

Language Strand

Unit 4: Oral and Written Language Development

Module 4.3 Community Genres

**Exploring Community
Language Genres**



Student Support Material

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Unit outline

Unit	#	Modules
Unit 4 Oral and Written Language Development	1	Oral Language Development (Core)
	2	Writing as a Process (Core)
	3	Community Genres (Core)

Icons



Read or research









Write or summarise

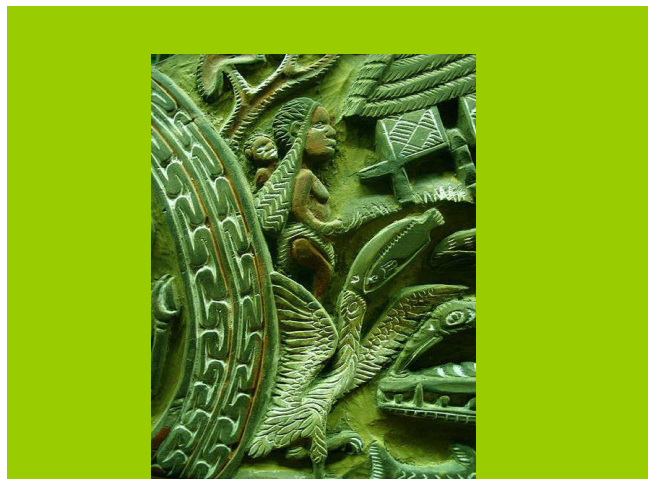


Activity or discussion

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Exploring Community Oral Genres



Introduction

Exploring Community Oral Genres is the third module within **Unit 4: Oral and Written Language Development**

In addition to completing the exercises in this material, you will be required to keep a Reading Journal to record responses to the readings: a summary of key ideas, reflections, and your developing ideas (personal theories) about the relationship between community genres and the development of speaking and writing.

Papua New Guinea (PNG) is a land of diverse cultures and languages, yet there are very few studies which explore the relationship between PNG cultures, societies, languages and education, yet there is a great need for this understanding in order for education to be relevant to the societies it is serving. One way of doing this is to increase teachers' awareness and knowledge of their own cultures and languages, and the ways these are learned.

Bernard Narakobi argues that Melanesian ways should be explored and knowledge, skills and perceptions derived which will have a constructive impact on society.

The real challenge to institutions of learning ... is to give the possibility to teachers and scholars to explore knowledge in the same way that they would physically explore a mountain, a jungle or sea. I believe that if we can instil this idea we will be planting in people's minds the possibility of creating knowledge, of creating thought which will assist in addressing human needs and problems ... The task of liberation and freedom is not a political task in the sense that you chase away the colonising power and take over political control of your country. The process ... is a process of liberation ... of thoughts which impede and obstruct our construction of a better society and a better people. (1991: 24, 25)

The module aims to take up this challenge by:

- providing you with opportunities to link your life experiences and observations with studies in language and learning to create knowledge that will be of benefit to you as a teacher

- improving understandings of the relationship between language acquisition and the socialisation of children in PNG
- exploring and theorising the impact upon classroom practices of cultural factors underpinning language acquisition and socialisation.

This study will be a bit like climbing and exploring a mountain, it will require some hard work. There will be some windy paths as you track ideas through the forests of readings; some slippery sections of the climb as you go back and re-read sections, review video clips or re-look at photographs to better understand them; some valleys and fast rivers to negotiate as you try to bridge the ideas in the materials with your experiences and observations. Hopefully at the end the view will be worth it, and you will see some things you haven't seen before.

There are five stages of this journey: the first stage is this orientation stage where you will be given an overview and a map of what lies ahead. The second stage involves improving understandings of language acquisition and socialisation processes which are at the heart of an understanding of what community genres are and how they are learned. To do this we will be adopting an ethnographic or cultural perspective (looking for patterns of talk and behaviour) to look at the language and behaviour of caregivers and how it socialises children as members of their communities.

In the third stage we will be looking at some of the ideas coming from stage two (eg concepts of 'save' and 'showing language'; educational and interactive forms of involvement; child centred vs. situation centred teaching and learning orientations; conceptions about age and the development of intentions; turn taking (dyadic and triadic organisation of talk).

In the fourth stage we will again use an ethnographic or cultural perspective to look at teaching and learning to see if any of these community genres are at work in the classroom.

The final stage will involve linking the studies with personal experiences and observations and building upon these to improve your understanding of the relationship between cultural factors and classroom practices.

At each stage of this module, you will be asked to study, scrutinise and examine the materials; reflect on what you find and theorise a set of propositions or ideas.

Good luck in your exploration!

Reference

Narakobi, B (1991) *The Ethics of Development in Teaching in Papua New Guinea: a perspective for the nineties*, (eds) Avalos, B. & Neuendorf, L. UPNG Press, Port Moresby.

Oral language development: patterns of caregiver talk and child development



What are Genres?

A genre is a recognised form of writing or speaking, such as story-writing or story telling, a written speech, or different types of conversation (describing an object, retelling an event). Each written or spoken form has particular characteristics or features which we learn to recognise as children and as adults. Sometimes we use the term 'text' for genre.

What are Community Genres?

A community genre is a form of writing or speaking which is recognised by a particular community, it is a particular language practice. In PNG community genres refers mainly to oral genres because most local languages do not have a written form. Where local languages have a written form, most of them have followed patterns of English written genres, eg letter writing forms, story (narrative) writing forms. This module will explore the concept of oral genre development because these genres represent what children have learned and are learning at home, which form the basis of their language development at school.

Children's ways of talking and reasons for talking follow expected patterns which they learn from home. When patterns of talk are different at school, children's expectations of how to talk, when and where to talk, and the purpose of talking, are changed. They learn 'school talk' or school genres. Not all children are successful in making the transition to 'school language'. It is important for teachers to develop an appreciation for this concept that children will bring with them different expectations about how to use language. Teachers should monitor children's speech behaviour and be supportive of a child's community genres while teaching children appropriate school genres.

We have a very limited understanding of community genres in PNG because of the many languages and societies that exist in PNG. For this reason, this module is an opportunity for you to research and study your own community genres and share them with others. For example, Ben Tamengit from Gaulim Teachers College has used the term 'tambu genres' to refer to the way different people speak to their 'tambus'. You should reflect on how language is used with different people in your community and

try to identify other genres, and what makes up their structure. You will find that it is not all language. Genres are governed by social rules which govern people's behaviour. Those rules might include what topics can be spoken about, who can be spoken to, how a person or group can be spoken to, how a person should stand or be positioned in relation to another person, who can start or end a conversation, what turn-taking rules apply, etc.

This module is a beginning. It looks at processes of language acquisition and socialisation in the community which are the foundations of the development of community genres. Specific communities are provided here in the readings below as examples, and to provide you with a basis for reflecting upon the development of oral language practices in your own communities.

These readings and exercises are challenging but worth the effort of careful reading, study and reflection.

Please pay particular attention to the main concepts each writer discusses. Each writer provides examples of what they are talking about. Find these examples (transcripts or descriptions of events) and read around them to better understand the key points.

Each writer presents a point of view, but you may see other things. You should note your thoughts, beliefs and observations in your Reading Journal and compare those you feel are most important, with a friend.



Reading 1

Extracts and adaptations from: Language shift and cultural reproduction: socialisation, self and syncretism in a Papua New Guinean village. Don Kulick (1992).

Some of the main ideas from **Reading 1** are: The idea that villagers value language for what it can achieve in interaction with others; the role children play in providing a language rich environment for infants; the reasons adults and children shift between Taiap and Tok Pisin; that infants are not seen as active communication partners (eg few games are played with them); and the way caregivers encourage infants to notice things but do not encourage them to talk.

Language shift, cultural reproduction and socialisation in Gapun village, ESP

Gapun villagers do not own radios, read newspapers, or have access to other depersonalized sources of information, so whatever they know about other people and other places, they know through their own experiences or through the stories of others. In this way, information is always contextualized, and it is always tightly bound up with whoever passes it on. Villagers' talk is not taken up with discussions of *issues* like politics, religion, or economy. People in Gapun occasionally talk about the Papally bestowed "power" of Michael Somare (Papua New Guinea's first Prime Minister), or the miraculous happenings linked to a statue of the Virgin Mary in a Ramu village, or they may discuss why the price they get paid for their coffee beans

keeps going up and down for no discernible reason. But these topics are never discussed apart from the fact that someone has seen or experienced them her- or himself or has heard about them from someone else. Talk about anything in Gapun is ultimately anchored in the talkers and the social contexts in and about which they speak.

The villagers' continual embedding of talk in social relations and contexts both reflects and influences their notions of what language is and what it is for. The local concept of language emphasizes its interactional character. For the villagers, language is a collaborative activity primarily concerned with the elaboration and manipulation of social relationships, and consequently, with the demonstration of *save*. This conception of language focuses more on discourse and on pragmatic effect than on individual words or isolated sentences, and it foregrounds a view of language as something done together with other people or something done to affect the actions of other people.' During speech, listeners are expected to react to speakers with talk of their own: with interjections of support, with repetition, and with help in structuring the discourse. By responding in this way, and by intuiting and adjusting their verbal and nonverbal reactions to the talk that the speaker produces, listeners demonstrate their *save*.

This kind of conceptualization of language entails the expectation that speech will occur in the presence of an audience of socially competent and potentially responsive listeners, of listeners who themselves have *save* and who can collaboratively participate in the construction of a discourse. This expectation, in turn, automatically disqualifies certain potential recipients of speech as listeners. Domestic animals such as the scabies ridden dogs the villagers keep to hunt with are, for example, not regarded as audiences in the villagers' eyes, and they are never spoken to except to be brusquely ordered to "get out of the way" or to "come."

Likewise, babies, who have no *save*, do not qualify as conversational partners, and one of the most characteristic features of adult talk to babies and young children in Gapun is the relative lack of it. For the first six months of their lives, village children are seldom spoken to at all except when they start to cry and mothers tell them "*Inap, inap*" (Enough, enough) or "*Susu, susu*" (Drink the breast, drink the breast), or when they are playfully called by animal-inspired vocatives such as "little rat" or "bloody stupid pig." If a mother is bored or alone with her baby, she may occasionally repeat the child's cooing sounds and engage in face play, but these interactions seldom last more than thirty seconds at a time, and they are immediately abandoned if somebody more interesting to talk to happens along. No caregiver ever attempts to engage an infant in any kind of sustained conversational activity, and even actions involving the physical handling of a baby's body, such as feeding, washing, or piercing boils, are performed without any comment to the child at all. At this age, child vocalizations are always treated as expressions of hunger and dissatisfaction, and as soon as a baby begins to fuss or struggle, a breast will be squeezed, firmly and wordlessly, into its open mouth.

It is only when children from about 8 months start to resist being quieted by the breast or by having an object suddenly placed in their hands that mothers begin talking to them. This is the point at which the *em ia* distraction routines begin, when mothers point into the distance and with singsong intonation direct the child to attend to an object or occurrence that may or may not be present. As with earlier speech to the

child, distraction routines do not engage the child in verbal interaction. On the contrary, their goal is to get the child to stop crying and be quiet.

The distraction routines are the beginning, however, of extensive verbal input addressed directly to the child. Throughout an *em ia* routine, caregivers work to keep the attention of the child by speaking directly to it, by pointing, and by orienting the child's body outwards toward the object of the talk, the village. As the child grows older and less likely to be distracted for long by simple calls to look at a pig or a dog, *em ia* routines become lengthy and increasingly complex.

Caregivers interweave calls to look at pigs and dogs with threats, asides, and general comments about the child's behaviour. A large number of these communicative conventions, which are typical of caregiver speech to children between the ages of 8-12 months and 3 years, are evident in the following monologue by Sopak. Sopak's daughter Masito (2; 1) has been crying insistently for several minutes, and despite several attempts to quiet her by offering her a breast, her favourite butcher knife, and a crimson wad of betel nut that Sopak had been chewing, Masito won't stop. Her temper growing short, Sopak finally swoops the child off the floor and tries once again to silence her with a breast:

Text 1

- 1 Drink it, drink it [the breast]. Drink it and swallow. Sss. Quiet. Quiet. Quiet now. Eye, her eye is hurting. Enough, Kama [Masito's 6-year-old sister] that sago head [Karria's nickname] just left again. Enough! Baso! [Masito's 16-year old brother] Baso, Baso, Sia [an exclamation]. I haven't washed, her dirty skin
- 5 [Masito's] is gonna mess me up. Drink the breast. Tsk. Oh, Kama died. Ah! I'm gonna box your cars now! Why are you doing this? Your tears are gonna block your ears now. Drink the breast. Drink the breast. Ding bes. [baby talk] Eh, Uh, Father's child [exclamation of exasperation]. Asapi [term meaning Nonkin] I call out to their kids and they're bikhed. [Sopak means here that she
- 10 calls to her mother's sister's children to come and amuse Masito, but they treat her like someone with whom they have no kin obligations and don't listen to her.] Look at the pig!
Yo, the pig died.
Look, at it.
- 15 Look Oabriwa's gonna spear a chicken.
Look. Oabriwa's gonna spear a chicken now. Ah. [Masito stops crying.]
Priest. Priest. Priest here.
The priest is coming.
Nurse. Mariana [the nurse's name] here.
- 20 Mariana is coming.
Priest. Father Pita is coming.
Over here, he's sitting in Krum's men's house. [Masito begins to whine.]
We're gonna go see him. [Masito stops.]
The priest is going with the nurse. The nurse is coming.
- 25 Oh, a couple of these hermit crabs [in a bag on the floor] are crawling away. Yesterday they went to get hermit crabs, but there were none at all. [Masito starts to whine.]
Enough.
Uncle's baby is gonna fall down and die. She's sleeping in the house and every-
- 30 one's gone. Yapa [the baby's older sister] went somewhere.
Michael's-eh-Gorn's chicken here.

- I haven't seen Basama's. [Masito whines louder.]
 There. Gom's chicken.
 Gom's chicken. There.
 35 It has a nice color. [Masito stops whining.]

Sopak begins her talk with a series of directives ordering Masito to nurse and be quiet (lines 1-2). When this is ineffective, she continues first by interpreting Masito's behaviour aloud as a sign that her eye hurts (line 2), then by telling her to stop crying (line 2). She then announces loudly to nobody in particular that Masito's 6-year-old sister, Kama, has run off again and is nowhere around to help distract Masito (line 23).

Sopak's next move is to shout, first at Masito ("Enough!") and then into the distance after Masito's adolescent brother Baso (lines 3-4). In calling out in this way to her son, Sopak's goal is not to summon Baso, who Sopak knows is not in the village anyway. Her calls to Baso are intended to distract Masito and make her forget whatever it is she is crying about. Voice modulation of the type used here by Sopak is regularly employed by mothers to startle their crying children and get them to stop crying, if only for a moment. If a child persists in crying too loudly and too long, a caregiver may respond by attempting to shout the baby down with a prolonged, loud scream in the child's ear. Before this point is reached, however, it is common for mothers or other caregivers to bark short, sharp, loud sounds into the child's ear, sounds like the names of relatives with reputations for short-temperedness or the sound of startled fear: "Ye!" These sounds are accompanied by sudden jolts or by the caregiver hugging the child tighter to her or his body as though offering protection from some threatening presence.

Distracting children in this way is also sometimes done by directing their attention to dramatic actions, like a fight or an accident, which are often not really happening. A mother will point urgently into the empty distance, clutch her baby close to her body, and tell it excitedly: "Yo look! A fight! Ye! Kruni's hitting Sombang! Look!" In her talk to Masito, Sopak uses this ploy when she points and directs the child's attention to the pig (line 13) and to the girl who she says is about to spear the chicken (lines 15-16). None of this is in fact happening, and no pig, girl, or chicken is visible in the direction in which Sopak is pointing.

Just as frequently, startling children involves suddenly announcing the death of a close relative, as when Sopak tells Masito that her sister Karna has died (line 5), and when she later says that Masito's baby cousin is going to "fall down and die" (line 29). When the death of her sister has no effect on Masito, Sopak continues trying to scare her in to silence by looking out into the (once again, empty) distance and telling her that the priest and nurse from Marienberg are arriving in the village (line 17-24). These two figures are frequently used by caregivers to frighten children since they are both strangers and have white skin. Parents know that every village child is especially terrified of Sister Mariana, who in addition to being a white stranger also squeezes their boils and give them injections.

As Sopak's talk to Masito continues, she digresses and comments to herself that two of the hermit crabs she had planned to roast as a snack are crawling out of their burlap bag (lines 25-6). Turning her attention back to Masito when she starts to whine, Sopak attempts once more to divert her attention away from herself by startling her with the imminent death of her baby cousin (lines 29-30). In the end, Sopak initiates another *em ia* routine, this time involving a chicken that actually is visible in the grass below

the houses (lines 33-4). Once this routine is begun, Masito stops crying for several minutes.

Taiap and Tok Pisin

Throughout her talk to Masito, Sopak oscillates between the village vernacular and Tok Pisin. Just as the two languages are not separated in adult speech in the village, so are Taiap and Tok Pisin never kept strictly separate in caregiver speech to children. The way Sopak intersplices the languages in her monologue is reminiscent of the ways adult villagers code-switch in their conversations with one another. But even though the fluid manner in which adults continually switch between Taiap and Tok Pisin is carried over in talk to children, one convention stands out and differentiates adult-adult talk from that of adult-child.

Sopak begins speaking in the vernacular and continues this way throughout the first half of the monologue, switching only briefly to Tok Pisin to startle Masito with a loud shout of "Enough!" (line 3); to frighten her by telling her that her sister Kama is dead (line 5); and to comment on the tears blocking her eyes (lines 6-7). Throughout this part of the speech, Masito remains crying. She stops only after Sopak initiates an *em ia* routine, signaled by the high rise-fall intonation on her utterance "Yo, the pig died" and by a switch to Tok Pisin (line 13). Once Sopak successfully captures Masito's attention with a series of urgently enunciated directives in both languages (*rar,-tukunllukim* = Look at it; lines 14-16), Masito actually stops crying. When this happens, Sopak, in her continuing talk to Masito, switches exclusively to Tok Pisin, except when she voices observations to herself in a lowered voice about the hermit crabs (lines 25-6) and her daughter Basama's chicken (line 32). The only other vernacular utterance here directed to Masito is "Gom's chicken" (line 33), but this is immediately translated into Tok Pisin.

In choosing to use Tok Pisin in talk addressed directly to Masito, Sopak is displaying a pattern of speech common to all village parents. Although villagers speak their usual mixture of vernacular languages and Tok Pisin in the presence of their children and in their talk to children, there is an overwhelming tendency for caregivers to switch to Tok Pisin when they especially want a child to attend to their talk, and when they see that they have the child's attention, as Sopak does here (lines 17ff). This tendency is so strong that even those village women who rarely speak Tok Pisin to anyone else tend to switch to this language when they directly address their children.

One reason why caregivers switch to Tok Pisin in this manner when speaking to children is because of their beliefs about that language in relation to Taiap. Villagers hear the evaluation of their vernacular by others and know that everybody else considers Taiap to be an unusually "hard" language. This characterization of their vernacular on the basis of the language's "two-language" gender system has influenced the villagers' own perceptions of their vernacular, for even though they know all too well the sinister undertones of saying that a language is "hard," they admit to one another that Taiap is in fact "a little bit hard- (i *hat liklik*). No one ever suggests that Tok Pisin is a difficult or sinister language, and the fact that virtually everyone in Gapun and all surrounding villages has learned Tok Pisin as a second language underscores its straightforwardness and accessibility. Only ol *buskanaka* (country bumpkins) and ol *longlong man* (idiots) do not know Tok Pisin.'

This perception of the vernacular as difficult is coupled with an adult appreciation of the limited processing and productive capabilities of young children. Villagers

observe and comment on the fact that children have difficulty pronouncing certain sounds and that they often don't listen to or understand adult conversations. These limitations are explained in terms of the child's *save* not yet having "broken open," and they result in villagers sometimes modifying their speech to children, in the same way that adults strive to modify their speech and choice of language in conversation with others so as to accommodate them verbally. Sopak and a few older villagers claim that there used to be a special baby-talk register in the vernacular, called *biengima mer* (infants' language). These villagers state that this register was extensive and widely used whenever caregivers, particularly women, spoke to infants and young children Today it is difficult to assess how accurate these claims are because although they say that the register was large, the total number of items belonging to the register that anyone could recall was 11, consisting of 9 nouns and 2 verb phrases (Table 1).

Table 1: Baby-talk words in Taiap

Adult form	Baby-talk form	Meaning
	<i>mambrag mamak</i>	spirit
	<i>kakamatik kakam</i>	millipede
	<i>mdrip ywauu tambaranmin mimi</i>	breast
	<i>yerwir Pipi</i>	excrement
	<i>n,g k sm</i>	urine
	<i>birsip sisi</i>	pig meat
	<i>gamar mar</i>	fish
	<i>yamige amei</i>	wildfowl egg
	<i>min atukun mimi maka</i>	drink the breast
	<i>atitygarana pupard?lgarana</i>	[you] better not fall

The items on this list are all common words that mothers, especially, would use when talking to their children. The first three objects are frequently named to frighten small children, and the remaining nouns name the child's bodily functions and common foods that children eat. The two verb phrases on the list similarly have obvious relevance for small children, who are continually being silenced by breasts, and who live in perpetual danger of suddenly falling off the side of a house or through a hole in the floor.

Since Tok Pisin entered the village, however, this vernacular babytalk register has been virtually abandoned. On very rare occasions, a mother might use the word *mamak* (spirit) to frighten a child, after she has repeatedly tried with the adult form (*mambrag*), and on one occasion in 1986, a 35-year-old man who had been trying for several minutes to coax his 2 ½ -year-old son to swallow a malaria tablet was heard to tell the boy in exasperation: "*Marasin maka!*" (Drink the medicine!). Beyond this, however, none of the vernacular baby-talk forms are used anymore by most villagers. Sopak, the woman who supplied the list in **Table 1** and the only villager who actually does, although very rarely, use some of the items in that list (e.g., in line 7 of her

monologue to Masito; *Text 1*), claims that the baby-talk register has only just been abandoned by the current generation of village mothers, that is, those women under 45 years of age. According to Sopak and others, her mother and the women in that generation knew the entire register and used it when talking to children. These women were also the final generation of village women who would not have spoken Tok Pisin fluently. If what Sopak and others say is correct, then it seems that the vernacular baby-talk register was the first entire register in the language to disappear as a result of the villagers' incorporation of Tok Pisin into their verbal repertoires.

No real baby-talk register exists in the villagers' Tok Pisin, perhaps because the language itself has taken on connotations of a kind of "babycode," and switches to that language serve the same accommodating function as switches to the vernacular baby-talk register did in the past. Certain individuals, however, do sometimes alter their speech even in Tok Pisin for short periods when they engage in verbal play with a child or when they imitate her or him. These alterations are changes in which consonant letters are left out (*[blong]* > *[boy]* [= possessive lexeme], *[gutpla]* > *[gupa]* [= good]); medial liquids are deleted (*[tarangu]* > *[tangu]* [= poor thing], *[bagarap]* > *[bagap]* [= ruin, destroy]); sibilants are articulated as plosives (*[suruk]* > *[turuk]* = move over); and reduplicated adult forms are reduced by deleting the final consonant of the first syllable, thereby also altering the stress (*waswas* > *wawas* wash], *pekpek* > *pepek* defecate/excrement], *saksak* > *sasak* [= sago]).

There is a great deal of variation among villagers as to whether or not they alter their speech in this way when speaking to children. Some women such as Paso almost never use any of these simplified Tok Pisin forms, doing so only to explicitly imitate a child's pronunciation.¹ Others, like Sopak and her older children, use these forms occasionally, especially if their child interlocutor produces an incomplete or reduced form, such as *[bong]* (for *[blong]* = possessive lexeme). Men do not generally use these forms at all, and even women like Sopak who do use them do so only sporadically and inconsistently. Beyond these phonological modifications, there are no systematic syntactic or morphological simplifications or alterations specifically for children in either Taiap or Tok Pisin, although the word *long* in Tok Pisin (as in *Kama i go long Wongan* [Kama went to Wongan]) is left out more frequently in adult speech to children than in adult speech to other adults.

Sibling caregivers

That adults tend to switch to Tok Pisin when speaking directly to young children means that from an early age, the linguistic input that these children receive is unbalanced. Children hear both Taiap and Tok Pisin spoken around them constantly, and the vernacular is often used when speaking to them, as is clear from Sopak's talk to Masito. But the great bulk of the talk that gets addressed directly to children and to which the children are expected to attend is in Tok Pisin.

This input in Tok Pisin is augmented by the kind of talk that a child hears from his or her older siblings and their friends. These older children are a major source of linguistic input for a child, because caregiving responsibilities in the village are not confined to mothers, but are distributed among all female relatives in the household.

Villagers consider that a mother should never stray far enough from her nursing baby that she cannot be on hand to feed the child should it begin crying incessantly - that Jari did this was one of the reasons behind Sake's kros. But beyond this responsibility, mothers are free to delegate caregiving tasks to others. Since the advent of school,

which removes girls between the ages of 8 and 14 from the village for much of the time, these tasks have come to fall heavily on a woman's preschool daughters. From the moment a woman gives birth in the jungle, all her daughters over 4 years of age will provide her with continual assistance in the care of a new baby. While a woman remains in the maternity house with her baby, her daughters run errands for her, bring her bits of news, and look after the baby whenever she leaves to wash or go to the toilet. When the mother leaves the maternity house and returns to the house in which she normally resides, these daughters are expected to be constantly on hand to hold the baby when a mother is preparing meals, to amuse it while the mother is leaching sago pith in the forest, or to simply take it off the mother's hands and away when she is tired or in a bad mood.

Sharing caregiving responsibilities in this way results in babies and young children spending as much time (and in some cases more time) in the company of their preschool sisters and their playmates as they do with their mothers. And on the backs and in the laps of these girls, infants and young children are the objects of extensive physical and verbal play. Whereas adult-child interactions with children under 2 tend to be brief, formulaic, and designed to distract and quiet, preschool girls can amuse themselves and their infant charges for up to twenty minutes at a time with songs and word play. In the following example, Bonika (6 years) is sitting alone with her little sister, Armambwira (7 months), on the porch of their house.

Text 2

Bonika: [bouncing Armambwira up and down on her lap]

bus mangi bus mangi
bus mangi
bus bus mush mush bush
yu bus mangi bus mangi yu
bus mangi mush mush
bus mangi mush mush

[Seeing their 7-year-old sister, Yapa, emerging from the forest, Bonika slaps Armambwira lightly on the face and points to Yapa]

Yapa ia Yapa ia
em ia em ia em ia
Yapa tata ia
lukim tata
Yapa apa apa apa
em ia Yapa Bapa ba pa pa pa pa

[Bonika suddenly, puts Armambwira belly-down on the floor and spansks her bottom to the rhythm of:]

Yu sindaun
sindaun
sindaun
sindaun

[Bonika lifts Armambwira up and lays her across her lap.]

Nau bai yu slip.
Sip sip bebi.
Bebi! Sip sip sip.
Bebi! Bobi bobi

bebu bebu
wo wo wo wow o wo ...

This interaction lasted for fifteen minutes and engaged Armambwira both physically and verbally in ways that do not occur between adults and children. Although Armambwira remained silent for most of this interaction, the babbling sounds of babies and young children are frequently incorporated into such play, providing a framework for the older children's rhymes and songs. This type of word play often consists for the most part of isolated syllables and nonsense words. But whenever language does occur, that language is always Tok Pisin. Like adults, older siblings talk to their young charges in Tok Pisin. But unlike adults and those children who have cared for infants in the past, the use of Tok Pisin by the present generation of child caregivers is no longer based on choice. The current generation of children who assist their mothers in the care of new babies does not actively command Taiap. This ensures that all those babies now growing up in the village hear only Tok Pisin spoken to them by their sibling caregivers in all verbal interactions.

Interpreting children's speech

In addition to the adult tendency to switch to Tok Pisin when directly addressing young children, and the amount and kind of input in Tok Pisin that children receive from their preschool sisters, there is a further factor in village communicational patterns that weights the language acquisition process in favour of Tok Pisin. This is the way in which parents interpret infant vocalizations.

The only vocalizations by infants that anyone ever interprets as utterances in the vernacular are the first three words a child is considered to utter: *eki* (I'm getting out of here), *mnda* (I'm sick of this), and *aiata* (Stop it), plus the directive *gaw* (*Wait*), which some villagers listed among a child's first words. Following these initial vocalizations, which are recognized only a few months after birth and underscore the aggressive nature of babies, there is a long period in which caregivers do not attribute linguistic meaning to a child's sounds; they are either ignored or dismissed as incomprehensible "rubbish talk" (*rabis tok*), "nothing calls" (*gar sinde*), or -bird talk (*tok bilong olpisinItamma nam*).

Only at about 18 months do some mothers begin once again to interpret their child's vocalizations as words. But now, without exception, these words are no longer interpreted as Taiap. From this point, all a child's "talk" is considered to be in Tok Pisin. When Gerak heard Mangia (1 year 8 months) utter to herself in private speech [*ta'tail*, for example, she turned to her daughter Saror and said, "That's it. She said to you: "Older sibling is leaving (*Tata i go*)." Using the same interpretive strategy, Sopak, when she saw Kama giving Masito (1 year 6 months) a betel nut and heard Masito murmur "*mama ka* (inaudible babble)," announced, "She's talking about betel nut: "Kama has chewed betel nut" (*Kama i kaikai buai pinis*). This is the same point in the child's development at which caregivers start to remark that the child's *save* is beginning to "break open." This eruption of *save* thus coincides with and is concretely manifested in the attribution of Tok Pisin in the child's speech.

At the same time that children are considered to be showing *save* through their vocalizations in Tok Pisin, they have also begun to walk. This physical independence allows caregivers to test the child's emerging *save* and put it to use; and at this stage, the nature of caregiver talk to children changes. Although distraction sequences remain common when the child starts to cry, caregivers now begin increasingly to use

directives in their talk to children. These directives function to involve children in social life. Rather than just tell a child, "Sleep, sleep" or "Drink the breast," caregivers now begin to command toddlers to give betel nut to their visiting mother's brother, to pass an ember to their grandmother so that she can dry her tobacco leaf, to fetch a knife from across the room from an older sibling. By successfully carrying out a command to fetch betel nut, tobacco leaves, embers, knives, or tongs, children demonstrate their *save* at the same time that they, for the first time, become active participants in the social interactions occurring around them.

The increased amount of talk to children at this stage in their development is in effect an increased amount of input in Tok Pisin. Because they are believed to be producing it, parents now assume that children understand Tok Pisin, but not Taiap. One evening, Sopak was sitting near her hearth with Masito (1 year 6 months). She had made dinner and had just given a plate of sago to her husband Mone, who was sitting a few yards away. Not hungry herself, Sopak sat swishing around water in an empty sago pot.

Text 3

Sopak:	<i>Sia. q a ruru sene ia kirawmbri wakare. end ekare, endekare.</i> [turns to Mas] <i>Mm. Masito.</i> <i>Kisim spun i go givim papa.</i> [hands Mas a spoon] <i>Spun.</i> [points spoon at Mone] <i>Papa.</i> <i>Kirap nau.</i> [tries to lift Mas to her feet] <i>Ap. Kirap. kirap.</i>	S: <i>Sia</i> [exclamation]. These two poor kids 1 just don't know. <i>Hungry, hungry.</i> [turns to Mas] Mm. Masito. Take the spoon and go give it to Papa. [hands Mas a spoon] Spoon. [points spoon at Monel Papa. Get up now. [tries to lift Mas to her feet] Up. Get up. Get up.
Mone:	<i>Da kukuwe</i>	M: <u>Bring it now.</u>
Sopak:	[lifting Mas to her feet] <i>Aop.</i>	S: [lifting Mas to her feet] Uup.
[Masito walks over to Mone and hands him the spoon.]		
Mone:	[taking spoon] <i>Ta.</i>	M:[taking spoon] Thanks.
[Masito goes back and stands near Sopak.]		
Mone:	[to Masito, who doesn't respond] <i>Ta kukuwe</i>	M: [to Masito, who doesn't respond] <u>Bring the knife.</u>
Sopak:	[looking at Masito] <i>Ta.</i> [impatiently:] <i>Naip. Naip.</i>	S: [looking at Masitol Knife. [impatiently:] Knife. Knife.
Mone:	[points at the floor near Masito's feet] <i>Em ia.</i>	M: [points at the floor near Masito's feet] There it is.
Sopak:	<i>Kisim ta.</i>	S: Get the knife.
Mone:	[points] <i>Klostu long lek bilong yu. Em i stap.</i>	M: [points] Near your foot. There it is.
[Masito looks down at the knife, then at Mone.]		
	<i>Em. Kisim i kam. Aygide tarak kukuwe</i>	Yeah. Bring it. <u>Bring that.</u>
Sopak	[picks up knife, points at Mone with it] <i>Uh. Papanana.</i> [pushes knife toward Mas] <i>Ta, ta. Em ia naip ia. Angode, ta angode. Kisim.</i>	S:[picks up knife, points at Mone Uh. For Papa. [pushes knife toward Mas] Knife, knife. Here, knife here. Here, knife here. Take it.
[Masito takes the knife from Sopak, walks over to Mone and gives it to him.]		

Here Sopak and Mone characteristically use both languages in the course of this short interaction, switching between them in their talk to Masito in the same way that they switch between languages in their talk to one another and to other adult villagers. The ways in which the languages are used, however, indicate that both parents consider that Masito, at 18 months, already commands Tok Pisin but does not know much Taiap. With the exception of Mone's initial formulaic command "*Da kukuwe*" ("Bring it now"; line 11), the first part of this interaction, concerning the spoon, is conducted by Sopak entirely in Tok Pisin, and she displays once again the village pattern of switching to Tok Pisin when addressing a child directly (lines 4-5). In the second half of this interaction, the Taiap word *ta* (knife) is treated as a new word. Masito's failure to respond to Mone's request for the knife is treated by Sopak as a failure to comprehend what is being asked for, and she defines *ta* for Masito by giving its Tok Pisin equivalent in a curt, impatient tone that implies that Masito should know that *ta* is another word for the already familiar *naip* (lines 15-16). The information that Masito has to have about the knife in order to carry out her father's request, in this case its location, is also in Tok Pisin.

At the time this interaction took place, Masito was using language only very rarely. For the most part, she communicated with Sopak and other members of her family by pointing, grabbing, crying, and whining. But despite her lack of productive competence, both of Masito's parents had already decided that she commanded Tok Pisin, but not the vernacular. This was continually made clear in interactions like the one above.

The assumptions that Masito's parents had about her language capabilities at around age 2 are shared by the parents of other young children, and even though the great majority of village toddlers resemble Masito in that they do not yet speak, they are believed by caregivers already to have a good comprehensive knowledge of Tok Pisin. This belief is reinforced each time a child correctly carries out an order in Tok Pisin. And because adults continue to switch to Tok Pisin whenever they speak directly to their children, the bulk of the directives to children are in that language.

Once children begin responding to and carrying out directives, parents begin to become aware that children tend to react much more frequently and readily to speech in Tok Pisin than they do to directives in Taiap. This results not only in even more Tok Pisin being used in speech to children, but also in Taiap utterances being increasingly systematically translated into Tok Pisin whenever the speaker wants to elicit a response from the child. This translating will be done by either the speaker her or himself (Text 6.7); by one of the child's older siblings (Text 6.8); or, especially in the several village households in which mothers speak a great deal of Taiap, by the child's father, whenever he is present (Text 6.9):

The most common switch point to Tok Pisin in speech to children of this age is when the child either doesn't respond as in (Texts 6.7-6.10 above) or asks "Ah?".

That caregivers are so willing to translate their vernacular utterances into Tok Pisin means that children come to understand that whatever is said to them in Taiap will be repeated in Tok Pisin, sooner or later. They learn that they can influence and even determine the surface forms of caregiver utterances by not responding, by whining (as Masito does when Sopak speaks to her in Taiap toward the end of her monologue in *Text 1*, and as David does in order to get Paso to cut his string), or by responding with "Ah?"

The types of communication patterns described above combine continually in caregiver-child interactions in Gapun, and work together to result in a language rich in Tok Pisin but relatively poor in Taiap.

This mass of input in Tok Pisin that children receive during their early years occurs against the background of the villagers' understandings of *hed* and the nature of children. Gapuners' concern about accommodating and not infringing on the personal autonomy of others is extended to their interactions with children, and it manifests itself in a tendency to refrain from making a child do anything against her or his will, including talk. Adults and older siblings speak to young children in the village, but they neither encourage or expect the children to talk back. At no point in her long monologue with Masito (*Text 1*), for example, does Sopak try to elicit any type of verbal reaction from the child.

Caregivers sometimes tell young children to call out the name of a relative, and they may ask "What?" (*WanemlAmbin*) if the child vocalizes especially loudly. But if the child doesn't call out the relative's name or respond to the "What?" after two or three prompts, then the matter will invariably be dropped. By the age of about 2, children have been observed to have said a few words, and, as adults comment that their *save* has begun to "break open," they are increasingly prompted to respond to directives in ways similar to those in which Masito was urged to give the spoon and the knife to her father (*Text 3*). Children of this age are not, however, expected to be actively using language to communicate. Until they are 6 or 7, and sometimes even older, parents asking children questions or giving them directives accept either no verbal response at all or extremely minimal responses such as the grunts and moans that David uses to get Paso to cut his string (Text 6.10). Children are not expected to really begin talking until they are 5 or 6 years old." A child who is especially verbal at a young age will be encouraged by adults and older children, who will engage the child in short exchanges and try to get her or him to answer information questions. A talkative child is somewhat unexpected, however, and whereas no one would remark on a 4-year-old who said very little and who still relied heavily on whines and groans to communicate with his mother, villagers notice and occasionally express surprise at and annoyance with a loquacious child. Bapong was a very verbal 4-year-old who frequently talked and sang to himself, sometimes loudly, in adult company. More than once on these occasions he was suddenly shushed in half serious tones: "*Sia! Liklik man na maus tasol i bikpela olgeta!*" (*Sia! Little man, the only thing big on you is your mouth!*)

The villagers' dispreference for prompting children to speak is a characteristic feature of every type of caregiver-child interaction. Adults do not play games with their children very often or for very long, for example, but when they do engage a child in play, this rarely includes verbal interaction. For a few months after Ermina's 10-month-old daughter, Bogua, died, for instance, Sopak occasionally initiated a brief game with Masito by asking her, "Masi, how did Bogua look dead?" The expected response to this was not verbal, but for Masito to close her eyes and pucker her face, to the general amusement of Sopak and anybody else who happened to see it.

In another typical instance, Gerak picked up a deck of cards she found lying on the floor and called to her 6-year-old daughter, Saror, "Come let's play." Saror sat opposite her mother, and Gerak began dealing the cards. The game rules were that, whatever card the other person puts down, one had to put down the same suit, or the same number, in which case the suit to play changed to that of the card just put down.

If on had neither the same suit or number as the card just played, then on had to pick a new card from the deck. None of this was explained to Saror, and the two played by Gerak's looking at Saror's hand and choosing an appropriate card, then telling her, "Put that one," or "Pick." Saror quickly grew impatient, and when it was her turn, she began to immediately throw down a card. Unless it happened to be right, which it usually wasn't, Gerak threw the card back at her, saying, "Not that one" (*i no em*) or "You're stupid, you're a pig" (*Yu longlong, yu pik*) and she picked an appropriate card from Saror's hand. Three-fourth of the way through this game, Gerak suddenly decided to change the rules, so that when Saror did in fact put down a correct number, there by changing the suit, Gerak flung it back at her and played her own cards which matched the previous suit. She said nothing about this, and Saror who was making little effort to understand the game, didn't care. But no verbal interactions occurred during this game, and Gerak continued to simply pick from Saror's cards when it was the girl's turn to play.

Partly because they are not encouraged or expected to talk, and partly because the bulk of linguistic input addressed directly to them is in Tok Pisin, by the time village children do begin to use language in their interactions at about 1 year 6 months and 2 years 3 months, the language they produce is Tok Pisin.

Children begin speaking by picking up and repeating parts of words and phrases they hear in conversations around them. This repeating is not normally noticed or commented upon by caregivers.

Children do not appear to spontaneously repeat or produce the vernacular in this way. When adult conversations or narratives like this occur primarily in Taiap or some other vernacular language, children most often simply remain silent. If they do repeat to themselves during such talk, they do so with sounds that do not have their source in the adult talk.

The most common linguistic situation for village children to find themselves in, however, is one in which both the vernacular and Tok Pisin are used in the course of the same interaction. In these cases, even those young children who have hardly begun to talk show themselves to be adept at focusing on those elements in the conversation that are either Tok Pisin or are Taiap nominals habitually used in Tok Pisin speech (such as the vernacular words for betel nut, sago, coconut, chicken, tobacco, and other common objects). Always, it is these elements, to the exclusion of all others, that the children repeat and incorporate into their own private monologues.

Short-lived attempts like this to get children to speak the vernacular have no effect other than underscoring the fact that parents regard their children as Tok Pisin speakers. Although parents at this point begin explicitly blaming their children for being *bikhed* and refusing to speak Taiap, the association between children and Tok Pisin is, in fact, so strong that adults will address children in that language even if a child should actually happen to answer in Taiap.

This association between children and Tok Pisin feeds back on itself so that it influences how parents talk to even very small children. Also, as it now becomes clear to caregivers that their children only speak Tok Pisin, the vernacular begins to assume the character of a secret code that caregivers use to talk about the children in their presence. On one occasion, for example, Wandi wanted to go work in her coffee garden without having to take along her 3-year-old daughter, Ampamna. She gave Ampamna a strip of newspaper and told her to go deliver it to Sopak to smoke. While

the girl was away doing this, Wandi speedily picked up her basket and slipped out of the house. She was not quite quick enough, however, because as Ampamna skipped back to her house, she caught sight of Wandi disappearing down the path leading to her coffee garden. The little girl burst into tears and tried to run after her mother. She was prevented from doing this by her adolescent sister, Yengia, who, following Wandi's instructions, carried her into the house and blocked her way so she couldn't leave again. A battle between these two sisters then raged for well over half an hour, with Ampamna screaming and crying and throwing herself on the floor and Yengia telling her that she would be disembowelled by *sangguma* witches the minute she left the house. All of Yengia's talk to the little girl was in Tok Pisin. At one point though, a young man walked past Wandi's house and, hearing Amparnria's tantrum, asked Yengia in Tok Pisin, "What is she crying about?" (*Em krai long wanem?*) Yengia, lowering her voice, answered in Taiap: "She wants to go with her mother" (*Jkinana mayareki*). Yengia's code-switch in this instance is particularly illustrative of the status that Taiap comes to assume as a secret code in dealings with young children, because the man who asked about her sister's crying was a man who had married into Gapun from the village of Pankin. Although this man had acquired a good understanding of Taiap, he did not speak it and was normally not addressed in it.

The vernacular also increasingly comes to be associated with reprimand and scolding. Between the ages of about 1 year 6 months and 2 years 4 months, children in the village come to learn that they can ignore their parents' warnings and threats until the parent begins to purposely speak to them in the vernacular. Once, 4-year-old Bapong and his playmate were trying to climb up a betel nut tree near the outskirts of the village. Bapong's father, Marame, happened to see the children from his veranda, and he called out to them in Tok Pisin, "Don't climb up [the tree] for betel nut" (*i no ken go antap long buai*). Marame repeated this prohibitive at intervals of several minutes, but the two boys ignored him completely and continued trying to wrap their arms around the base of the tree and scoot themselves up. After about a quarter of an hour, when Marame noticed that the boys were still trying to climb the tree and had actually progressed about a meter off the ground, he shouted, this time in Taiap, "Are you listening to my talk?!" (*Yu nam tarkwankutke Uayi namakut?!*) Immediately, Bapong and his playmate slid down from the tree and padded away slowly, looking abashed.

By the time children have reached Bapong's age, they have begun to participate actively in the gender-based peer groups that form in the village. Between the ages of 3 and 5, boys begin to spend less and less time in the company of their mothers and older sisters and more time with their older preschool brothers or cousins, whose play takes the boys out into the jungle for much of the day. Girls of this age also form play groups, but burdened by the toddlers that have been left in their care by mothers who are off leaching sago pith or hunting with their husbands, these girls usually remain closer to the village. In these peer groups, children of both sexes practice and develop their language skills as they play, explore their environment, recount stories, and argue with one another. But because these children are now speaking Tok Pisin, and because their older preschool siblings and friends are not active bilinguals, the language skills that are developed during this period continue to be language skills in Tok Pisin.

Selections from: Language shift and cultural reproduction: socialisation, self and syncretism in a Papua New Guinean village. Don Kulick (1992)

 **Reading 1 Exercises:**

1. *What does Kulick say is the villagers' view of what language is, and what it is for?*
 2. *One of the things Kulick is interested in, is the way some caregivers switch between tok ples and tok pisin when talking to children. What are the reasons Kulick gives for this and what are some of the outcomes of this practice?*
 3. *As with other PNG communities, caring for children is a shared responsibility. How do sibling caregivers (sisters or brothers) influence a child's language development?*
 4. *What do you think language is for?*
 5. *How would you describe the way Gapun children learn language?*
 6. *What is your attitude to language switching (mixing)?*
 7. *What community genres can you recognise in this reading?*
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 **Reading 2**

An American Story; A Papua New Guinean Story: Extracts and adaptations from: 'Language Acquisition and Socialisation', Ochs, E & Schieffelin, B in 'Culture Theory: Essays on Mind, Self & Emotion', Shweder, R & Levine, R (eds) (1984).

Some of the main ideas from **Reading 2** are: The difference ways children and caregivers interact in different cultural groups (2-way and 3-way interactions, use of simplified talk); the way caregivers 'show language' to children and correct their words and sounds; the different ways infants are held; the differences between a child-centred approach to raising children (American/Australian) and a situation-centred approach (Kaluli/Samoan).

Language acquisition and socialisation: *an American white middle-class story*

Soon after an infant is born, many mothers hold their infants in such a way that they are face-to-face and gaze at them. Mothers have been observed to address their infants, vocalize to them, ask questions, and greet them. In other words, from birth on, the infant is treated as a social being and as an addressee (person being spoken to) in social interaction. The infant's vocalizations and physical movements and states are often interpreted as meaningful and are responded to verbally by the mother or other caregiver. In this way, conversations are established and sustained along a dyadic (two-way), turn-taking model. Throughout this period and the following language-acquiring years, caregivers treat very young children as communicative partners. One

very important procedure in facilitating these social exchanges is the mother's (or other caregiver's) taking the perspective of the child (seeing the world through the eyes of the child). This perspective is evidenced in her own speech through the many simplifying and affective features of the baby-talk register (the way a mother changes the sound of her voice and her words when talking to her baby) and through the various strategies employed to identify what the young child may be expressing.

Such perspective taking is part of a much wider set of accommodations (changes in behaviour) by adults to young children. These accommodations are manifested in several domains. For example, there are widespread material accommodations to infancy and childhood in the form of cultural artefacts designed for this stage of life, for example, baby clothes, baby food, miniaturization of furniture (eg small tables and chairs for children, small bed etc), and toys. Special behavioural accommodations are coordinated with the infant's perceived needs and capacities, for example, putting the baby in a quiet place to ensure proper sleep; "baby-proofing" a house as a child becomes increasingly mobile and is not aware of, or able to control, the consequences of his or her own behaviour, (eg putting locks on cupboards that small children can reach, putting up barriers to stop small children touching valuable things, putting things up high out of reach of small children, making sure doors close so that children can't run outside etc), In general, the pattern appears to be one of prevention and intervention, in which situations are adapted or modified to the child rather than the reverse. Further, the child is a focus of attention, in that the child's actions and verbalizations (voice sounds that a child makes) are often the starting point of social interaction with more mature persons (parents, older brothers, sisters, relatives and family friends).

Example 1

Ann (3 months)	Mother
(smiles)	Oh what a nice little smile! Yes isn't that nice? There. There's a nice little smile.
(burps)	What a nice wind as well! Yes, that's better, isn't it? Yes
(vocalises)	Yes! There's a nice noise

Although such developmental achievements as crawling, walking, and first words are awaited by caregivers, the accommodations (caregiver changes in behaviour and lifestyle to suit the baby) have the effect of keeping the child dependent on, and separate from, the adult community for a considerable period of time. The child, protected from those experiences considered harmful (e.g., playing with knives, climbing stairs), is thus denied knowledge, and his or her competence in such contexts (situations) is delayed.

The accommodations (modified behaviours) of white middle-class caregivers (not rich, not poor, somewhere in between) to young children can be examined for other values and tendencies. Particularly among the American middle class, these accommodations reflect a discomfort with the competence differential (the difference between what and adult can do and what a child can do) between adult and child. The competence gap is reduced by two strategies. One is for the adult to simplify her/his speech to match more closely what the adult considers to be the verbal competence (language ability) of the young child. Let us call this strategy the self-lowering strategy (the caregiver speaks in a simple way bringing themselves down to the level of the child). A second strategy is for the caregiver to richly interpret what the young child is expressing. Here the adult acts as if the child were more competent than his behaviour would indicate. Let us call this strategy the child-raising strategy (the caregiver acts as if the child is communicating as an adult).

Example 2

Mother	Allison (16 months)
What's mommy have (holding cookies) (Allison reaching for cookie)	cookie
Cookie! OK. Here's a cookie for you (Allison takes cookie reaching for others in bag)	more
There's more in here. We'll have it in a little while. (Allison picking up bag of cookies)	bag

Other adult behaviours conform to this strategy, such as when an adult cooperates in a task with a child but treats that task as an accomplishment of the child (After making something together the caregiver says: "Look what you have done!").

For example, in eliciting a story from a child, a caregiver often cooperates with the child in the telling of the story. This cooperation typically takes the form of posing questions to the child, such as "Where did you go?" "What did you see?" and so on, to which the adult knows the answer. The child is seen as telling the story even though she or he is simply supplying the information the adult has selected and organized. Bruner's (1978) description of scaffolding, in which a caregiver constructs a tower or other play object, allowing the young child to place the last block, is also a good example of this behaviour. Here the tower may be seen by the caregiver and others as the child's own work. Similarly, in later life, caregivers playing games with their children let them win, acting as if the child can match or more than match the competence (ability) of the adult.

A final aspect of this story concerns the willingness of many caregivers to interpret unintelligible (not understandable) or partially intelligible utterances of young children, for example, the caregiver offers a paraphrase (summary) or expansion (extra words), using a question intonation. This behaviour of caregivers has continuity (connection) with their earlier attributions of intentionality (caregivers believing that young child mean various things when they make sounds). For both the pre-linguistic

and language-using child, the caregiver provides a verbal interpretation (the caregiver will interpret a child's earlier sounds and words as meaning something). This interpretation or paraphrase is potentially available to (spoken to) the young child to affirm, disconfirm, or, modify (the caregiver speaks to the child expecting the child to respond by agreeing, disagreeing or adding something different, even though the child is too young to do so).

Through exposure to, and participation in these exchanges, the young child is socialized into several cultural patterns. The first of these (is where the caregiver) recognizes and defines an utterance or vocalization that may not be immediately understood. Second, the child is presented with the procedures for dealing with ambiguity (uncertainty or unclear meaning). Through the successive offerings of possible interpretations, the child learns that more than one understanding of a given utterance or vocalization may be possible. The child is also learning who can make these interpretations and the extent to which they may be open to modification (change). Finally, the child is learning how to settle upon a possible interpretation and how to show disagreement or agreement. This entire process socializes the child into culturally specific modes of organizing knowledge, thought, and language.

Reading 2 Exercise

1. *Compare the role of the caregiver in Reading Two with PNG caregivers you have observed. What is interesting about the way children are brought up in this society? Can you see some parallels in the way children are taught in western schools?*
 2. *What community genres can you see being developed in this reading?*
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Reading 3

Language acquisition and socialisation: *the Kaluli - a Papua New Guinea story*

The Kaluli people live in the tropical rain forest on the Great Papuan Plateau in the southern highlands of Papua New Guinea. They maintain large gardens and hunt and fish. Traditionally, the sixty to ninety individuals that comprise a village lived in one large longhouse without internal walls. Currently, although the longhouse is maintained, many families live in smaller dwellings that provide accommodations for two or more extended families. It is not unusual for at least a dozen individuals of different ages to be living together in one house consisting essentially of one semi partitioned room.

Men and women use extensive networks of obligation and reciprocity (give and take) in the organization of work and sociable interaction. Everyday life is overtly (clearly)

focused around verbal interaction. Kaluli think of, and use, talk as a means of control, manipulation, expression, assertion, and appeal. Talk gets you what you want, need, or feel you are owed. Talk is a primary indicator of social competence and a primary means of socializing. Learning how to talk and become independent is a major goal of socialization (the process of becoming a member of a social group).

For the purpose of comparison and for understanding something of the cultural reasons for the ways in which Kaluli act and speak to their children, it is important first to describe selected aspects of a Kaluli story that I have constructed from various ethnographic data. Kaluli describe their babies as helpless, and having no understanding. They take care of them, they say, because they feel sorry for them. Mothers, the primary caregivers, are attentive to their infants and physically responsive to them. Whenever an infant cries, it is offered the breast. However, while nursing her infant, a mother may also be involved in other activities, such as food preparation, or she may be engaged in conversation with individuals in the household. Mothers never leave their infants alone and only rarely with other caregivers. When not holding their infants, mothers carry them in netted bags suspended from their heads. When the mother is gardening, gathering wood, or just sitting with others, the baby sleeps in the netted bag next to the mother's body.

Kaluli mothers, given their belief that infants "have no understanding," never treat their infants as partners (speaker/addressee) in dyadic (two-way) communicative interactions. Although they greet their infants by name and use expressive vocalizations, they rarely address other utterances to them. Furthermore, a mother and infant do not gaze into each other's eyes, an interactional pattern that is consistent with adult patterns of not gazing when vocalizing in interaction with one another. Rather than facing their babies and speaking to them, Kaluli mothers tend to face their babies outward so that they can see, and be seen by, other members of the social group. Older children greet and address the infant, and the mother responds in a high-pitched nasalized voice "for" the baby while moving the baby up and down. Triadic (three-way) exchanges such as that in Example 3 are typical.

Example 3

Mother is holding her infant son Bage (3 mo). Abi (35 mo) is holding a stick on his shoulder in a manner similar to that in which one would carry a heavy patrol box (the box would be hung on a pole placed across the shoulders of the two men).

Mother	Abi
(A to baby)	Bage/ do you see my box here?/ Bage/ ni bokisi we badaya'/?/ Do you see it/ Olibadaya?/
(High nasal voice talking as if she is the baby, moving the baby who is facing Abi): My Brother, I'll take half, my brother. nao, hebe) ni dieni, nao. (holding stick out)	

	Mother give him half/ ne hebe eme dimina/ mother, my brother here/here take half/ nao we/we hebe dima/
(In a high nasal voice as baby): My brother, what half do 1 take? nao, hebe dieni heh? What about it? My brother, put it on the shoulder! Wangaya? nao, kelene wela diefoma! (to Abi in her usual voice): Put it on the shoulder. kelene wela diefendo. (Abi rests stick on baby's shoulder) There, carefully put it on. ko dinafa diefoma. (stick accidentally pokes baby) Feel sorry, stop. Heye, kadefoma.	

When a mother takes the speaking role of an infant she uses language that is well formed and appropriate for an older child. Only the high-pitch mark it as “the infant's.” When speaking as the infant to older children, mothers speak assertively (forcefully), that is, they never whine or beg on behalf of the infant. Thus, in taking this role the mother does for the infant what the infant cannot do for itself, that is, appear to act in a controlled and competent manner, using language. These kinds of interactions continue until a baby is between 4 and 6 months of age.

Several points are important here. First, these triadic (three-way) exchanges are carried out primarily for the benefit of the older child and help create a relationship between the two children. Second, the mother's utterances in these exchanges are not based on, nor do they originate with, anything that the infant has initiated (started) - either vocally or gesturally (by action). Recall the Kaluli claim that infants have no understanding. How could someone with “no understanding” initiate appropriate interactional sequences (start a conversation)?

However, there is an even more important and enduring cultural construct (concept) that helps make sense out of the mother's behaviours in this situation and in many others as well. Kaluli say that “one cannot know what another thinks or feel”. Although Kaluli obviously interpret and assess one another's available behaviours and internal states (feelings), these interpretations are not culturally acceptable as topics of talk. Individuals often talk about their own feelings (I'm afraid, I'm happy, etc.). However, there is a cultural dispreference (prefer not to do something) for talking about or making claims about what another might think, what another might feel, or what another is about to do, especially if there is no external evidence. As we shall see, these culturally constructed behaviours have several important consequences for the ways in which Kaluli caregivers verbally interact with their children and are related to other patterns of language use.

As infants become older (6-12 months), they are usually held in the arms or carried on the shoulders of the mother or an older sibling (brother or sister). They are present in all ongoing household activities, as well as subsistence activities that take place

outside the village in the bush. During this period, babies are addressed by adults to a limited extent. They are greeted by a variety of names (proper names, kin terms, affective and relationship terms) and receive a limited set of both negative and positive imperatives (commands). In addition, when they do something they are told not to do, such as reach for something that is not theirs to take, they will often receive such questions such as “Who are you?!” , meaning “You are not someone to do that” or “Is it yours?!”, meaning “It is not yours”, to control their actions by shaming them. It should be stressed that the language addressed to the pre-verbal child consists largely of “one-liners” that call for no verbal (spoken) response but for either an action or the end of an action. Other than these utterances, very little talk is directed to the young child by the adult caregiver.

This pattern of adults treating infants as non-communicative partners continues even when babies begin babbling. Although Kaluli recognize babbling, they call it non-communicative and do not relate it to the speech that eventually emerges. Adults and older children occasionally repeat vocalizations back to the young child (age 12-16 months), reshaping them into the names of persons in the household or into kin terms, but they do not say that the baby is saying the name nor do they wait for, or expect, the child to repeat those vocalizations in an altered form. In addition, vocalizations are not generally treated as communicative and given verbal expression except in the following situation. When an infant cries in protest of the assaults of an older child, mothers say "I'm unwilling", referring to the infant's cries. These are the only circumstances in which mothers treat vocalizations as communicative and provide verbal expression for them. In no other circumstances did the adults in the four families in the study provide a verbally expressed interpretation of a vocalization of a pre-verbal child (a child not yet speaking). Thus, throughout the preverbal period very little language is directed to the child, except for imperatives, rhetorical questions (questions not expected to be responded to), and greetings. A child who by Kaluli terms has not yet begun to speak is not expected to respond either verbally or vocally. As a result, during the first 18 months or so very little sustained dyadic (two-way) verbal exchange takes place between adult and infant. The infant is only minimally treated as an addressee and is not treated as a communicative partner in dyadic exchanges. Thus, the conversational model that has been described for many white middle-class caregivers and their pre-verbal children has no application in this case. Furthermore, if one defines language input as language directed to the child then it is reasonable to say that for Kaluli children who have not yet begun to speak there is very little. However, this does not mean that Kaluli children grow up in an impoverished verbal environment and do not learn how to speak. Quite the opposite is true. The verbal environment of the infant is rich and varied, and from the very beginning the infant is surrounded by adults and older children who spend a great deal of time talking to one another. Furthermore, as the infant develops and begins to crawl and engage in play activities and other independent actions, these actions are frequently referred to, described, and commented upon by members of the household, especially older children, to each other. Thus the ongoing activities of the preverbal child are an important topic of talk among members of the household, and this talk about the here-and-now of the infant is available to the infant, though it is not talk addressed to the infant. For example, in referring to the infant's actions, siblings and adults use the infant's name or kin term. They say, “Look at Seligiwo! He's walking”. Thus the child may learn from these contexts to attend to (pay attention to) the verbal environment in which he or she lives.

Every society has its own philosophy about language, including when it begins and how children acquire it. The Kaluli are no exception. Kaluli claim that language begins at the time when the child uses two critical words, “mother” (*ne*) and “breast” (*bo*). The child may be using other single words, but until these two words are used, the beginning of language is not recognized. Once a child has used these words, a whole set of interrelated behaviours is set into motion. Once a child has begun to use language, he or she then must be “shown how to speak”. Kaluli show their children language in the form of a teaching strategy, which involves providing a model for what the child is to say followed by the word *elema*, an imperative (a command) meaning “say like that”. Mothers use this method of direct instruction to teach the social uses of assertive language (teasing, shaming, requesting, challenging, reporting). However, object labelling is never part of an *elema* sequence (as it is in **Example 2**), nor does the mother ever use *elema* to instruct the child to beg or appeal for food or objects. Begging, the Kaluli say, is natural for children. They know how to do it. In contrast, a child must be taught to be assertive through the use of particular linguistic expressions and verbal sequences.

A typical sequence using *elema* is triadic, involving the mother, child (20-36 months), and other participants, as in Example 4.

Example 4

Mother, daughter Binalia (5 yrs), cousin Mama (3 ½ years), and son Wanu (27 months) are at home, dividing up some cooked vegetables. Binalia has been begging for some, but her mother thinks that she has had her share.

Mother to Wanu (telling him what to say to Binalia)	Wanu repeating
Whose is it?! say like that. Abenowo?! <i>elema</i> .	Whose is it?! Abenowo
Is it yours?! say like that. Genowo?! <i>elema</i> .	Is it yours?! Genowo?!
Who are you?! say like that. ge oba?! <i>elema</i> .	Who are you?! ge oba?!
Cousin Mama to Wanu (telling him what to say to Binalia)	Wanu repeating
Did you pick'?! say like that. gi suwo <i>elema</i>	Did you pick'?! gi suwo
Mother to Wanu (telling him what he should say to Binalia)	Wanu repeating
My grandmother picked! say like that. ni nuwe: suke! <i>elema</i> .	My grandmother picked! ni nuwt: suke!
Cousin Mama to Wanu (telling him what to say)	Wanu repeating
This my g'mother picked! say like that we ni nuwe suke! <i>elema</i>	This my g'mother picked! we ni miwe stike!

In this situation, as in many others, the mother does not modify her language to fit the linguistic ability of the young child. Instead, her language is shaped so as to be appropriate (in terms of form and content) for the child's intended addressee (person being spoken to). Consistent with the way she interacts with her infant, what a mother instructs her young child to say usually does not have its origins in any verbal or nonverbal behaviours of the child but in what the mother thinks should be said. The mother pushes the child into ongoing interactions that the child may or may not be interested in and will at times spend a good deal of energy in trying to get the child verbally involved. This is part of the Kaluli pattern of fitting (or pushing) the child into the situation rather than changing the situation to meet the interests or abilities of the child. Thus mothers take a directive role with their young children, teaching them what to say so that they may become participants in the social group.

In addition to instructing their children by telling them what to say in often extensive interactional sequences, Kaluli mothers pay attention to the form of their children's utterances. Kaluli correct the phonological (sounds), morphological (grammar), or lexical form (word forms) of an utterance or its pragmatic (practical) or semantic meaning. Because the goals of language acquisition include the development of a competent and independent child who uses mature language, Kaluli use no baby-talk lexicon (vocabulary), for they said that to do so would result in a child sounding babyish, which was clearly undesirable and counterproductive. The entire process of a child's development, of which language acquisition plays a very important role, is thought of as a hardening process anti culminates in the child's use of "hard words".

The cultural dispreference for saying what another might be thinking or feeling has important consequences for the organization of dyadic (two-way) exchanges between caregiver and child. For one, it affects the ways in which meaning is negotiated during an exchange. For the Kaluli, the responsibility for clear expression is with the speaker, and child speakers are not exempt from this. Rather than offering possible interpretations or guessing at the meaning of what a child is saying, caregivers make extensive use of clarification requests such as "huh" and "what?" in an attempt to draw out clearer expression from the child. Children are held to what they say and mothers will remind them that they in fact have asked for food or an object if they don't act appropriately on receiving it. Because the responsibility of expression lies, with the speaker, children are also instructed with *elima* to request clarification using similar language from others when they do not understand what someone is saying to them.

Another important consequence of not saying what another thinks is the absence of adult expansions of child utterances. Kaluli caregivers put words into the mouths of their children, but these words originate from the caregiver. However, caregivers do not elaborate or expand utterances initiated by the child. Nor do they jointly build propositions across utterances and speakers except in the context of sequences with *elima* in which they are constructing the talk for the child.

 **Reading 3 Exercise**

1. *Compare the child upbringing in Reading Three with your experiences as you grew up. Who looked after you? What did they teach you? Did people 'put words into your mouth?' Was your speech corrected?*
 2. *What language behaviours are Kaluli children taught and, in your view, how will they influence different community genres?*
-

Implications of these stories

Unlike white middle-class mothers, Kaluli mothers do not engage in sustained gazing at, or elicit and maintain direct eye contact with, their infants as such behaviour is dispreferred and associated with witchcraft.

The literature on white middle class child development has been oriented toward the two-party relationship between infant and caregiver, typically infant and mother. This relationship is primary for infants within this social group. Further, most communicative interactions are dyadic in the adult community. Although the mother is an important figure in both Kaluli and Samoan developmental stories, the interactions in which infants are participants are typically triadic or multiparty. As noted, Kaluli mothers organize triadic interactions in which infants and young children are oriented away from their mothers and toward a third party.

This is not to say that Kaluli and Samoan caregivers and children do not engage in dyadic exchanges. Rather, the point is that such exchanges are not accorded the same significance as in white middleclass society. In white middle-class households that have been studied, the process of becoming social takes place predominantly through dyadic interactions, and social competence itself is measured in terms of the young child's capacity to participate in such interactions. In Kaluli and Samoan households, the process of becoming social takes place through participation in dyadic, triadic, and multiparty social interactions, with the latter two more common than the dyad.

From an early age, Samoan and Kaluli children must learn how to participate in interactions involving a number of individuals. To do this minimally requires attending to more than one individual's words and actions and knowing the norms for when and how to enter interactions, taking into account the social identities of at least three participants. Further, the sequencing of turns in triadic and multiparty interactions has a far wider range of possibilities than dyadic exchanges and thus requires considerable knowledge and skill. For both the Kaluli and the Samoan child, triadic and multiparty interactions constitute their earliest social experiences and reflect the ways in which members of these societies routinely communicate with one another.

As we have emphasized in these stories, the very young child is less often spoken to than spoken about. Nonetheless, both Kaluli and Samoan children become fluent speakers within the range of normal developmental variation.

... the story told here of Kaluli caregiver speech indicates that simplification is culturally organized in terms of when, how, and extent. caregivers do not speak in a simplified manner to very young children. They do not simplify because such speech is felt to inhibit the development of competent speech.

In each of these stories we saw that caregivers and children interacted with one another in culturally patterned ways. Our overriding theme has been that caregiver speech behaviour must be seen as part of caregiving and socialization more generally. What caregivers say and how they interact with young children are motivated in part by concerns and beliefs held by many members of the local community. (*These interactions forms the basis for children learning behaviour associated with different community genres of speaking.*)

As noted earlier, these concerns and beliefs may not be conscious in all cases. Certain beliefs, such as the Kaluli notions of the child as “soft” and socialization as “hardening” the child, are explicit. Others, such as the white middle-class notions of the infant and small child as social and capable of acting intentionally (expressing intentions), are not explicitly formulated.

We have also suggested that the heavy use of expansions by middle-class caregivers to question or confirm what a child is expressing is linked to culturally preferred procedures for achieving understanding.

Although caregivers in two different societies may expand their children's utterances, it would not necessarily follow that the caregivers shared the same beliefs and values.. Both the Kaluli and the Samoan caregivers do not appear to rely on expansions, but the reasons expansions are dispreferred differ. Kaluli do not use expansions to resay or guess what a child may be expressing because they say that “one cannot know what someone else thinks,” regardless of age or social status.

There are two orientations to children discussed in the stories - adapting situations to the child and adapting the child to situations.

We would expect these orientations to shift as children develop, for example, a society may adapt situations to meet the needs of a very small infant, but as the infant matures, the expectation may shift to one in which the child should adapt to situations. Indeed, we could predict such a pattern for most, if not all, societies.

A society that adapts or fits situations to the needs of young children will use a register to children that includes a number of simplifying features, for example, shorter utterances, with a restricted lexicon, that refer to here-and-now. Such an orientation is also compatible with a tendency for caregivers to assist the child's expression of intentions through expansions, clarification requests, cooperative proposition building and the like. These often involve the caregiver's taking the perspective of a small child and correlate highly with allowing a small child to initiate new topics (evidencing child-centred orientation).

On the other hand, societies in which children are expected to meet the needs of the situation at hand will communicate differently with infants and small children. In these societies, children usually participate in multiparty situations. Caregivers will socialize children through language to notice others and perform appropriate (not necessarily polite) speech acts toward others. This socialization will often take the form of modelling, where the caregiver says what the child should say and directs the child to repeat. Typically, the child is directed to say something to someone other than the caregiver who has modelled the original utterance. From the Kaluli and Samoan

cases, we would predict that the utterances to be repeated would cover a wide range of speech acts (teasing, insulting, greeting, information requesting, begging, reporting of news, shaming, accusations, and the like). In these interactions, as in other communicative contexts with children, the caregivers (to not simplify their speech but rather shape their speech to meet situational contingencies *Table 2*).

Table 2: Two orientations toward children and caregiver speech patterns

Adapt situation to child	Adapt child to situation
Simplified register features baby-talk lexicon	Modelling of (un-simplified) utterances for child to repeat to third party (wide range of speech act, not simplified)
Negotiation of meaning via expansion and paraphrase	
Cooperative proposition building between caregiver and child	Child directed to notice others
Utterances that respond to child initiated verbal or nonverbal act	Topics arise from range of situational circumstances to which caregiver wishes child to respond
Typical communicative situation: two-party	Typical communicative situation: multiparty

Kaluli and Samoan children use affect pronouns, for example, "poor-me," initially in begging, an activity they are encouraged to engage in. The use of affect pronouns in other speech acts is a later development. Similarly, many white middle-class children use their first nominal forms (nouns) in the act of labelling, an activity much encouraged by caregivers in this social group. Labelling is not an activity in which Kaluli and Samoan caregivers and children engage in. Each social group will have its preferences, and these, in turn, will guide the child's acquisition of language.

Conclusions

The process of acquiring language and the process of acquiring sociocultural knowledge are closely linked.

1. The specific features of caregiver speech behaviour that have been described as simplified register are neither universal nor necessary for language to be acquired. White middle-class children, Kaluli children, and Samoan children all become speakers of their languages within the normal range of development and yet their caregivers use language quite differently in their presence.
2. Caregivers' speech behaviour expresses and reflects values and beliefs held by members of a social group. In this sense, caregivers' speech is part of a larger set of behaviours that are culturally organized.
3. The use of simplified registers by caregivers in certain societies may be part of a more general orientation in which situations are adapted to young children's

perceived needs. In other societies, the orientation may be the reverse, that is, children at a very early age are expected to adapt to requirements of situations. In such societies, caregivers direct children to notice and respond to other's actions. They tend not to simplify their speech and frequently model appropriate utterances for the child to repeat to a third party in a situation. Not only caregivers' but children's language as well is influenced by social expectations. Children's strategies for encoding and decoding information, for negotiating meaning, and for handling errors are socially organized in terms of who does the work, when, and how. Further, every society orchestrates the ways in which children participate in particular situations, and this, in turn, affects the form, the function, and the content of children's utterances. In this sense, the process of language acquisition is part of the larger process of socialisation, that is, acquiring social competence.

Extracts & adaptations from Ochs, E & Schieffelin, (1984) Language Acquisition and Socialisation in Culture Theory: Essays on Mind, Self & Emotion, Shweder, R & Levine, R (eds).

Exercises

1. Compare the two ways of socialising children: "adapting children to situations" and "adapting situations to children". Provide examples from the readings and your own experience.
 2. How do you think these patterns of socialisation will influence a child's oral language development?
-

Families and communities provide the first learning that a child experiences. The learning occurs in everyday interactions between caregivers, children and their environment. Children develop shared knowledge through observing and participating in events with knowledgeable family and community members. In many of these interactions caregivers show children what to do, how to act, speak and feel, they model behaviour appropriate to different circumstances and model associations with different people.

In the following scene a mother and her son encourage their daughter/sister, to sing. Alis (mother), Walta (son, 8 years) and Kelina (daughter, 2 years) are sitting together outside their house late in the afternoon in Mis Village, Madang.

- Alis to Kelina:** Yu singim "Bikpela sanap antap".
- Kelina:** (Silence, look at Alis)
- Walta:** Oke, bikpela-a (looking at Kelina, singing and trying to encourage her)
- Kelina:** (singing) Bikpela-a ... tamap an-n ... tap mantan

- Alis to Kelina:** Singsing gen
- Kelina:** (singing) Bikpela-a tamap antap ... mantan ... bikpela-a-a-a- tama-ap anta-ap mantan
- Walta:** (singing) Kam kam kam ... kam insait
- Kelina:** (singing) Kam insai ... Didat tinaut-i-im yu tindaun (Jisas i singatim yumi kam sindaun)
- Walta:** (singing) Kam kam ka-am
- Kelina:** (singing) Kam kam ka-am
- Walta:** (singing) Kam insait
- Kelina:** (singing) Kam insait ... Didat tautim yu-u mi ka-am tindaun
- Alis:** Gut gel

Exercises

1. Do you think caregivers should use simplified language when speaking to children?
2. Using ideas from Readings 1 and 2 describe the caregivers' behaviours and Kelina's responses in this situation.
3. How would you describe the way children learn and use language and cultural knowledge in your community?
4. Which style of learning do you think schools should reinforce 'adapting children to situations' or 'adapting situations to children', both or neither, why?

Extension reading

A Samoan Story: Extracts and adaptations from: 'Language Acquisition and Socialisation', Ochs, E & Schieffelin, B in 'Culture Theory: Essays on Mind, Self & Emotion', Shweder, R & Levine, R (eds) (1984).

Language and socialisation: A Samoan story

In American and Western Samoa, an archipelago in the southwest Pacific, Samoan, a verb-initial Polynesian language, is spoken. The following story draws primarily on direct observations of life in a large, traditional village on the island of Upolu in Western Samoa; however, it incorporates as well analyses by Mead (1927), Kernan

(1969), and Shore (1982) of social life, language use, and childhood on other islands (the Manu'a islands and Savai'i).

As has been described by numerous scholars, Samoan society is highly stratified (hierarchical). Individuals are ranked in terms of whether or not they have a title, and if so, whether it is an orator or a chiefly title - bestowed on persons by an extended family unit - and within each status, particular titles are reckoned with respect to one another.

Social stratification characterizes relationships between untitled persons as well, with the assessment of relative rank (social position) in terms of generation and age. Most relevant to the Samoan story to be told here is that caregiving is also socially stratified. The young child is cared for by a range of untitled persons, typically the child's older siblings, the mother, and unmarried siblings of the child's mother. Where more than one of these are present, the older is considered to be the higher ranking caregiver and the younger the lower ranking caregiver. As will be discussed in the course of this story, ranking affects how caregiving tasks are carried out and how verbal interactions are organized.

From birth until the age of 5 or 6 months, an infant is referred to as *pepemeamea* (baby thing thing). During this period, the infant stays close to his or her mother, who is assisted by other women and children in child-care tasks. During this period, the infant spends the periods of rest and sleep near, but somewhat separated from, others, on a large pillow enclosed by a mosquito net suspended from a beam or rope. Waking moments are spent in the arms of the mother, occasionally the father, but most often on the hips or laps of other children, who deliver the infant to his or her mother for feeding and in general are responsible for satisfying and comforting the child.

In these early months, the infant is talked about by others, particularly in regard to his or her physiological states and needs. Language addressed to the young infant tends to be in the form of songs or rhythmic vocalizations in a soft, high pitch. Infants at this stage are not treated as conversational partners. Their gestures and vocalizations are interpreted for what they indicate about the physiological state the child. If verbally expressed, however, these interpretations are directed in general not to the infant but to some other more mature member of the household (older child), typically in the form of a directive.

As an infant becomes more mature and mobile, he or she is referred to as simply *pepe* (baby). When the infant begins to crawl, his or her immediate social and verbal environment changes. Although the infant continues to be carried by an older sibling, he or she is also expected to come to the mother or other mature family members on his or her own. Spontaneous language is directed to the infant to a much greater extent. The child, for example, is told to "come" to the caregiver.

To understand the verbal environment of the infant at this stage, it is necessary to consider Samoan concepts of childhood and children. Once a child is able to move himself or herself and even somewhat before, he or she is frequently described as cheeky, mischievous, and wilful. Very frequently, the infant is negatively sanctioned (disciplined) for his actions. An infant who sucks eagerly, vigorously, or frequently at the breast may be teasingly shamed by other family members. Approaching a guest or touching objects of value provokes negative directives first and mock threats second. The tone of voice shifts dramatically from that used with younger infants. The pitch drops to the level used in casual interactions with adult addressees and voice quality

becomes loud and sharp. It is to be noted here that caregiver speech is largely talk directed at the infant and typically caregivers do not engage in -conversations- with infants over several exchanges. Further, the language used by caregivers is not lexically or syntactically simplified (no simple words or grammar are used).

The image of the small child as highly assertive (bossy) continues for several years and is reflected in what is reported to be the first word of Samoan children: *tae*, a curse word used to reject, retaliate, or show displeasure at the action of another. The child's earliest use of language, then, is seen as explicitly defiant and angry. Although caregivers admonish (reprimand) the verbal and nonverbal expression of these qualities, the qualities are in fact deeply valued and considered necessary and desirable in particular social circumstances.

As noted earlier, Samoan children are exposed to, and participate in, a highly stratified society. Children usually grow up in a family compound composed of several households and headed by one or more titled persons. Titled persons conduct themselves in a particular manner in public, namely, to move slowly or be stationary, and they tend to disassociate themselves from the activities of lower status persons in their immediate environment. In a less dramatic fashion, this demeanour (attitude) characterizes high ranking caregivers in a household as well, who tend to leave the more active tasks, such as bathing, changing, and carrying an infant to younger persons.

The social stratification of caregiving has is reflected in the verbal environment of the young child. Throughout the day, higher ranking caregivers (e.g., the mother) direct lower ranking persons to carry, put to sleep, soothe, feed, bathe, and clothe a child. Typically, a lower ranking caregiver waits for such a directive rather than initiate (begin) such activities spontaneously. When a small child begins to speak, he or she learns to make his or her needs known to the higher ranking caregiver. The child learns not to necessarily expect a direct response. Rather, the child's appeal usually generates a conversational sequence such as the following:

Child appeals to high-ranking caregiver > High ranking caregiver directs lower ranking caregiver > Lower ranking caregiver responds to child.

These verbal interactions differ from the dyadic (two-way) interactions described for white middle-class caregivers and children. Whereas a white middle-class child is often alone with a caregiver, a Samoan child is not. Traditional Samoan houses have no internal or external walls, and typically conversations involve several persons inside and outside the house. For the Samoan child, then, multiparty (many people) conversations are the norm, and participation is organized along hierarchical lines.

The importance of status and rank (social position) is expressed in other uses of language as well. Very small children are encouraged to produce certain speech acts that they will be expected to produce later as younger (i.e., low ranking) members of the household. One of these speech acts is reporting of news to older family members. The reporting of news by lower status persons complements the detachment (separation) associated with relatively high status. High status persons ideally (or officially) receive information through reports rather than through their own direct involvement in the affairs of others. Of course, this ideal is not always realized. Nonetheless, children from the one-word stage on will be explicitly instructed to notice others and to provide information to others.

The character of these instructions is similar to that of the triadic (three-way) exchanges described in the Kaluli story. A young child is to repeat an utterance offered by a caregiver to a third party. As in the Kaluli triadic exchanges, the utterance is designed primarily for the third party ... Caregivers use such exchanges to teach children a wide range of skills and knowledge. In fact, the task of repeating what the caregiver has said is itself an object of knowledge, preparing the child for his or her eventual role as messenger. Children at the age of 3 are expected to deliver verbatim (exactly worded) messages on behalf of more mature members of the family.

The cumulative (collective) orientation is one in which even very young children are oriented toward others. In contrast to the white middle-class tendencies to accommodate situations to the child, the Samoans encourage the child to meet the needs of the situation, that is, to notice others, listen to them, and adapt one's own speech to their particular status and needs.

The pervasiveness of social stratification is felt in another, quite fundamental aspect of language, that of ascertaining the meaning of an utterance. Procedures for clarification are sensitive to the relative rank of conversational participants in the following manner. If a high status person produces a partially or wholly unintelligible utterance, the burden of clarification tends to rest with the hearer. It is not inappropriate for high status persons to produce such utterances from time to time. In the case of orators in particular, there is an expectation that certain terms and expressions will be obscure to certain members of their audiences. On the other hand, if a low status person's speech is unclear, the burden of clarification tends to be placed more on the speaker.

The latter situation applies to most situations in which young children produce ambiguous or unclear utterances. Both adult and child caregivers tend not to try to determine the message content of such utterances by, for example, repeating or expanding such an utterance with a query intonation. In fact, unintelligible utterances of young children will sometimes be considered as not Samoan but another language, usually Chinese, or not language at all but the sounds of an animal. A caregiver may choose to initiate clarification by asking "What?" or "Huh?" but it is up to the child to make his or her speech intelligible to the addressee.

Whereas the Samoans place the burden of clarification on the child, white middle-class caregivers assist the child in clarifying and expressing ideas. As noted in the white middle-class developmental story, such assistance is associated with good mothering. The good mother is one who responds to her child's incompetence by making greater efforts than normal to clarify his or her intentions. To this end, a mother tries to put herself in the child's place (take the perspective of the child). In Samoa good mothering or good caregiving is almost the reverse: A young child is encouraged to develop an ability to take the perspective of higher ranking persons in order to assist them and facilitate their well-being. The ability to do so is part of showing respect, a most necessary demeanour (attitude) in social life.

Extracts and adaptations from Ochs, E & Schieffelin, (1984) 'Language Acquisition and Socialisation' in Culture Theory: Essays on Mind, Self & Emotion, Shweder, R & Levine, R (eds).



Community learning: observation, imitation and participation



Reading 3: Showing "save"

Kulick defines the term *save*,

In its most basic sense, *save* signifies knowledge: the knowledge of facts and being able to learn from experience and through doing. But it also means more than that. *Save* is knowledge about appropriate behaviour and speech, awareness of social obligations and roles, cognizance of the consequences that one's own or someone else's actions or words can have. *Save* is a metaphor often used in Gapun to mean social sensitivity and solidarity.

Adults have, and should continually demonstrate that they have *save*. Children don't... Attaining *save*, coming to know, is not something that the villagers think children can be taught. Children can be taught certain things, like the names of objects and of relatives, but *save* itself is not taught; *save* in the villager's view 'breaks open'... inside the child, like an egg ...

"We teach kids to call names of things, like, um what ... pig, dog, betel nut. Or coconut, or kandere (mother's brother), that's what we teach them. We'll call it, and they'll repeat it. Later now, when their *save* breaks open now then they'll start to learn everything really fast."...

Children in the village are thought to show evidence of *save* when they start at between 20 and 30 months, to use language by themselves to engage others in verbal interactions. Gapuners thus conceptualize a break between what they hold to be a child's early language – words like *ki*, *mnda* and *aiata*, which are considered to be blunt declarations of the child's true aggressive hed – and their later verbal utterances which are observed to be interactive in nature and expressive of *save*. Language used in interaction with others is understood as both an indication and a result of *save* 'breaking open'. In recognising such a link between verbal interaction and *save*, villagers are asserting their belief that language is

one of the chief means through which an individual expresses her or his social competence. (pp119-122)

Kulick also observes how villagers use language as a tool for establishing relationships and for keeping a knowledge of traditions, knowledge and skills active.

‘... language focuses more on discourse and on pragmatic effect (ability to get things done) than on individual words or isolated sentences’, (this) means that language is used by Gapuners as a means of interacting with others in order to achieve something. Meanings of words and expressions may change according to who is speaking to whom, what is being spoken about, when, where and why a conversation takes place. To focus on ‘pragmatic effect’ is to use language as a means to cause something to happen, to do things with words.

 **Exercises**

1. What does the word ‘save’ mean to you (it can have different meanings)? Write two sentences in Tok Pisin showing different meanings of the word ‘save’.
2. What is the meaning of the term 'save' given in the reading above? Do you agree, can you add to this meaning?
3. Why do you think the people of Gapun 'call' words for children?
4. What is your experience with the way children learn and use language in your community, does it occur in a similar way as it does in Gapun?
5. What is your experience with the way language is used by adults in your community, does it function in a similar way as it does in Gapun, to get things done?

 **Reading 4: "Showing Language"**

In her study of the socialisation of Kaluli children in the Southern Highlands (1990), Bambi Schieffelin observes how 'talk' is a key factor in children's learning:

'Speech enables children to develop social relationships and participate in the give and take of everyday life. Caregivers play an active role in "showing language" to young children. Through language, they create relationships between their children, themselves and others. Everyday speech activities in which Kaluli adults tell children what to say, what to do, and how to feel make explicit cultural assumptions and expectations that are usually tacit.' (1990:1)

'It is through language and through using language that children become participants in all varieties of social exchange as ones who will give as well as ask and take. This is accomplished by teaching children what to say, how to ask and how to refuse. Once children begin to use words, Kaluli mothers say they must "show language" (*to widan*) to children if they are to learn to speak. This is part of *halaidan* 'hardening', indicated by the acquisition and use of *to halaido* 'hard language'. Mothers show language through extensive sequences of direct instruction using the imperative *elema* 'say like this', telling 2 year olds to repeat what they say to other people. The language is always in an assertive modality. It is markedly different in form, function, and content from the language used in appeal, which is not directly socialised because it is considered something children already know. Once a child uses language assertively to ask for food and objects, other members of the household can also ask the child to give and share, and the process of holding the child accountable in exchanges begins.' (1990:7)

Exercises

1. How would you describe "showing language" as a teaching strategy? Why do you think it is used, 'assertively'?
 2. From your own experience, explain how language is used to create relationships.
 3. What kinds of relationships, do you think, are developed through language?
 4. Think of speaking relationships in your community and identify oral language genres used by children or adults
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Community Language Genres: Ways of using language

Each community has distinct ways of communicating and interacting which influence what is said, where it is said, when, how, who to and why. In any society there are regular ways of saying things which depend upon the situation, these may be called 'speech events'. It is through participating in speech events and exchanges that we develop identities. These ways of communicating have developed over time, historically. They reflect the understandings of a community about how things should be done. We refer to speech events, when part of a wider situation, as 'genres'. There are both spoken and written genres. A genre is not just what is spoken or written, it includes, details of the situation in which the communication occurs.

As historical and cultural patterns of interacting (speaking and writing), genres evolve. They change over time because they reflect the communications and actions of a society. As societies change so do the forms of communication. Genres respond to changing social and cultural circumstances.

At school, students may be taught to write stories (narratives), reports, or essays, or taught to give an oral report, or debate a proposition, these are *genres* from western societies.

A language genre is a particular way of speaking or writing which is shaped by the environment in which it is used, what is being said/written, who is speaking/writing, when and where the talk/writing occurs and most importantly the purpose for speaking/writing.

As previously mentioned, Ben Tamengit at Gaulim Teachers College uses the term, '*tambu genres*' to refer to the different ways people in PNG speak to their 'tambus'. These patterns of talking are culturally determined. They are the patterns of speaking that we learn as we grow up in our communities.

It is important for children and adults to learn the genres of their communities.

Because PNG is an oral culture, these local/traditional genres will be spoken.

'Community genres' (ways of speaking) need to be supported and sustained if a local language is to survive where there are other influential languages in the same linguistic environment. Children's learning of community genres, the linguistic practices of their cultures, is interrupted by modern schooling. In recent times the Department of Education has implemented a policy of vernacular education so that children can learn traditional and modern concepts through their local language.

There are many different forms of oral communication (oral genres) in PNG reflecting the many different kinds of social interactions and the many different purposes for communicating. Some of the more recognisable oral genres are singsings, songs, chants, story telling, exchange addresses, marriage and funeral addresses, gender specific communications, initiations, day-day bartering and communication, gossip, magic, sorcery, community speeches, village meetings. In addition, the churches have introduced many oral forms, liturgies, prayers, hymns, sermons, etc. All of these have different communication purposes.

In all of these oral genres there are variations, for example, story telling can mean telling 'cracking jokes' 'gossiping' or just talking about day-to day things or telling someone about something that happened to you or someone else, it could mean telling a 'tumbuna' stori which may be fictional or factual or both;. Which kind of 'stori' will depend upon who is in the speaking group (old or young people; family or friends) the purpose of the story, (a child asking her father to tell a story).

Genres contain words and expressions which help us interpret what is being communicated.

In English when we hear 'Once upon a time' we know we are going to hear a fiction stori or you may hear 'Bipo bipo long tumbuna taim ..' or 'Bipo bipo turu ..' then we know we will hear a 'tumbuna stori'. How the story genre is introduced, by whom when and where is different for every culture, and for different kinds of stories..

Think about your own family and stories that were told, how were they introduced, how did they finish. Do you think that children are still hearing tumbuna stories from their parents? In English speaking cultures it is the parents who will ask the children if they want to hear a story and this begins before a child can speak or even walk. In PNG cultures it is often the parents who will wait for the children to ask for a story before one is told. This is true for some PNG cultures not just for stories but for knowledge of how to do things. As Ben from Mis Village, Madang (in his seventies) says, unlike when he was young, no young men have come to him for his knowledge, and as his sister laments when making bilums and grass skirts:

Da keke seinā ge ag pi pesi.

I things do (but) you don't watch

Da mausui ge aun is mardig

I die who show (to you)?

Community language genres are ways that people use language to do and understand different things, in particular to develop the right kinds of relationships between one another in particular settings.

In Kaluli society, when children are small they learn the *ade* relationship. This is a way of speaking (a community genre) necessary to a person's survival in the community. It is a strategy of appeal or request. Schieffelin notes that it is

"a strategy in which one person attempts to get something by making others 'feel sorry for' him or her. A person making a request based on appeal is seen as being helpless; this state in turn is responded to by compassion and assistance. Persons responding to such an appeal, however, must feel that they are giving of their own free will. ... Because I felt sorry for, I gave ..."

To participate in Kaluli society, one must draw upon a range of interactional strategies acquired in childhood: One must be able to ask assertively as well as respond appropriately to assertive requests and statements; one must be able to move others to give or help as well as be moved by others and respond by giving or helping. (1990:112)

This relationship is particularly important between 'older sisters and younger brothers'. In Kaluli culture older sisters have an obligation to agree to the requests of younger brothers, the consequence of not doing so are taught to children through another community genre, a mythical story. This is a story with a moral. There are many different kinds of 'stori' genre. Story genres differ according to their purpose.



Reflection Exercise

1. As you read the following story, reflect on your own life and stories you have been told. Identify similar stories, and others that are told for a different purpose?

The boy who became a muni bird

Once there was a boy and his older sister; they called each other *ade*. One day they went off together to a small stream to catch crayfish. After a short while the girl caught one; the brother as yet had none. Looking at the catch, he turned to her, lowered his head, and whined, "*ade*, ni galin andoma" – "*ade*, I have no crayfish." She replied, "I won't give to you; it is for mother."

Later, on another bank of the stream she again caught one; her brother was still without. Again he begged, “*ade*, ni galin andoma.” Again she refused. “I won’t give to you; it is for father.” Sadly he continued to hope for a catch of his own. Finally, at another bank, she again caught a crayfish. He immediately begged for it, whining, “*ade*, I really have nothing.” She was still unwilling: “I won’t give to you; it is for older brother.”

He felt very sad. Just then he caught a tiny shrimp. He grasped it tightly; when he opened his palm, it was all red. He pulled the meat out of the shell and placed the shell over his nose. His nose turned a bright purple red. Then he looked at his hands; they were wings.

When she turned and saw her brother to be a bird, the older sister was very upset. “Oh *ade*,” she said, “don’t fly away.” He opened his mouth the reply, but no words came out, just the high falsetto cooing cry of the *muni* bird, the Beautiful Fruitdove.

He began to fly off, repeating the *muni* cry, a descending *eeeeeeee*. His sister was in tears at the sight of him; she called out, “Oh *ade*, come back, take the crayfish, you eat them all, come back and take the crayfish.” Her calling was in vain. The boy was now a *muni* bird and continued to cry and cry. After a while the cry became slower and more steady, “Your crayfish, you didn’t give it to me. I have no *ade*, I’m hungry.” (p113)

In her discussion of this story, Schieffelin notes that:

... Kaluli deeply fear loneliness. No companionship, no assistance, no one to share food with is perhaps the most frightening human state. Loneliness is seen as non-assistance, the condition of being without relationships. ... Kaluli equate breakdowns in reciprocity, assistance, sharing, hospitality ... with loss, abandonment, isolation, loneliness, and ultimately death.’ The fact that the older sister consistently denies her younger brother food signals the fact that he has no *ade*, no one in the relationship of giving in response to his request.

In Kaluli beliefs, birds are significant, Schieffelin reports that,

Children must not eat birds, lest they never speak, Kaluli perceive children with their high pitched voices and their repetitive vocalisations, to be like birds. Children are told not to speak ‘bird-talk’ but “good talk”, “hard words”. In addition Kaluli believe that birds are ane mama, spirit reflections of their dead. In actual or symbolic death, one becomes a bird. Thus the consequences of the breach of the *ade* relationship is that the boy turns into a bird; his crying is the origin of weeping. (p114)

Ade is one of a number of important social behaviours children are taught. It is through language that children are socialised into community genres. Children are taught ways of being assertive or ways of appealing to others through language. Understanding the correct ways to ask or refuse are important community genres.

Community Genres: Public Talk

Talk, stories and gossip are particular community genres which are an integral part of community life because they are used to get things done, to influence decisions, to share information, to maintain social relations between family and community members, and ultimately, to influence relations of power. Talk constructs the world people live in. People choose within their social places and roles in a community, the kinds of talk that will best help them to achieve particular aims. Some kinds of talk, more than others, can be seen to act as a means of social control.

Public meetings like those found throughout PNG are not just opportunities for information sharing or settling differences, they are places where oratorical skills are displayed and social ranks of speakers are determined. The structure of these meetings may vary throughout the country but what is evident is that the right to speak is not always evenly distributed, social restrictions come into play. Notably women and children are not usually full participants in these forums.

Also evident are particular routines, or patterns of taking turns in public speaking, with some people leading and others only speaking after, some people with the right to interrupt and others not. Such structures are often the basis for the way power is exercised in the community with the community accepting that some should speak and make decisions and other should not, that there are different rights of interaction.

The distribution of authority in a community will prompt a certain style of public debate ... in egalitarian communities, for instance, it is common for speakers to interrupt each other in meetings ... in hierarchical systems ... powerful individuals announce decisions in meetings ... fewer speakers are heard, and interruptions are frowned upon. (Brison 1992:16)

In PNG communities there is sometimes a link between speech styles and ability to use various speech genres, and access to resources. Those with demonstrated oratorical skill, often appear to have privileged access to wealth and resources not available to others.

In many of these societies, however, there are also less formal genres, like gossip and rumour, which can influence the authority of recognised leaders. These genres also have structures which influence the speaking roles people take, and the way things are expressed, often with great ambiguity or uncertainty and in round about ways.

In her discussion of the role of 'gossip' amongst the Kwanga people in the East Sepik, Karen Brison provides detailed accounts of how events in the village are changed into gossip. The gossip changes over time as different people add their beliefs, until they become a kind of truth which influences community decisions for good and bad.

'Talk' can also have a political impact by redefining the meaning of events, or, in other words, telling a story about them that changes the way people view and react to these situations. These interpretations may redefine social relations or the meaning of future actions. (Brison 1992:17)

Gossip and rumour are shown to have great power in these communities as people find it difficult to escape from them. Events are re-shaped as they are passed around and people with harmful intent can influence the reputations and lives of others without directly involving themselves and this avoiding direct conflict.

Brison asserts,

Others have noted a connection between highly allusive ‘veiled’ (indirect) speech and egalitarian communities. In such places speakers must avoid ‘hard words’ – that is, direct expressions of negative emotions ... or potentially embarrassing or damaging information which might start fights or destroy relationships....

In this way indirect speech, or talking about something while not referring to it directly, helps to sustain community equity by showing respect for the opinions of others. Telling stories is a way of commenting on things, expressing disapproval or a moral point of view without offending participants, allowing participants to reach their own conclusions without forcing decisions upon them.

... discussion may accomplish many things even if there is no decision ... Talk , public and private, conveys certain messages about personalities, the nature of the community, and the status and categories of people within it ... discussion does not passively reflect reality, but instead, actively constructs it; meetings provide a context for people to publicly enact, and thus display their roles in the community ... when certain individuals make impressive speeches, they show themselves to be leaders. Similarly when people talk about events, they give them new meaning and alter the audience’s impressions of their personalit(ys).’ (p21)

... in many small communities, politics seems to consist of a great deal of talk and little action. Villagers, for instance, hold long community meetings to look into disputes and other matters of common concern but they seldom reach a decision and even less frequently actually implement a solutions when participants do agree on them. (p22)

What is identified here is the high value placed on displaying correct social relations, over and above undertaking agreed community decisions or resolving disputes. Communities may use meetings to reinforce themselves as a community, to enact and display particular roles. The outcome of the meeting may be less important than the physical coming together and engaging in the practice of meeting and interacting.

Brison notes how Kwanga meetings reflect a community in transition between traditional and modern ‘meeting-talk’ practices and that Kwanga meetings ‘... often contain a great deal of talk about the correct way to conduct a discussion’. This is illustrated in the following accounts from a local meeting dealing with issues of sorcery, killing, gossip, accusation and inquests. What is also illustrated is what is being responded to, i.e. the interest that many in the meeting (particularly initiated men) have in retaining the old ways. The first talk is from George the local pastor, the second from Ronald, a village leader/magistrate, the third from Henry a successful community businessman:

George: Are you listening? This meeting we are hearing now, we are not following the customs of before. No don’t do this. I make some point and immediately you guys break it down again. Now I don’t want us to talk and talk and follow this way of first making the water dirty and then waiting for it to clear so we can see. For myself, I am

telling you now. What I want for right now is for the truth to come up. And I must put it in the (village court's) hands, and (they) must throw out this thing; throw it out. I don't want to stay here and question another suspect. I don't want you guys to say: "Wait for the water to clear first and then we will see." If you talk about the water clearing then another person will die. No right away. This is the time of the Bible here. Everything is out in the open now. So now you must talk straight. You mark some man and then we will say: "All right, just you will go. Ronald will show you now and it will finish." You want to follow the law of before and say: "Hide it first, then later we will retaliate." This no, no.

Ronald: Whoever of you knows something about Inakor and Asanakor (two villages) ... call their names so we can look into it. This is the true way to find about about sorcerers ... From one thousand years ago to now, we have not even seen one sorcerer come out into the open so we can take him to court. No, not at all. Someone dies. Talk comes up, but we don't jail a man. Never, You want to change and live under the law. All right then, when the law talks you must reveal the sorcerer. I want this kind of custom to take over. But no one does it. We always hide sorcerers.... There are hundreds of sorcerers. All these sorcerers are around but you and me come here and just tell stories and fight among ourselves without accomplishing anything. I don't want this way of talking without evidence and accusing people. You must get the story ... first before you talk. You can't just guess with no good proof about all these men. You can't just sit there and talk without evidence. This is all just rumour. I won't listen to this kind of story. I want you to get up and show me the men. Asanakor, too, you must say who you think it is and we can talk about it and find out about it.

Henry: You guys don't discuss thing properly. You talk and talk and tell plenty of lies. You should make the discussion short, say Hapandi did it, and tell him to throw out his sorcery spears. A lot of us here aren't clear on the laws of meetings. We are breaking a new trail through unfamiliar territory (brukim bus). So we are still dying. (pp182-3,186)

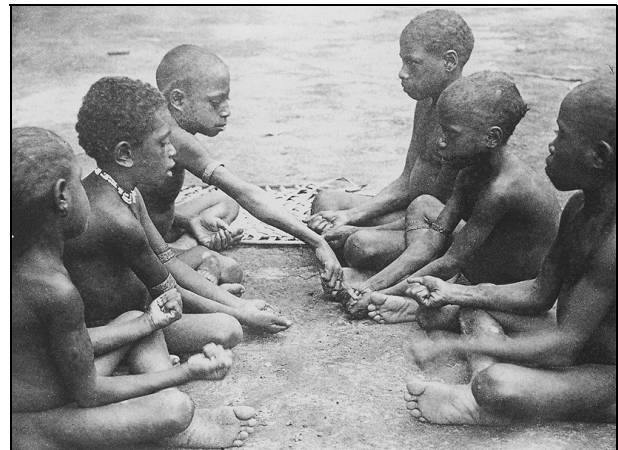
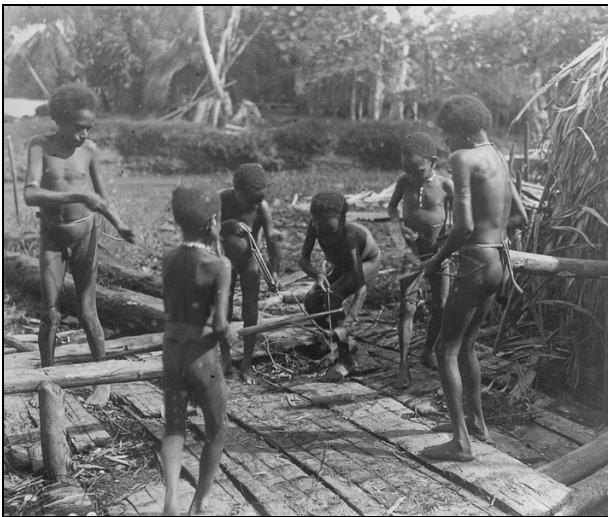
These excerpts of talk illustrate how 'talk' practices can exert control over social activity, how they can conceal as well as reveal knowledge and intentions. Community genres are used for particular community purposes. Powerful people usually have rights to speak in particular ways, they have access to community genres which others may not have. When community purposes change, new genres develop. Young people may speak differently to their parents, they may have their own 'language'. This is the way language adapts to its environment.

 **Reflection Exercises**

1. Discuss the account of the Kwanga people and compare the effect of gossip upon your community or family life.
 2. In summary, review the topics of this module and discuss the question:
“Should ‘community genres’ be maintained?”
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Photo Gallery

Study each photo carefully and record in your Reading Journal the kinds of community genre you would expect to be used in these interactions.



 **Summary Exercise**

1. With other students, make a point summary of what you have learned about community genres.
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