to intonation, the adjectives of affect such as "afraid," "angry," "mad," "happy," etc. indicate more explicitly the nature of the affect communicated. These adjectives have considerable interest for developmental psychologists, because their use displays to a high degree an awareness among young children of their own and others' feelings. Dunn & Kendrick (1982), for example, have documented the capacity of 2- and 3-year-old children to notice and even anticipate the feelings of their younger siblings:

The important point on the issue of perspective-taking is that the children commented on the baby's behavior in a way that certainly did not always represent a projection of their own feelings about their own situations. Sometimes the difference between the perspective of the child and the baby was made quite explicit. One boy watching his baby brother playing with a balloon, commented to the observer: "He going pop in a minute. And he going cry. And he going be frightened of me too. I LIKE the pop." (p. 46)

The interest in affect among development psychologists is growing by leaps and bounds, for it seems that a great deal can be learned about children's cognition from observing affective behavior of children and others engaged in face-to-face interaction. These behaviors indicate the extent to which children can take a sociocentric perspective, their understanding of cause and effect, and their concept of person as distinct from other entities in their environment. It is apparent from existing studies that attitudes, emotions, moods,

feelings, and the like are communicated and perceived in the first year of life and that this system expresses an understanding of the world, i.e., a world view.

Affect: linguistic dimensions

Research in adult processing indicates further the essential role of affect in communication (see, for example, Mandler 1975; Norman 1979; Zajonc 1979). Among other phenomena, the processes of attention, memory, and recognition can be facilitated or impeded by an individual's emotional state. We have every reason to believe from this growing literature as well as from the writings of Burke (1962) and Hymes (1974) that such a fundamental component of human nature will find its place in language beyond prosody and the lexicon. Speakers' affective dispositions are expressed through syntactic, morphological, and phonological structures, such as verb voice (Hopper 1979; Hopper & Thompson 1980), word order (Givon 1979; Halliday 1967; Kuno 1972; MacWhinney 1977, 1984), sentential mood (Searle 1969), right and left dislocation (Chafe 1976; Duranti & Ochs 1979), tense/aspect (Hopper 1979; Smith 1983), deictics and other determiners (Clancy 1980; Duranti 1984), quantifiers (Lakoff 1972; Brown & Levinson 1978), focus particles (Dixon 1972; Hawkinson & Hyman 1974), phonological simplification, reduplication (Ferguson, 1977), and phonological variation (Blom & Gumperz 1972; Ferguson 1977; Labov 1966).

In most arenas of daily communication, speakers convey not only information concerning some state or event but their feelings about some state or event as well, and languages will have varying structures for encoding this level of information. Much as in the social referencing of facial expressions discussed in the infant-development literature, adult listeners will attend to these linguistic structures as keys (Goffman 1974; Hymes 1974) to an affective proposition a speaker is conveying. In certain contexts, the speaker is more highly constrained as to the affective frame he can communicate. Both the affect and the grammatical structures to convey that affect will be tightly bound to registral norms (Andersen 1977; Ferguson 1977). This is the case for many formal communicative contexts, such as certain formal meetings, certain religious services, and certain literate genres such as scholarly writing and front-page news articles in American society.

An important stand taken in this chapter is that all sentences expressed in context will have an affective component. In certain contexts, the affect conveyed will be one of "distance" from some proposition conveyed. Thus, a speaker or writer may convey an impersonal attitude or indifference or objectivity in expressing information. As noted, such an affect may be a registral defining feature. Indeed, much of current scientific communication is consumed with the idea that objectivity is an ideal disposition and means a

formal style. It would be naive to see this disposition as the absence of affect. The impersonal, objective style reflects and expresses cultural assumptions about the relation between the communicator (scientist), the topic of the message (scientific research), and the audience of that message. This style renders the communication more valid and "factual," deemphasizing the subjective dimensions of the proposition(s) conveyed.

In other contexts, the personal, subjective response of the communicator to the information conveyed is more overtly expressed. As will be discussed in the following section, on Samoan, the personal feelings of speakers are presupposed or asserted in a wide variety of informal and formal contexts.

Distinct from the dimension of impersonal to personal is the notion of markedness of affect (see Irvine 1982). Speakers in different speech communities have expectations regarding the type of affect expression associated with particular events, settings, and social status of communicator. For example, speakers have expectations concerning the expression of affect by women to women, women to men, men to women, men to men, parents to children, judges to members of the jury, members of a funeral party to each other, and so on. When these communicators display a more marked form of affect, more complex interpretations of the psychological states and intentions of the communicator may be generated.

Whereas both our own experience and scholarly research validate that affect does indeed penetrate the linguistic code, the precise nature of this penetration has not been clarified. Until recently, affect has not been a topic of concern among psychologists pursuing research into information theory. Shweder (1984) has argued that the concept of "man" as a rational being, while having a long history in Western thought, has become the foremost concern of the social sciences generally since World War II, as evidenced by the emergence of cognitive psychology, cognitive anthropology, cognitive sociology. Linguistics has followed this pattern as well, with Chomsky's attachment to cognitive psychology as a theoretical paradigm. Now that the prominent figures in information processing have renewed the interest in affect and incorporated affect in their models of communication, perhaps linguistics will follow suit and begin to ascertain the grammatical structures associated with affect and the pragmatic and sociolinguistic systems in which they participate.

The linguistic expression of affect in Samoan

The semantic domain

The structures to be discussed here are drawn from family interactions in which young children participate. In addition, I will be relying on research on affect in Samoa carried out by Gerber (1975), Mead (1928), and Shore (1977,

1982). As discussed by Gerber (1975), Samoans have no word exactly corresponding to the English term "emotion," but rather refer to the notion of "feeling" (*lagona*). Certain feelings corresponding to emotional feelings originate inside the chest (*loto*).

The concept of feeling is bound to the concept of self in all societies. As discussed in considerable detail by Shore (1977, 1982), Samoans see persons as not having much control and as often not responsible for their feelings and actions. Feelings are seen as reactions. This is encoded in the morphology of constructions using verbs of feeling. The objects of these verbs are marked with the preposition *i*, which also is a case marker indicating instrumental semantic role. Thus, a sentence such as *Fiafia Sina i le mea alofa*, lit. 'happy Sina instrument/middle verb object proposition the gift', can be loosely understood as "Sina is happy because of the gift." These constructions are also translated as "Sina likes the gift," but this captures more the English than the Samoan concept of affect. In line with the orientation towards external origins of feelings, in Samoan conversation there is explicit talk about the origins of a feeling in some person. However, there does not appear to be much talk about feelings as origins of behavior. One's actions are seen as evidence of one's feelings rather than as consequences of one's feelings. Thus, for example, from the Samoan point of view generosity, the giving of food and money and labor, indicates *alofa* 'love' more than it follows from *alofa*. Indeed, the meaning of verbs of feeling is more action- (or reaction-)like than in a language like English. Caregivers will often control small children by warning them that they or others will not love them (if they act in some undesirable way). This is usually understood as meaning that they will not give things to or do things for the child. Withdrawal of love means in the most fundamental sense withdrawal of goods and services. In English-speaking Western communities, withdrawal of love is seen more as the origin or reason for withdrawal of goods and services. The latter behaviors are usually seen as indicators that a change of affective state has taken place.

In household interactions with small children, four major feelings dominate Samoan talk and behavior. These are the feelings of *alofa* (love), *'ita* (anger), *fa'a'aloalo* (respect), and *tautalaititi* (impudence, disrespect). These affects are topics of talk in themselves, as discussed earlier, and are associated with a range of grammatical structures. When put to use, these structures signal or key that a particular affect or intensity of affect is in play much the same way as do body postures and facial gestures. Indeed, a semiotic grammar would specify the ways in which nonverbal and verbal expressions of affect systematically cooccur in Samoan.

Linguistic encoding of affect

Table 12.1 displays some of the ways in which Samoan encodes affect. There are special affect particles, affect first person pronouns, and affect determin-

ers. In addition, there are interjections, affect-loaded terms of address and reference, and a long list of affect descriptors. Like many other languages, Samoan uses prosody as well to encode feelings, e.g., loudness, intonation. More language-specific, as noted by Shore, is the use of the front and back of the oral cavity to convey distinct affects, namely delicacy/properness (in a Christian sense) versus earthiness/coarseness. Additionally, Samoans may switch back and forth between two different phonological registers and two lexical registers (respect vocabulary and unmarked vocabulary) to indicate a shift in mood or in intensity of feeling.

Pragmatic functions

Affect specifiers and affect intensifiers. I have found it useful to analyze the linguistic features that encode affect in terms of two semantic roles. The first role is that of indicating *the nature of the affect being conveyed*. When a feature carries out this role, I will refer to it as an *affect specifier*. The second role is that of indicating the *intensity of the affect being conveyed*. Linguistic features that carry out this role are *affect intensifiers*. All of the features listed in Table 12.1 are affect intensifiers in the sense that they are affect-loaded alternatives to more neutral features. However, the features differ in the degree to which they function as affect specifiers as well. For example, the particles *a*, *ia*, and *fo'i* are unmarked with respect to type of affect. They can be used to intensify over a range of positive and negative affects. On the other hand, the affect particle *e* is more specifically associated with negative feelings such as anger, irritation, disapproval, or disappointment. Other features even more narrowly specify affect, such as the first person pronoun *ka ika* 'poor me' and the determiner *si* 'the dear', both of which denote sympathy for the referent.

Speech-act function. In many cases, the affect specifier or intensifier may color the interpretation of the sentence as a whole, much like a sentence adverb. Among other effects, the feature may indicate to the hearer which speech act is being performed. For example, the particle *e*, as just discussed, typically denotes anger, disappointment, displeasure, or irritation. Adding this particle to an assertion or imperative utterance usually signals that the utterance is a threat or warning. For example, the imperative *Fa'akali!* 'Wait!' constitutes a neutral directive out of context. When the particle *e* is added, as in *Fa'akali e!* 'Wait + neg. affect', the utterance is interpreted as a warning, with a gloss something like "You just wait!" Similarly, the declarative utterance *Laku i 'oo* 'I'm going over there' is a neutral assertion out of context. The utterance with the particle *e*, *Laku i 'oo e* 'I'm going over there + neg. affect', will usually be heard as a warning or a threat that the speaker is going to the specified location. We can also carry out this analysis

Table 12.1. *Linguistic expression of affect in Samoan*

Particles	Interjections	Pronouns	Articles	Phonology
ia (intens.)	*ota* ⎤ pos./neg. sur-	*ta* ⎤ 1st person	*si* (sing.) ⎤ 'the dear'	loudness ⎤ (intens.)
a (intens.)	*ola* ⎥ prise	*ta ita* ⎥ sympathy pronouns	*nai* (plur.) ⎦	lengthening ⎥
e (intens.)	*uoi* ⎥	*lota* ⎥		stress ⎥
fo'i (intens.)	*uoia* ⎦	*lata* ⎥		glottal stop ⎦
		etc. ⎦		
	auoi – pos./neg. surprise; sympathy			reduplication (± intens.) backing (earthiness) fronting (refinement, distance) switching registers between /t/ & /k/ (indicates abrupt mood change)
	tafiolaē ⎤ neg. surprise/ *otafefe* ⎥ sympathy *uisa* ⎥ *oki* ⎥ *tch* ⎥ *i* ⎦			
	'isa ⎤ annoyance *sē* ⎦			
	a'e ⎤ disapproval *a'a* ⎦			
	talofae – sympathy *tae* 'shit'			

Address/reference terms		Adjectives of affect	
maile 'dog'	*ali'i* 'master'/'little devil' (to child)	*ita* 'angry'	*ofo* 'surprised'
pua'a 'pig'	*sole* 'mate'	*lotoleaga* 'jealous'	*fa'aaloalo* 'respectful'
mataomo 'smallpox'	*toea'ina* 'dear old man'	*lotomalie* 'agreeable'	*fa'amaoni* 'faithful'
moepī 'bedwetter'	*si* 'dear' + ref. term, e.g.,	*fiafia* 'happy'	*popole* 'worried'
moeti'o 'bedshitter'	*si tama* 'dear boy'	*mimita* 'proud'	*fefe* 'afraid'
lima pipilo 'smelly hand'	*suga* 'lassie'	*fiapoto* 'conceited'	*pala'ai* 'cowardly'
lou aitae 'your shittiness'	Evalina (name of woman	*fiamatua* 'acts like bigshot', acts like boss'	*maualalo* 'humble'
pū tele 'big hole' (to woman)	who is crazy)	*fiasiō* 'showoff'	*maualuga* 'show pride'
Sapina (name of woman, used to effeminate man; man who fumbles in sport)	*avilu* 'baby face' (look young for age)	*fiapepe* 'babyish'	*tautalaiti* 'cheeky'
	lou alelo 'snake/eel eyes'	*fiu* 'fed up, bored'	*ulavale* 'naughty'
			taea 'disgusting'

Nicknames (*gao*)	Respect vocabulary
ma'ila 'scarface'	*afio mai* 'come (of a chief)'
vaepi'o 'polio'	*maliu mai* 'come (of an orator)'
lafa 'ringworm'	
o laulauati 'lisper'	
etc.	

for the first person sympathy pronouns. When the neutral first person is used in the imperative utterance *Mai ma a'u!* 'Give (it) for me!', the utterance will usually be heard as a demand. When the sympathy pronoun is used, as in *Mai ka 'ika!* 'Give (it) for dear me!', the imperative will usually be heard as begging.

I have introduced here only the bare bones of the system. As more of the same types of affect specifiers appear, with or without affect intensifiers, the interpretation of the speech act changes. For example, warnings become threats and acts of begging become acts of pleading.

Speech-genre function. At this point, I suggest that affect features function to signal not only speech acts but *speech genres* and *speech events* as well. The use of these features over continuous discourse (indeed, their absence as well!) defines that discourse as a type of talk. Certainly in Samoan the extended use of respect vocabulary is a key (Bauman 1977; Duranti 1983; Hymes 1972) to the fact that the speaker is delivering a formal speech rather than engaged in some other type of activity. Similarly, the use of affect features in narrative discourse distinguishes that discourse as *personal narrative* rather than as a narrative that might appear in a newspaper article. These features are not incidental to the genre or event. The use of affect in personal narrative, for example, is tied to the purpose of these discourses. They are primarily told to express a feeling and, if possible, to secure an empathetic response from the audience (Langness & Frank 1981). For Samoans at least (and I suspect for most people in most societies), a telling of a personal experience without affect is a story without a point and a speaker without competence.

Constraints across turns and speakers. In examining personal narratives exchanged among adult speakers of Samoan, I have found that the domain of influence of affect features extends even beyond the discourse of a single speaker. To put this more precisely, *there is a sequential organization of affect across turns and speakers*. A narrator will use one or more affect features that will indicate the attitude or feelings of the narrator toward the events discussed. These features clue the addressee as to the appropriate feedback response. Thus, in the course of a personal narrative, one can isolate sets or pairs of affect-linked turns. The existence of such an organization reinforces the notion that the point of telling stories is to express feelings and elicit sympathy. The selection of the appropriate empathetic response will be guided by the narrator's initial selection of affect specifiers and intensifiers. An illustration of the sequential organization of affect is provided in Ex. 8.

(8) Women weaving and talking about the funeral of another woman's mother
F: uhmm [pause] sa'o ā   le mea ga ka   popole
                right emph. ART thing that I-dear worry

ai   le lo'omakua le tagi.
PRO ART old woman ART cry
"It's true that the thing poor me worried about was the old woman crying."
L: Kagi kele sĭ   lo'oⱶ/makua
cry   much the dear old woman
"The old woman cried a lot"

F: Kagi ia   le lo'oma//kua
                                         cry emph ART old woman
                                         "The old woman really cried"

L: Kalofa e! sh!
                                         pity   emph
                                         "What a pity"

F: Le mafai– kau alu aku   ia [pause] falekua   gei fo'i
not able– try go deixis emph   chief's wife this emph
ma le   solosolo [pause] solosolo   fo'i o le
with ART handkerchief   handkerchief emph of ART
keige [pause]
girl
"The chief's wife was not able– tried to give the handkerchief–the handkerchief of the girl [= older woman whose mother had died]."
E   alofa ā   i   si   oga kigā
pres love emph OBJ ART-dear her mother
"(She) really loves her dear mother"

In this example, one woman is telling two other women about a funeral. In the narrative, several features associated with feelings of sympathy are used. The narrator refers to herself with the first person sympathy pronoun *ka* in the phrase *le mea ga ka popole ai* 'the thing that poor me worried about'. The narrator refers to the woman whose mother had died with the sympathy reference term *lo'omakua* 'dear old woman'. The intensity of this feeling is heightened by the narrator switching phonological register on the word *tagi* 'cries'. This word is spoken in the register that uses /t/ in contrast to the previous discourse, which is in the register /k/.

All of this conveys to the hearers what the narrator's attitudes are and suggests the appropriate response. The first response by L is a more intensive repetition of the narrator's description. L uses the sympathy determiner *si* as well as the sympathy reference term *lo'omakua* in referring to the grieving woman. The crying is emphasized not by code switching, which the narrator had used, but by the use of the adverbial intensifier *kele* 'a lot'. The narrator subsequently paraphrases what L has just said, using the intensifier particle *ia* to emphasize the crying of the woman. This particle typically occurs in escalations or second sayings of utterances. After three utterances that focus on the poor woman's crying, L responds with the appropriate interjection of pity and sympathy *Kalofa e!* In these lines and subsequently, the turns are

systematically organized in terms of conventional expressions of affect. Each turn constrains the affect expressed in the next turn.

To summarize the points made so far, affect is richly encoded at many levels of Samoan grammar and discourse. The linguistic features that express affect fall into two nonexclusive functional categories – those that *specify* affect and those that *intensify* affect. These features enter into the literal meaning of propositions. Further, they signal the speech act performed by an utterance. Finally, there are cooccurrence restrictions on the use of affect specifiers and intensifiers within and across utterances and turns.

Acquisition of affect expression in Samoan

Affect once encoded is a powerful means of securing some desirable response from others, constraining what will be said next and what will be done next. Young children understand this cause–effect relation quite early in rural Western Samoa and use language to this end from the very beginning.

Developmental span

In this section, the order of emergence of grammatical forms expressing affect is presented. The data on which this ordering is based are drawn from utterances that express either anger (*'ita*) or sympathy/love (*alofa*). Table 12.2 presents the construction type or area of grammar and the time of its first appearance in the acquisition corpus. It does not indicate order or appearance of different forms within the same grammatical category (e.g., different interjections, focus particles, etc.).

One of the most general developmental patterns to emerge from the data is that most of the grammatical forms for expressing positive and negative affect are acquired before the age of 4.

The expression of affect through linguistic structures begins at the single-word stage. At the single-word stage, the children in the study used a variety of curses and vocative insults, switched back and forth between two phonological registers for rhetorical effect, and used the affect first person pronoun ('poor I', 'poor me'). All this was supplemented by a variety of prosodic strategies for conveying affect. These prosodic strategies are recognized and named in Samoan. For example, there are terms for shouting (*e'e*), screaming (*i'i*), speaking softly (*leo vaivai*), speaking loudly (*leo kele*), whining (*fa'a'u*), and so on, each conventionally linked to types of affect.

From a Samoan perspective, the acquisition of verbal affect expression begins not only in the single-word stage, but at the very first word, the beginning of recognizable Samoan itself. Every Samoan parent we questioned

Table 12.2. *First appearances of grammatical forms of affect*

Age of child	Grammatical forms (anger)	Grammatical forms (sympathy)
1;7	Prosody Phon. alternation of t/k Interjection (*tae* 'shit')	Prosody Phon. alternation of t/k 1st pers. poss./obl. pronoun (*ta/ta ita*)
1;10	Neg. existential (*leai*)	Focus particles (*a, ia*)
1;11	Neg. imperative (1st deg. intens.: *aua*)	
2;0	Vocative (*ise*)	Vocative (*sole*)
2;2	—	3rd pers. ref. term Pred. adj. (*fiu* 'weary') Diminutive suffix
2;4	Neg. imperative (2nd deg. intens.: *soia*)	—
2;5	Pred. adjective (*'ita* 'angry')	—
2;11	3rd pers. ref. term (*le alelo*)	—
3;7		Sing. determiner (*si*)

said that their child's first word was *tae*, a term meaning "shit." The term is a curse, a reduced form of *'ai tae*, meaning "eat shit." This conventional interpretation of a child's first word reflects the Samoan view of small children as characteristically strong-willed, assertive, and cheeky. Indeed, at a very early point in their language development, children use the curse frequently and productively to disagree, reject, and refuse and to prevent or stop some action from being carried out.

Presupposition and predication

As might be predicted from other developmental studies (Cruttendon 1982), linguistic forms that presuppose affect seem to be acquired before forms that predicate affect in the form of an assertion. Thus, like English-speaking children, Samoan children use prosodic devices for conveying affect at the earliest stage of language development. Further, for both anger and sympathy, the explicit predication of these affects through predicate adjectives of affect (e.g., *fiu* 'weary/fed up', *'ika* 'angry', *fiafia* 'happy') is a relatively late development. Rather than saying "I am angry," for example, children at first convey their anger through increased loudness, through a negative interjection, or through a vocative. Similarly, before children state, "I am happy (about something or towards some person)," they will convey their feelings

through phonological code switching, through a referential term of positive affect for self (*ka ika* 'dear me'), or through a vocative of endearment (*sole* 'mate/brother', *suga* 'lassie', etc.).

I note here that the children predicate feelings associated with their own and others' physiological conditions (hunger, thirst, tiredness, etc.) far more often than they predicate/assert affective feelings. These predications are formed by prefixing the verb *fia* 'want/feel like' to a verb denoting a physical action or activity, such as *'ai* 'eat' (*fia 'ai* = "want to eat" or "hungry"), *'inu* 'drink' (*fia 'inu* = "want to drink" or "thirsty"), and so on. The predication of these feelings begins at 25 months among the children in our study.

Speech-act context

Somewhat parallel to the results of the section "Presupposition and Predication," children use the grammatical forms of affect first and more often in directives than in assertions. In the domain of sympathy/love, for example, first person sympathy pronouns first appear in the course of begging for objects. Whereas the affect pronoun is used in begging at 19 months (when our recording began), this pronoun is not used in assertions until 29 months.

Just as an adult uses these affect pronouns to obtain sympathy from the audience in the telling of a narrative, young children use them to obtain sympathy from someone who has some desired good. As discussed earlier, from a Samoan perspective sympathy/love is manifest when the audience-/addressee offers the desired good (in the case of begging) or the desired verbal expression of support and appreciation (in the case of a narrative about "poor me"; see Ex. 8).

Referents and subjects

Despite the sociocentric orientation of socialization, Samoan children show a decided egocentrism in their use of affect terms, determiners, and adjectives. Looking at Table 12.2, we can see that young children acquire or at least produce terms referring sympathetically to ego (first person pronoun of affect) before terms referring sympathetically to others (third person reference terms such as *koeiga* 'old man') and before noun-phrase constructions that contain the sympathy determiner *si* 'the dear' (e.g., *si kama* 'the dear boy', *si keige* 'the dear girl'). When children first use these third person forms, they use them to refer to themselves and much later apply them to other referents. For the domains of both anger and sympathy/love, reference to addressee, i.e., vocatives, precedes third person forms of reference. Finally, the egocentric bias is seen in subject referents of predicate adjectives. These predicates all

refer to the speaker, i.e., the child, in our corpus of children under the age of 4.

Affect-marked versus neutral constructions

Perhaps the most interesting developmental pattern is that there is a strong tendency for affect constructions to be acquired before the corresponding neutral constructions. With the exception of the acquisition of determiners, whenever there are two alternative forms of carrying out a semantic function, the affect-marked form is acquired before the neutral form.

The best example of this is seen in the acquisition of first person full pronoun forms. As noted earlier, Samoan has an affect full pronoun *ta ita* ('poor I', 'poor me'). In addition, it has a neutral full pronoun *a'u* ('I', 'me'). Both terms can appear in a variety of syntactic roles. As possessive and genitive constituents, they may both be inflected for what may be roughly called inalienable and alienable possession. The two systems are presented in Table 12.3.

The first uses of the first person pronoun in the children's speech are as benefactives ("for me"), corresponding to indirect objects in adult speech, and as possessive adjectives. In both roles, the affect pronoun appears in children's speech several months before the neutral pronoun appears. For example, for one child the affect pronoun appeared as a benefactive at 19 months, whereas the neutral first person benefactive appeared four months later at 22 months. For a second child, the possessive affect form appears at 21 months, whereas the neutral first person possessive forms appear at 24 months. Examples of the affect pronoun taken from a child at the single-word stage and a child at the multiword stage are presented below.

(9) K, 1;7, asking mother for food

K	Mother
[Crying] / /mai/	/ /(Leai.) Leai.
bring	(no) no
"bring it/"	(No.) No.
[Calls name of mother]	
	'O le ā
	topic ART what
	"What is it?"
(i)ta/	
dear me	
"for dear me/"	

(10) P, 2;5, asking mother for water
P: mai   ua vai   deika [= ta ita *or* ka ika]
   bring ?   water poor me
   "bring water for dear me/"

Table 12.3. *First person pronouns*

Category	Neutral form ("I, me, my")	Affect form ("Poor I, poor me, poor my")
Full pronoun[a]	a'u	ta ita
Subject clitic	'ou	ta
Poss. adj., sing., specific, inalienable	lo'u	lota
Poss. adj., sing., specific, alienable	la'u	lata
Poss. adj., sing., nonspecific, inalienable	so'u	sota
Poss. adj., sing., nonspecific, alienable	sa'u	sata
Poss. adj., plural, specific, inalienable	o'u	ota
Poss. adj., plural, specific, alienable	a'u	ata
Poss. adj., plural, nonspecific, inalienable	ni o'u	ni ota
Poss. adj., plural, nonspecific, alienable	ni a'u	ni ata

[a]These forms behave, syntactically, like nouns and can be used to express different grammatical functions, viz. subject, direct object, indirect object, oblique object.

A very similar pattern is found if we look at the acquisition of negation. In this case, we find young Samoan children using their official first word *tae/kae* (the interjection meaning "eat shit") to express negation in the way in which English speaking children use "No" and "Don't!" The Samoan child at the single-word stage and later as well will use the negative affect term *tae/kae* to disagree, to reject, to refuse, and to prevent or stop some action from being carried out. The use of this form for these functions appears long before the more neutral negative particle *leai* 'No' and the negative imperative *aua!* 'Don't!' As stated earlier, the youngest children in our sample are using the affect term *tae/kae* at 19 months. The use of the negative particle *leai* 'No' does not appear in the speech of one child until 22 months and for the other young child not until 24 months. The use of the negative imperative *aua!* 'Don't!' appears at 23 months for one child and 25 months for the second child. An illustration of how young children use *tae/kae* to refuse and reject is presented in the example below:

(11) K, 1;7, refusing to comply with his mother's wishes

K

    Mother
    'ai muamua le   talo
    eat first   ART taro

    "Eat first the taro"
    ā?
    okay
    "Okay?"

tae
shit
"shit/"

    'ai muamua le   talo lea.
    eat first   ART taro this
    "Eat first the taro here."

u tae/
? shit
"(?) shit/"

    'a'a
    neg. affect
    "Don't!"
    Se   'ai muamua le   talo lea
    please eat first   ART taro this
    "Oh please eat first the taro here."

tae/
shit
"shit/"

The basis for children's preference of the affect form over the neutral form appears to be rhetorical. As noted earlier, for example, the affect first person pronoun expressing sympathy for oneself is used to elicit sympathy from others for oneself. In adult speech, one finds this pronoun in narratives of complaint, for example, where minimally some sort of commiseration is desired. As discussed earlier, in the children's corpus the most common environment for the pronoun is in the course of asking for some good or service. In using the affect pronoun, the speaker appeals to the addressee to provide what is desired out of love or sympathy for the speaker. The neutral first person pronoun does not have this rhetorical force. Children apparently are sensitive to these rhetorical differences. The affective forms can "buy" something that the neutral pronoun cannot.

Implications of acquisition patterns

These and other findings strongly support the idea that children can express affect through conventional linguistic means from a very early point in developmental time. The Samoan materials indicate that small children are concerned with the rhetorical force of their utterances and that rhetorical strategies may account for certain acquisition patterns.

Affect strategies and goals, then, should be considered along with others that have been proposed as underlying children's emerging grammar. No-

matter to what use you put words – whether to request, to assert, or to question – you need to get the hearer to recognize your disposition with respect to those elocutionary acts and their propositions. All languages have conventional means of encoding this information. We can turn to the historian, the drama critic, and the clinical psychologist to tell us this. But we can also turn to our transcripts and our recordings of infants, small children, and caregivers. These materials reveal the patterned and conventional ways in which affect pervades both form and meaning in language.

Notes

1   I am grateful to Dotsy Kneubuhl for discussing the role of affect in the lives of Samoan children and for sending me this excerpt.
2   For a description of the field research methods used in collecting these data as well as an overview of Samoan social organization, see Platt paper in this volume.

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