UC Riverside
Issues in Applied Linguistics

Title
Syncretic Practice: Change and Maintenance of the Samoan/Samoan American ^d I huh

Permalink
https://escholarship.org/uc/item/1w70d25z

Journal
Issues in Applied Linguistics, 7(1)

ISSN
1050-4273

Author
Reynolds, Jennifer

Publication Date
1996-06-30

DOI
10.5070/L471005234

Peer reviewed

eScholarship.org Powered by the California Digital Library
University of California

Syncretic Practice: Change and Maintenance of the Samoan/Samoan American *`â* / huh

Jennifer Reynolds
University of California, Los Angeles
Department of Anthropology

Samoans establish new communities and identities through different linguistic strategies in the urban context of Los Angeles. I isolated two kinds of strategies, the "minimal grasp" and the "tag particle" in both Samoan and Samoan-English, and traced the distribution of their use in everyday encounters between adults and children. Different models for socializing appropriate behavior—the Samoan way (fa`aSâmoa) and the American way (fa`apalagi)—co-exist within the same speech community. I argue that by comparing the different social organizations of language use, we may uncover how certain forms may be used to simultaneously maintain and transform cultural practices within a syncretic social space.

INTRODUCTION

Changing child socialization practices are evident in everyday conversational practices between Samoan American adults and their children. I am interested in explaining how some micro-ethnographic practices (minimal grasp repairs) are maintained whereas others (conversational tags) are challenged in exchanges between Samoan American children and their care givers. If we construe everyday-interactive linguistic strategies as cultural tools deployed by members, then we are able to understand how members modify them in new social contexts without necessarily compromising sociocultural identities.

The Samoan American community under investigation is located near the industrial port of San Pedro.[1] Samoan households are spread throughout this region of the city. What keeps people united is their interactions with other Samoans in different social activities like extracurricular school events, church-based activities, and family parties. We followed three children (Seuseu, Sikê and Luina) from three different extended households in their everyday activities. We intentionally wanted to collect socialization data to compare with those collected in Western Samoa in the late 70's by Elinor Ochs, Alessandro Duranti, and Martha Platt. My role in the project has been to focus on what the children are doing and how children are also active agents of culture change.

Issues in Applied Linguistics
ISSN 1050-4273
© Regents of the University of California
Vol. 7 No. 1 1996 91-117

Older models for studying immigrant cultures are absolutely inadequate for current studies of urban groups. Anthropological studies in the United States have tended to study 'Others' in their own place without considering how 'Others' are in fact mobile and can and have become 'our' neighbors. In this article I take an analytic perspective which prioritizes the nexus between culture and communication: how people use different linguistic strategies to accomplish everyday living and how these strategies are culturally shaped. Borrowing from studies in the Ethnography of Communication and Conversation Analysis I will compare and contrast how minimal grasps and tags are deployed by Samoans in Western Samoa and Los Angeles. I will explicate the intricate social relationships woven across generations in Los Angeles through these strategies. Moreover, I will illustrate how this process relates to changing and conflicting perceptions of what is considered "appropriate" child behavior as evidenced within three Los Angeles Samoan households.

FROM STUDIES OF ASSIMILATION AND ACCULTURATION TO SYNCRETIC PRACTICE

Models of assimilation and acculturation are abundant in early social scientific research. One can still note vestiges of their influence in recent academic work. These models[2] usually generate descriptions of immigrant life within the United States which misrepresent the actual social processes through which people re-create their lives within new social contexts. Such static models presuppose that people's cultures from "back-home" are homogeneous and "pure"; once people come to the United States, they must maintain all of these cultural "traits" to be considered authentic representatives of their culture.[3]

Models of assimilation and acculturation also presuppose that language is a precise indicator of the cultural frame for interpreting the world (Duranti & Ochs, 1996). The reasoning goes that a speaker may only be Samoan while speaking in Samoan and American while speaking in American-English.[4] Once the children of Samoan immigrants no longer speak Samoan they are considered to be completely assimilated into mainstream monolingual American-English US society. This is a grave misconception of multicultural and multilingual communities (Duranti & Ochs, 1996). These descriptions grossly distort Samoans' everyday lived experiences. In fact, most recent studies show that researchers *must* approach immigrant groups as functioning simultaneously within two communities (Anzaldúa, 1987; Chavez, 1994; Duranti, Ochs & Ta`asê, 1995; Rosaldo, 1989; Zentella, 1990).

To untangle these webs of cultural and communicative relationships, it is crucial to see how people conduct everyday life as *social actors*. One way we can do so is to track how social actors deploy different linguistic strategies within social interactions.[5] By comparing different patterns of linguistic phenomenon

we can begin to observe how people orient to constructing their social relationships through language.[6] Moreover, the tracking of linguistic forms in interaction provides a methodological vehicle by which we can witness how different kinds of cultural practices are changing both within families and across families within the same community.

As I was tracking different forms used in child-adult linguistic exchanges, I noted that there were two distinct interactional phenomena—'minimal grasp clarification requests' and 'tags'[7]—used in everyday Samoan talk in both Western Samoa and the United States. The functional-interactional consequences of minimal grasp deployment remained constant across sociocultural contexts. The patterns of tag usage, however, are changing in the Los Angeles Samoan community. This change in conversational practice, which I will discuss shortly, also has interesting consequences for child language socialization practices.

Once co-existing practices are identified across communities one can begin to consider how people use the same kinds of linguistic forms differentially to transform the organization of emerging social networks.[8] In the case of the Los Angeles Samoan communities, some of these changing practices are fundamentally challenging 'traditional' Samoan social structures. Moreover, the process by which people mediate these challenges is fundamentally syncretic. Syncretism, as I have used it here, means "the intermingling or merging of culturally diverse traditions (which) informs and organizes activities." (Duranti & Ochs, 1996)

Elsewhere (Reynolds, 1995) I have argued that "syncretic practice" is the process by which different and sometimes competing cultural notions are challenged and kneaded out interactionally on a moment by moment basis by the participants. It is a process which is never resolved even though sometimes a temporary resolution is established within specific social relationships. Syncretic practices may help mediate social, cultural, and linguistic change within households, community institutions, and the community at large. Syncretism may occur precisely at the moment when the boundaries between otherwise compartmentalized identities are blurred.[9] In the case of Los Angeles Samoan households, we noted that while age-based family hierarchies were maintained some children were socialized in a way that undermined that same hierarchy within particular familial relationships. For example, one child, Luina, often verbally challenged her mother in dyadic exchanges. This is evidenced particularly in her tendency to initiate topics for talk and tag adults as unproblematic recipients for talk. Being able to tag an adult indexes something about the kind of relationship a child might be trying to assert or perhaps it indexes the kind of relationship(s) a child has already been developing with that particular recipient. In practices to initiate other-repair,[10] however, such changing relationships were not indexed. To be able to understand the significance of these data one must have some understanding of the ethnographic context of the Samoan communities being discussed.

REFLECTIONS ON A LOS ANGELES SAMOAN COMMUNITY

In the Los Angeles area there are many different Samoan American communities.[11] When driving into Samoan communities one will find Samoan households nestled right alongside households of people from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds. I have conceptualized Samoan extended family households separated by geographic space as the metaphorical extended community.

Some Samoan families have lived in these communities for several generations and others are just arriving. Extended family residences are often transformed into conduits through which people and material goods travel back and forth between the Islands and the mainland. Samoan American children born in Los Angeles do not have the direct access to experiencing 'life in Samoa' their parents might have had. The three children of this study, Luina, Seuseu, and Sikê, have witnessed cultural diversity since they were born. They are directly exposed to this cultural diversity at school, in their neighborhoods, in the local parks, and through images in television and music.

What has remained constant across generations is the support which children receive from the various members of their extended families. This holds true for life back on the Islands as well as here in Los Angeles. In many ways, these children's life experiences are being shaped by the different people who continuously stream through the social space around them.[12] They are generally members of extended families who grew up with the children's mothers and fathers. Some of these people may have been raised by their grandparents or parents. Movement of people through the children's homes, the stories that they bring, and the manner people have of relating to children, give children indirect access to ways of learning and living back in Samoa. This is achieved through language socialization practices within all interactions between caregivers and children. These varying practices, designed by a speaker for a specific party (or parties), embed messages in ongoing interactions (Schieffelin, 1990).

Another kind of extended community is evident in Samoan participation in local church activities. The Samoan Congregational Church, in the Samoan community in which this research took place, is responsible for many kinds of social activities that keep people united with one another as if they were back living in a small community on one of the islands. In fact, Duranti, Ochs, and Ta`asê (1995) have described how the **nu`u lotu**'s (church village or urban village) physical construction and allocation of space within the church compound recreates a feeling of a 'village' within an urban setting. This place is one locus of community activity organized and controlled exclusively by Samoans.

All of the children in the Los Angeles Samoan project attend the same church and often go to Sunday school. Many times the extra-curricular activities that they engage in are church related. Church attendance and participation is one public demonstration of allegiance to the Samoan community and ethnic

identity. Children are expected to show respect (**fa`aaloalo**) by going to church and interacting 'appropriately' with people from different generations in this public context.

At home, children are also expected to be respectful of older and higher ranking family members. Complying with family responsibilities like caring for siblings while not 'talking back' or acting 'cheeky' are expected as appropriate conduct. Family dynamics and relationships are constantly being shaped to varying degrees by two cultural ideals—respect and responsibility. These are held by many Samoans and believed to be key to one's social survival. It is important to note that 'responsibility' is distributed differently within each family and 'respect' might have different shades of meaning as well. In Los Angeles, the way one demonstrates respect is changing. Most children and young adults cannot command the more specific 'respect vocabulary' (Duranti, 1992; Milner, 1961) although they may be exposed to it in some settings (e.g. the church).

These Samoan American households actively maintain variations of 'Samoan traditions.' Change occurs within the act of recreating tradition. So that even though a bridge of social relations continues to remain intact between Samoa and the US, the way people do 'being Samoan' is changing on both sides. 'Being Samoan' has assumed different meanings. For example, on one occasion a Samoan American mother who recently traveled to Samoa for the first time told me that she was struck by how hard children worked over there. She witnessed very young children helping out with chores. She said that she felt the kids in the US were spoiled. Life, for US kids, was "like a piece of cake" compared to that of kids back in Samoa. This is a very different perspective from the one of Western Samoans who often describe the US as a dangerous place[13] and Samoan society as easy going (**filemû**). These perspectives respond to the different but necessary survival skills necessary in the social contexts in which Samoan children are raised. In the first observation, the mother felt that the kids raised in the United States are not learning what it means to work hard. The second observation points out the different environment in which children must survive. In cities like Los Angeles, children cannot act exactly the same way they do in Samoa. Their mobility around the Samoan American community is more restricted.[14] There are other 'outside' dangers which children face at school and in the playgrounds (like gangs and drugs) which kids back on the Islands do not have to worry about. Adults must contend with these changing aspects of life. First, they must discern 'survival skills' necessary for the respective community. Secondly, they must be able to transmit the skills that children need to know to face life. In the case of first generation immigrant populations, moreover, it is sometimes youths who teach adults about survival in the new place.

Still, the position of Samoan American youths as 'teacher' or 'cultural broker' does not absolve them from being judged by the expectations of the older generations. Demonstrating 'respect' is not always easy to accomplish in

interaction, especially when members within the same household may be subscribing to different models for it. Children may act 'inappropriately' because they don't know what is expected of them. Sometimes children act 'inappropriately' because they don't agree with the 'appropriate' models of behavior by which adults evaluate them. In Western Samoa children are supposed to respect the age-based family hierarchy by doing what's asked of them and adapting to adult activities. Child care often is the responsibility of older siblings. Older adults (like grandparents) should not have to be bothered with the needs of low ranking people like children. Questions regarding who is responsible to adapt to the child's needs often arise in the US social context, especially since the American model of 'appropriate' child care is based on always adapting to the child (Ochs & Schieffelin, 1984). For example, US institutions, like public education, base their pedagogical practices on the understanding that adults will supervise children's progress at school by assisting them with their homework. In Samoan households, when children need help with homework assignments they sometimes need to interrupt adult activities to ask for help (Duranti & Ochs, 1996). The problem of "who is responsible for assisting the child," is usually dealt with through a hierarchy of care-giving, whereby the youngest available adult assists the child.

Samoan parents feel especially challenged by some of the choices that confront them while living in US society. For multilingual, multicultural families some of these choices are: In which language should I raise my child? How do I teach my children about their rich and diverse heritages? How do I handle conflict between different traditions? After all, children are simultaneously in contact with people from Samoa as well as their relatives raised in Los Angeles. Children are exposed to these adults' explicit and implicit cultural expectations regarding child behavior. Like everyone else in their family, children must contend with a wide-array of experiences and theories about what is appropriate and what is not. There are some patterns of mediated "appropriate" practices which are community wide and others which are family specific. This is true particularly for the patterned use of minimal grasps and tags. During the following discussion on the distribution of the use of minimal grasps and tags, I hope to demonstrate that both are sociolinguistic variables in the Labovian tradition. The use of minimal grasp tokens indexes continuity of culturally shaped conversational practice whereas the use of tag questions is a powerful index of cultural change—syncretic practice in action.

DESCRIPTION OF MINIMAL GRASPS

Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson (1977) and later Ochs (1988) wrote of minimal grasps as a strategy which "exhibit(s) minimal or no grasp of what the speaker has said or done and (which) rel(ies) primarily on the speaker to resay the

utterance or redo the gesture (Ochs, 1988, p. 133)." Minimal grasps are usually WH- interrogatives which show that the recipient to the talk has grasped that the first party has said something related to a "what" rather than a "who" or a "when." For example, consider the following exchange:[15]

Example A
Virginia, 14:08-15 (Schegloff data set)

15	Bet:	so I wen down the bank en Pam did en they were tellin me about th'
16		wedding (.) 'h they said thet Phillips got um (0.5) knee: wa:lking
17		dru::nk et the reception
18		(0.2)
19	Mom:	Who:?
20	Bet:	Phillips,
21	Mom:	Wh[o's Phillips]
22	Bet:	[Pa:m Ben]sen's (.) husband.

"Who?" in line 19 is a minimal grasp. Mom understood that Beth had referred to someone; the "who" locates "Phillips" as the trouble source in understanding. Mom is the social actor who initiates the repair. Conversation analysts refer to this practice as "other-initiated repair"—initiated by someone other than the speaker of the trouble source.

Minimal grasp strategies differ from other repair strategies. Ochs (1988) discusses them in opposition to an expressed guess strategy where the recipient of the first utterance "articulate(s) a guess at what the speaker's unclear utterance or gesture could be or mean (Ochs, 1988, p. 134)." This is a common strategy in White Middle Class American caregiver-child interactions in which adults constantly make guesses about what babbling babies are trying to utter. Minimal grasps cover a range of possible utterances from WH- interrogatives to utterances like *huh*?, *mh*?, *uh*? and all its variations. The difference between *huh*? and WH- interrogatives is that *huh*-like utterances display no explicit understanding.

Ochs' Western Samoa data revealed that the minimal grasp strategy was used with much greater frequency between caregivers and young children. Expressed guesses were exceedingly rare. She argues that the preference for minimal grasp clarification requests over other strategies re-enforces a Samoan epistemology which bases meaning on the consequences of utterances/actions (Ochs 1988, p. 142). There is a dispreference for assigning interpretations based on an individual's intentions.[16] In this paper I illustrate how such an epistemology is maintained in Western and Los Angeles Samoan interactions involving all minimal grasp forms. The interactional practice is maintained; only a phonetic change is evident due to switching between the two codes.

Minimal Grasp Data

Example One
Western Samoan Family Dinner
August, 1988

Husband: S
Wife: Sk

		((*S and Sk are finishing the preparation of dinner for their guests*))
	Sk;	**leai, amai `i`i**
		"no, bring [it] here"
		((*kids talking in background*))
—>	S;	**`e â?**
		"what?"
	Sk;	**se`i kope mea ia**
		"let me just hurry these up ((make the food quickly))"

Example one is an example of the Samoan WH- interrogative **`e â**. In rapid talk, sometimes the **`e** is dropped so that only a long **â** is uttered, **`e â** is nevertheless understood. Example two demonstrates how the **`e** gets dropped in an LA Samoan adult-child exchange. Notice how Sikê still responds to it as a request for clarification. He repeats his prior utterance.

Example Two
Sikê's Family 1993 (Los Angeles Samoan Data)

Sikê: Si
Sikê's Grandfather: Gf
Sikê's Grandmother: Gm

	Gf;	Sikê
	Si;	((*withdraws hand*))
		what?
	Gf;	are you guys gonna eat?
	Gm;	**(?â fea?)**
		"when?"
	Si;	no
		((*walks into CAM view from the left*))
—>	Gf;	**â::?** ((/ə::?/))
		"what?"
	Si;	no:::
		[
		((*runs towards recliner*))
	Gf;	no:::?

This sound â is equivalent to the English /ə/. In instances when it is aspirated, it begins to phonetically resemble the English "həh." Example three is an instance of an aspirated **â**.

Example Three
Seuseu's Family 1993 (Los Angeles Samoan Data)

Kiare: (youngest girl)
Gladice: (older sister)
Father: (Father of both girls)

	Kiare;	((*eating a piece of bread*)) dad can I eat this? ((*shows her father the remaining piece of bread clutched in her hand*))
	Gladice;	ahhhh=
—>	Father;	=ɔ^{h}? "what"
	Kiare;	can I eat this? ((*shows her father the bread*))
	Father;	**oi e ai-ai ga koe fesili lea,** "oh you eat-eat and then ask"

All three examples illustrate the maintenance of a conversational practice of other-initated repair across social contexts. The phonetic transformation occurring is that the Samoan other-initiated repair minimal grasp begins to resemble an American English minimal grasp form (*huh*?) which in fact does not display *any* understanding whatsoever of what the first speaker intended to say.[17] Also notice how, across both social contexts, adults were the initiators of all instances of other-initiated repair. However, it is not uncommon to find children using the same kind of strategy to initiate repair of the previous speaker's utterance. It is appropriate for children to use minimal grasps, even with adults. It is not appropriate to use other kinds of other-initiated repair.

Example Four
Luina's Family 1994 (Los Angeles Samoan Data)

Minimal grasp other-repair initiators used by Luina to clarify her mother's indexical gesture.

	Mother;	look at that right there
—>	Luina;	hɔh?
	Mother;	look at that right there
—>	Luina;	what
	Mother;	these ((*points*)) did you?
	Luina;	no

Example four is a minimal grasp other-initiated repair deployed by the lower-ranking speaker. The minimal grasp requests clearer instructions so that Luina still may comply with the task at hand—directing her attention to the appropriate place on the page and answering her mother's inquiry. Even though I am only providing one instance where a lower-ranking speaker deploys a repair initiator, I found it to also be preferred over other kinds of repair strategies in both Western Samoa and Los Angeles.

USE OF TAG PARTICLES

The first researchers to mention the import of tags in the organization of turn taking were Harvey Sacks, Emanuel Schegloff, and Gail Jefferson (1974). They discussed the gross organizational features which compose a "turn-in-a-series" (1974, p. 722). They distinguished a three part structure including a component which "addresses the relation of a turn to a prior turn, one involved with what is occupying the turn, and one which addresses the relation of the turn to a succeeding one" (Sacks, Schegloff, & Jefferson, 1974, p. 722). Turn final tags, in their data, occupy the slot which addresses the relation of the current turn to a succeeding one.

Example B
(From Sacks, Schegloff, & Jefferson, 1974, p. 722)

(29)	A:	It would bum you out to kiss me then, [hunh
	B:	[Yeah well we all know where that's at.
		((pause))
	A:	[( )
	B:	[I mean you went- you went through a- a long rap on that one.=
—>	A:	=Yeah, so I say that would bum you out then, hunh

Here 'yeah' is a formal affiliator to last turn; 'hunh' is a tag question, projecting a link to next turn.
[TZ:21-23]

Tags are deployed in conjunction with other co-occuring features, sometimes built into the talk itself, which select next speaker: Eye-gaze (Goodwin, 1979) and spatial proximity may also select a specific party/second speaker in these two contexts.[18]

A more specific characterization of this form of tag deployment was written by Gail Jefferson (1980). She refers to this phenomena as a tag response solicitation. Its function is to get the selected addressee to respond to the second part of the turn with some sort of evaluative response. I have found that almost all Los Angeles Samoans' tags are used to prompt affirmative responses to prior assertions.[19] The tags are deployed in an attempt to accomplish other interactive work. First, tags may be deployed to 'tag' the selected recipient's attention. Children use tags to check adult attention across utterances. Second, the speaker searches for agreement with their prior talk by the selected recipient. This turn allows the recipients to contribute to and expand upon the first speaker's statement if they so desire. Recipients may dispute the affirmation of the first speaker's statement or even choose to ignore it. After selecting and categorizing *all* of the interactions in which tags are deployed, I came up with the following diagram. It outlines two possible 'ideal' conversational contexts in which tags

are deployed. Part I is representative of most adult-adult interactions. Part II is representative of most child-adult interactions.

Diagram:

I	Adult1:	Assertion + Tag particle	
	Adult2:	Agreement	ADULT-ADULT
----------OR----------			
II	Child:	Assertion	CHILD-ADULT
	Adult:	((no response))	
	Child:	Tag Particle	
	Adult:	Response (+/-)	

As members within Samoan American households differentiate between adult-adult interactions, adult-child and child-adult interactions, it became necessary to clarify issues of participation in order to understand the use of tags. Some of the general questions I addressed when first analyzing these interactions were: Who are the participants? Who is entitled to use the tags and with whom? In which ways do different participants transform the form of tags? How is the nature of interactional work transformed when we consider asymmetrical differences in social status between the participants? Finally, how might these practices pattern across different families? I will attend to answering these questions in the following sections.

ADULT TAG PARTICLE DATA

"`â" or "hɔh" are tag particles[20] evidenced in Samoan and English. A tag functions at different interactional levels. It has different phonetic forms which have different distributional patters across families and generations and when children deploy a tag it accompanies different illocutionary acts.

Example Five
Western Samoa Family Dinner
August, 1988

Samoan particle, the tag. Father of the family is chatting with his friend. They are discussing the difficulty in acquiring a wheelbarrow.

	Father;	**fai aku loga uiga**
		"I tell you this means"
—>		**e lê mafai ka`ilo pe koe mafai se uilipaclo `â?**
		"you probably can't get/borrow a wheel barrow, huh?"
	Friend;	**auâ ko lua â uilipaclo la e lelei**
		"because there are only two wheel barrows that are still good"

Example five is an instance of the Western Samoan tag **`â** used between the father of the household and a friend of the family (adult-adult). In the first turn, the father appeals to his friend for a verification of his belief that it is improbable that the friend will be able to acquire a wheel barrow to carry some of his things. The tag with rising intonation at the end of his turn cues his friend to respond, either confirming or dispelling his doubts about the availability of a wheelbarrow. The friend does confirm the father's assertion by explaining why it will be difficult: "because there are only two wheel barrows that are still good." This instance of tag deployment conforms with the sequence structure represented in part one of the Diagram.

A fine example of the use of both particles (Samoan and Samoan English) in tag position within Los Angeles Samoan adult conversation is evidenced in example six where Sikê's grandparents are chatting with a visitor (Alessandro Duranti). The grandmother uses a tag to address the guest about different kinds of Samoan food. The grandfather takes the next turn to expand the discussion from chicken to New Zealand corned beef. Later on in the discussion, the grandfather code-switches into English when he uses the Samoan-English tag accompanied by a negative assessment of corned beef. It's "too fat huh" opposed to the grandmother's first positive assessment of baked taro, "**mânaia `â**?", glossed as "its nice huh?".

Example Six
Sikê's Family 1993 (Los Angeles Samoan Data)

The grandmother (Gm) and grandfather (Gf) of Sikê, are chatting with the researcher, Alessandro Duranti (Al), about Samoan food.

—>	Gm;	**mânaia `â?**
		"its nice huh?"
	Gf;	**(? ? ?) moa**
		"chicken"
		(.)
	Gf;	**ia ma le pisupo**
		"okay and corned beef"
		e `ai pisupo `oe Niu Sila?
		"do you eat New Zealand corned beef?"
	Al;	**e leai**
		"no"
	Gf;	**`e â?**
		"what?"
	Al;	**e lê fiafia ai tele**
		"I don't like it too much"
	Gf;	**Niu Sila?**
		"New Zealand?"
	Gm;	**Sâmoa?**
		"Samoan?"
—>	Gf;	too fat huh?

In both instances we witness that the tag follows an assertion and it functions within the interaction to engage one of the parties to respond to their assertion. In both instances there is an embedded assessment ("nice" and "too fat") within the assertion so that if the party responds with a positive answer then they are

taking up a stance which aligns with the assessment made by the first speaker. Tags, act in such contexts, in a sense, to invite the addressee to align with or reject the prior speaker's assessment. *These tags can be used as an intersubjective tool to let the active conversational parties display their different stances toward the initiator of the tag.*

ASYMMETRIC TAG PRACTICES

The interactive function of tags in adult-adult exchanges is not necessarily the same for adult-child interactions. Adults use tags with children most often to direct action or elicit information. Like minimal grasps, this is another linguistic and social practice which bridges both Samoa and Los Angeles. In this example, the mother deploys a tag after an interrogative. She is prompting them to respond to her question.

Example Seven
Seuseu's Family 1993 (Los Angeles Samoan Data)

Mother --> Children. Example of Seuseu's mother using minimal grasps with two of her children.

	Mother;	**e te lua o?**
		"are you two going"
		((*looks toward child 1*))
		a?
—>		"huh?"
	Child 1;	((*eating*))
		[I not going]
	Child 2;	[mom I going]
		((*sits on the table*))

The greater variation of tag usage is encountered in child-adult interactions. Gaining adult attention is an interactional problem for children. Adults do not treat children as equal conversational partners. Children, therefore, have to somehow resolve this inherent asymmetry. If children endeavor to engage adults verbally, then they take a risk of being ignored or being scolded. These are only some of the possible consequences for treating someone of higher rank as if they are of equal social status. It is thus a significant interactional achievement for a child to gain an adult's attention.

There is a notable difference among the families in our study in the way they sanctioned children's use of tags to achieve certain interactional ends. Although many children seemed entitled to use tags, not all of them were able to use them in the same way. These differences may be first traced to the children's relative success in their deployment of tags. I have found that there is an overall gross distinction between 'successful' and 'failed' tag usage in talk-in-interaction.

Los Angeles Samoan children sometimes resolve the aforementioned interactional problem through a 'successful' tag deployment. 'Successful' tag usage entails the child gaining adult attention and not being scolded for attempting to do so. A 'failure' in tag usage entails one, the child was ignored or two, the child was scolded for interrupting. In real interactions, there are actually different degrees of 'success.' Sometimes the deployment of tags does not elicit a verbal response. It does, however, accomplish what the talk is designed to do. Tags are used in conjunction with particular speech acts. If the perlocutionary act of the talk happens to coincide with the goal of the illocutionary act then the tag is 'successful' in the sense that I have been describing it.

I am making a distinction between 'gaining attention without scolding' and 'being ignored' or 'gaining attention with scolding.' Adults do not scold each other for using tags. Adults of equal status, when they gain the floor to take a turn, are generally entitled to equally participate in intimate everyday conversation. Children, on the other hand, are not accorded the same social rank as adults. They have a different set of social behaviors and linguistic resources available to them. Being able to deploy a tag is indirectly related to the kinds of speech practices associated with 'adult status.' Adults, for example, also are able to introduce new conversational topics and select which parties will be the participants of such interactions. Tags are deployed to facilitate this turn taking strategy as well as elicit evaluations of a first speaker's assertion. Behaviors which are explicitly socialized and expected of Samoan children are those "concerned with getting children to know names of others, notice movements of others, greet others, perform with others (sing, etc.), deliver messages for others, report news, and fetch objects" (Ochs, 1987, p. 50). This does not include initiating conversational topics or selecting who may be a conversational participant. Children in Western Samoa are not expected to participate as adults in adult conversations (Ochs & Schieffelin, 1984).

I will also examine how 'successful' and 'failed' tag usage does not necessarily correlate with 'appropriate' and 'inappropriate' kinds of behavior accompanying the deployment of tags across family households. In other words, children sometimes achieve successful tag deployment when their behavior could be construed as 'inappropriate' (talking-back, being cheeky, interrupting adult conversation) by other adult members of this speech community. This twist of events actually strengthens the argument that these different patterns of successful and failed tag use are indexes of change in social relationships between specific family members.

The following section is dedicated to unpacking some of these different kinds of tag interactions. I will first track the different kinds of behaviors (appropriate and inappropriate) which children 'do' as they simultaneously deploy these tags. I am particularly interested in how behaviors and appendage tags are managed interactionally between adults and children. Moreover, I will show that the seemingly disparate practices between families are consistent in that they all index the different evolving social relationships in the three households.

CHILD TAG PARTICLE DATA

Example eight is one in which two children compete for their mother's attention. Note that Ana's tag functions to elicit an affirmation of her previous assertion while Seuseu's tag functions as a begging device to derail his mother's attention from Ana. Both of these interactional strategies were a challenge to accomplish as there were many other competing activities and sounds to preoccupy the mother. As the following transcript will reveal, only one child successfully deploys the tag.

Example Eight
Seuseu's Family 1993 (Los Angeles Samoan Data)

	Mother;	**alu e ave ou se`evae ave ou se`evae e tu`u**
	((*to Seuseu*))	"go take your shoes- take your shoes put them away"
		toetiti na ou alatu e tâ ma oe
		"I may be coming and hit you"
		tu`u ile i le mea lele
		"put it in that place/thing"
	((*turns to Ana lying next to her*))	Ana ol Lita "oh"
	((*to Seuseu*))	Seuseu **mai ile i le mea lele**
		"bring (it) there to that place/thing"
—>	Ana;	mom "Jesus" is capitalized **hʌh**?
	Mother;	mɾ̩::,[21]
	Ana;	because it it's a name=
	Seuseu;	=mamaɺ::
		[
		((*enters screen from left*))
		ma can I go to the park
		((*kneels down in the front Mother and Ana*))
		(.)
—>		**hɔ h?=**
	Teri;	((*walks by*))
	Seuseu;	=mommy,
		can I go tuh park//=
	Ana;	tha's not very long
	((*to mother*))	
—>	Seuseu;	**=hɔ h?**
	Ana;	all I have to do is (? ?)
		[
	Seuseu;	((*whines*)) mɑ̈ie:::::
		((*leans over, contorting his body so that he can try & capture his mother's gaze*))
	Ana;	all I have to do is two lines
	Seuseu;	mommy::: mommy::::
		((*sits up and stops whining*))

A brief recap of the events and social actors will follow to provide the reader a little of the context in which this interaction occurs in real time. At the onset of this transcript, the mother is in the middle of issuing a series of directives in Samoan to her young son Seuseu. She wants him to pick up his shoes and put them out of the way. He doesn't move fast enough for her so she threatens him with the future consequences (getting hit) for not complying. While the mother

is addressing Seuseu, her daughter Ana is fighting off the four-year old Lita who is disrupting Ana's homework. The mother acknowledges them just before her attention is drawn back to Seuseu, who doesn't know where he should put the shoes. As she tells him where to put them, Ana attempts to draw her mother's attention back to her homework by asking whether 'Jesus' is supposed to be capitalized. The mother responds affirmatively and the girl expands her original assertion with an explanation as to how she knew that 'Jesus' was capitalized. This expansion resembles what Mehan (1979) refers to as a process response, where the child is supposed to orally provide the reasoning behind the answer to a question. As soon as she finishes her statement, her younger brother, Seuseu, approaches and calls "mamaḷ::". When their mother doesn't respond he kneels in front of her, requests permission to go to the park and uses the tag "hɔh?" As shown in the transcript he repeatedly utters this tag. The mother ignores him completely. Even when he bends down, putting his face close to hers, she continues to ignore him.

Both children employ tags and the conversational sequencing corresponds to the two patterns in the diagram. Ana's tag conforms to adult conversational practices. It invites the hearer to confirm the speaker's last assertion. Seuseu appears to be an interloper in this interaction. His presence interrupts Ana's homework. Like Ana's talk, Seuseu's talk is designed to set up a participation framework with his mother as primary recipient. Nevertheless, the relative difference between successful and failed deployment of conversational tags is whether one's status as a participant at that instant is ratified or unratified (Goffman, 1981). The mother does not permit the children to use these tags with her when they are interrupting activities in which she is already engaged.[22] Even when Seuseu lowers himself[23] below her seated position, he still fails to gain the floor.

With so many children around,[24] the mother creates 'private' spaces where she can help individual children do homework without letting others disturb them. At the same time, she monitors the behavior of the other kids to ensure that they are not getting into trouble. Thus, the mother is involved in multiple activities ('doing homework supervision,' 'directing housework,' and other kinds of monitoring) and she lets the children know the participant framework she will invoke for each activity by the way she chooses to interact with some children and not others. Thus, Seuseu is a ratified participant when she directs him to put shoes away within the 'directing housework' activity. He is not a ratified participant once his mother has switched activities to 'doing homework supervision.' His begs and calls are ignored and essentially failed strategies at that instant. This does not mean that begging might not be successful within a different interaction.

This kind of switching between participation frameworks may be unique to the demands of this family: Seuseu's family is the largest out of the three families included in this study. Besides his parents and occasional aunts, uncles, and cousins who stop by, he has ten siblings, ages ranging 18 years to a baby of

six months at the time of filming. Five of them (including Seuseu) are under the age of ten. There are many young children around the house playing about and demanding attention.

This is not a unique case. For example, when the mother is involved in one activity she is often called to help someone else in a different activity. She sometimes ignores them. She often assigns other older children to go take care of the problem. The sibling caregiving observable in this household is common to Samoan households on Western and American Samoa (Mead, 1928; Ochs, 1988). The father also partakes in this kind of assignment and re-assignment of duties when he is home.

Returning to example eight, it is evident that ignoring strategies make explicit who is accorded higher rank and who must receive ratification to participate in 'adult' activities.[25] Of course giving permission is not exclusively an adult activity, but it is a vehicle for the enforcement of certain adult interactional privileges (to decide who may and may not participate in talk). As long as children are ratified participants they may use the tags after assessments and requests. In this particular instance, begging is discouraged or possibly considered an inappropriate behavior. This does not hold true across all interactional contexts.

'APPROPRIATE' AND 'INAPPROPRIATE' BEHAVIORS[26]

In the previous section, I discussed the difference between 'successful' and 'failed' tag deployment. One might say that the child was ignored because his behavior was inappropriate. But *what* was the inappropriate thing that the adult might have been trying to discourage? Begging is not necessarily an inappropriate behavior. It seems to me that the adult was not discouraging the behavior, but rather *how* the child was trying to accomplish 'begging.' Was it the right time or place? Was he entitled to engage his mother as a recipient at that moment? How was the talk produced? Behavior is not merely 'acting cheeky' or 'talking back.' Other contextual factors must be considered when discussing how the socialization of 'appropriate behaviors' is achieved in interactions. In what follows I will examine how children try to 'do' different things with tags, only some of which are successful or appropriate. In other words, I will show the specific illocutionary force that tags have when deployed by the children.

The next transcript comes from Seuseu's family. Seuseu does asking permission, but he does it wrong. He is sitting in the living room in front of the television while his mother is sitting in the dining area with his older siblings. She is engaged in supervising the other children's schoolwork. She is also trying to relax by being with the older kids who are quietly working away

with their homework. Suddenly, Seuseu yells from the living room to the dining area, trying to get her permission to get a toy.

Example Nine
Seuseu's Family 1993 (Los Angeles Samoan Data)

	Seuseu;	mama can I have a toy?
		ma can I have toy?
		((*bending on his knees and look over to the table to his mother*))
		(1.0)
—>		hɔh?
	Mother;	((*shakes her head back and forth horizontally*))[27]

Seuseu utters his request to have a toy two times and he receives no verbal or gestured uptake from his mother. Had his mother heard him and wanted to respond affirmatively she could have done so after both first and second requests where he comes to possible completion of his turn. She does not. Seuseu ventures again by extending his request with a tag thereby filling that growing gap of silence following his ignored requests. This time his mother shakes her head 'no' and he drops the matter. His tag was already a failure before he had even a chance to utter it as his mother was already ignoring him from the other room.[28] Even though asking adults' permission to do or get something is a possible activity for children, the way in which Seuseu tries to do so in this instance is not appropriate.[29] This is evidenced by the perlocutionary effect of his request.

Example 10 is an instance of Sikê doing 'talking back.' Sikê and his older 'sibling'[30] Mata are both sitting in the living room watching television. Mata is on the couch holding a baby cousin while Sikê sits on a large reclining chair off to the side of the room. Here a disagreement disrupts when his aunt enters the living room and orders him to pick up some toys which he had left lying around. He indignantly says that they aren't his toys. He tries to place the responsibility for picking them up on Mata by stating that they are hers. Mata calmly and quietly disputes his statement telling him not to lie

Example Ten
Sikê's Family 1993 (Los Angeles Samoan Data)

Aunt;	((*stops and looks at Sikê*))
	sh:::[31] **piki i luga ia au-**
	"pick up your"
	[
	((*kicks something on the ground towards Sikê*))
	au toys ia
	"your toys here"
	fofola solo
	"all lying around"
Sikê;	they're not my toys
Mata;	(? ? ?)
Aunt;	((*walks to book shelf in far left corner*))
Sikê;	those are Ma-ta's
Mata;	°don't lie°
	(.)

	Sikê;	Mata ɬlad tho::se
	Mata;	°don't lie°
—>	Sikê;	I gave um to her ∂h.
	Mata;	don't lie
	Sikê;	I'm not those are not my toys

The volume and stress on "∂h" index Sikê's frustration, but this behavior makes him look extremely cheeky compared to Mata who is quiet but nevertheless insistent with her accusations that he is lying. Sikê is quite successful[32] at getting 'his way' when he deploys this tag. In this instance, the sequencing of the talk consists of a series of denials immediately followed by accusations between the children while the aunt doesn't talk at all. Sikê is addressing his aunt, while making Mata an overhearer. The aunt lets the argument run its course without interfering. After he declares that they aren't his toys for the last time, the aunt leaves the room and she tells Mata to watch over the baby. Thus, this interaction is transformed into a squabble between siblings rather than a dispute resolved by the aunt. She does not tell Sikê to go pick up the toys again. She doesn't tell Mata to do it either. Sikê's apparent success in this interaction will not cushion him from future charges of acting 'cheeky.' At that moment, and at that moment only was he permitted to assert himself and deny the charges being perceived as against him in the presence of an adult. The tag seems to work as an emphatic device to support his position as one who is not responsible for the toys.

Example eleven is taken from Luina's family. This is an instance of doing 'being cheeky.' Luina, like the children from the other two families, knows how to use tags. She also knows how to deploy them subtly to challenge adults and adult behavior. In example eleven Luina initiates a remembering sequence with her mother which highlights a previous interactional dispute between them. Earlier on that afternoon her mother had discovered a tape dispenser in her folder and had accused her of taking it from school. Luina had defended her position that this accusation was unjust[33] and perhaps was still smarting over it. So, while her mother is putting something away in the kitchen, she tries to initiate a conversation about what her mother had thought... "you thought I took that from school hɔ h mom?"

Example Eleven
Luina's Family 1994 (Los Angeles Samoan Data)

	Mother;	((*walking around kitchen, putting something away*))
	Luina;	((*turns her head back toward table, grabs the tape dispenser*))
		((*funny accent*))
		[
—>		you thawt I took that from school hɔh mom.
	Mother;	hə∂h?
—>	Luina;	you thought I took the tape from school hɔh.
		((*looks toward kitchen*))
	Mother;	((*walks toward table*))
		what
—>	Luina;	((*said using smile-voice*))
		[

	you thought I took the tape from school °hɔh°.
Mother;	((*moves glass and flips book order form around*))
	[
	m hm:
Luina;	if- if I took the tape (.) from school what would you do?
Mother;	((*takes tape from Luina and puts it over near folder*))
	[
	I'd tell you to make you take it back
	(0.4)
	cause it's not yours ((*organizing different piles of paper*))
Luina;	m↑hm
	(.)
	it was mine.
	(1.0)
	I wanna do this [homework first it's so ea::sy
	[((*grabs one of the papers in mother's hand*))

Notice how Luina's mother ratifies her as a participant at several points. As Luina begins her initial statement she assumes a funny kind of accent,[34] using staccato diction and emphasizing the word "took." Her mother deploys a louder volume minimal grasp repair initiator, thereby granting Luina a chance to continue and possibly clarify her talk. This here carries a double meaning: one of accommodation (letting Luina continue) and no accommodation (Luina *must* continue and possibly amend her talk). Luina does repeat and she takes the opportunity to amend her speech slightly. It is significant that Luina becomes less 'cheeky' as she is granted more chances to re-start the topic. It is significant because she drops the 'cheeky child' voice and assumes a more adult-like voice. Her volume decreases and she drops all of the intensifiers, however she does *not* drop the tags. The mother finally responds affirmatively to Luina's third try. Instead of stopping there, Luina broaches the subject of consequences for stealing and when her mother ratifies the topic by responding to it, Luina emphasizes the fact that she was never guilty in the first place. She is able to accomplish this challenge by lowering her speech and baiting her mother to ratify her not only as a speaking participant, but one who *may* introduce the topic. This is a very different kind of interaction from the ones evident in Seuseu's and Sikê's families. Luina's mother at times allows Luina to initiate challenges about intentions, even when they are directed at her.[35] The tags deployed by the other children never index or challenge notions about intentionality.

The last two deployments of tags were successful even though the behaviors which accompanied them might not be considered 'appropriate' of children who are not supposed to 'talk back' or act 'cheeky' in the presence of an adult. Contrasting the two successful tag deployments with Seuseu's attempt to ask permission one instantly notices that the behaviors in the last two transcripts might be construed as inappropriate whereas Seuseu's was not. Unfortunately for Seuseu, the *way* in which he tried to do 'asking permission' was inappropriate. Therefore, there must be some unique contextual features to the successful tag deployments in the other two families which nullify the questioning of the children's 'inappropriate' behavior.[36]

EVOLVING (SYNCRETIC) PRACTICES WITHIN SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS

The practices I have been discussing do not happen in a vacuum. They occur in changing social and cultural webs of relationships (Geertz, 1973) and in culturally built material environments (Goodwin & Goodwin, in press). Moreover, these social actors maintain relatively asymmetrical sociocultural relationships with one another. This is not something imagined by researchers. It is a niche of human social interaction.

I have examined the different ways Samoan Americans shape the form of a particular sociolinguistic variable, the tag, which they use within conversation to impact turn taking and speaker selection. Samoan Americans deploy tags to accomplish differential interactional goals. What's more, adults and children do not necessarily deploy tags to achieve the same interactional ends. When Samoan or Samoan American adults deploy a tag they are not necessarily attempting to challenge or subvert their relative social position. Yet children many times do just that when they address adults. *Being able to 'tag' an adult indexes something about the kind of relationship a child might be trying to assert or perhaps it indexes the kind of relationship(s) a child has already been developing with that particular recipient.* Finally, the patterning of inter-generational tag usage is a powerful indicator of such transforming social relationships.

CONCLUDING REMARKS: LINGUISTIC AND CULTURAL CHANGE

These strategies themselves become a powerful index of not only evolving social relationships but also *cultural as well as linguistic change.* These differentially sanctioned uses of *huh*, between families and within families, is an instance of syncretic practice in action where different social relationships between caregivers and children are negotiated. New kinds of relationships are realized within these families as adult caregivers and children continually respond to transforming cultural and linguistic contexts. The use of tags is one linguistic and cultural bridge which unites Samoa and Los Angeles. Simultaneously, at this same level we notice great cultural and linguistic variation as children index their changing positions alongside other members within the Samoan family hierarchy, simply through their deployment of *huh*.. This kind of change occurs during a thoroughly interactive and syncretic process. To argue that it is necessarily an assimilationist process is to overlook the complexity and intricacy of micro-ethnographic phenomena that constitute people's lives.

APPENDIX:
KEY TO TRANSCRIPTION SYMBOLS

	Symbol	Phenomena it Represents
1.	[or //	Marks overlapping or simultaneous talk or gesture. When the gestures are overlapping two occur, one in the talk that is being overlapped and one just in front of the talk which interrupts. Simultaneous talk and/or gestures are preceded by left-hand brackets.
2.	=	Equal signs are used to mark latched talk by two different speakers or to mark continuous talk by the same speaker.
3.	(0.0)	Timed intervals between or within utterances are marked in tenths of a second and inserted within parentheses.
4.	(.)	A micro-pause. Generally less than (0.2) of a second.
5.	-	The hyphen represents a self-cut off or interruption, where by the speaker interrupts or cuts off their own talk.
6.	:	It marks stretched or prolonged sounds "S:ound". Prolonged sounds are marked with more colons.
7.	.	A period indicates stopping fall in tone.
8.	,	A comma marks continuing intonation.
9.	?	A question mark marks rising inflection.
10.	↑↓	Up and Down arrows mark dramatic changes in pitch.
11.	line	The underline marks emphasized talk.
12.	°	Talk which occurs between degree signs is significantly softer the speech which surrounds it.
13.	HEY	Capitalized letters mark increased volume.
14.	·hh	This marks audible inhalations.
15.	(hh)	H's between parentheses inserted within talk mark laughter within talk.
16.	(( ))	Italicized and shrunken font words written inside these double parentheses mark gesture and or particular qualities about the speech like ((*funny accent*)).
17.	( )	Enclosed items between single parentheses mark things that are in doubt or difficult to make out on the original tape.
18.	—>	Marks a sequence in the talk to which the reader should pay special attention.
19.	" "	Talk inserted between quotation marks are English translations of Samoan talk.

Phonetic symbols	Example in English
ə	sof<u>a</u>
ʌ	b<u>u</u>t
ɔ	l<u>o</u>ng
h	<u>h</u>ot (h marks aspiration)
`	glottal stop (occurs before all Samoan vowels)
^	When it occurs over a Samoan vowel it marks long vowel.

NOTES

[1] In 1994 I was presented with the opportunity to explore these emergent practices. I was invited to work as a research assistant on Alessandro Duranti and Elinor Ochs' project on the socialization of problem solving in a Samoan American community in Los Angeles.

[2] Some of the earliest models of assimilation and acculturation were based on studies in ex-colonies of the 'New World.' See Redfield, Linton & Herskovits (1936) and Herskovits (1937a; 1937b).

[3] Apter (1991) writes how Herskovits "essentialized tribal origins in Africa, perpetuated myths of cultural purity in the New World, overlooked class formation, and developed passive notions of acculturation and cultural resistance, all of which distorted the ethnographic record under the guise of an imputed scientific objectivity (Apter, 1991, p. 235)."

[4] I use 'American-English' to refer to an abstract standard. Americans do constantly evaluate each others' speech based on such a standard.

[5] Linguistic forms are deployed both at and below the level of discursive consciousness. Silverstein (1981) argues that people have different levels of awareness when they use linguistic forms when they speak; so that some phenomenon are more available for speaker scrutiny (the structurally segmentable; i.e. entire lexical items, affixes, word stems) and manipulation, whereas other phenomenon (non-segmentable and suprasegmentable; i.e. embedded phonological forms like Wasco-Wishram Chinook augmentatives and diminutives and prosodic features respectively) are much more difficult to manipulate as they are so embedded and dependent on the overall form to have any meaning.

[6] Language thus construed resembles what Wittgenstein (1958) referred to as "language games," whereby people use words as social tools. We must consider the context of the activity in which these phenomena are used in order to understand their meaning.

[7] The form for minimal grasps in Samoan is either "ʻeâ" or "ʻâ" and in English it is "huh". The form for tags in Samoan is ʻâ and in English it is "huh". There is a continuum of phonetic form between the two codes so that some Samoan ʻâ sound like English ʻɔh.

[8] What I am essentially arguing is that there exist parallel linguistic forms associated with the same interactional practices in both Western Samoa and the Los Angeles Samoan community. These practices are informed by community members' presuppositions about how people should appropriately act in the world. However, due to changing social contexts and different individuals' experiences, the way that these parallel forms are being deployed (within the same syntactic sequence and turn) is changing the way some adults are socializing children to interact in the world. Children must learn two appropriate models for engaging the world (the Samoan way and the American way) in order to survive in the Los Angeles Samoan community.

[9] P. V. Kroskrity, personal communication.

[10] As will be evidenced it the data, children are entitled to initiate other-repair as long as they follow the Samoan practice of minimal grasp. Ochs (1988) argues that these kinds of minimal grasp strategies respect Samoan models in that they do not try to guess others' intentions or what they had 'meant' to say.

[11] Pouesi (1994) records that more than 90,000 Samoans live in California.

[12] For example, in the case of Luina's home, when I first started filming her home housed around twelve people. One year later there were twenty-one people—her uncle's family had moved in as had some other visiting cousins from northern California.

[13] A. Duranti, personal communication.

[14] They depend on older siblings or adults to drive them around since the public transportation system is not readily available or particularly safe for young children.

[15] Refer to the Appendix for a set of transcription symbols.

[16] Ochs (1988, p. 143) writes, "Where the speaker is of low status and/or of lower rank than the hearer, then his or her personal intentions tend to assume low priority in assigning meaning, and the interpretation of the higher-ranking hearer takes precedence. Notice that whether the higher-ranking party is speaker or hearer the higher-ranking party controls the meaning. Given that explicit guessing is tied to the pursuit of the speaker's intentions, it is somewhat understandable, given the comments above, that we would observe very little explicit guessing directed to lower-ranking speakers."

[17] I must clarify that in English, 'what' can also be used to display no understanding whatsoever like 'huh.' It differs from other contexts of usage which do display understanding. Schegloff classifies the first instance of 'what' as an *unspecified interrogative request for a solution*. The second instance of 'what' falls under the *category of constrained interrogative request for a solution.*

[18] There might be other interactional contexts where the subsequent party to talk is not explicitly selected. In other words, the first speaker does not target a particular recipient but rather he/she launches the utterance + tag in the hopes that someone will self-select to respond. However, I have yet to witness this case scenario in the Samoan data.

[19] The prior utterance tends to take the form of assessments or requests. Only Seuseu consistently used tags after requests. Almost all other instances of tag usage occur after assertions which invoke a need for assessment.

[20] In *A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language* (Quirk et al., 1985), tag questions most often are considered appendages to statements. Most of the characterizations of tag forms exclude particle forms like those of the Samoan tag and the English "huh". However, the editors do note that tags invite a listener to respond to the previous assertion. "The meanings of these sentences, like their forms, involve a statement and a question; each of them asserts something, then invites the listener's response to it... The tag with rising tone invites verification, expecting the hearer to decide the truth of the proposition in the statement. The tag with the falling tone, on the other hand, invites confirmation of the statement, and has the force of an exclamation rather than a genuine question"(1985, p. 811). I argue that particle forms may also function this way as tags, although they are not being used to invite verification exclusively.

[21] This is a high pitch 'm' which is interpreted to mean 'yes' in Samoan.

[22] There are other examples of this in the corpus of the data. Another instance of this is included in the next section which discusses 'appropriate' and 'inappropriate' behaviors.

[23] Lowered body position is a physical demonstration of respect in Samoa. Children are expected to do so in front of people of high status.

[24] She is mother to eleven.

[25] Children also do 'ignoring,' but the context and consequences would be different from the one presented here.

[26] All of these 'behaviors' accompany instances of tag particle deployment.

[27] The head shake can mean "no" and it may also be a kind of gestured evaluation of Chuck's *way* of asking.

[28] She could have responded to him during the first gap where his second utterance was possibly complete, but she did not. This resembles the ignoring strategy used by her previously. However, this time she does respond to him with a disapproving head nod. There is a total avoidance of talk.

[29] Of course, it is possible that the mother didn't want to give him a toy and so she ignored him. The point is that she ignored him and he doesn't succeed in getting what he wants.

[30]Mata is an adopted child of Sikê's grandparents, but every one treats her like Sikê's sister. In the videos she addresses the grandparents as mom and dad while Sikê calls them grandmother and grandfather.

[31]'sh::' is a Samoan attention getting device.

[32] 'Successful' tag deployment I had previously considered to be maintaining adult attention and not being scolded. In this particular instance, Sikê's aunt does continue to monitor the conversation and she does not scold him nor does not affirm his assertion. One might then consider the existence of different levels of 'success' which might not be so marked as 'eliciting an affirmative verbal response' from the recipient.

[33] We know this because she says so in the earlier interaction. She argued that she was justified in taking the tape to school because, according to Luina (which we recorded on tape), the teacher hoarded it from the students.

[34] This voice in this instance is one where Luina affects a funny accent which is semi-accusatory. It is hard to describe exactly what kind of voice Luina might be assuming. It is definitely marked and probably one of many voices that she may assume in her private repertoire of voices.

[35] Other children subvert parents/adults, but not in the same way. These interactions are not represented here as they do not contain tags. The point is that the ability to use tags symbolically elevates the child to seeming 'adult' status as they are able to converse using tags. Moreover, the children accomplish different illocutionary acts through the deployment of these tags.

[36] Ochs notes that adults explicitly socialize appropriate behavior whilst 'cheeky' behavior is covertly cultivated. By investigating these kinds of interactions we may have a way of getting at these subtle ways that adults encourage those behaviors which are not considered appropriate.

REFERENCES

Anzaldúa, G. (1987). *Borderlands: The new mestiza, la frontera.* San Francisco: Spinsters/Aunt Lute.

Apter, A. (1991). Herskovits's heritage: Rethinking syncretism in the African diaspora. *Diaspora, 13,* 235-60.

Chavez, L. R. (1994). The power of the imagined community: The settlement of undocumented Mexicans and Central Americans in the United States. *American Anthropologist, 96,* 52-73.

Duranti, A. (1992). Language in context and language as context: The Samoan respect vocabulary. In A. Duranti & C. Goodwin (Eds.), *Rethinking context: Language as an interactive phenomenon.* (pp. 77-99). Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press.

Duranti, A. & Ochs, E. (1996). Syncretic literacy: Multiculturalism in Samoan american families. *Research Report 16.* Santa Cruz: National Center for Research on Cultural Diversity and Second Language Learning.

Duranti, A., Ochs, E. & Ta`ase, E. (1995). Change and tradition in literacy instruction in a Samoan-American community. *Educational Foundations, 9,* 4, 57-74.

Geertz, C. (1973). *The interpretation of cultures.* New York: Basic Books.

Goffman, E. (1981). *Forms of talk.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Goodwin, C. (1979). The interactive construction of a sentence in natural conversation. In G. Psathas (Ed.), *Everyday language: Studies in ethnomethodology* (pp. 97-121). New York: Irvington Publishers.

Goodwin, C. & Goodwin, M. H. (In press). Formulating planes: Seeing as a situated activity. In D. Middleton & Y. Engestrom (Eds.), *Distributed Cognition in the Workplace* . London: Sage.

Herskovits, M. J. (1937a). The significance of the study of acculturation for anthropology. *American Anthropologist, 38,* 259-264.

Herskovits, M. J. (1937b). African gods and Catholic saints in New World Negro belief. *American Anthropologist, 39,* 635-43.

Jefferson, G. (1980). *Occasional paper no. 6: The abominable "ne?": A working paper exploring the phenomenon of post-response pursuit of response.* (pp. 1-82). Manchester, England: University of Manchester.

Mead, M. (1928). *Coming of age in Samoa.* New York: Morrow.

Mehan, H. (1979). *Learning lessons.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Milner, G. B. (1961). The Samoan vocabulary of respect. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, 91,* 296-317.

Ochs, E. (1987). The impact of stratification and socialization on men's and women's speech in Western Samoa. In S. Philips, S. Steele & C. Tanz (Eds.), *Language, gender, and sex in comparative perspective.* (pp. 50-70). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ochs, E. (1988). *Culture and language development: Language acquisition and language socialization in a Samoan village.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ochs, E. & Schieffelin, B. B. (1984). Language acquisition and socialization: three developmental stories and their implications. In R. Shweder and R. LeVine (Eds.), *Culture theory: essays on mind, self, and emotion.* (pp. 276-320). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Pouesi, Daniel. (1994). *An illustrated history of Samoans in California.* Carson, CA: Kin Publications.

Quirk, R., Greenbaum, S., Leech, G. & Svartvik, J. (Eds.). (1985). *A comprehensive grammar of the English language.* New York: Longman Inc.

Redfield, R., Linton, R. & Herskovits, M. J. (1936). Memorandum for the study of acculturation. *American Anthropologist, 38,* 149-152.

Reynolds, J. (1995). *Tautalaititi and Tags: A study of Samoan American child language socialization as syncretic practice.* Unpublished Masters Thesis, University of California, Los Angeles.

Rosaldo, R. (1989). *Culture and truth: The remaking of social analysis.* Boston: Beacon Press.

Sacks, H., Schegloff, E. & Jefferson, G. (1974). A simplest systematics for the organization of turn-taking in conversation. *Language, 50,* 4, 696-735.

Sacks, H., Schegloff, E. & Jefferson, G. (1977). The preference for self-correction in the organization of repair in conversation. *Language, 53,* 2, 361-382.

Schieffelin, B. B. (1990). *The give and take of everyday life: Language socialization of Kaluli children.* Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press.

Silverstein, M. (1981). The limits of awareness. *Sociolinguistic working paper, 84,* (pp. 1-30). Southwest Educational Development Laboratory.

Wittgenstein, L. (1958). *Philosophical investigations.* (3rd ed.), G. E. Anscombe (trans.). New York: MacMillan.

Zentella, A. C. (1990). Returned migration, Language, and identity: Puerto Rican bilinguals in dos worlds/two mundos. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language, 84,* 81-100.