THE SAMOAN FONO:
A SOCIOLINGUISTIC STUDY

by

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This monograph is dedicated to my parents, Ivio and Rossana Duranti, who, in the last few years, have often crossed half of the world to share with me part of my life 'away from home'. The many friends they made wherever they went revealed sides of their personalities and an ability to adapt to different people and conditions of life that I would have never known if we had all stayed in Rome.

Canberra, July 1981

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CHAPTER ONE
GOALS AND ORIENTATIONS

1.1. Introduction

This monograph is a sociolinguistic study of **fono**,[1] the political meetings of chiefs and orators in a Samoan village. The intention of this study is twofold: (1) to provide a detailed account of language use in an important event in the social life of a Samoan community; and (2) to demonstrate that systematic variation in language use must be explained by taking entire social events as units of linguistic analysis. The combination of (1) and (2) should be seen as a fragment of a much larger goal, the writing of *a sociolinguistic grammar of Samoan* (see below). In this sense, this study is meant to be a contribution to our understanding of Samoan language and culture in particular and of language in social events in general.

The idea of taking the social event as a unit of analysis in the study of language use has been proposed by several scholars, including Malinowski (1935), Firth (1935), Halliday (1973), Gumperz (1972), Hymes (1964, 1972, 1974) and, most recently, Levinson (1979). Hymes has provided the most detailed account of this topic and is responsible for introducing the notion of 'speech event'. The speech event is considered to be a fundamental unit of langauge use. In Hymes's original conception, it was a unit to be analyzed in ethnographies of speaking (later, ethnographies of communication). As a guide to such analyses, Hymes proposed the SPEAKING model, with its sixteen components of the speech event (Hymes 1972, 1974, Chapter 2): setting and scene (Setting); speaker, addressor, audience, and addressee (Participants); outcomes and goals (Ends); message forms and message content (Act sequences); key (Key); channels and forms of speech (Instrumentalities): norms of interaction and of interpretation (Norms): genres (Genres).[2]

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Throughout the study I have referred to those components that seemed relevant to the issue at hand, stressing the *interaction* among components, an aspect of speech events indicated by Hymes as a possible area of research, but generally neglected in the Ethnography of Speaking tradition. In particular, I have discussed ways in which *speech genres*, meant as discourse units, are shaped by the social event in which they occur. Such interaction between genre and event must be seen in two perspectives. One is a syntagmatic one: how the same speech genre changes form and content as an event unfolds. The second is a paradigmatic perspective, that is, one that considers the varying ways in which the same speech genre is performed and interpreted in different social events.

1.2. The Dependency Hypothesis

I take as the goal of sociolinguistic research that of providing adequate sociolinguistic grammars, that is, explicit accounts of (aspects of) what Hymes (1967, 1974) calls *communicative competence* - the knowledge that native speakers have as potential (competent) participants to a particular range of communicative events.

A crucial part of describing communicative competence consists of determining the extent to which and the ways in which language and social context systematically interact and depend upon one another. Hymes's SPEAKING model provides one grid for such a purpose. With such a task in front of him, however, the sociolinguist must be prepared to take into account and integrate a variety of linguistic and sociological theoretical frameworks, to reach observational and descriptive adequacy of his grammar. An important step to this end is to establish a working hypothesis that will capture the wide range of facts that are potentially relevant:

> THERE ARE ASPECTS OF LINGUISTIC BEHAVIOUR THAT CAN BE
> EXPLAINED ONLY BY REFERRING TO ASPECTS OF SOCIAL CONTEXT.

I will call this view the 'Dependency Hypothesis'.

Although not necessarily in opposition to the Autonomy Hypothesis proposed by Chomsky and his students,[3] the Dependency Hypothesis defines a sphere of interest and a kind of linguistic research dramatically different from that usually discussed by generative grammarians, who systematically ignore any aspect of variation in linguistic form that might depend upon non-linguistic context (cf. my discussion of possible methodological consequences of this approach in Chapter Eight). Chomsky's Universal Grammar is an abstract system of

rules or conditions on rules which, because innate, are conceived as independent from 'accidental experience' (Chomsky 1975). In contrast, the approach advocated here takes as its central focus the interaction between language and that part of 'accidental experience' defineable as 'social context'. A crucial question the sociolinguist must address is 'what constitutes social context?'.

1.3. The Social Event as Social Context

Social context or simply 'context' - the two are often variants of the same notion, depending upon the researcher's orientation - has been defined in different ways by different authors. Within the school of Generative Semantics, for example, in the late sixties, under the influence of the performative analysis proposed by Austin (1962) and Searle (1968), speaker and hearer were introduced as part of the syntactico-semantic representation of sentences (cf. Ross 1970). As a later development of basically the same concerns, the notion of *pragmatic presupposition* was also included in the more philosophically oriented literature to account for various aspects of what we might call 'social context', for example, Karttunen 1974; Keenan 1971; Stalnaker 1974; Gazdar 1979.

The first to make social context an explicit part of the structural description of grammatical rules was Labov (1966, 1970, 1972). His notion of *sociolinguistic variable* is correlated with both social group (class, age, sex) and stylistic differentiation. In his discussion of interview technique, Labov showed that changes in style could be 'encouraged by shifts in the setting and topic' (Labov 1966: 133).

The work of the past fifteen years on sociolinguistic variable rules, however, has concentrated on social group variation rather than on the interaction between grammatical structure and social events. Labov's original preference for the interview as the most reliable source of data collection is probably responsible for the neglect of variation across settings.

> 'No matter what other methods may be used to obtain samples of speech (group sessions, anonymous observation), the only way to obtain sufficient good data on the speech of any one person is through an individual, tape-recorded interview: that is through the most obvious kind of systematic observation.' (Labov 1970:46-47)

In adopting this approach, sociolinguists usually rely on socio-logical distinctions established by someone else (e.g., the

sociolinguist) – for a critique of this method, cf. De Camp 1971;
Levinson 1977. Thus, the linguist actually does little to further
the understanding of social categories and social relationships on
the basis of what he has learned from observing and analysing
spontaneous speech behaviour.

A different approach is proposed by Gumperz and Hymes (cf. Gumperz
and Hymes 1972; Gumperz 1972; Hymes 1964, 1972, 1974). Among other
things, my study of Samoan fono shares with the ethnographic approach
the basic claim that:

> '...one cannot simply take separate results from linguistics,
> psychology, sociology, ethnology, as given, and seek to
> correlate them, however partially useful such work may be,
> if one is to have a theory of language (not just a theory of
> grammar). One needs fresh kinds of data, one needs to
> investigate directly the use of language in contexts of
> situation, so as to discern patterns proper to speech activity,
> patterns that escape separate studies of grammar, of
> personality, of social structure, religion, and the like, each
> abstracting from the patterning of speech activity into some
> other frame of reference.' (Hymes 1974:3-4)

In my own study of Samoan language use, I have interpreted 'contexts
of situation', which Hymes has adopted from Malinowski (1935), as
equivalent to 'social events'.

*A social event is here taken to be a strip (to use Goffman's
term[4]) of organised public behaviour that is recognised by the
participants as a separate unit within the stream of ongoing activity.*

Although to assess the extent to which a given society recognises
some strip of activity as a well-defined (or separate) social event
might be at times problematic, I think that there are usually ways to
estimate the reality of a certain event as a social unit. For
instance, one can often rely on linguistic labels, such as *party,
debate, court session, church service, political rally*, used by members
of a given community to refer to 'types' of events.

Other times the particular structuring or organisation of a certain
strip of behaviour may reveal units of activity. Thus, for instance,
as noticed by Goffman (1974), organised social activity is often
defined by conventional temporal and spatial boundary markers.
Participants mark beginning and end as well as internal subparts of an
event. They also redefine the setting in which a certain event is
taking place. When the researcher, through observation and subsequent
discussion with (potential or actual) participants, is able to isolate
such boundary markers, he might take them as evidence of an emerging
unit of social interaction.

The advantage of studying complex, highly structured events like the Samoan fono is that they exhibit clear and elaborately marked boundaries (cf. Chapters 4 and 5). Further, not only are they typically recognised lexically (i.e. receive a term of reference); they are also considered and evaluated (by at least some members) within the community. Indeed, participants and non-participants alike are often able to explicitly (re)state rules for interaction in an event such as a trial, a funeral, a wedding, an offering of bridewealth, or a fono. Such metastatements can be used by the researcher to establish relevant social expectations, if not the very rules of appropriate verbal behaviour in the event at hand.

Finally, the adjective 'public' used in my definition of social event should be taken as referring to the fact that participants' actions both take place in the presence of others and are constrained by the presence of others. Public behaviour here covers both focussed and non-focussed social interaction (Goffman 1963).

1.4. Social Events as Speech Events

Given that the role of speech varies tremendously from one social event to another (between, say, a fishing expedition and a church service), a distinction is drawn by Hymes (1972) between *speech situation* and *speech event*. The former refers to activities in which speech does not play a major role, the latter to 'activities, or aspects of activities, that are directly governed by rules or norms for the use of speech' (Hymes 1972:56). In this terminology, a fono is a speech event (rather than a speech situation).

Although intuitively and perhaps methodologically appealing, Hymes's distinction could weaken, if taken literally, the strength and the theoretical implications of the social event as a unit of linguistic analysis. The distinction encourages the researcher to separate parts of an activity that are directly governed by rules for speaking from other parts in which speaking does not play an important role or any role at all. Such a procedure could lead the sociologist to exclude or fail to integrate in the analysis aspects of the activity that are ultimately relevant to speaking. The distinction between speech situation and speech event risks, then, establishing an analytic dichotomy between verbal and non-verbal communication, a dichotomy that goes against the original goals of the ethnographic approach as advocated by Hymes.

I propose that the term 'speech situation' be eliminated and that the term 'speech event' be reserved for a different purpose. 'Speech event' will refer to a *perspective* of sociolinguistic analysis, namely, that of studying a social event from the preferred point of view of the speech behaviour within it. In this new sense, a social event in which no speech occurs can still be analysed as a speech event, the reseracher's task being, in such a case, that of accounting for the absence of speech (or alternatively, for the presence of silence), for example by comparing it with other (similar) events in which speech did occur, by translating the non-verbal communication into possible linguistic correlates or explaining why such correlates could not be used. This solution saves the basic principle of taking social events as units of linguistic analysis and, at the same time, provides a way to focus on speech behaviour without losing sight of co-occurring codes and global social norms. It is this sense of speech that I have adopted in the study of Samoan fono.

The study of speech events (in the sense given above) should not be taken simply as a way of getting access to interesting and complex 'texts', to be subsequently separated from their social contexts for grammatical analysis. An analysis of texts drawn from spontaneous verbal behaviour is not sociolinguistic as such. A sociolinguistic study is one that addresses the *relation* between texts and social norms. In this sense, many studies of discourse do not address sociolinguistic issues.

The field of *discourse analysis* has emerged in the last few years from the awareness, both in linguistics and in other related fields (e.g., psychology, computer science, literary criticism), of the need for a linguistic unit of analysis larger than the sentence. In this tradition, there has been a tendency to conceive of discourse as from a linguistic or a psychological perspective but not from a sociological perspective. Thus for instance, the motion of *topic*, a key concept in many contributions to discourse analysis, has been usually defined by referring to the grammatical role (or to the position) that a certain NP may take with respect to a certain predicate (e.g., the tendency for subjects to be topics, for topics to appear in sentence-initial position) (cf. Creider 1979; Givón 1976, 1979; Hawkinson and Hyman 1974; MacWhinney 1977) or by introducing strictly psychological terms such as memory, consciousness, centre of attention (Chafe 1976; Clark and Haviland 1977; Li and Thompson 1976). While these studies discuss the relation of speaker to hearer, the relationship is a cognitive one rather than a sociological one. Speaker and hearer are related

in terms of dimensions of information processing: is the information
expressed shared/non-shared information, old/new, conventionally
or conversationally implicable for the participants engaged in this
discourse?

The study of discourse presented in this study, although sharing
several of the concerns of the abovementioned tradition, takes quite a
different perspective. It looks at discourse as embodied in social
events. This means, among other things, that the linguistic form of
discourse is seen as directly correlated with and constrained by
social goals and cultural values of participants/speakers.

1.5. Plan of the Study

After some basic information, in the next section, on the village
where I conducted my fieldwork, and on other kinds of fono not
discussed in this study, I provide in Chapter Two a summary of the
methods employed in this research and the nature and scope of the
data collected. This chapter is intended both as an overview of
methods and data base for the study of the fono presented in
Chapters Three to Seven and as the necessary background information
for Chapter Eight, where the consequences of different data collection
procedures (recording of spontaneous speech versus elicitation) are
considered.

In Chapter Three, I introduce the fono as a social event. After
a brief illustration of the different uses of the term 'fono', I
discuss the purposes, the participants, and other crucial features of
the event.

The main actors of the social event are introduced through an
exegesis of the fa'alupega or ceremonial greeting of the village.
In so doing, I refer to both the social, expected roles and to the
personalities of the key participants, offering, in some instances,
my own perspective on them. A concise summary of the events leading
up to the meetings I attended and recorded exemplifies the type of
crisis dealt with in a fono. This summary provides necessary context
for understanding the linguistic interaction discussed in subsequent
chapters.

Chapter Four contains a detailed discussion of the interaction
between verbal and non-verbal aspects of the social event. It
implements the Dependency Hypothesis by showing that *sequential order
of speakers* and *choice of speech genre* in fono are related to and can
be partially predicted in terms of the following aspects of the social

event: (a) the seating arrangement of chiefs and orators inside the
fono house; (b) the number of subvillages represented in the meeting;
(c) the order of kava distribution in the beginning kava ceremony;
(d) the subvillage with which speaker's title is associated;
(e) status and rank of potential speakers; (f) the topic of the agenda
of the meeting.

Chapter Five discusses the concept of a speech event as a discrete
unit. Goffman's notion of *boundary marker* is evaluated and applied to
the fono. I demonstrate that the kava ceremony marks the opening and
sometimes the closing of fono, based on a detailed comparison of
conversational norms, and lexical, morpho-syntactic and prosodic
features of Samoan before and after the kava ceremony. Further, I
show that while openings are well defined, closings are gradual and
negotiable. Future research will establish the extent to which this
feature characterises different speech events and the type of event
so characterised.

While Chapter Five discusses how language varies from one speech
event to the next as boundaries are crossed, Chapter Six examines
how language varies within the same speech event as speakers move from
one genre of discourse to the next. While Chapter Five focusses on
those features of language that cut across the fono and distinguish it
from other events, Chapter Six examines features that distinguish two
types of oratory, called lāuga and talanoaga within a fono. The
native distinction between the two genres is viewed as a homology of
the contrast between two sets of concepts and values in Samoan
society. Harmony, agreement and shared views are represented by the
ceremonial style of the lāuga, a highly structured and predictable
speech. Conflict, disagreement and personal interests are represented
by the talanoaga, a discussion-like speech that is less convention-
alised and less predictable and consequently perhaps more a threat to
established social hierarchies. The chapter closes with a discussion
of the way in which participants in this event can invoke one or the
other set of values by shifting from one genre to the other.

Chapter Seven examines yet another aspect of language variation.
It considers one genre, lāuga, as it varies across different social
events. I demonstrate that features of this genre vary as components
of speech events change. Four components are particularly important
in shaping lāuga: (1) the purposes of events, (2) the sequential
location of the lāuga within events, (3) the participants (status and
rank of speaker, addressee and audience), and (4) the keys in which the
lāuga should be performed and interpreted (Hymes 1972, 1974). With

respect to keys, I discuss how lāuga are affected by the extent to
which their delivery is conceived as performance of traditional
oratorical skill. I use here Bauman's (1977) notion of verbal art as
a domain of performance.

Chapter Eight takes a step back from (or a step beyond) the fono
to discuss the implications of the ethnographic method in general and
speech event analysis in particular for linguistic research. This
chapter is in effect a study of variation of much subtler sort, that
found across corpora of data collected by the linguist. Parallel to
the well-known effect of the observer upon the observed, I indicate
ways in which language corpora vary according to data collection
methodology. Two important methods, that of direct elicitation and
that of observation/recording of spontaneous speech, are contrasted
in terms of the Samoan structures that each 'produce'. The chapter
emphasises that the activity of collecting linguistic data (e.g. the
formal interview between linguist and native speaker) is itself a
social event, with cultural expectations that will constrain the
language used. With respect to Samoan, I show that elicited Samoan
is not equivalent to formal Samoan (or to informal Samoan). Rather,
the Samoan elicited is the register appropriate to speaking to
foreigners. I examine phonological, semantic and syntactic variation
across different social events (namely, interview, conversation,
fono). The discussion of the various grammatical features indicates
that observational and descriptive adequacy is best achieved by
incorporating the ethnographic approach into the linguist's
repertoire of data collection procedures.

1.6. The Village

The research on which this study is based was conducted during a
one year period (July 1978 to July 1979) in the village of Falefā,
on the island of Upolu, in Western Samoa (see Map 1.1). Falefā is
located eighteen miles east of Apia, the capital. Historically and
politically - as we shall see in the discussion of the participants
in a fono (Chapter Three) - the village is strictly related to three
other villages: Falevao, situated about two miles inland, and the two
villages of Sauano (or Sauago) and Saletele, along the coast of the
Fagaloa Bay (see Map 1.2).

A paved road connects Falefā to Apia and to Falevao, but the road
to Sauano and Saletele is made of dirt which becomes thick mud in any
heavy storm, a frequent weather condition in the tropical climate of
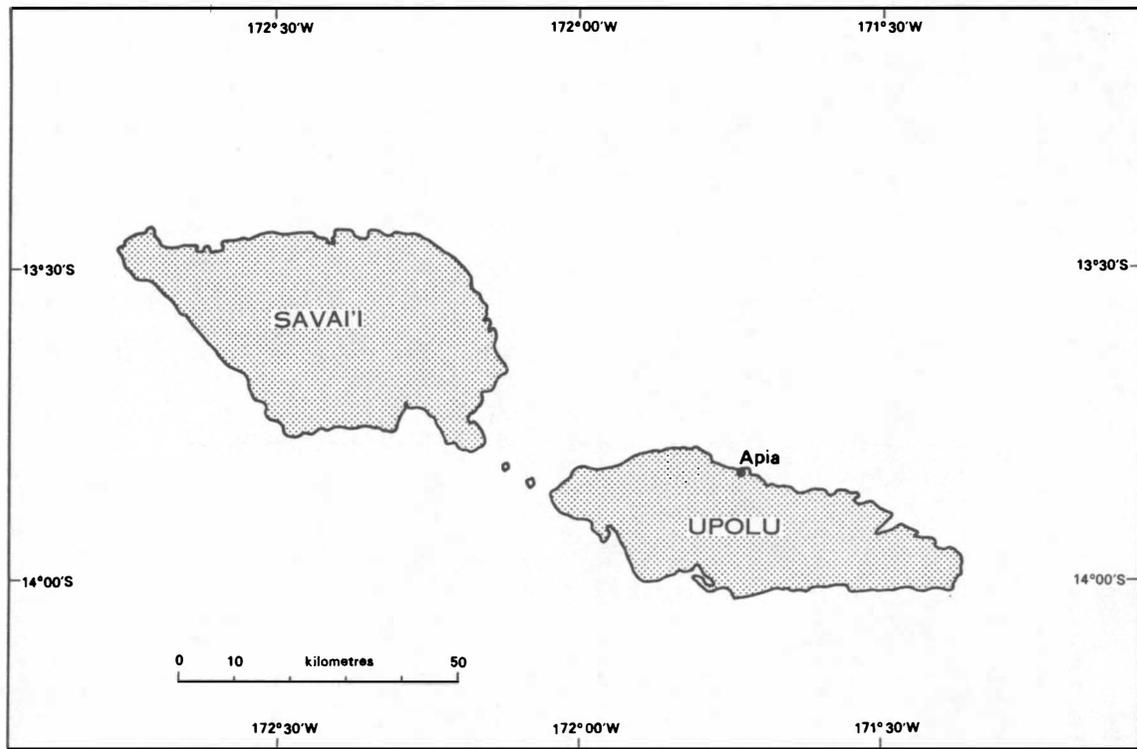
Map 1.1. Western Samoa
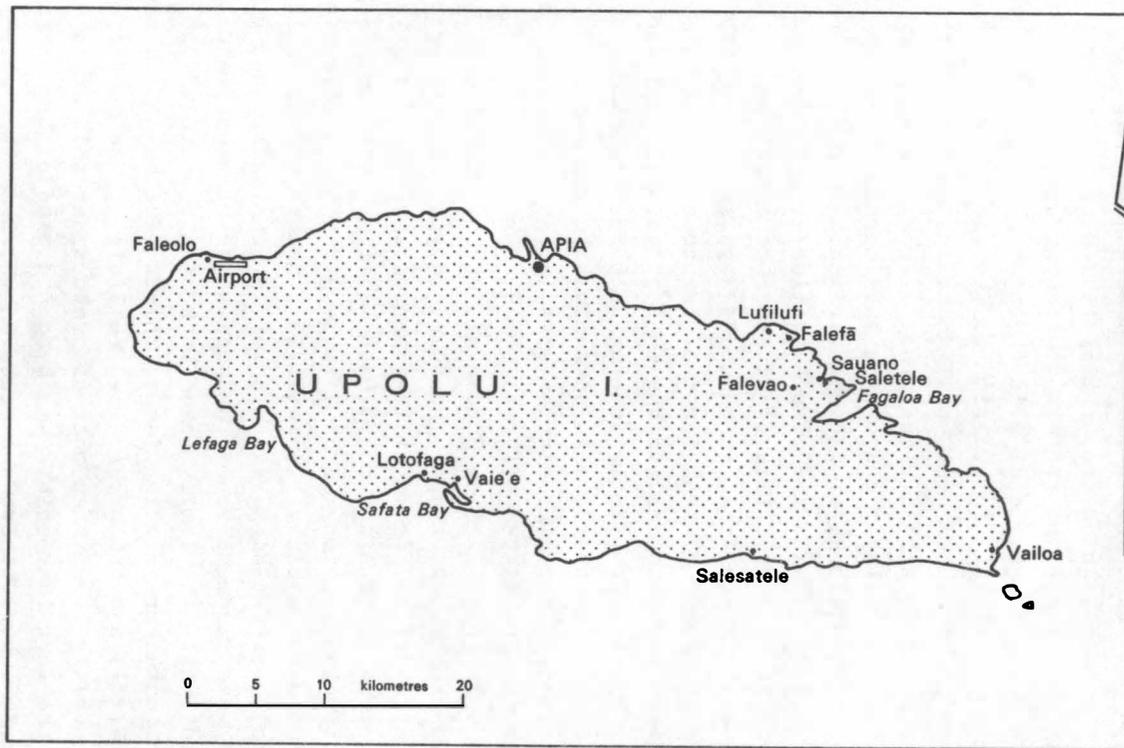
Map 1.2. Upolu Island

the Samoan Islands. This makes communication between Falefā and the
two villages in the Fagaloa Bay more difficult than between Falefā
and Falevao.

A daily bus service connects Falefā to Apia, but given the irregular
schedule of the buses, which are usually filled up at the very begin-
ning of their run, those who want to go to Apia or to some other part
of the island often ask for a lift in the many pick-up trucks that
pass through the village. In addition to the people who go to Apia
weekdays for work or school or to sell goods in the market, the rest
of the villagers go to Apia at least once a week, for shopping or to
go to the movies, usually at one of the late morning or early afternoon
shows. After five o'clock, it becomes difficult to find a cheap way
back to the village - taxis are always available, but the fare from
Apia to Falefā is about six tala (equivalent to almost ten US dollars).

The frequent trips to Apia, which are always an opportunity to meet
friends or relatives from other parts of the country, together with
the several weekly newspapers and the public radio (in addition to the
daily news, a special program is devoted to more personal messages
from one village to another), make communication generally easy, and
people are informed about important events in the country and about
more local or family-related affairs.

Falefā is a large village by Samoan standards, with a population
of about 1200 people. Of these, about 100 adults, almost exclusively
men, hold a matai title. A matai is a person who has been given a
title by the members of his family (both matai and untitled people)
gathered in special session. Such a title gives the holder a number
of privileges in the society. A matai is a member of the village
council (fono), has decision-making power in both family and village
affairs, can vote for members of the National Parliament, and owns a
piece of land (which the family takes back at his death). Two
categories of matai are distinguished: chiefs (called ali'i, short
form for tamāli'i) and orators (called tulāfale). The number of
chiefs is generally lower than that of orators and this seems
parallel to the fact that chiefs are by definition of higher status
than orators. However, there are cases in which particularly
prestigious orator titles can, on some occasions, outrank medium or
lower rank chiefs.

In addition to chiefs and orators, two Matua are also present in
Falefā. As I will explain in Chapter Three, although referred to and
addressed with many of the terms used for orators, the holders of the

two Matua titles have a special status somewhat in-between chiefs and orators, but sometimes above both groups.

People live either in traditional Samoan houses with no walls (fale Sāmoa) (see Fig. 1.1) or in Western-style houses with wooden walls (fale papalagi) (see Fig. 1.1). Houses are often grouped together in a family compound, typically comprising a house in which people sit during the day and sleep at night, a cooking house (umu kuka) (see Fig. 1.2), and an outhouse (fale'ese). A family compound can include one or more nuclear families (father, mother and children) related by blood and/or marriage. Untitled people (tauleie'a) do most of the hard work involved in cultivation, food preparation and household maintenance. Young untitled men are also in charge of serving the matai when social engagements require it. The untitled men are also in charge of cutting the grass in the malae, the traditional ceremonial ground, nowadays almost exclusively used for playing cricket.

During the morning, children over five are sent to the village elementary school, while the younger ones stay around the house or accompany their mother or older siblings on errands.[5] Women either stay home to take care of infants or go to work - in the plantation or on the coral reef to collect food, or in the capital department stores or offices.

Matai do not spend much time in the house. When they do not have a regular job in the capital (traditionally matai should not work) or are not engaged in village or family affairs, they spend their time chatting with other matai, in small groups, sometimes drinking kava, other times playing cards at someone's house or billiards at (one of) the village pool halls (fale piliati).

1.7. Different Kinds of Fono

There are several different kinds of fono in Samoan society. The fono I will describe and discuss in this study are meetings specially called for discussing some particularly important matter for the community at large, usually involving the respectability of one or more of the leading members of the village. As I will explain in Chapter Three, only matai participate in this kind of fono; in fact the right (and duty) of participation in such meetings is one of the defining features of matai status.

In addition to the *ad hoc,* special meetings discussed in this study, there are several other kinds of meetings (at times also

1.1. Traditional Samoan house with thatched roof
     and no walls (on the left) and western style
     house with walls and windows (on the right).

1.2. Young untitled woman peeling a breadfruit in front of a cook house.

1.3. Bananas for sale.

called 'fono') of matai or other people in the village who meet on a
more or less regular basis.

There are, for instance, fono komiti fafine *women's committee
meetings*, where the women of the village (who are organised in
parallel fashion to their husbands' and fathers' titles and ranks)
get together to plan and discuss public health projects or the
organisation of mat production in the village.

Another type of fono is the fono o tupua ma le aumaga, in which
the untitled men talk about the organisation of work that is needed
for the activities of the titled men and practice speech-making.

Finally a kind of fono that is very close to the kind discussed
here, but must be distinguished from it, it the fono o le pulenu'u
fono of the pulenu'u. The pulenu'u, lit. *(the one who) rules* (pule)
the village (nu'u) - is a matai chosen by the other matai to be the
link between the village and the central government. He is like a
mayor, but his power is usually more nominal than real, given that
the range of his influence is highly constrained by other (more
powerful) figures in the village council.

It is often in a fono o le pulenu'u that problems are first
brought to the attention of the assembly of matai and decisions taken
on whether to call a special meeting or not.

The characteristics of the fono I will describe in this study are
the ones that I have observed in the *one* village of Falefā and I am
aware that certain variation exists from one village to another and
from one island to another. Although some variation should be
predictable on the basis of the social structure of a particular
place (e.g. whether it is *one* village with no further subdivisions or
a conglomerate of several subvillages), other features may be
idiosyncratic. Only further research in other locations in the
country (ideally to be done by Samoans themselves), combined with the
already available literature (cf. Mead 1930; Keesing and Keesing 1956;
Freeman 1978; Shore 1977), will provide the necessary information for
a detailed comparative analysis of Samoan fono, the most important
social event in a Samoan village.

1. I have followed hereafter the convention of using Artesan only for the first occurrence of frequently used Samoan terms (e.g. fono, matai).

2. Some of these components are taken from Jakobson (1960) and others from Burke (1945).

3.   'My own quite tentative, belief is that there is an autonomous
        system of formal grammar, determined in principle by the
        language faculty and its component U[niversal] G[rammar]. This
        formal grammar generates abstract structures that are associated
        with "logical forms"...by further principles of grammar.'
        (Chomsky 1975:43)

The essays collected in Culicover, Wasow, and Akmajian (1977) represent examples of this kind of approach to the study of linguistic forms.

4. cf. Goffman (1974:10):

        'The term "strip" will be used to refer to any arbitrary slice
        or cut from the stream of ongoing activity, including here
        sequences of happenings, real or fictive, as seen from the
        perspective of those subjectively involved in sustaining an
        interest in them. A strip is not meant to reflect a natural
        division made by the subjects of inquiry or an analytical
        division made by students who inquire; it will be used only
        to refer to any raw batch of occurrences (of whatever status
        in reality) that one wants to draw attention to as a starting
        point for analysis.'

It should be clear from my working definition of social event that I mean here only a subset of what Goffman calls 'strips', namely, those for which the subjects of inquiry do make a 'natural distinction'.

5. On the distribution of child-caregiving, see Ochs (1980a).

CHAPTER TWO

Methodology, Data Base, Transcription Conventions

2.1. Methods

The research on which this study is based was carried out between July 1978 and July 1979 in the village of Falefā, on the island of Upolu, in Western Samoa. I will list below the methods that I used for collecting and analysing ethnographic and linguistic material.

2.1.1. Direct Participant Observation of Everyday Village Life

This includes informal contexts such as casual conversation with neighbours, the people who worked for our research project, shop-keepers, etc., as well as more formal and ceremonial settings such as formal visits, funerals, weddings, and church services.

A point must be made about 'participant observation'. Although the researcher in the field never completely stops observing (and, from the natives' point of view, never stops being an outsider), there are times in which one can observe less. In my experience, those times were typically situations in which I was expected to be an active participant. If I had to concentrate on a speech I might be asked to give any second, or on the proper way to handle an economic transaction, I could not observe as much as I could have, had I been just one of the crowd, without any immediate and public commitment other than sitting properly in the right place. The more active my role in any event the more difficult it would be for me to remember specific details of the interaction (e.g., where a certain person was sitting, who had been served food last, whether someone had spoken in the t/n pronunciation [cf. Chapter Eight] etc.). In this respect, the fono were ideal settings for observing. Once I learned where to sit so as not to be served kava and thereby disturb the order of the kava distribution I was interested in studying, I could easily sit for

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hours through a meeting, knowing that no one would pay any attention
to me until the meeting was over. In a fono, the rules about who
should speak when and how were so strictly observed that there would
be no opportunity for speaking to me, the palagi. In a less formal
setting, like a friend's house, people would be more likely to switch
back and forth between talking to each other and talking to me.
Although my sitting quietly in the house might momentarily encourage
people to ignore my presence, there would always be the possibility
for a topic in their conversation to invite my participation. There
were also times when I would decide to enter the conversation. On
these occasions, people would always attend to my speech, even in the
first months, when my Samoan was still shaky.

  While attending a fono, I took notes of those aspects of the
interaction that I thought might turn out to be important for future
analysis. Thus, for instance, I drew maps of people's position in
the house, also marking movements of participants from one place to
another. I noted at which point people arrived. This could be done
either by using the three digit number shown in the running tape
recorder (e.g., 078 - Iuli arrives and sits next to Moe'ono) or by
noting the actual time of arrival (e.g., 8:45 Iuli arrives).

2.1.2. Audio-Recording of Spontaneous Verbal Interaction in a Number of Settings

  By spontaneous I mean interaction that originated independently
from my interest in recording speech. Obviously, once one has started
recording and the people present are aware of this, the very fact of
recording can influence their interaction in a number of ways. As I
have mentioned above (2.1.1), the more formal the setting, the more
natural it would be for people to ignore my presence, unless I was
expected to be an active participate (which was not the case in fono).
In casual settings, although I would often stay quiet and let people
get into their own topics and discussion for as long as possible, I
would not, of course, discourage people from talking to me when they
showed such an inclination.

2.1.3. Elicitation of Linguistic Material in Informant Sessions

  At the beginning, elicitation work was conducted exclusively with
bilingual speakers, using English as the metalanguage. Later on,
when my Samoan had improved, I would alternate between Samoan and
English, according to the circumstances. During informant sessions,

I used to collect sentences from a traditional checklist prepared for typological comparison, have native speakers read from worklists, and ask their opinions (intuitions) about certain structures I had found in the transcripts of spontaneous interaction. (See Chapter Eight for a discussion of the consequences for adopting this methodology.)

2.1.4. Informal Interview with Village Matai

These interviews ranged over a number of topics such as the structure of a ceremonial speech and background information on the fono I recorded. Several of these interviews were recorded on tape. However, when I felt that the presence of the tape recorder would have particularly affected the content of the discussion, I either took notes during the interview or wrote a report in my field notes subsequently. Most of these discussions were conducted in Samoan, a few of them in English. As I will discuss in 2.2, most of the recorded interviews were not transcribed in loco. This is in large part because matai did not like the idea of anyone else, especially untitled people, listening to what they had told me about the traditions aganu'u or about local politics. This made it difficult to find socially appropriate persons to help me transcribe. Very often, the person I had talked to was unavailable or unsuitable for transcribing. Generally, however, since I was the one who had conducted the interview and raised most issues, it was not too difficult for me to understand the content of an interview and I could do so without the help of a native speaker, especially when my proficiency in Samoan had improved.

2.1.5. Transcription of Audio Material

This was done first by trained native speakers who knew the speakers in the recorded material and shared most of the background information necessary for understanding the interaction. Young untitled people could not transcribe fono interaction because their knowledge of the language variety used and of the issues discussed was not adequate. For this reason, only matai were asked to transcribe tapes of fono and of various ceremonial occasions (e.g., paolo, saofa'i). Young untitled people were very helpful for different kinds of recording, such as a night-time conversation among youth about the latest movie or a recent fight in the village.[1] After the first transcription of a tape had been made, I would listen to the tape alone, checking its accuracy. Later, I would relisten

to the tape with the person who had transcribed it and discuss
particular parts that my ear had heard differently. This would also
be the time for discussing the content of the tape, especially those
passages and words I did not understand.

2.1.6. Interpretation of the Fono Speeches and of the Events Behind Them

Considerable work was necessary to understand meaning and import
of metaphors and idiomatic expressions used by the participants in a
fono. Very often, it was necessary to have access to the history of
the events that had culminated in a meeting. For this kind of
information, I would talk with someone who had participated in the
meeting and who also had an important role in the events that were
being discussed. In some cases, I was fortunate enough to get the
person who had given a certain speech to give me an interpretation of
what he was trying to accomplish.

The recording of several fono over a continuous period of time
(between January and April 1979) seemed an indispensable prerequisite
for a good exegesis of the fono transcripts. The issues discussed in
each fono were always somewhat related to what had been discussed in
the prior ones, and this allowed me, after a while, to formulate
hypotheses and pose clearer questions to some of the participants.
In some cases, I asked a matai who could speak English to translate a
whole section of a fono for me and subsequently I would go over his
translation and mark the points that were still obscure or where the
translation seemed too far removed from the Samoan text. After this
phase, I would go back and ask the same matai who had translated the
text to explain the points that I thought unclear. This was also an
opportunity to get people's reactions to a particular speech and to
ways of saying things. I would often ask questions such as 'Is it
appropriate for the speaker to say this at this point?' or 'Can you
use this expression for this other purpose?'. When I would be given
a piece of information that I judged to be important - it could be
about a ceremony, past events in the village, the meaning of a
metaphor - I would always check with more than one person. In this
way, I not only acquired an idea of the extent of shared information
in the community, but also avoided some misunderstanding about what
people had told me the first time.

2.1.7. Field Notes

The information collected in the course of interviews or interpretation sessions were hand recorded in one of a number of files (e.g., 'ceremonial greetings', 'order of kava distribution', 'village organisation').

2.1.8. Journal

From the very beginning of my stay, I kept a journal of my experience, recording my first impressions of a certain place I had seen or of a certain person I had met. Later on, when I started collecting field notes, what I had noted down in the journal could turn out to be valuable for obtaining a fuller picture of a given aspect of the culture.

2.1.9. Photographic Documentation

In addition to photographs taken of daily life and children's activities for Elinor Ochs' project on the acquisition of language and culture (see Introduction), I also collected photographic documentation of ceremonial occasions such as saofa'i. With two or three exceptions, I did not take pictures of the fono I attended and audio recorded.

2.2. The Data

A total of sixtysix hours of audio material was recorded. Of these, twenty-nine and a half hours were transcribed in loco by trained native speakers. Table 2.1 illustrates the various types of settings in which audiotapes were made and the amount, for each setting, that was transcribed in loco. A total of eight fono over a period of four months (January to April 1979) were recorded. The tapes of seven fono were completely transcribed in loco by native speakers, whom I had trained in the transcription conventions (e.g., to write down exactly what people said and not what they should have said, to mark overlap, etc.). For the analysis of various linguistic features, my data were supplemented by the extensive recording conducted by Elinor Ochs and Martha Platt in the households of six families in the village: one hundred and twenty-eight hours of audio and forty hours of video recording.[2] These recordings, made for the main purpose of documenting language acquisition and the interaction between children and caretakers, are also rich material for analysing

TABLE 2.1

Duration and Content of Audio-Recorded Material

Setting	Hours Recorded	Hours Transcribed
Fono (including some talk before and after the meeting)	16:00	14:30
Ceremonies (e.g., saofa'i, malaga)	11:00	5:00
Conversation among matai (non-fono)	4:00	3:00
Conversation among untitled people (i.e., young men)	2:00	1:00
Women's meeting	2:00	1:00
Conversation among women (while weeding)	1:00	1:00
Church services and church activities (e.g., meetings of youth organisation)	7:00	1:00
Radio broadcasting	3:00	1:00
Informal interviews with matai in Samoan	13:00	2:00
Informal interviews with matai in English	5:00	-
Informal interviews with untitled people	2:00	-
Total	66:00	29:30

adult language, given the frequent presence in the houses of older siblings and adult relatives of the children.

2.3. Transcription Conventions

In transcribing Samoan, I have used conventional Samoan orthography (cf. Milner 1966). The apostrophe (') stands for a glottal stop (fo'i /fo?i/, 'ese'ese /?ese?ese/) and the letter g for a velar nasal (magumagu /maŋumaŋu/, galo /ŋalo/, talanoaga /talanoaŋa/). A macron on a vowel indicates length, although phonemically long vowels should be considered as two identical vowels, e.g. lāuga /laauŋa/ → [la:uŋa],

mālō /maaloo/ → [ma:lo:] (cf. Pawley 1966). Samoan exhibits two
phonological varieties (cf. also Kernan 1974, Milner 1966, Shore 1977).
In the written language, as well as in some registers of the spoken
language (e.g. school instructions, church sermons and prayers, radio
broadcasting, etc.), Samoan has an opposition between /t/ and /k/,
and between /n/ and /ŋ/ (written g), e.g. tī *tea* and kī *key*, and ana
cave and aga (/aŋa/) *conduct*. In the spoken language, in both formal
and informal settings, those words that have a t in the written are
pronounced with a k in its place and those words that have an n are
pronounced with a g in its place, e.g. both *tea* and *key* are pronounced
kī (/kii/) and both *cave* and *conduct* are pronounced aga (/aŋa/)
(cf. Chapter 8).

I will keep with the tradition by writing words out of context in
the t/n pronunciation, which should then be considered as the
conventional citation form. However, I will leave the k/g
pronunciation in the transcription when that was the original way in
which words were pronounced by the Samoan speakers.

My transcription of Samoan in the various texts presented in this
study is a compromise between a phonemic and a phonetic one. I have
not marked certain redundant features such as geminate consonants
unless discussing gemination, and at the same time I have not marked
glottal stops and long vowels where I did not hear them.

The tapes of all the transcripts presented in this study were
relistened to for the purpose of obtaining the most accurate
transcription amd making them homogeneous in terms of the conventions
used. I have adopted a version of the conventions of Conversation
Analysis (cf. the Appendix in Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson 1974).
The double solidus (//) indicates the point at which the speaker's
talk is overlapped by another participant's. This convention is
usually accompanied by a long single bracket at the point of overlap,
with the utterance of the intervening party placed beneath. Talk
between parentheses ( ) indicates uncertainty of transcription. This
could mean a number of things, namely, that the Samoan person who
transcribed the tape was not sure, that I was not sure, or that the
Samoan transcriber and I had different opinions on what the speaker
had said and no agreement could be reached. In the latter case, I
have also used the convention of writing the two versions one on the
top of the other, with mine on the top and the native speaker's on the
bottom. Empty parentheses indicate that no reasonable guess was
possible. Double parentheses contain extralinguistic information,
e.g., ((laughing)).

Numbers between parentheses indicate the duration of pauses, e.g. (1.5) means 1½ seconds, (0.4) means $^4/_{10}$ of a second, etc. Three periods ... indicate a non-timed pause. Three periods between parentheses (...) indicate that part of the original transcript has been omitted.

Translations vary in quality and spirit according to the discussion of the moment. When analysing speech from a purely syntactic point of view, I have been inclined to be more 'literal' in my translations. When discussing the language of oratory, on the other hand, I have tried to reproduce part of the metaphorical flavour of the Samoan expressions. Obviously, to understand Samoan metaphors and proverbs means to understand Samoan culture, and I often had to sacrifice form and beauty for the sake of brevity.

1. Usually I would let people know that I was recording, either by asking their permission or by making sure that the tape recorder was visible (although not too much in their way). However, in a few cases, I made audiotapes of people conversing without telling them. With one or two exceptions, I subsequently let people know that their speech in a given situation had been recorded. These recordings made without revealing the presence of the tape recorder were used to estimate the influence of the awareness of the tape recorder in those situations in which people did know their speech was being taped.

2. I actually participated in the video recording of three of the six families in the project and this gave me further opportunities to witness family interaction and a use of language quite different from that found in matai gatherings.

CHAPTER THREE
THE FONO AS A SOCIAL EVENT

3.1. Introduction

The Samoan word fono has a variety of related meanings. It can be used to refer to the whole body of village matai – both chiefs and orators – as a juridical and legislative institution (e.g. 'ave i le fono *take (it) to the fono*, an expression similar to the English *take it to court*); to the actual event of the village matai getting together to take a certain decision (e.g., fai le fono? *is there going to be a fono?*); to the act of getting together for a fono (e.g. tātou fono *let us meet [in a fono]*).

In this chapter I will provide some basic background information on various aspects of fono. Unless otherwise clear from the context, I will speak of 'a' fono when I refer to the event, and 'the' fono when I refer to the body of matai that constitute the social institution.

As said in 2.3, there are different kinds of fono (cf. also Larkin 1971, Shore 1977), the ones I discuss in this study being the most comprehensive in terms of the matai who participate in them (namely, any matai in the village can attend) and the most serious in terms of the offenses and problems dealt with.

In 3.2 I illustrate the way in which Samoans themselves see a fono, that is, as a necessary process through which to maintain or re-establish village harmony and the dignity of village leaders. In section 3.3 I introduce the various parts or factions of the fono by explaining the meaning of a shortened version of the village fa'alupega or ceremonial greeting. In section 3.4 I give a short summary of the origin of the crisis that underlay all the fono I recorded. In section 3.5 various types of fono are distinguished in terms of participants and purposes.

3.2. The Purpose of a Fono

Perhaps the best way to explain what a fono is about is to recount a personal experience in the village, during which I was given an insight into the nature of the event by a Samoan matai.

When a fono lasted more than a couple of hours, it would be difficult for a pālagi like me to sit cross-legged for all that time. Despite my attempt to appear accustomed to the Samoan way of sitting, sometimes I had to allow my public image to suffer and get up to stretch my aching legs. Although I always tried to leave the house quietly, the tape recorder left running behind me, someone would invariably whisper to me 'Are you leaving?'. I would answer 'No' and point to my legs, saying they were hurting. Some of the matai around me would smile and perhaps one of them would say, 'His legs hurt. Alesana is not used to it' (Kigā oga vae. E le masagi Alesaga). Another one might confirm with a more general statement: 'Yes, pālagi are not used to it'.

One of those times, I found a few matai sitting outside on mats laid on the terrace behind the house. Given the silence of the village at that time of the morning and the absence of walls, it was possible from outside to follow the discussion inside the house.

After walking around for a couple of minutes, I sat down on the edge of the terrace. Coming from inside the house, I could hear the powerful voice of an orator, who sounded upset. When I asked the matai next to me what was going on, he answered 'Keukeu'. 'Keukeu?' I repeated, and he confirmed 'Ioe. Keukeu le gu'u'.

If asked what teuteu (keukeu) means, a Samoan would probably answer fa'amānaia, that is *make beautiful* (from mānaia *beautiful* and the causative prefix fa'a-). Thus, for instance, one finds the word teuteu used in expressions such as teuteu le vao. Vao is the bush, as well as the high grass and weeds that grow in front of the houses (Milner 1966:313), and it must be cut every so often by the young untitled men. Teuteu le vao contrasts with other expressions such as sasa le vao *cut the grass* in that it implies a series of operations that must be accomplished in order to make the land look beautiful: collect the fallen leaves, cut the grass, and burn it. Another synonym of teuteu is fa'amamā *to clean up*.

The word teuteu is clearly related to teu, of which it is the reduplicated form. Teu as a noun means *a bouquet of cut flowers* (Milner 1966:262), like those that Samoan girls take to school to decorate their classrooms. As a verb teu means *put something in order* (cf. also the discussion of this term in Shore 1977:161).

How does the word **teuteu** relate to what the matai do in a fono?
What did the man mean when he said 'keukeu le gu'u' - *'cleaning up
the village, making it beautiful'*?

A fono is called either when a breach of some social norm has taken
place or when one is anticipated. Such a breach, either actual or
potential, creates a crisis in which the harmony of village life is
disrupted. The ideal mutual love (**fealofani**) of the members of the
community is suspended. The beautiful village becomes like the **vao**,
the bush or forest, where tall grass and weeds grow, where men can
misbehave away from the eyes of social institutions and social
control.[1] The convocation of a special session of the fono is the
attempt to make life orderly and more predictable, to cut the weeds,
the bad feelings, and to make the village beautiful again.

It is important to realise here that the actions that lead to a
fono may not be considered offenses (or threats) to the social order
for the community at large until the fono discusses it. That is to
say, at any given time, there are a number of intended or accomplished
moves that are potential sources of trouble. However, the trouble is
recognised as such by the whole community only when the responsible
mechanism enters into play and the potential or effective sources of
the conflict are verbally defined and acknowledged. Thus, in addition
to an attitude towards the breaking of the law as an attempt to test
the strength and validity of the system, a mechanism provocatively
analysed by Shore (1977), there are also attempts to create a crisis
out of acts that are not necessarily serious breaches of the norms,
but are defined as such by a leading group or by an important member
of the fono.

The decision to bring a given issue to the attention of the fono is
itself part of a much more complex succession of events that must be
understood by taking a step back from the proceedings of a particular
meeting. Even to the participants themselves there are always several
levels of interpretation and understanding of what is really going on
in the discussion in a fono. The overall feeling that however painful
and difficult for some individuals, a fono is needed by the whole
community at large is what makes a fono a creative and important
process through which a Samoan community continuously looks for and
finds its own identity.

3.3. The Actors: Interpreting the Ceremonial Greeting

I will introduce the actors of the social event called a fono by
discussing the **fa'alupega**, or ceremonial greeting, of Falefā.

The best and most concise definition of a **fa'alupega** is probably
that given by Mead in her *Social Organisation of Manu'a*:

> Fa'alupega is the arrangement of phrases of ceremonial
> recognition to the fono itself and to special names or
> special categories in which numbers of names are arranged
> which must be recited at the opening of any fono, large or
> small. (Mead 1930:10)

Each matai title in Samoa has its own form of ceremonial address,
that is, certain phrases that refer to some historical event or special
attribute or the ancient - and by now mythical - character from whom
the title originated. In Falefā, it is the combination of the
fa'alupega of the most important titles in each subvillage that makes
longer versions of the **fa'alupega** of the whole village. The form and
content of the **fa'alupega**, as has been stressed by several authors
(cf. Mead 1930, Shore 1977), varies - and it is expected to vary -
from one situation to another, according to the people who are present
and the purpose of the gathering. In fact, it is only within the
first speech in a fono that we can find the most elaborated and
complete version of the whole village's ceremonial address (see
Chapter 6). Otherwise, on any other occasion, whether a public
ceremony or a private visit to a matai's house, reduced versions
would be appropriate. Here I will only discuss a condensed version
(with a few variations) of Falefā's **fa'alupega** that will allow me to
introduce the most important and basic distinctions made in the village
social structure and its symbolic representation in the fono. Some of
the names discussed in this section will be found in many of the
examples of fono speeches that I will analyse in other parts of this
study.

3.3.1. Short Version of Falefā's Fa'alupega

Disregarding the various possible phrases of introduction that we
may find before the mention of any of the following phrases (cf.
Chapter 7), the basic structure of Falefā's **fa'alupega** (in one of its
most common versions) is the following:

<div align="center">Version A</div>

(i)   ... 'Āiga
         ... *Family [of chiefs]*

(ii)   ma Aloali'i
         and Sons of chief(s)

(iii)   'oulua Matua
you two Matua

(iv)   ma (le tofi fa'asolo i)
and (the various positions of)

tagata o le Tuiatua
Tuiatua's people.

I will now examine each phrase and provide an appropriate interpretation:

(i) 'Āiga. This term, which literally means *family*, in the sense of the traditional Samoan extended family, refers to all the chiefs (tamāli'i) of Falefā.[2]

Although the term 'Āiga refers to *all* the chiefs in Falefā, distinctions of rank must be made among them. As we shall see, these distinctions are important for understanding the organisation of the meetings and the roles of different individuals participating in them. Thus, each of the four subvillages of Falefā has one chief - or, rather, one chief title[3] - that is considered higher than all other chiefs in the same subvillage. Furthermore, the four highest chiefs are also ranked with respect to one another, with Leutele as the highest, followed by Lealaisalanoa, and then by Alai'a-sā and Suluvave. Figure 3.1 illustrates the relationship between high chiefs and subvillages.

As I will discuss in Chapter Six, the rules of a fono say that a representative of 'Āiga, possibly the highest of the chiefs present, should speak toward the end of a fono and give the assembly the opinion of the chiefs.

FALEFĀ

Subvillage: 1. SAGAPOLU 2. SALEAPAGA   3. GAGA'EMALAE 4. SANONU

High chief: 1. Leutele 2. Lealaisalanoa 3. Alai'a-sā 4. Suluvave
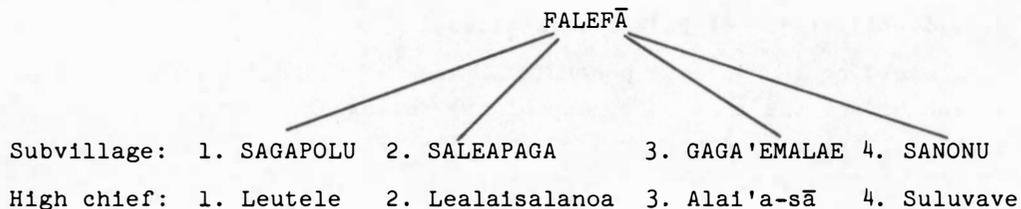
Figure 3.1. Subdivision of Falefā into four subvillages, each with its highest chief

At the meetings that I recorded, since neither one of the two co-holders of the title Leutele was ever present, the holder of the title Lealaisalanoa usually spoke as a representative of 'Āiga.

(11) **Aloali'i.** This word literally means *son(s) of chief* and refers to two chief titles: Muagututi'a (see Note 2), and Luafalemana, who, according to Kraemer (1902), is the ancestor of the Matā'afa family, one of the three great families of Samoa, the other two being Malietoa's and Tupua's (cf. Freeman 1964). Except for the privilege of being served the last cup in a kava ceremony, I am aware of no special right or duty of the holders of these two titles, which must have had some special status in the past to justify their independent mention in the village **fa'alupega**. At the time of my stay in Falefā, the holders of the Aloali'i titles did not seem to have a particularly active role in the political life of the village. It was difficult for me to establish whether this was due to the personalities of the particular individuals who were holding Aloali'i titles.

(iii) **'Oulua Matua.** The phrase **'oulua Matua**, literally *you two Matua*, refers to the two senior orators Iuli and Moe'ono (shortened form of Moe'ono'ono). The title of Matua, which is found in a few other villages throughout the country (e.g., the village of Sala'ilua described by Shore 1977), gives a special status to its holder, as will become clear in the discussion of various phases of a fono. Although Iuli and Moe'ono are considered orators (**tulāfale**), as opposed to chiefs (**tamāli'i**), they share several attributes and rights of the chiefs, and, in fact, are thought of as having a status and social function in between **'Āiga** (see [i] above) and the body of orators (see [iv] below).

The term **Matua** is interpreted by Samoans as meaning *parent*, despite the fact that the word for parent is in fact pronounced (and spelled) with a long ā, i.e. **mātua**.[4] Moe'ono is often addressed in fono speeches, as 'the father of the village'.

The holders of the titles Iuli and Moe'ono are the only ones who can call or postpone a fono. Each of them can act as the public prosecutor if a matai's crime is being discussed. Moe'ono is, in many respects, what we would call the chairman of the meeting. He is the one who opens the discussion, invites certain people or groups to speak, instructs the matai who are in charge to start the kava ceremony, can declare the meeting concluded. Both Matua have the right to scold publicly any member of the fono who has misbehaved or committed a serious offense. They can raise the volume of their voices and be angry (**ita**). They can also, more than others, speak in the first person and say what *they* think or want. Finally, they constantly monitor the interaction and etiquette followed in a fono, to make sure that things are done according to tradition.

Moe'ono and Iuli are, respectively, Leutele's and Lealaisalanoa's main orators. This may in part explain their important role in fono, as well as in the political scene at large, but there is more than that at stake. In my own experience, and particularly from the analysis of the transcripts of the several meetings I recorded in Falefā, the power of the two Matua seems much beyond that of any other orator in the village and, more interestingly, at times even beyond the power of 'Āiga (traditionally of higher status than the body of orators). At the time of my stay, the two holders of the Matua titles represented, in many respects, the leading forces in village politics, and by means of their rivalry they created a continuous stream of energy that shaped the social life of the community. Such a competition between Iuli and Moe'ono, as I understand it, was not merely a product of the personalities of the individuals who held the titles at that particular time; it also represented the expected roles of their social identities. The different life experiences of the two men seemed to fit perfectly the different roles that they played in the fono.

Moe'ono was outspoken, apparently without fear of confronting other matai, even outside the village fono. With his full life spent in the village and attending village matters, he represented the Samoan tradition, the native distrust for Western values and for Western education. I never heard him speak in the language of the school and of the church, that is, with the t/n pronunciation (cf. Chapter 8), except to mock someone. He projected an image of a tough man, bold, sometimes daring, sometimes fierce and almost cruel in his convictions, in his merciless remarks to those who had misbehaved or betrayed him. His behaviour was typical of what people expect from a high chief. People at times described Moe'ono as *leaga* *bad* and that was also part of his social role, which he had reinforced over the years. For Samoans, the difference between *leaga* *bad* and *lelei* *good* must always be seen in context, being two sides of the same coin. Circumstances make a person good or bad, and the same action can be good or bad depending on the point of view. Furthermore, the presence of Bad makes Good look better. Thus, in Samoan, one can emphasise a positive attribute by preceding it with the word *bad*, for example, *e leaga le mea lelei* *a really good thing.* A Samoan legend says that Good and Bad were brothers, and that is why they always go together.

The holder of the other title, Iuli, was quite different from the holder of the Moe'ono title.[5] He spent a long period of his life abroad, in New Zealand, where he held a job in public administration.

He spoke English fluently and was generally open to Western values
and ways of living. Although politically ambitious (see 3.4), he
tried to appear humble. Unlike Moe'ono, he was very interested in my
work and was always willing to discuss village politics or even
personal matters with me. He had an unusual interest in introspection
and, towards me, directed what appeared to be a frank display of his
own feelings and personal motivations.

People would, at times, interpret Iuli's public behaviour or words
as inappropriate or even foolish, but they would also recognise his
generosity and would run to him when in trouble, asking for his under-
standing and his protection.

The interplay between the personalities of the two men was an
important part of the political life of the village and created much
of the work for the fono I recorded (see 3.4).

Although matai in the village would often say that the rivalry
between Iuli and Moe'ono was unfortunate, because they should agree
on everything to properly rule the village, I understood the frequent
contrast in their opinions or strategies as part of an expected public
behaviour, conduct that was not accidental, but rather fit very well
with their respective social roles. Each of them could be either Good
or Bad, according to the circumstances. In love and hate, Iuli and
Moe'ono are true Samoan brothers.

(iv) The phrase **tagata o le Tuiatua** refers to all the orators
in the village and literally means *the people (*tagata*) of the king
(*Tui*) of Atua.*[6] The expression **le tofi fa'asolo**, which is sometimes
found before **tagata o le Tuiatua**, simply states more precisely that
*all the positions or appointments (*tofi*) are mentioned. **Fa'asolo** means
here *one by one*.

As in the case of chiefs discussed above in (i), one must
distinguish among various ranks of orators as well. Samoans tend to
think of orators as connected with a particular chief, for whom they
are the public voice. This fact then creates a hierarchy of the
highest orators, parallel to the hierarchy of the highest chiefs
illustrated in Figure 3.1 above. The most important orator titles in
Falefā and their respective subvillages are given in Figure 3.2.
Despite the fact that in terms of the subvillages' hierarchy Iuli is
not as high as Moe'ono, it is Iuli who is the official speaker for
the whole village whenever there is an official encounter with another
village for either ceremonial or political affairs. Iuli's legendary
skills in speechmaking are usually given as an explanation for his

special role as the village speaker. When he is served kava, his cup
is announced with the phrase lua pō lua ao *two nights two days,* which
refers back to a legend for which one of the past holders of the Iuli
title was able to talk for two nights and two days and save some of
Falefā's people from being eaten by a giant ghost.[7]

FALEFĀ

Subvillage: 1. SAGAPOLU 2. SALEAPAGA 3. GAGA'EMALAE 4. SANONU

High orator: 1. Moe'ono 2. Iuli 3. Fa'aonu'u 4. Leuta
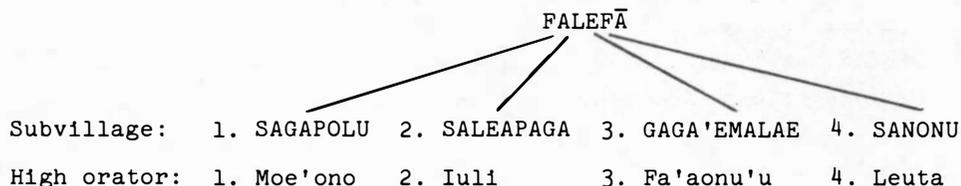
Figure 3.2 The four highest orators in Falefā

3.3.2. Other Shortened Version of the Fa'alupega

Other versions of the shortened form of Falefā's fa'alupega involve
the mention of the two titles Iuli and Moe'ono, as in version B below,
or alternative ways of referring to the body of orators, who could be
called le 'a'ai o Fonotī *the village of Fonotī* (see version B), or
le 'a'ai o le Tupu *the village of the king,* as in version C below:[8]

Version B

(i)   ... 'Āiga
         ... *Family (of chiefs)*

(ii)   ma Aloali'i
         and Sons of chief(s)

(iii)   'oulua Matua Iuli ma Moe'ono
         you two Matua Iuli and Moe'ono

(iv)   ma le 'a'ai o Fonotī
         and the village of Fonotī

Version C

(i)   ... 'Āiga
         ... *Family (of chiefs)*

(ii)   ma Aloali'i
         and Sons of chief(s)

(iii)   'oulua Matua Iuli ma Moe'ono
         you two Matua Iuli and Moe'ono

(iv)   ma le 'a'ai o le Tupu
         and the village of the King

Before concluding this section, I must add that the gist of the
more elaborate versions of Falefā's fa'alupega has been in fact given
in Figure 3.1 and Figure 3.2 above, where I listed, in hierarchical
order, the most important chiefs and orators of the village and their
respective subvillages.

3.4. The Nature of the Crisis: The Elections

All the meetings of the fono I attended can be related to a single
theme: the elections for the National Parliament.

Samoans have mixed feelings about the modern (Western) way of
handling elections of representatives to the Parliament. In a general
referendum held before becoming an independent country, Samoans voted
to have only matai vote and be eligible for the forty-five seats in
the National Parliament.[9] The idea, however, of secretly voting
instead of reaching a consensus through discussion in a fono, at the
end of which a village or district would nominate its representative,
is seen by many Samoans, particularly by older matai, as an example
of the negative influence of the Western way of life. Despite the
written law of the constitution, according to which any matai, young
or old, low or high ranking, has the right to run for a seat in the
Parliament, many matai still think that younger chiefs and orators
should respect (fa'aaloalo) those holding higher ranking titles and
those who have been in office longer by not competing against them.
This is one of those cases, as a chief once said in a fono, in which
the laws (tulāfono) of the new central government do not match the
unwritten traditions of the country (aganu'u).

Below, I will give a brief reconstruction of the events that
created the crisis dealt with in the meetings I attended and recorded.

About two months before the elections, apparently under pressure
from Moe'ono, the fono of the four villages of Falefā, Falevao, Sauano
and Saletele (see Chapter 1 and 3.5.1), offered to back the candidate
from the nearby village of Lufilufi, who was already the district
representative in the legislature.[10] The district matai[11] met in
Lufilufi and agreed upon renominating the current M.P., Fa'amatuāinu,
from Lufilufi, without holding elections. The matai from Lufilufi,

in turn, promised that there would be no other candidate from their
village. While this was taking place, the other Matua, Iuli, was
abroad.

After a few weeks, Iuli returned from New Zealand and expressed
his intentions to seek election. First he had a few informal meetings
with several matai in the village, and finally, on January 11, he
officially requested the support of the fono (this was my first
recording). Participating in the meeting were not only Falefā's
matai, but also matai from the villages of Falevao, Sauano, and
Saletele. (As I will explain later, this kind of fono in which a
total of seven subvillages participate is called **fono falefitu.**)

Moe'ono and some matai failed to convince Iuli not to run; other
matai from Sauano and Saletele instead backed Iuli's decision and
candidacy. When no agreement was reached, Moe'ono announced that he
was also going to run for parliament. This move could be interpreted
as an attempt to force Iuli to withdraw his candidacy, given that
Falefā's votes were going to be divided between Iuli and Moe'ono to
the benefit of Lufilufi's candidate.

A further complication came about with the announcement of another
candidate from Falefā, Savea Sione, a young chief from the subvillage
of Gaga'emalae, and another candidate from Lufilufi.

A couple of weeks later (fono of January 25), another meeting was
held in a desperate attempt to find a solution to the complex
situation. In this meeting, several matai agreed that the violation
of the promise to Lufilufi was justified given that even Lufilufi now
had a second candidate. The question then was whether it would be
possible to settle on only one candidate from Falefā, so as to
increase the chance of winning the election. However, none of the
three candidates withdrew.

In the following weeks, two of them tried to gather support, while
the third one, realising the impossibility of the task, decided not
to put any more effort and money into campaigning.

As predictable, Fa'amatuāinu, the incumbent M.P. from Lufilufi,
won the district election, gathering most of the votes from his
village and a few more votes from each of the others. Of the three
candidates from Falefā, it was the young chief Savea who obtained most
votes (only ten less than the winner), whereas Moe'ono and Iuli were
second and third respectively. Thus, the crisis that started with
Iuli's return from New Zealand culminated with Falefā's defeat.

Several individuals and groups had tried in vain to test their
power and ascendency within the community, creating factions and an

atmosphere of competition that resulted in the resentment of one matai toward another, one family toward another, and even resentment within the same family. The village and several of its prominent figures had lost face and credibility. The relationship (vā) with the nearby village of Lufilufi, tied to Falefā through history and family relations, had been seriously compromised.

A long and strenuous effort was necessary to re-establish good ties among the people and confidence in the leaders of the community and in its institutions. The highest matai had shown themselves unable to control their ambition, arguing with instead of supporting one another. The unity of the village had been broken, mutual love cast aside. With a younger matai challenging two senior titleholders, the hierarchies had been shaken. The attempt to appear to the rest of the country as a strong and united district that did not need a secret ballot had failed. Within the various subvillages represented in the fono (see next section), promises had not been kept.

For several weeks after the elections, all meetings of the fono had one major goal, namely, to overcome the crisis created by the elections. Moe'ono, more than anyone else, worked hard to reaffirm the village unity and the 'dignity of 'Āiga'. Things needed to be said; several matai had to share the responsibility of the defeat; others needed to express frustration and anger. The meetings of the fono provided the appropriate settings in which to reunite the village (fai le nu'u), and to recognise new important figures and accept change.

3.5. Convocation of a Fono

The convocation of a special meeting of the village fono can be decided only by Iuli or Moe'ono. They also decide whether only the four subvillages of Falefā should meet, or the other villages of Falevao, Sauano and Saletele should be involved. The range of participants defines three types of meetings:

> (a) fono falefā *fono of the four subvillages;*
> (b) fono falelima *fono of the five subvillages;*
> (c) fono falefitu *fono of the seven subvillages.*

Here, the word fale *house* means *subvillage*. A fono falefā is then a fono in which only the matai from the four (fā) subvillages of Falefā (cf. Chapter 1) participate. A fono falelima (lima *five*) is a fono with the four subvillages of Falefā and the village of Falevao. A fono falefitu involves Falefā, Falevao and the two villages of Sauano

and Saletele in the Fagaloa Bay (see Map 1.2). Figure 3.3 schematical-
ly illustrates the range of participation in the three kinds of fono.

Subvillages:

1. Sagapolu
2. Saleapaga
3. Gaga'emalae
4. Sanonu
5. Falevao
6. Sauano
7. Saletele

fono falefitu

fono falelima

fono falefā

Figure 3.3. Subdivision in subvillages of three types
of fono in Falefā

When a **fono falelima** or a **fono falefitu** must be held, an orator
from the subvillage of Sanonu will be sent to *bring the message*
(**momoli le afioga**, literally *report the [chiefly] opinion*) to the
other village(s). The messenger is usually hosted in the house of a
chief who will provide food, money, or even a fine mat as compensation
for the orator's time and travelling expenses (**pasese**). Of course,
when the convocation of a fono is decided at the end of another fono,
there is no need to send a messenger, provided that a representative
of each subvillage is present.

3.5.1. Participants

Only matai - orators and chiefs - can attend a fono;[12] and only a
restricted group actively participate in it. Although the holder of
a title has automatic access to the meetings of the village fono, an
active role in the discussion or even in the preliminary speeches
(see Chapter 6) is not necessarily granted by a title. At play here
are factors such as age, prestige, oratorical skills, rank, and
personal ambition. A young matai, for instance, especially if co-
holder of a title with an older person (who has had that title for a
longer period), will hardly have a chance to exhibit his speech-
making abilities and wisdom in a meeting of the village council. If
he is a good speechmaker, he may have a better chance on ceremonial
occasions, when the elders are more willing to let a promising young
man perform publicly.

The discussion of offenses and crises in a fono is an ideal
occasion for restating and stressing the traditional patterns of
conduct, the secular links and alliances among groups and families;
it is also the proper channel for reacting to the rapidly expanding
influence of the Western way of life (fa'apālagi), which threatens
the Samoan way of life (fa'aSāmoa). The survival of the traditional
values is too important to permit young unexperienced persons to have
a voice in it.

Usually no more than thirty or forty matai out of about one
hundred attend a fono. If it is a **fono falefitu**, the percentage goes
down even more, often with no more than one or two matai from each of
the other three villages coming to Falefā to attend the meetings.
When the attendance drops so drastically that some subvillages are
not represented at all, a public statement is needed on the importance
of the meeting and their social significance. In the following passage,
Moe'ono speaks with dramatic tones and against the two villages of
Sauano and Saletele, which are being accused of deserting the meetings;
a crime for which they risk expulsion from the fono in Falefā:

(Fono Falefitu, April 7, 1979, pp. 58-61, book II) (English
translation)

Moe'ono: ((With an angry voice)) (...) The only thing we know here
            is that if it wasn't for Mata'afa there wouldn't be
            anyone else. Where are people? ... If there are some fine
            mats, or some foods to collect, then nobody stays back in
            their villages! ... That's what I am angry about!

Audience: Mālie!13

Moe'ono: You'd better be careful, Family of Tama ... Where is
            Alai'a-sā?14 ... Where is Leutele? Where are the
            Aloali'i? Where are the people of the King of Atua?
            (...)
            If there is a distribution of fine mats or something to
            eat, not one single person from your two subvillages
            stays home ... But if we assemble in order to take a
            decision, because this is Iuli's desire and also my wish
            ... who is going to find out the right thing to do? ...
            It must be that chief over there and that orator over
            here.

Audience: Mālie!

Moe'ono: If those who make a decision are many, a village is safe!

Others: Mālie!

Moe'ono: There is no one who can be absolutely right ... You must
            bring your wise opinion to help this Matua here and
            myself to make the right decision ... This is what happens
            at our fono. Come! They are fono, they are not komiti-
            meetings! ... A fono is a sacred thing! ... It is not
            something that someone can play around with!

    In this passage, we find, explicitly expressed, several
distinctive features of a fono as opposed to other social events in
the society.[15] A fono is different from ceremonial gatherings in
which food and fine mats are distributed but no particularly important
issue is debated. A fono must also be distinguished from other kinds
of meetings in which minor crimes or crises are dealt with. The
meetings of the komiti, for instance, are attended by a smaller group
of matai appointed by the fono, who gather regularly (every Sunday
night) and operate very much like a local court, taking care of
various minor charges and violations of the village laws (tuiāfono)
involving untitled people and lower rank matai. As a real 'father of
the village', Moe'ono tries to remind his large 'family' of matai
that everyone must attend a fono, regardless of the particular
obligations one may have on the day of the meeting. The decisions
taken in a fono need the dialectical interaction of many voices and
many parties. As a fundamental social institution, in which the life
of the village is given direction and meaning with respect to past
and future, a fono is 'sacred', that is, no one should think of doing
without it or underestimate its crucial role in keeping the community
united and functioning.

3.6. Conclusions

    In this chapter, I have discussed some fundamental features of the
social organisation of the events I will be dealing with in the next
chapters. As we shall see, in order to understand some aspects of the
organisation of verbal interaction and of the linguistic expressions
used in a fono, we need to have access to information concerning the
purpose of such an event, the kinds of crises dealt within it, the
range of participants, and their respective statuses, ranks and roles.
What I have described in this chapter is not additional information
to an otherwise strictly linguistic analysis of the fono speeches,

but rather a necessary step to make sense of a complex and intense interaction, in which language cannot be considered as an entity separate from the rest.

1. On the role of social institutions and social control in Samoa, and the native perspective on them, cf. Shore (1977).

2. This use of the term 'Āiga is found in other villages throughout Samoa. As explained by Freeman:

> The terms 'āiga and sā are used by Samoans to refer to groupings at all levels in their society [...] as Kraemer (1902:476) notes, the word 'āiga is applied to villages and districts which "are accustomed to taking the side wholly or in part of a great chief, to whom they are related." For example, there are ten districts and villages in different parts of Upolu and Savai'i which are known as the 'āiga of the high chief Malietoa. Again, high chiefs, like Malietoa, are traditionally known as tama'āiga, a phrase which is commonly translated as "Royal Son," but which has the literal meaning (Pratt 1911) of "Son with many family connections." At this level the facts of relationship by descent have been modified in various ways by the events of history (and particularly by the wars which were endemic in former times), but it is significant to note that 'āiga is still the term employed. (Freeman 1964:10)

According to one version of Samoan history I was able to reconstruct through interviews with some of the matai in Falefā, the origin of the use of the word 'Āiga for all the families and chiefs in Falefā with the paramount chief Tupua, the tama'āiga or *royal son* of the district of Atua. Muagututi'a, son of Fonotī, Tui (*King*) of Atua married Fenunuivao, daughter of the high chief Leutele of Falefā, but they did not have any children. Muagututi'a decided then to adopt the son of Sailau, another of Leutele's daughters. The child was named Tupua. Since he was going to become a king himself - notice the close linguistic similarity between the name Tupua and the word tupu *king* - Tupua needed the support of many chiefs and families. The high chief Leutele was then appointed Tupua's *mother* (tinā), and the high chief Lealaisalanoa was appointed his *little brother* (tei). All the other

chiefs of Falefā were designated Tupua's 'extended family' ('āiga). These appointments are still part of the ceremonial greetings to the various titles. Thus, for instance, Leutele is greeted as the 'mother of Tupua', and Lealaisalanoa, another high chief in the village (see below), is greeted as 'Tupua's little brother'.

3.   It is, in fact, possible that more than one person holds the same title. Usually, when this is the case, one of the co-holders is considered as 'primus inter pares', because of age, wealth, personal prestige, or other factors (cf. Shore 1977).

4.   Without the long ā, it means *old, grown up, mature*. The clear semantic relation between the two words mātua *parent* and matua *old, mature* could very well be partly responsible for the native etymology of the title Matua.

5.   From now on, I will use the convention of talking about 'Iuli' and 'Moe'ono' without distinguishing between title and holder, leaving to the context the function of disambiguating. It will be clear, for instance, that any time I will talk about what Moe'ono (or Iuli) said in a fono, etc., I will be talking about the particular individual who held the Moe'ono (or Iuli) title at the time when the recording was made. On the other hand, when I speak of duties and rights of Moe'ono (or Iuli), I will be referring to the duties and rights of the titles, independently of their particular holders.

6.   A common (etymological) spelling is Tui-a-Atua, but I have preferred Tuiatua because the latter form reflects both the native spelling (at least in the case of the matai in the village) and the native pronunication ([tuɣatua]).

7.   Each version of this myth that I have heard is different. Particularly the identity of the victims and of the one who was going to eat them change from one narrator to another. The detail of the two nights and two days is one of the very few parts that stay the same.

8.   In a fono, people speak in the k/g pronunciation; therefore the fa'alupega would not be spoken with the t's and n's with which it is written above. Thus, for instance, Moe'ono would be Moe'ogo, Matua would be Makua, and Fonotī would be pronounced Fogokī. Examples of

this pronunciation are found throughout this study in the transcripts of fono speeches.

9.   An exception is made for two seats that are elected by the half-caste population of Western Samoa who lives in Apia. Cf. Tiffany (1975).

10.   There are some aspects of this prelude to the crisis that are not sufficiently clear in my own reconstruction of the events. According to some sources in Falefā, the fono had not completely agreed upon re-electing Lufilufi's candidate. However, according to the same sources, when the meeting with Lufilufi was held, Moe'ono publicly announced Falefā's (and the other three villages') decision to support Lufilufi's candidate.

11.   The district to which Falefā and the other villages belong is called Anoama'a East, and it is part of the larger district of Atua.

12.   In this respect, the Samoan fono is different from similar events in other Polynesian societies. For instance, among the Tikopia described by Firth (1975), anyone can attend a fono, although distictions are made in terms of who can actively participate and to what extent.

13.   This expression conveys agreement and encouragement to the speaker. See Glossary.

14.   This chief-title as well as the others mentioned here by Moe'ono are the same names as those of Falefā's high chiefs (see 3.3 above), but refer to titles held by matai in the villages of Fagaloa. This is explained by the fact that those villages used to be controlled by Falefā's high chief Leutele, who owned the land in that part of the island. When Fagaloa became more independent, its inhabitants were given the right to use some of the titles of Falefā's matai.

15.   See 1.3 for a summary of different kinds of fono in the village.

CHAPTER FOUR

Sitting, Drinking, and Speaking in a Fono

4.1. Introduction

In this chapter, I will provide support for the Dependency Hypothesis proposed in Chapter One by showing ways in which, within a fono, the organisation of space, the sequence of matai served kava in the beginning kava ceremony, and other aspects of the organisation of the event in particular and of the social structure of the community at large are all relevant to (some aspects of) speaking in a fono. We will see that in order to understand *when* a certain person speaks as well as part of *what* he says, and *how* he says it, we must have knowledge of (at least) the following aspects of the social context:

(a) where that person is sitting inside the fono house (e.g., in the front row, in the back row, on the 'side' - this aspect also assumes, as I will show, that we must have an ideal model of how people should sit inside the house with respect to one another and a way of matching such an abstract model with actual situations);

(b) how many subvillages are represented in the meeting;

(c) when that person (or someone else from the same subvillage) was served kava in the beginning kava ceremony;

(d) who spoke before;

(e) the topic of the agenda of the meeting (e.g., who is being accused and who, among the participants, is related to that person and to what extent);

(f) to which subvillage that person's title is affiliated;

(g) his matai status (namely, chief, or orator);

(h) the rank of his title.

Features (a) to (e) could be easily translated into some of Hymes's (1972) components of a speech event (see Chapter One). Thus, for instance, where someone is sitting and the time of his intervention are part of both the *setting* and the *scene*. The number of subvillages represented in the meeting defines the range of *participants*. What the topic of the meeting is relates to both the *message content* and the *purposes of the event*. Features (f) to (h), on the other hand, seem to exist independently from the particular situation. Thus, whereas a certain amount of variation in (a) to (e) is predictable from one fono to another, (f), (g) and (h) are more likely to stay the same (but see Note 1).

4.2. The Organisation of Space in a Fono: Sitting and Speaking

Samoans share an *ideal plan* of the way people should be sitting inside a house in any public gathering (the seating arrangement). Although such an ideal plan is hardly matched by reality, it must be taken into consideration as an interpretive frame for understanding the roles of the participants in a given event.

In a fono, where someone is sitting determines when he can speak and also the genre that he can use. For this reason, an understanding of the fono as a speech event implies an understanding of the logic of sitting in a Samoan house.

4.2.1. The Ideal Plan

Regardless of the particular shape of the foundations of a house, which can be rectangular, oval, or round (see Figure 4.1), Samoans distinguish four different parts or sides: the front (i luma), the back (i tua), and two 'sides' (tala).

As shown in Figure 4.1, in a rectangular house, the two tala are the shortest sides and in an oval house, the two tala are the round ends.

In a round house, however, one cannot a priori say which section is what until we have determined the *front* of the house. The front is in fact the key notion for establishing the orientation of the various parts of any house, given that, even in a rectangular or in an oval house, the identification of the two tala does not necessarily determine which one of the other two sides should be considered the front and which one the back.
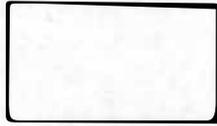
(a)
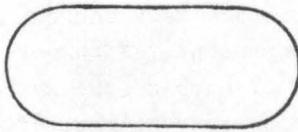
(b)
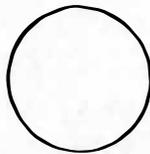
(c)

4.1. Three kinds of foundations of Samoan houses:
(a) rectangular, (b) oval, and (c) round.

The front of a house is defined with respect either to the malae or the road. Usually, if the house is right next to the malae, the front will be the side closest to the malae; if instead the house is along the main road, the side towards the road is considered the front. As a way of illustrating these two principles, I have here schematically reproduced a map of a small section of the village around the malae and the main road (Map 4.1). One can easily see that the orientation of most houses is fixed with respect to the main road. In my experience, I found no evidence for the claim made by Mead (1930) and Shore (1977) that the front is the side facing the sea (i tai).

In the ideal plan of the seating arrangement, orators sit in the front, chiefs in either one of the two tala, and the back row is occupied by untitled men who prepare kava and are generally available for serving chiefs and orators present. Figure 4.2 illustrates the ideal plan for the three kinds of houses (the symbol 'C' is taken from child language transcription conventions [cf. Reilly, Zukow and Greenfield, n.d., and Ochs 1979] and indicates the direction of pelvis - bird's-eye view - and, therefore, people's positions with respect to each other and the possible reach of their eye gaze).

4.2.2. The Actual Seating Arrangement

When we consider the actual seating arrangement in a fono, we find some important variations with respect to the abstractly formulated plans just illustrated. However, the appropriateness and significance of those variations must be understood by a continuous matching and comparing of the specific situation with the ideal model. A passage from an interview with an orator sheds light on the correlation between expectations and particular choices.

> (1) (Interview with an orator in the village of Salesatele, March 1979. In addition to the orator and myself (A.D.), a chief is also present and intervenes whenever he feels it appropriate.) (English translation)

> Orator: The orators sit in the front row and the chiefs sit either in this tala here or in that tala there ((pointing to the shorter sides of the rectangular house where we are sitting)).

> A.D.: Sometimes I have seen orators and chiefs sit in the back.
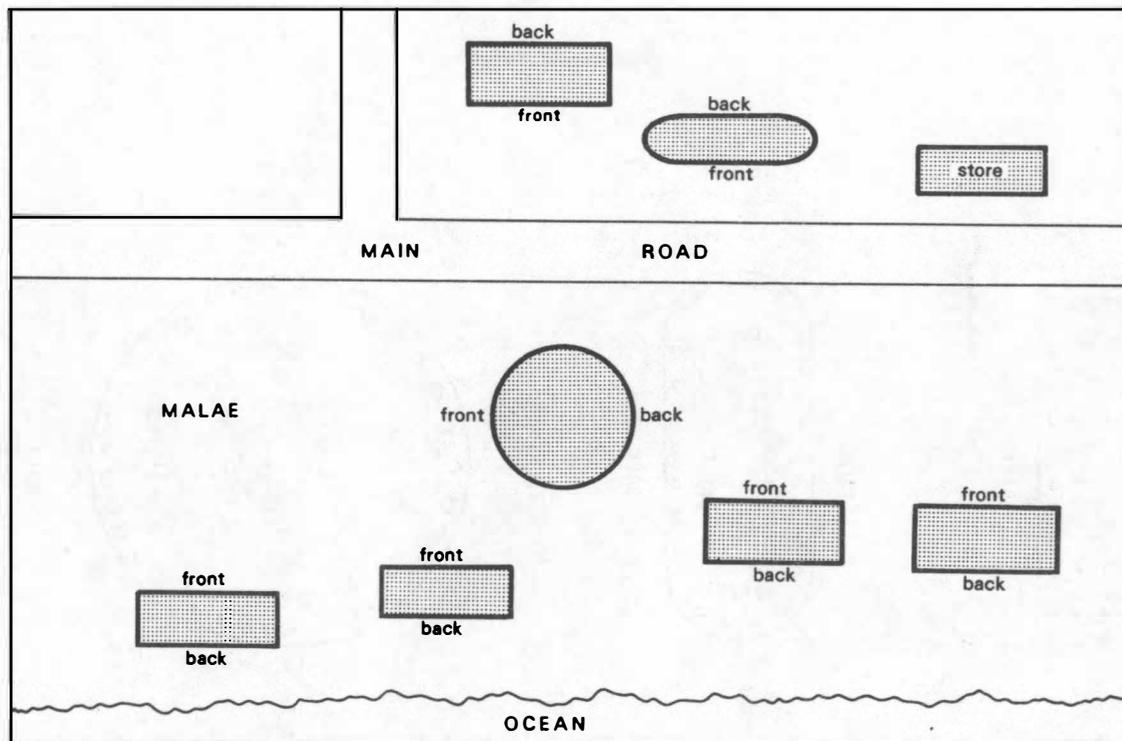
Map 4.1 Section of Falefā Village (simplified version)

FRONT

TALA orators TALA

chiefs chiefs

untitled

BACK

FRONT

TALA chiefs orators chiefs TALA

untitled

BACK

FRONT

TALA orators TALA

chiefs chiefs

untitled
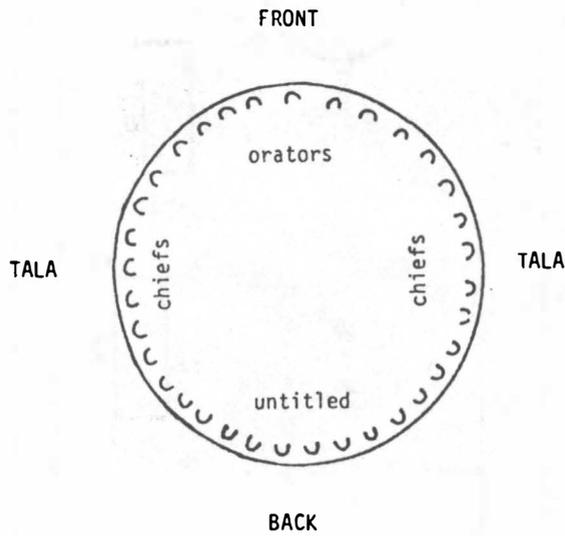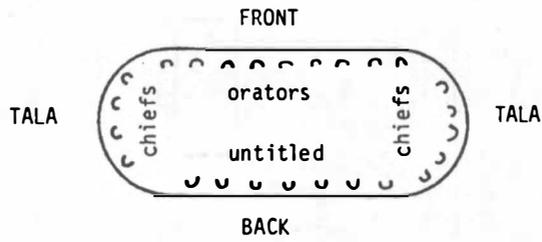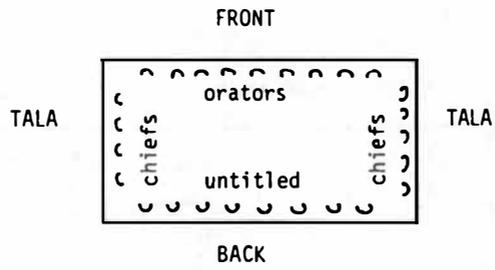
BACK

4.2. Ideal seating plan in the three types of houses.

```
Orator:    Yes.  If there is not enough room in the front,
           some go to sit in the back.

A.D.:      Can one give a formal speech (lāuga) if he sits
           in the back?

Orator:    He can't.  It is not appropriate according to
           the custom.

Chief:     If you sit in the back, you are untitled!

Orator
 and
Chief:     ((LAUGHTER))
```

At first the ideal model is laid out: orators in the front and chiefs in the two tala (untitled men and back of the house are not mentioned probably because I had asked only about orators and chiefs). When I mentioned seeing some matai sitting in the back, the orator gives a practical explanation: when there is no more space in the front row, some sit in the back. Notice here that he sees the opposition between front and back but does not mention the tala, where the chiefs sit.

In my second question, on the possibility of giving a formal speech sitting in the back, I am trying to find out to what extent the place where one sits defines the access to active participation in the event. The orator's answer seems to deny the possibility of an active role for those sitting in the back row. As we shall see, however, his answer is based on the particular word that I have used for 'formal speech', namely, lāuga, which indeed can be given only by orators sitting in the front.

Finally, it is the chief's comment, made in a joking modality, that gives us an important hint on how to interpret the relationship between ideal and actual arrangement. The chief says that, if you sit in the back, even if you are an orator, you cannot perform a lāuga because by the very fact of sitting in the back row, you become like those whose place it is in the back, therefore you are regarded as an untitled person, with no rights to speak. This comment suggests that the ideal arrangement should be understood as an interpretation of the actual seating arrangement. From time to time, according to who is present and to the roles and degrees of involvement of different participants in a particular meeting, different actual arrangements are possible, but the abstract model stays the same to provide the missing interpretation.

In Falefā, the front row is occupied by the two Matua, Iuli and Moe'ono, and by the other orators (usually at least one for each of the subvillages represented in the meeting) who are going to have an active role, that is, those who will give introductory speech(es) and participate in the discussion.

The tala can be occupied only by the highest chiefs. Thus, as often happens, only one or none of the highest is present, and the tala are almost empty.[2]

The other chiefs of medium and lower rank sit towards the edges of the back row, whereas the middle of the back row is usually occupied by other orators (particularly those who are in charge of the kava ceremony).

An example of an actual seating arrangement in a fono is given in Figure 4.3.
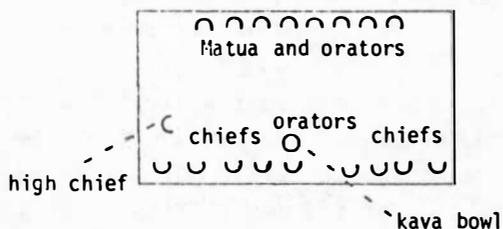
Fig. 4.3. Typical seating arrangement
in a fono in Falefā

We can see from Figure 4.3 that there are no untitled men sitting inside the house; if some untitled men are around, ready to serve the matai in case of need, they would be sitting outside the house. If no untitled men are available, lower rank orators sitting in the back row would perform the same kind of service for the orators sitting in the front and the chiefs.

We can understand now how the ideal plan illustrated earlier must be seen as an interpretation of various actual seating arrangements: THE ORATORS WHO SIT IN THE FRONT ARE THE ACTIVE ONES, THOSE WHO PERFORM THE TRADITIONAL ROLE OF SPEECHMAKERS AS REPRESENTATIVES OF THEIR RESPECTIVE SUBVILLAGES AND CHIEFS. Here, Iuli and Moe'ono always have open the possibility of acting as representatives of their

own subvillage or letting someone else perform that function, reserving for themselves, instead, the role of general discussants.

The high chiefs who sit in the tala are the representative of 'Āiga, that is, of all the chiefs of the village. One of them speaks last and gives the final word on the agenda of the day.

The chiefs sitting in the back, towards the edges, and in the first of the back rows (if more than one) show their respect and submission to the higher chiefs by sitting in a lower status position. They may, however, participate in the discussion. When they speak (and the same is true for the orators sitting in the back row), they must start their speech by apologising for their 'place in the back'. Here, personal strategies differ, especially for those chiefs sitting towards the very edge of the back row, say, at the corner of the rectangular house. Whereas one person may define himself as in the back, another one may consider himself as sitting in the tala.

The orators sitting in the back row are like untitled men at least with respect to both the orators sitting in the front row and the high chiefs. They are the ones who prepare kava and perform the various tasks requested by the matai who are sitting in higher status positions (in the front and in the tala). This status differentiation among orators in a fono is confirmed in the interaction reported in example (2) below, where Moe'ono tries to get Taiamia, a younger orator (and Moe'ono's brother), to donate his bananas to the people gathered for the meeting. When Taiamia offers the excuse that there are no young men around to serve them (kama is another way of saying taulele'a *untitled men*), Moe'ono reminds him that he and the other orators like him (young orators of lower rank) are like untitled men, just a bit more mature.

> (2) (Fono April 7, book I, pp. 16-17) (Before the fono starts. Moe'ono has seen a bunch of bananas hanging in front of his brother Taiamia's house and has been trying to convince someone from Taiamia's family to serve the bananas to the matai in the meeting. Taiamia's wife has already refused, giving the excuse that the bananas have been sold to someone else; then Moe'ono sees his brother approaching towards the back of the fono-house and calls out to him.)

```
Moe'ono:    Kaiamia!   Kaiamia!
            Kaiamia!   Kaiamia!

S.:         Kaiamia!
            Kaiamia!

Moe'ono:    Mai gi  kama  avaku   le         aufa'i
            Get some boys [to] take that bunch of bananas

            lele       ave  fai  se   pe'epe'e a le kakou
            there [to] take make some cream      for our

            gu'u!
            village [matai]!

Taiamia:    (E     leai gi) kama.
            (There are  no) boys!

Moe'ono:    A      oukou?!      Le      oukou     'o
            What about you guys?  Because you (all) are

            kaulele'a makukua!
            just      mature untitled men!

??:         ((LAUGHTER))
```

Another interesting distinction in actual situations is that
participants seem to distinguish degrees of backness. For example,
when there is not enough space for everyone to sit in the same inner
circle, a second back row may be created (this may actually be formed
even before the positions in the inner circles are filled). At that
point, the inner back row may be thought of as front with respect to
the outer row. Thus, for instance, a lower rank orator who is
expected to speak in the meeting (e.g. as a witness) may be invited
to 'sit in the front', meaning in some cases only the first of the
back rows. The fact that the spatial and psychological dimensions of
the house must be understood along a continuum or, rather, in
relational terms, is also reflected in the frequent use of the
expression i luma *in the front*, used in referring to the center of
the house when talking to someone who is located in the back.

4.2.2.1. On-Stage and Off-State Interaction

The matai who sit in second back row or outside do not normally
participate in the fono preceedings. They may, however, exchange
short informal comments or messages while another matai in the inner

circle is performing a highly elaborated speech. Whereas the norms
for speaking are very strict for those actively participating in the
meeting, both in terms of the right to speak (turn-taking norms) and
in terms of the style being used (see Chapter Five), the matai who
sit out of the inner circle are less constrained in their verbal
behaviour.

This suggests that participants distinguish between an ON STAGE
and an OFF STAGE interaction (for the similar notion of 'backstage'
interaction, cf. Goffman 1963) (Figure 4.4). Back row or off stage
interaction would not then be perceived as competitive with the
ongoing speech, unless particularly loud and prolonged.

4.2.3. Status Position and Status Negotiation

The seating arrangement in a fono symbolically represents the
village hierarchies, the traditional distinctions between different
descent groups, the dependency of some titles upon others, the status
and rank of members of the assembly (cf. also Mead 1930, Shore 1977).
When a person is given a title, he should automatically gain access
to a particular position in the fono. In fact, *only very high rank
titles have their position in the fono assigned by tradition*. For
the other titles (particularly for middle ranking ones), their
particular position in the seating arrangement may vary from one
occasion to the next. Thus, for instance, if a certain high rank
orator who usually sits in the front row and delivers the first speech
for a particular subvillage is not present, then another, perhaps
younger or lower rank, orator will take his place. In these cases
various factors are at play establishing which particular person
should replace the one who is absent, but personal ambition is
certainly one of the most important ones. It is important to notice
here that there is very little negotiation going on with respect to
the seating position in a fono. Usually, people arrive and go
straight to sit in a particular place. Generally, there is a
tendency, particularly for high status persons, *to sit a little lower
than one's proper place* (cf. also Ortner 1979 for a similar tendency
among the Sherpas). Thus, for instance, the high chiefs tend to sit
more towards the edge (see Figure 4.5) than in the middle of the tala
(Figure 4.6), where their rank would give them the right to sit.
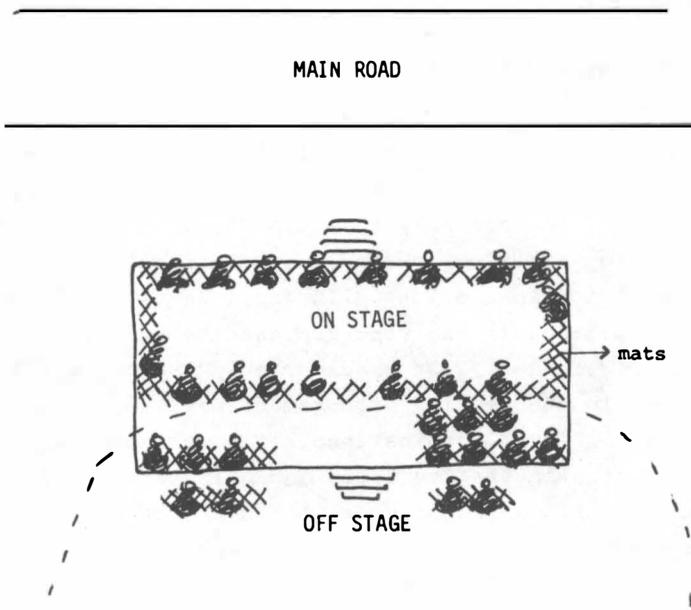
4.4. OFF STAGE and ON STAGE space in a fono.
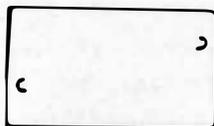
Fig. 4.5. Position of the two highest chiefs in a fono
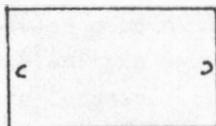
Fig. 4.6. Position of the two highest chiefs
in a malaga or in a saofa'i

Lowering one's status by sitting in a slightly lower position is
part of a humble demeanor that even a high chief may have to display.
However, there are also social occasions in which humility may not be
appropriate. Thus, for instance, in some other social events such as
a saofa'i or a malaga the (usually two) highest chiefs sit right in
the middle of the tala, opposite one another, as shown in Figure 4.6.
In these ceremonies, various elements of the event, such as goals,
dynamics, participants, are not the same as those I have been
describing as characteristic of a fono. It is then the social and
cultural significance of a particular event that determines the extent
to which the rules must be followed and in which direction violations
may be expected.

4.2.4. Conclusions to the Organisation of Space in a Fono

In this section, I have shown that someone's status and rank is
important in determining the particular place where he will sit inside
the fono house. At the same time, the particular position he will
take with respect to the orientation of the house (namely, whether in

the front, in the back, or in one of its tala) will determine the
extent of his participation in the meeting. Only the orators who
sit in the front can perform a lāuga (see Chapters Six and Seven),
a highly structured ceremonial speech. Whereas any matai in the
house can potentially participate in the discussion part of the
meeting, the orators who sit in the front and the high chiefs sitting
on the side are the more likely ones to give speeches. The matai who
are sitting in the central part of the back row act very often as
untitled men (as predicted by the ideal plan discussed in 4.2.1).
If they talk at all, their intervention is more likely to take place
towards the end of the meeting. Finally, the matai who sit in the
second back row or outside the house are not to take an active part
in the discussion. They may, however, talk, given that their activity
is not perceived as competitive with the main activity inside the fono
house. A distinction must be drawn then between on stage and off stage
interaction. Whereas talk on stage must be directly relevant to the
proceedings of the meeting and must respect strict norms of turn-
taking and style (see Chapter Five), off stage talk can be more casual
and less constrained by the rules of etiquette of the fono interaction.

4.3. The Organisation of Time in a Fono: Orders of Drinking and Speaking

A fono begins with a kava ceremony. In this section, I will show
that the sequential organisation of kava distribution in the beginning
kava ceremony is directly related - in a predictable and symmetrical
fashion - to the sequential organisation of turns for speaking in the
following proceedings of the fono.

After a brief description of the kava ceremony in a fono (for
further information on this important aspect of Samoan tradition,
cf. Mead 1930; Holmes 1961, 1974; Shore 1977; Love 1979), I will
discuss the relationship between the order of those who are served
kava and the order of those who give a speech after opening the
ceremony. As we will see, the two orders (i.e. drinking and speaking)
violate in one respect the hierarchical order of the seven subvillages
as it was represented in Chapter Three. An orator from the subvillage
of Sanonu both drinks and speaks first, whereas Moe'ono and Iuli
drink second and third respectively and may wait several turns before
speaking. The high chief drinks after one orator from each of the
subvillages present has drunk and also speaks last. This apparent
violation of the village hierarchies is explained in section 4.4.3 by
taking into consideration the spirit of a fono and its purposes.

4.3.1. The Kava Ceremony at the Beginning of the Meeting

In the middle of the back row sits the palu'ava, who mixes kava ('ava) and water in a kava bowl (tānoa). Next to him sits the tufa'ava, the one who cries out the names of the matai about to be served by the cup-bearer (solitū).

In a fono, the kava ceremony is less elaborate than on other occasions such as a visit by a travelling party or the appointment of a matai.

Thus, for instance, the pounded kava (consisting of the dry roots of a kind of pepper plant, *Piper methysticum*) is usually wrapped in a cloth and then mixed with water, instead of using the strainer made out of hibiscus fibre (fau). This alteration eliminates the need for a person to stand outside and shake the strainer (tāfau). Furthermore, there usually is no special person (agaitānoa), to pour water into the kava bowl, this function is performed by the tufa'ava himself or by the tufa'ava who sits next to him. These factors make the kava ceremony in a fono a more modest version of what one can see in other contexts.

It is usually Moe'ono who gives the tufa'ava the signal to start the ceremony. The first lines of the tufa'ava's announcement that the kava is about to be served usually overlap with the various conversations among the matai in the house. With the rising escalation of the volume and pitch of his voice, however, people will stop talking and focus on the ceremony. After having recited, maintaining his rhythmic chanting voice, the fa'alupega of the village in its short form (see Chapter Three), the tufa'ava will conclude by saying that the kava is ready to be served (makou suia i vai se'i usi age i le fa'asoasoa!). At this point, usually Moe'ono says a word of encouragement and acknowledgement of the tufa'ava's work and the matai start clapping slowly, each apparently with his own rhythm (there seems to be a tacit rule to avoid a common tempo). As soon as the clapping has started the tufa'ava will cry out a long ua::::, lasting several seconds, and invite the cup-bearer to stand up. When the clapping is over, the first cup will be announced.[4]

Before drinking, each matai has the option of making a short speech, called fa'amanuiaga o le 'ava *blessing of the kava* or *good wishing of the kava*. In this speech, God is thanked for his protection and asked to assist the assembly in the forthcoming discussion. The last phrase always contains the word manuia (more rarely soifua), a wish of good luck and health to the other matai, to which the assembly responds with either of the two terms.[5]

An example of such a speech is given in (3) below:

> (3) (Fono January 25, book I, p. 6)
>
> Orator: **O le mea sili ua kākou maua lēgei kaeao fou. (1.0)**
> *The most important thing (is that) we have
> this new morning.*
>
> **Kākou fa'amoemoe i Lau Afio**
> *We hope in Your Coming*
>
> **o lea e fa'amaguia legel aso**
> *to bless this day*
>
> **i le kōfā liliu ma le fa'aukaga. (0.3)**
> *for the decision that chiefs and orators will
> have to take*
>
> **Ia.   Maguia le kaeao!**
> *Well.   May the morning be successful!*
>
> Audience: **Soifua!   Maguia!**
> *Long life!   Good luck (to you)!*

With the beginning of the kava distribution, the on-stage verbal interaction undergoes a dramatic change: turn-taking rules are altered, with only one speaker at a time and longer (and sometimes preallocated) turns, the lexicon is full of respect vocabulary (cf. Milner 1961, Shore 1977), syntax becomes more complex. These aspects will all be discussed in the next chapter, when I will introduce the notion of *boundary* and its linguistic reality in a fono. In the rest of this chapter, I will concentrate on the relationship between the order of those who drink kava and the order of those who deliver a speech in the meeting following the kava ceremony.

4.3.2. Drinking and Speaking

In his account of the fono in the village of Sala'ilua (on the Samoan island of Savai'i), Shore (1977) points out a one-to-one correspondence between the order of some[6] of those served kava in the beginning kava ceremony and some of the speakers in the meeting. Looking for similar correspondences, I started comparing the order of kava distribution and the order of speakers in the several fono I attended. As shown in Tables 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3, only some of the positions in the kava distribution were matched in the order of speakers.

TABLE 4.1

Orders of Drinking and Speaking on January 25

Kava			Speeches		
1) Taofiuailoa	(orator)	←——————→	1) Taofiuailoa	(orator)
2) Moe'ono	(Matua)	←——————→	2) Moe'ono	(Matua)
3) Iuli	(Matua)	*	3) Usu	(orator)
4) Taepī	(orator)	*	4) Savea	(chief)
5) Tafili	(orator)	←——————→	5) Tafili	(orator)
6) Mata'afa	(orator)	←——————→	6) Mata'afa	(orator)
7) Tui	(orator)	←——————→	7) Tui	(orator)
8) Lealaisalanoa	(chief)	*	8) Fulumu'a	(orator)

Note: I have marked the symmetrical positions with an arrow, and the non-correspondences with an asterisk.

TABLE 4.2

Orders of Drinking and Speaking on March 10

Kava			Speeches		
1) Taofiuailoa	(orator)	←——————→	1) Taofiuailoa	(orator)
2) Moe'ono	(Matua)	*	2) Lutu	(orator)
3) Iuli	(Matua)	*	3) Fanualelei	(orator)
4) Nu'u	(orator)	←——————→	4) Nu'u	(orator)
5) Tafili	(orator)	←——————→	5) Tafili	(orator)
6) Lealaisalanoa	(chief)	*	6) Moe'ono	(Matua)
⋮			⋮	

TABLE 4.3

Orders of Drinking and Speaking on April 7

Kava			Speeches	
1) Taofiuailoa	(orator)	←———→ 1) Taofiuailoa	(orator)
2) Moe'ono	(orator)	←———→ 2) Moe'ono	(Matua)
3) Fanualelei	(orator)	←——→ 3) Fanualelei	(orator)
4) Fa'aonu'u	(orator)	←——→ 4) Fa'aonu'u	(orator)
5) 'Upu	(orator)	←——→ 5) 'Upu	(orator)
6) Lealaisalanoa	(chief)	* 6) Taofiuailoa	(orator)
7) Savea	(chief)	* 7) Lealaisalanoa	(chief)
⋮		⋮	

In order to make sense out of these parallel lists, we must think in terms of subvillages rather than in terms of titles. If we substitute for each title listed in the three preceding tables the subvillage with which the title is affiliated, we obtain exact correspondences up to a certain (predictable) number (see table 4.4, 4.5, and 4.6).

The prescribed order of subvillages for those who drink and those who speak after the kava ceremony is given in Figure 4.7, which illustrates the possible predictable sequences according to the number of subvillages represented in the meeting (from a minimum of four to a maximum of seven).

```
                                              ┌  1.  Sanonu
                                              │
                                              │   2.  Sagapolu
                                              │
                              ┌  fono falefā  ┤   3.  Saleapaga
                              │               │
              fono falelima   ┤               │   4.  Gaga'emalae
                              │               └  - - - - - - - -
fono falefitu ┤               │
              │               └      5.  Falevao
              │                      - - - - - - - -
              │
              │                      6.  Sauano
              │
              └                      7.  Saletele
```
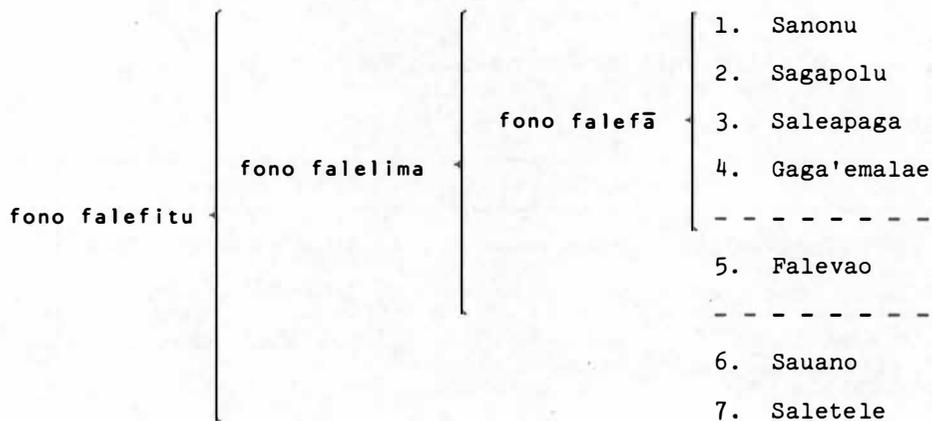
Figure 4.7. Order of drinking and speaking
according to subvillages

TABLE 4.4

Order of Drinking and Speaking on January 25
According to Subvillages

Kava		Speeches
1) SANONU (Taofiuailoa)	⟵⟶	1) SANONU (Taofiuailoa)
2) SAGAPOLU (Moe'ono)	⟵⟶	2) SAGAPOLU (Moe'ono)
3) SALEAPAGE (Iuli)	⟵⟶	3) SALEAPAGA (Usu)
4) GAGA'EMALAE (Taepī)	⟵⟶	4) GAGA'EMALAE (Savea)
5) FALEVAO (Tafili)	⟵⟶	5) FALEVAO (Tafili)
6) SAUANO (Mata'afa)	⟵⟶	6) SAUANO (Mata'afa)
7) SALETELE (Tui)	⟵⟶	7) SALETELE (Tui)
- - - - - - - - - - - - - -	- - -	- - - - - - - - - - - - - -
8) SALEAPAGA (Lealaisalanoa)	*	8) SANONU (Fulumu'a)
⋮		⋮

TABLE 4.5

Order of Drinking and Speaking on March 10
According to Subvillages

Kava	Speeches
1) SANONU (Taofiuailoa) ⟷	1) SANONU (Taofiuailoa)
2) SAGAPOLU (Moe'ono) ⟷	2) SAGAPOLU (Lutu)
3) SALEAPAGA (Iuli) ⟷	3) SALEAPAGA (Fanua)
4) GAGA'EMALAE (Nu'u) ⟷	4) GAGA'EMALAE (Nu'u)
5) FALEVAO (Tafili) ⟷	5) FALEVAO (Tafili)
- -	
6) SALEAPAGA (Lealaisalanoa) *	6) SAGAPOLU (Moe'ono)
⋮	⋮

TABLE 4.6

Order of Drinking and Speaking on April 7
According to Subvillages

Kava	Speeches
1) SANONU (Taofiuailoa) ⟷	1) SANONU (Taofiuailoa)
2) SAGAPOLU (Moe'ono) ⟷	2) SAGAPOLU (Moe'ono)
3) SALEAPAGA (Fanua) ⟷	3) SALEAPAGE (Fanua)
4) GAGA'EMALAE (Fa'aonu'u) ⟷	4) GAGA'EMALAE (Fa'aonu'u)
5) FALEVAO (Upu) ⟷	5) FALEVAO (Upu)
- -	
6) SALEAPAGA (Lealaisalanoa) *	6) SANONU (Taofiuailoa)
7) GAGA'EMALAE (Savea) *	7) SALEAPAGA (Lealaisalanoa)
⋮	⋮

In addition to the order of drinking and speaking according to subvillages, other principles must be taken into account in order to correctly predict *who* can speak *when*.

(a) *Orators both drink and speak first* – the two Matua, Moe'ono and Iuli, are aligned, in this case, with the body of orators. Given the ordering in terms of subvillages rather than in terms of titles, there can be variation from drinking to speaking within the same subvillage. For example, Table 4.5 shows that the subvillage of Sagapolu (second position) was represented by Moe'ono in the kava ceremony, but by the orator Lutu in the speaking sequence. Whereas the highest orator from each subvillage will be always served kava before other lower rank orators from the same subvillage (e.g., Moe'ono and Iuli, if present, are always served second and third respectively[7]) the same orator will not necessarily be the first one to use his subvillage right to speak. This is due to the fact that the first orators to speak are to deliver a ceremonial speech (lāuga) rather than a discussion speech (talanoaga). High rank matai like Moe'ono or Iuli will then let someone else from their respective subvillage perform the ceremonial introductory speech (like on March 10, Table 4.5) and wait for the discussion to start before taking their turn to talk.

(b) *Rule (a) 'orators speak first' can be deactivated by Moe'ono if he speaks second, opening the discussion*. As I will discuss in Chapter Six, Moe'ono is the one who has the right to start the discussion. He can do so by either letting one orator from each sub-village perform a ceremonial speech – this is what happened on March 10, when five subvillages were present at the meeting (see Table 4.5) – or deciding to speak after the first orator from Sanonu, in which case there will be only one ceremonial speech and all the other speeches of the day (Moe'ono's as well) will be discussion speeches – this is what happened on January 25 and April 7 (see Tables 4.4 and 4.6). In this case, chiefs are also entitled to speak at the first opportunity for their subvillage. This is, for instance, what happened on January 25 when the chief Savea decided to speak the first time his subvillage's (Gaga'emalae) turn came about (see Table 4.4).

(c) *When the first round of subvillages is over, it is the turn of the highest chief present to drink*. This rule does not apply for the order of speakers. When the first round of speakers is over, it

is Moe'ono's turn to speak if he has not spoken yet (see Table 4.5).
Otherwise, it is Sanonu's turn again (see Tables 4.4 and 4.6).[8]
After that point, the order of speakers is no longer so predictable.

It should be clear by now that the principle for the order of
drinking and speaking in a fono are not only relevant to *when* a
certain participant can speak but also to part of the *content* of his
speech and the *form* of it. As pointed out by Hymes (1972:59)
'*how* something is said is part of *what* is said'. The Samoan fono
offers a clear example of this, given that the first orator(s) can
only give a ceremonial speech without actually discussing the agenda
of the day. As will be discussed in detail in Chapter Six, their
speech is highly structural and highly predictable. On the other hand,
once Moe'ono has spoken, both the range of topics and of speakers is
enlarged. Once the discussion begins, people can bring various
arguments and recall events that would be otherwise inappropriate if
mentioned before Moe'ono's speech. At the same time, after Moe'ono's
turn, not only orators but chiefs as well can speak.

4.3.2.1. Why a Special Order?

The order of kava distribution illustrated above (see Figure 4.7)
is peculiar in two ways:

> (a) the hierarchy of the subvillages discussed in
> Chapter Three (see Figure 3) is violated by the fact
> that a representative of Sanonu drinks and speaks
> before a representative from Sagapolu;

> (b) orators are served kava before chiefs. This
> sequence principle is unique to a fono. In any other
> social event in which kava is served, a chief would
> normally be the first matai to be offered the kava cup.

In order to understand these two special features of the fono
interaction, we must go back to the social reasons for a fono
discussed in Chapter Three.

A fono is called when there has been a serious violation of a
social norm or when such a violation is about to take place. A fono
attempts to resolve or avoid a crisis that has damaged or could damage
the equilibrium of the community. The unusual order of 'orators
drink first' symbolises such a state and parallels the traditional
concept that it should be the lower status persons to be actively
engaged in the resolution of some troublesome situation. If the

dignity of the chiefs is at stake, it is the orators' job to try to
restore such dignity, either through actions or words. In Samoa, a
high status person (e.g., a high chief) should not enter into direct
confrontation and should let lower status people take an active role.
A dignified person sits in his house and waits. He will intervene
either when the crisis is about to be solved or when it has escalated
to such an extreme that there is need for his firm and authoritative
voice.

Very much the same pattern is followed in a fono, where the orators
discuss and argue until a solution or no possible solution is seen.
Only at that point will 'Āiga speak through the highest of the chiefs
present.

At this point, we must explain why the subvillage of Sanonu is first.
This can be understood first by noticing that Sanonu's speech is only
an introductory speech; it is still Moe'ono (from Sagapolu) who
controls the interaction by initiating the discussion. Another
explanation is historical in nature, related to the social organisation
of the village in times of war.

As I was told by Falefā's matai, in times of war9 Sanonu was in the
vanguard (muā'au): 'Sanonu would go first, to make sure the way was
clear and the king (Tuiatua) could pass safely'. If enemies were to
be found, the people from Sanonu would be the first to face them.

In a fono, Sanonu still acts as the vanguard. It is one of its
orators who speaks first, announcing the reason for the gathering,
the agenda of the meeting. It is a hard task because it is the first
public recognition of a crisis, and the orator must be able to phrase
the problem or the accusation without being too direct. At times,
he may even try to avoid such an unpleasant task and Moe'ono will
have to remind him, as in the following passage.

(4) (Fono April 7, book II, pp. 11-12) (English translation)

Taofiuailoa: (...) Yes. Sacred and dignified people of
                our malae gathered in Moamoa [name of the
                malae in Falefā] ... right. My speech has
                not reached all those other sacred names from
                outside of our malae. Those whom I have not
                addressed.

Audience: Mālie!

Taofiuailoa: Yes. They are all well-known titles ...
                There is no boy or girl who does not know

them ... This is the end of the
introductory speech of this honorable
assembly and council of ours ... I
wish a clear sky to you chiefs. May
you never be unwell, ... may the
lightning never flash for you royal
sons (i.e., may you never to killed)
... And may you never have to leave
your fly whisk or your precious stick
oh Matua of our village ... And also
may the leaves be always strong on your
trees, people of (the king) Fonotī.
May I live too. To our assembly 'bless
you!'.

Taofiuailoa: Good luck to the assembly and the fono.

? : Thanks for your eloquent speech.

Moe'ono: What is the agenda of the fono?

Taofiuailoa: The agenda of the assembly and the fono.
Well, it's really about our Falelua.
That's all for the agenda.

Moe'ono: The other topic of Savea.

Taofiuailoa: Right. The other topic is about His
Highness Savea because of that thing
also with Fa'amatuāinu given that Savea
has complained to the Government because
of what has been said in the campaign
[by] Fa'amatuāinu in the elections.
That's all for the agenda of the
assembly and the fono ....

Others: Well done!

Moe'ono: Well thank you Ta[ofiuai]loa for having
opened the meeting since you are the
rooster who speaks first ....

4.3.2.2. The Final Kava: Back to the Canonical Order

When the discussion is over there can be another kava ceremony. The
significance of this concluding ceremony is explained in the following
passage from an interview with an orator:

(5) (Interview with an orator in the village of Salesatele,
     March 1979) (English translation)

Orator: If it is a difficult meeting, kava is not drunk
         (again) for a while.

A.D.:   Oh.

Orator: Until an agreement is reached. Only then people
         clap their hands for the kava.

         . . .

Orator: When the fono is over, then there is kava.
         It's the 'ava taumavae. It means that it's
         finished, (the people) are dismissed.

A.D.:   What's the meaning of this kava? Is there a
         meaning of the kava?

Orator: Yes. It means that people can go in their
         different directions.

The final kava ('ava taumavae, lit. *departing kava*) is then the
official announcement that an agreement among the matai has been
reached. Such an agreement that re-establishes equilibrium in the
community shaken by the crisis is symbolised by a different order of
kava distribution from that which characterises the beginning kava
ceremony. At the end of the fono, when the traditional hierarchy has
been reconfirmed through the painful process of discussion and
confrontation, either the highest of the chiefs present or Moe'ono
drinks first. A representative from Sanonu this time will be served
only after the representatives from the other three Falefā subvillages
have already drunk. That is, when the social institutions are no
longer in danger, the vanguard (Sanonu) can retreat and let the highest
chiefs and orators enjoy the glory of the battle.

1. If a person is holding more than one matai title, which is not
uncommon in Samoan society, he can at times choose on behalf of which
particular title he is acting on a particular occasion. This means
that, in fact, someone's subvillage, matai status, and rank can vary
from one event to another. However, usually it is the event itself
that determines on behalf of which of his several social personae,
a certain individual will act. In a fono, for instance, a person's
social identity is usually fixed by the circumstances.

2. This privilege of high titles to a particular place in the fono-
house was also recorded by Mead (1930:13), who noticed that there are
titles that 'carry a right to a particular post, automatically
locating the holder of the title in a particular section. These
section divisions may or may not be reflected in the geography of the
village'. Interestingly enough, the high chief Lealaisalanoa used
always to sit on the side of the house towards his subvillage. Other
chiefs, however, changed their place from time to time.

3. With a few exceptions, in Samoa only matai and high status guests
can drink kava. This contrasts with other Polynesian societies, for
instance Tonga, in which both commoners and nobles drink kava,
although different levels of formality in kava drinking are recognised
(cf. Marcus 1980).

4. Distinctions are made here according to different statuses. Each
chief has his own special cup's name (**igoaipu**) followed by his title
in the expression 'so-and-so drinks' (**taute**). Orators, on the other
hand, do not have special names, and their cup is simply announced by
saying 'here is your kava ... (and the orator's title)'. The two

Matua, Iuli and Moe'ono, are distinguished from both orators and
chiefs by having a special kava name (igoa'ava) that is not followed
by the mention of their title.

5. There is a tendency to answer with the other one of the two terms.
Thus, if a matai says manuia (maguia) the others usually answer
soifua; less frequently, the same term is used for the first and
second pair part of the exchange.

6. In particular, Shore (1977) noticed that of the two Matua of the
village (Sala'ilua is, like Falefā, one of the few villages in Samoa
that has Matua titles), the one who was served first would also be
the one to speak first.
    Freeman (1978) describes a fono in Sa'anapu where the first one
to drink is also the first one to speak, but contrary to what I will
describe for Falefā, in Sa'anapu the first to drink and speak was a
chief; furthermore, no other correspondences result from the list of
orders reported by Freeman.

7. In Chapter Three I have listed the highest orator titles for each
of the four subvillages in Falefā. In the case of Sanonu, precarious
physical conditions did not allow the high orator Leuta to participate
in the meetings. This explains why another orator of lower rank,
Taofiuailoa, is the first one to both drink and speak in the sequences
illustrated before.

8. Sanonu must have the right to speak in these cases because all the
other subvillages have already had a chance to discuss the topic of
the meeting, but not the representative from Sanonu who had to perform
the first ceremonial speech.

9. Until very recently wars between districts and islands were quite
common (cf. Brown 1908, 1910; Turner 1884).

CHAPTER FIVE

LANGUAGE AND TEMPORAL BOUNDARIES

5.1. Introduction

The kava ceremony at the beginning of the fono, discussed in
Chapter Four, can be considered as an example of what Goffman (1974)
calls *opening temporal bracket*:

> Activity framed in a particular way - especially
> collectively organised social activity - is often
> marked off from the ongoing flow of surrounding
> events by a special set of boundary markers or
> brackets of a conventional kind. These occur before
> and after the activity in time and may be circumscriptive
> in space ... One may speak, then, of opening and
> closing temporal brackets and bounding spatial brackets.
> (Goffman 1974:251-52)

As typical of opening boundary markers,[1] the opening kava ceremony not
only specifies the point in time at which the event starts, it also
provides information on the forthcoming activity. Thus, for instance,
the crying out by the tufa'ava (see 4.3.1) not only announces that
the kava is ready to be served (and therefore people should stop
talking and concentrate on the ceremony), it also defines the forth-
coming event as distinct from other (partly similar) events in the
society. The peculiar order of distribution of kava, for instance,
symbolically represents the loss of social balance and the need for
discussion (see 4.3.2.1).

From the point of view of analysing a fono as a speech event, one
might want first to ask the question of whether and to what extent
temporal boundaries have a linguistic reality. In our case, this
amounts to asking whether the change marked by the opening kava
ceremony has consequences for the way in which the same individuals
talk to one another. I will answer this question in section 5.2,
where I show that verbal interaction among the matai before and after

the opening kava ceremony differ in rules for turn-taking, lexical
selection, morphosyntactic and phonological patterns.

The same dramatic change, however, does not characterise verbal
interaction before and after the *final* kava ceremony, which one would
tend to identify as the *closing temporal bracket*. When the final
kava distribution takes place, one has the feeling (also shared by
Samoans) that the meeting has in fact already ended some time before.
The closing of the meeting is generally a more gradual enterprise
than the beginning. Instead of a definite, sharp closure, we often
find several *attempts* to end, all of which involve in one way or
another a violation of some of the rules of fono interaction. Such
violations, with the return to rules for talking typical of 'before
fono' time, constitute *negotiable closings*, which may or may not be
accepted by other participants. In providing a few examples of these
attempts to close, I will demonstrate that contrary to what is
suggested by Goffman,[2] closing an event can be more difficult than
opening it.

5.2. Verbal Interaction Before and During a Fono

When they know that there is going to be a fono, matai start
gathering around eight o'clock in the morning either in the big house
where the meeting is to take place or in some other, smaller house
nearby.

They sit and talk, often keeping their hands busy by rolling on
their thighs the fibres of coconut, which will eventually be made into
a string ('afa) or a fly whisk (fue). If they gather in another
house, or in the back of the fono-house, they may have an early kava.[3]
In the meantime, other matai may be playing billiards nearby, waiting
to see Moe'ono and Iuli pass by before moving to the fono-house.

This is a time for relatively relaxed verbal interaction, full of
story-telling and jokes. When several matai are gathered together,
more than one conversation may be going on at the same time with some
parties switching in and out of one conversation to get into a more
interesting one. The range of topics is quite wide, although there
seems to be a fairly strict, unspoken rule prohibiting mention of the
topic(s) that will be discussed in the forthcoming meeting.

For the purpose of this study, I am concerned with the talk that
goes on at this time inside the fono-house, among those same
individuals who will be engaged, once the fono has started, in the
meeting proceedings. Although verbal interaction before the meeting

starts may be called 'conversation', it is apparent that it is not the same kind of conversation that would be going on if the same individuals were gathering in some other house for some other activity, say, playing cards. For one thing, despite a certain 'informality' of talk, there is clearly much less overlap and competition for the floor than in other conversations I have recorded among matai in more casual settings. Furthermore, although ranks and roles do not have the importance and function they will have once the meeting has begun, some conversationalists seem more in control of the floor and of the topic than others. Thus, for instance, Moe'ono is often concerned with those who are not present yet and inquiries whether they will be coming or not.

(1) (Fono April 7, 1979, book I, p. 3) (Letters indicate
     unnamed speakers.)

```
Moe'ono:  A    fea  le  makua ┌ // (o le        )?
          EMP where ART Matua │
                              │
B :                           └   ((Finishing his greeting to
                                     the assembly)) makua
                                                    Matua

          ma  kagaka o  le  Kuiakua.
          and people of the King of Atua

Moe'ono:  'o fea    luli?
          TOP where Iuli

          (1.2)

C :       E    ma ke le'i    feiloa'i a  a'u ga usu
          COMP we TNS NEG+PST meet     EMP I   PST go

          mai   a le  loku.
          Deict   ART church

          Sau  ai    a.
          come here  EMP

          (1.8)

Moe'ono:  A'o i(ai)  ō?
          But exist there

C :       Ke  le  iloa fo'i.
          TNS NEG know also

          (2.0)
```

```
D :          Lea   iai.
             there exist

             (1.0)

D :          A   loku   gei.
             EMP church now

             (0.5)

Moe'ono:  ┌┌ Mm.l
          ││ mh.
E :       └└ I ai,] Iuli?
             whom, Iuli?

D :          Mm.
             Yes.

F :          Sa  loku
             had (gone to) church

Moe'ono:     Where is the Matua // ...?

B :          ((Greeting the assembly)) the Matua and the
             people of the King of Atua.

Moe'ono:     Where is Iuli?

             (1.2)

C :          He and I didn't see each other.  As for me,
             I got up and went to church.  Then I came
             straight here.

             (1.8)

Moe'ono:     But is he still over there?

C :          I don't know that either.

             (2.0)

D :          He's around.

             (1.0)

D :          He is at church now.

             (0.5)

Moe'ono:  ┌┌ I see.
E :       └└ Who?  Iuli?

D :          Yes.

F :          He'd gone to church.
```

5.2.1. Turn-taking

In this section, I will describe the rule for allocation of turns in talking among matai before (section 5.2.1.1) and after (5.2.1.2) the opening kava ceremony. As we shall see, the two systems differ in several important respects.

5.2.1.1. The Organisation of Turn-taking in Conversation Among Matai Before the Meeting Starts

As it should be apparent from a quick look at the stretch of transcript reproduced in example (1) above, before the opening kava ceremony matai seem to be engaged in conversation. In this kind of interaction, we find several of the features for turn allocation that have been described for English conversation (cf. Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson 1974; Schegloff, Jefferson, and Sacks 1977).[4] In particular, the following rules are at work:

> **(i) Allocation of speakers is accomplished according to the following two rules: (1) Other-selection (i.e. current speaker selects next speaker); (2) Self-selection (i.e. a speaker selects himself).**

Rule (1) may apply in a variety of ways. Thus, for instance, the current speaker may select next speaker by means of the topic of his turn, particularly so when he is asking a question. In example (1) above C is selected by Moe'ono because he is the only matai from Iuli's subvillage who is sitting in the inner circle inside the fono-house. Only after C has repeatedly failed to satisfy Moe'ono's request for information (which is, at the same time, a complaint about the fact that the other Matua has not arrived yet), do other speakers self-select.

Other times, the current speaker may summon the next speaker by calling his name, as in example (2) below, which is similar to the one just illustrated:

(2) (Fono April 7, book I, p. 10)

Moe'ono: a   fea   uma fo'i lo kou pikogu'u (a)li'i,
           EMP *where all also* ART *your subvillage sir,*

           (0.3) Loa?

Loa: (Se) ka'ilo a iai. (0.2) Savalivali mai   a
           [*who*] *knows of it.*   *walk*   Deict. EMP

```
         kaika ke  le  (iloa).
          I    TNS NEG [know]

     (5.0)
```

Moe'ono: Where are all the other people from your
          subvillage Sir (0.3) Loa?

Loa: How do I know? (0.2) I walked by myself.
          I don't [know].

**(ii) Overwhelmingly, one party talks at a time and
         overlaps are brief.**

Here we must distinguish between different foci of attention and
different conversations that may be going on at the same time. While
the matai are having the conversation reported above in (l), one of
the women from the family who owns the fono-house is arranging more
mats in the house for the matai who are arriving. She is inside the
house, calling and directing her kids who are bringing mats. If we
were to transcribe her verbal interaction with her children together
with the conversation among the matai, there would be several overlaps.

(iii) Brief gaps between turns are common.

The status and rank of participants, as well as other factors such
as the topics and the time of the interaction (e.g. as soon as people
have arrived or later on), seem to play a role in the length of gaps
between turns.

(iv) The order of those who speak is not fixed.

In conversation among matai before the meeting, the succession of
speakers is not pre-allocated. That is, one cannot predict who is
going to speak next, and even less, who is going to speak after three
or four turns.

**(v) Although speakers often signal the end of their turn,
        there is always the possibility that the last speaker
        may reselect himself if no one else does.**

(vi) What speakers say is not specified in advance.

Although one may predict that some topics will not be discussed
(particularly the topic to be discussed in the meeting), it is not
possible to know in advance what speakers will talk about nor the
succession of topics (e.g. it is not possible to say that, given
topic a at time n, it will be followed by topic b at time n+1).

      (vii) Any person sitting inside the house is a potential
           conversaltionalist at any given time.

This means that, any of the matai in the house, without distinctions
of status, rank, or position (e.g. whether in the front row or in the
back) can participate in the conversation. A distinction should,
however, be made between those who are *potential* speakers and those
who are *likely* to participate in the conversation. Here, again,
considerations regarding status, rank, and position in the seating
arrangement (see Chapter Four) have a relevant role in the likelihood
of a certain individual to be an active conversationalist.

Another feature that we may have to take into account with respect
to the range of participation is the *size of the fono-house*. I
noticed that when the matai would gather in a very big house, there
was a tendency to break the interaction before the meeting into small
groups of those who were sitting next to each other, with occasional
switches from one group to another and from separate conversations to
one conversation. When the meeting was held in a smaller house, where
participants would be physically closer to each other, there was
a tendency to engage in *one* conversation, with the participation of
a much larger group.

5.2.1.2. Turn-taking After the Opening Kava Ceremony

In this section I will describe the rules for allocation of turns
for speaking in a fono. As we shall see, such a system differs, in
several respects, from the organisation of turn-taking in pre-fono
conversation described in section 5.2.1.1 above.

    (i) Allocation of speakers is accomplished according to the
following three rules:

                1. pre allocation
                2. self-selection
                3. other-selection

Rule 1. is absent from the rules of conversation (cf. section
5.2.1.1). As I have illustrated in Chapter Five, *in a fono, speaker's
turns are pre-allocated up to a predictable number*. Thus, for
instance, if there are seven subvillages gathered in a fono (**fono
falefitu**), one orator (from those who sit in the front row) from each
subvillage will speak in a predictable order. The extent of
predictability is, however, variable. If there are two orators from
the same subvillage sitting in the front row, it is not always
possible to establish in advance which one of the two will speak when

it is their subvillage's turn.[5] In this sense, the pre-allocation
rules operate in such a way to restrict the set of speakers at a given
time, but they may not always specify which particular individual will
speak.

Before going on with the discussion of allocation of turns, I must
make clear that in order to speak of 'turns' here, I must use this
term in a different way from what is meant in Conversation Analysis
and from the way I have used it in the preceding section. Within the
meeting, the term 'turn' becomes synonymous with 'speech'. As I will
explain, during a speech, there are certain predictable and partly
elicited responses of the audience (see (ii) below) that in some sense
interrupt or partly overlap the current speaker's turn. We may adopt
Duncan's notion of a turn (Duncan 1974) and consider those responses
as *back channel behaviour* that should not be considered as separate
turns. If we are mainly concerned, as Duncan is, with describing
speaker change, we would not need to consider one-word back channel
expressions as separate turns. Another solution is to coin a different
term, namely, 'macro-turn', that would characterise the difference
from and, at the same time, maintain the relationship with 'turns in
conversation'.

One of the characteristics of a macro-turn would be that the
speaker would have the right to the floor for several sentences and
potential 'turns' until he explicitly signals that his turn is over
and someone else may come in. The macro-turn, once established,
stops the other potential speakers from coming in at the 'transition
relevant points' (Sacks 1970; Sacks et al. 1974) and, in fact, we may
say that a macro-turn, by way of conventions, establishes different
rules for 'transition relevant points'. What would be a possible
point of intervention in conversation is not necessarily so for a
speech.

*When pre-allocation rules stop operating, it is usually the case
that parties self-select in starting to talk* (once a speaker has
started to talk, there are no 'second starters').

Before starting to talk, speakers usually signal their intention
'to be next' by a readjustment of their body posture and a clearing
of their voice. They may also look at other potential speakers
(e.g. other matai from the same subvillage), trying to spot any signs
that would indicate that another person is about to speak next
(although this is more a concern for lower status matai than for higher
status ones). There is also a verbal cue that signals a person's

decision to speak and affirms his intention to hold the 'vacant'
floor, namely, ua *so well*, followed by a brief pause.

Finally, other-selection is usually restricted to those cases in
which Moe'ono, as the chairman of the meeting, invites someone to
provide some important relevant information on the issue at hand
(see 6.5.1) or when he invites a representative of 'Aiga to speak
towards the end of the meeting, as shown in (3) below:

(3) (Fono January 25, book III, p. 62)

Moe'ono: Ia   ali'i aumaia se kou saugoana a   le
          Well, sirs, give   us some speech   from your

          kou   kala.
          [*chiefly*] *side.*

          Pei   ga'o ga kakou   leo kekele.
          Given that we have been just shouting at each other.

**(ii)   Within one's speech ('macro-turn') conventional
         back channel responses are elicited from the
         audience conveying agreement or recognition.**

This is a common environment for brief overlap. The most common
expression is mālie meaning *nice, nicely said* (probably related to
the verb malie, with a short a, *to agree*) or mālie lava *really nice*, or
nice indeed. Speakers clearly create the environments for receiving
feedback from the audience in the form of mālie, both as a way of
verifying other people's attention to their speech and as a way of
seeking agreement. A less frequent back channel expression is mo'i
true. This word has a different range of distribution from mālie.
Mo'i is an expression of agreement with respect to the content of
what the speaker has just said and it contrasts with mālie which is
rather concerned with the way in which a particular idea was expressed.
Whereas there are certain metaphors and proverbs, particularly those
conveying shared knowledge and attitude with respect to some
fundamental aspects of Samoan world-view, which would always trigger
a mālie, the same could not be said for mo'i, which tends to convey
an alliance or affinity with a particular issue under discussion.
Whereas mālie are common in both lāuga and talanoaga parts of the
fono, mo'i are found only in the talanoaga (see Chapter Six).

Another less frequent type of response from some members of the
audience involves one of the specialised terms for speaking
appropriate to the status of the current speaker (see 5.3). These
responses are different from the two mentioned above, because they

must be given by one particular person in the audience, whereas mālie
and mo'i can be potentially said by anyone of the matai present.
An example is given in (4) below. We have a case here in which,
while Taofiuailoa, an orator from Sanonu, is delivering the first
speech (lāuga) of the meeting, another older orator (Fulumu'a) from
the same subvillage arrives and goes to sit in the front row. Without
interrupting his speech, Taofiuailoa acknowledged Fulumu'a's arrival
and apologises for being the one who is delivering the lāuga, given
that, Fulumu'a being older and of a higher rank, he may have claimed
the right to deliver the first speech.[6] Fulumu'a answers with the
expression fekalaia lau kōfā, that is, *Your Honour may speak* (the word
fetalai is the specialised term for an orator, as opposed to saunoa
[*a chief*] *speaks*, and vagana [*a Matua*] *speaks*), a recognition of
Taofiuailoa's right to go on with his speech:

    (4) (Fono January 25, book I, p. 13)

      T :   ... 'Ua fa'akaugu'uiga (0.5) i le maguia (1.0)
           [*We*] *have accomplished* (0.5) *in good health* (1.0)

           fuafuaga'uma- (1.0) kōfā sā liliu
           all the plans- (1.0) *made by the chiefs*

           ia po'o le fa'aukaga fo'i sa moe
           and the suggestions also made by the orators

           i lo kākou gu'u.
           in our village.

           (8.0) ((FULUMU'A ARRIVES))

      T :   Ia vaku la le o'o mai
           With the permission of the arrival

           o le kagaka o Fogokī
           of the person of Fonotī 7

           (1.5) Ia o:- (1.0) le kākou vi'iga i le Akua lea
                Well- (1.0) *this is our praise to God*

            ua makou kaumafai iai. (1.5)
           [*that*] *we are trying* [*to deliver*] (1.5)

           (A)uā le aofia ma le fogo. (3.5)
           Given that we are gathered in a fono. (3.5)

           Ia. (1.0) 'O le kākou vi'iga i le Akua. (1.0)
           Right. (1.0) *It's our praise to God.* (1.0)

Uā   ua kākou maukigoa
Because we are   sure

ua le ukuva Lana (le) ma'a kogi fa'akō
our Matai   ((=God)) does not stop

lo kakou Makai.
*throwing rocks [at us] with a curse.*8

F :   la.   Fekalaia.   (1.0) Lau kōfā
      Yes. [Go on with] your speech. (1.0) Your Honour

          Loa.
      [*Taofiuai*]*loa.*

Other times, the same expression, accompanied by a possessive
adjective (lau *your*), is used as a recognition of a compliment, as
in (5):

(5) (Fono January 25, book I, p. 45) (The orator Usu
delivers the third speech of the day, after Moe'ono has
opened the discussion with a very long speech.)

Usu: ... 'Ae kaigage fo'i le mamalu
          ... But as well   the dignity

          i le kofi   fa'asolo
          *of the various positions*9

          i le 'a'ai ...
          in the village ...

          Gofo a ala   i le Falefiku
          The subvillages of the Falefitu

          i kokogu i lo kakou gu'u ...
          inside   of our   village ...

          Fa'amālō   vagaga ...
          Congratulations [for your] speech [Moe'ono] ...

          'Ua fa'afogoga 'Āiga ...
          The chiefs have listened ...

Moe'ono: Lau fekalaiga.
          Your speaking [Usu].

Usu: ((Goes on with his speech.))

     (iii) Gaps between 'macro-turns' are generally longer
           than between turns in conversation.

This seems to follow from the general 'slower pace' of the speaking
in the meeting, if we compare it with verbal behaviour before the
meeting starts among the same individuals.

     (iv) The end of the speech is signalled by the speaker through
one of a restricted number of formulae, all of which convey the meaning
of a good wish to the assembly. The most common phrases are manuia le
aofia ma le fono! *health (to) the assembly and the fono!*; manuia le
asō! *(may) today (be) healthy*, or *have a good day!*. Towards the end
of his speech, the speaker may also say *my speech is over, these are
my words*, and other expressions of this kind. These phrases, however,
do not mark the end of the speech, but rather, the fact that the
speaker is *about* to end. An expression like *I am going to stop here*
(o le 'ā fa'apau mai i'i) cannot then be interpreted literally, but it
rather opens the 'end' part, which will be completed with one of the
formulae cited above (see also the discussion of the different parts
of a speech, in Chapter Seven).

     (v) Part of what a speaker says may be specified in advance
         (cf. also (ii) above).

Here, a distinction must be made between the introductory speeches
and the discussions. As I will illustrate in the next chapter, the
structure of the introductory speeches is in large part predictable,
with several topics and parts to be covered, although the speaker has
the choice of making some variations and deciding which particular
metaphors and expressions he will use for stating certain well-known
facts and values.

However, even in the discussion, speakers make use of well-known
formulae and 'routines', which are taken from the more structured
introductory speeches (cf. Chapter Seven).

     (vi) Not all the people sitting inside the house have the same
right to speak at any given time. This is partly a consequence of (1).

Overwhelmingly, the orators sitting in the front of the house (see
the discussion of the seating arrangement in Chapter Four) do most of
the talking, with the occasional participation of one or two chiefs.
Furthermore, as illustrated in Chapter Four and stated in (1), the
order and the identity of a certain number of speakers at the beginning
of the meeting is already arranged. Violations are not permitted,
although they may be attempted.[10]

In addition to the rules for taking turns and the tendency for orators in the front to be the most active participants, there are other rules that may come into play at various occasions, concerning the appropriateness of a certain individual to express his opinion on a particular topic. These rules if violated, tend to cause the prompt reaction of one of the two Matua.[11]

5.2.2. The Lexicon

Samoan has special words for addressing and referring to matai called by Samoans themselves 'upu fa'aaloalo *respectful words*. The language used after the opening kava ceremony is distinguished from the language before the ceremony by the high occurrence of these words. In the literature, this special lexicon has been referred to in various ways such as 'chief's language' (Pratt 1911), 'vocabulary of respect' (Milner 1966), or '(chiefly) respect vocabulary' (Shore 1977). When studying Samoan from a grammar or from a dictionary, as well as when trying to learn from direct experience in loco, one is told that he must use different words in addressing and talking about matai from what one would use in addressing or talking about untitled people. Furthermore, within the matai class, distinctions sometimes are made between chiefs and orators, and other times even between high rank and low rank chiefs and orators (cf. Milner 1961). Thus, for instance, the word for *to know* is iloa for untitled people, but silafia for matai. The word for *to come* is sau for untitled, but afio mai for chiefs and maliu mai for orators.

In actual interaction, a complicated system of rules is at work for establishing when the respect vocabulary (RV) term should be used. Thus, for instance, one should not use an RV term when referring to oneself. At the same time, on some occasions, a very high chief may use an RV term when talking about himself. Generally, in most contexts, the RV is not used very consistently as one would expect if we were to take the status (and rank) distinctions mentioned above literally. Thus even when the referent of the subject of a given verb may require the use of an RV word, a common term may in fact be used. The verb sau, for instance, could be used in talking about an untitled person, a chief or an orator, as shown in (6) below:

(6) a. 'Ua sau Sefo. *Sefo has come.* (Sefo is an untitled)

b. 'Ua sau Savea. *Savea has come.* (Savea is a chief)

c. 'Ua sau Leuta. *Leuta has come.* (Leuta is an orator)

There are times, however, in which distinctions must be made. In
those cases, we would have the following sentences:

(7)   a. 'Ua sau Sefo. *Sefo has come.*
                          (Implication: Sefo is an untitled)

       b. 'Ua afio mai Savea. *Savea has come.*
                          (Implication: Savea is a chief)

       c. 'Ua maliu mai Leuta. *Leuta has come.*
                          (Implication: Leuta is an
                                        orator)

Other times, however, some RV terms may be used in addressing
individuals who are not matai. This is particularly common in
requests for favours, when the speaker uses what Brown and Levinson
(1978) have called 'negative politeness', that is, 'redressive action
addressed to the addressee's negative face: his want to have his
freedom of action unhindered and his attention unimpended' (Brown and
Levinson 1978:134). The emphasis on the hearer's relative power is
one of the typical strategies for conveying the idea that the
addressee does not have to do what he is asked for. Whether the
speaker chooses to be humble and abase himself or to treat the hearer
as superior (to himself and to what the hearer would be in other
circumstances), 'in both cases, what is conveyed is that H (i.e.
hearer) is of higher social status than S (i.e. speaker)' (ibid.
p. 183).

In a fono, we find the most extensive and consistent use of the RV.
This is probably due to the fact that in such an event we have matai
speaking to matai (mostly) about matai. Furthermore, people act in
terms of their social identities (cf. Chapter Six) and therefore their
matai status is achieved at its full potential. Examples 8 and 9
below show that, whereas Moe'ono uses the common term sau when asking,
before the fono has started, whether the orator Mata'afa has arrived
(example 8), he uses the word maliu mai when delivering a speech
within the meeting (example 9):

(8) (Fono April 7, 1979, book I, p. 10) (Context: Before
meeting starts, Moe'ono inquires about which other matai
are expected to participate in the meeting.)

Moe'ono: Ga'o Maka'afa a le Falelua ga sau?
          Only Mata'afa came from the Falelua?

L: Ia   ai a ga'o // Maka'afa.
          There is only   Mata'afa.

(9) (Fono April 7, 1979, book I, p. 47) (Context: The
meeting has been going on for some time. After the
discussion of the first item, Moe'ono recognises the
arrival of the chief Tevaseu and the orator Mata'afa.)

Moe'ono: (...) Ia, o lea ua lua afio mai Kevaseu
                   So. Now you have come,   Tevaseu

       maliu mai fo'i   Maka'afa.
       [you] have come too Mata'afa.

5.2.3. Morphosyntax

I will list below a few examples of the kind of morphosyntactic
variation that one finds between talk before the kava ceremony and
talk after it.

(1) In the fono speeches there are more sentences with 'full
constituents' than in conversation.

By limiting our survey to main declarative sentences with
transitive verbs (i.e. verbs taking ergative/absolutive case marking),
we find that, out of seventeen sentences in conversation before fono,
only three have (in addition to the verb) Agent NP and Object NP
superficially expressed by nouns or full pronouns. In the fono
speeches, on the other hand, out of fifty-eight transitive sentences,
seventeen have full NP Agents and Objects in them. The two
distributions are summarised in Table 5.1.

TABLE 5.1

Percentage of full NP constituents in speech
before and after the opening kava ceremony

	Percentage	
Before ceremony (conversation)	17.6%	(3)
After ceremony (fono speeches)[a]	29.3%	(17)

[a]These figures refer to the discussion part
(talanoaga) of the meeting (cf. Chapter Six).

(ii) In fono speeches, there is a greater tendency for verbs to
appear with tense/aspect markers than in conversation.

(iii) The so-called 'transitive suffix' (-Cia) appears in a wider
range of forms and contexts during a fono than before it.

Several linguists have tried to capture the syntactic or discourse function of the various verbal suffixes known under the label (C)(i)a (e.g. -a, -ia, -mia, -tia, -ina etc.). Chung (1978:88) has suggested that this suffix appears when the subject has been moved or extracted, a point independently made also by Cook (1978). By looking at written texts collected by Stuebel in the last century, Chung (1978:92) also proposes that -Cia may also be a marker for 'unrealized mood'.

Chung's predictions are generally matched by my own observations of spontaneous conversation.[12] However, when we look at the presence of -Cia in fono speeches, we also find it in constructions that should not host it. Thus, for example, we find it in sentences in which the Agent NP follows the verb, like in (10) below:

(10) (Fono April 7, 1979)

    ... pei oga fa'ali-a e le kōfā   a le Makua
    as COMP *show-*Cia *by* ART *Highness of* ART *Matua*
    ... *As it has been shown by His Highness the Matua*

Furthermore, we find in the fono several allomorphs of -Cia that are not usually found in conversation (e.g. -mia, -gia, -sia) and, not only with transitive verbs, but also with intransitive verbs and middle verbs, which acquire, as a consequence, ergative case marking.

(11) (Fono April 7)

    ... pei fo'i e   musumusu-iga le mafaufau e   le
    as also TNS *whisper-*Cia ART *mind*   ERG ART

agaga o le Akua.
spirit of the Lord.

... *As the spirit of God has also suggested to our consideration.*

(12) (Fono April 7)

'Ua fau-sia e   Savea le figagalo
TNS *make-*Cia ERG *S.*   ART *decision*
Savea has made a decision.

(13) (Fono January 25)

'Ua ole-gia   'Aiga ma lega Makua ma- ma lo kakou
TNS *deceive-*Cia *chiefs and that Matua   and* ART *our*

gu'u   e   Lufilufi
village ERG *Lufilufi*
the chiefs and that Matua and our village have been deceived by Lufilufi

(14) (Fono April 7, p. 56)

... 'A'e 'aua le va'ai-a e   lo kakou gu'u
but don't ART see-Cia ERG ART our   village

ua ulu   i   lea fale,
TNS *enter in that house,*

ulu   i   lea fale.
enter in that house.
But don't let our village see
[that] you enter in one house [and]
[then] in another one.

These facts suggest that we should see the presence of -Cia
suffixes not only in terms of grammatical (syntactic or semantic)
environments, but also as appropriate to particular social contexts.[13]
A fact that is supported by native speakers' intuitions that a form
with -Cia often sounds 'nicer' and it is appropriate for a church
sermon or a formal speech. A formal setting like the fono is then
characterised, among various things, by a broader spectrum of -Cia
environments and a higher percentage of Cia suffixes.

(iv) In the fono, we find complex subordinate conjunctions (e.g.
iga 'ia *in order to*, pei oga *as*, e ui lava iga *although*) which are
rarely found in conversation. The latter is, in turn, more often
characterised by verb chains, without subordinators.[14] An example is
given in (15) below, where we have four verbs in the same utterance
without any conjunctions:

(15) (Before fono April 7, 1979, p. 10)

Mai gi   kama avaku le 'aufa'i lele ave fai se
send some boys get   ART bananas there take make some

pe'epe'e a le kakou gu'u!
cream   of ART our   village!
Send some boys [to] take that bunch of bananas over
there [to] take [it] [to] make with it [some cream]
for our village['s matai]!

(v) In the fono, speakers sometimes use the particle 'i before a
full pronoun, like in example 16. Such use of 'i is absent in
conversation.

(16) (Fono January 25, 1979, p. 16)

... Fesoasoagi mai iā   'i kākou
    Help   DX PREP   us [all]
... *Help us*

5.2.4. Prosody

As noted earlier, the speed of speech is much slower in the fono than in conversation, although it varies from one individual to another and it tends to be closer to conversational speed in the middle of a heated discussion. Furthermore, in the fono, speakers often use a characteristic rising intonation towards the end of backgrounded and/or subordinated propositions, which is unusual in conversation.

5.3. Closing the Event

In the preceding section, we have seen that verbal interaction among the same individuals before and after the kava ceremony is different in several respects, namely, organisation of turn allocation, lexical selection, morpho-syntactic patterns. The opening kava ceremony can then be said to constitute an institutionalised boundary that alerts the audience to the properties of the code to be used and the activity to be engaged in thereafter.

The same cannot be said of the *closing* kava ceremony. In the first place, such a ceremony is not always performed (whereas the opening kava is a *must* of every fono). Second, shifts in the verbal (as well as in the non-verbal) behaviour of the participants usually occur *much before* the final kava is distributed. The final kava, as explained in Chapter Four (see 4.3.2.2), is the official announcement that an agreement has been reached and that people can leave the house. Such an announcement, however, usually occurs at a point when other conventional signals have already been exchanged among the participants conveying the message that the meeting is over. From the point of view of defining the final kava as a temporal boundary marker, we must take notice of the fact that language before and after it is not as dramatically different as between that before and after the opening kava. Towards the end of the meeting, speech gradually goes back to features of 'before fono', and this happens *before* the final kava ceremony is performed.

Turn-taking is the first aspect of verbal behaviour to change toward the end of a fono. After a representative of the chiefs has spoken defining the final position of the chiefs on the topic of the discussion, there may be a few more speeches. In addition to recognising the chiefs' decision, the matai often address the question of when (or where) the next meeting should take place or the amount of the fine that must be paid to the assembly. At this point, turns become much shorter, as illustrated in the following interaction taken from the last pages of a transcript of a fono:

(17) (Fono April 7, book III, p. 75)

Moe'ono: ... Aso Gafua kakou feiloa'i!
          ... On Monday we   meet!

          Ia.   Maua mai ai   le kali.
          Okay.   We'll get then an answer.

          Oga 'ave loa lea o   le laufā
          After [having] sent the messengers

          iā:: Lufilufi i   se   aso
          to: Lufilufi for some day

          kakou ke feiloa'i ai.
          [when] we will all meet.

          (2.0)

          Ua: lea?
          How about that?

Salanoa: Ua   lelei.=
          That's fine.=

Savea: =Lelei.
          =Fine.

?:   Mālō!
          Well done!

Salanoa: A::- vave fa'apegei lā
          But- [we must] be quick

          e- e- e leaga, e   kakau lā
          because,   [we] must be

          oga vave 'ave le laufā.
          quick to send   the messengers.

          Ma kakau ga kakou vave feiloa'i
          And we must meet soon

          (ma)-
          (and)

Moe'ono: 'Ave a i le Aso Gafua.
          Send [them] on Monday.

```
            Aso   fiku   legei   ┌ // Aso      valu kaeao.
            Today is the seventh │ // tomorrow is    eight.
Iuli:                            │
                                 │   Ka'akia ia fa'apea.
                                 └   Leave it like this.


            Ua lava lea.
            That's enough.

Moe'ono:    Aso iva le Aso Gafua▪
            Monday is the ninth=

Fuimaono:   ▪Aso Gafua.
            =Monday.

Moe'ono:    Ioe.
            Yes.

? :         'Ae    magaia.
            That's nice.

Moe'ono:    Lea a e mamao aku aso
            Given that it's not so soon

            e le'i          kaikai.
            there is still time.

            . . .

            . . .
```

In this context, we find clear attempts to conclude the discussion by some important members of the assembly. An example is provided below in (18), where Moe'ono tries to end by suddenly introducing a radically different topic, namely *eating*, in a very informal manner:

(18) (Fono January 25, book III, pp. 67-68)

```
Moe'ono:    Ia.  Savea, pei fo'i oga 'ou- (0.5)
            Well, Savea, I am just-      (0.5)

            valuvalusia a'a o le fau i lou figagalo.
            making    a suggestion to your [chiefly] mind.

            Ia o lea ku'u aku galue le kalasia o le Akua
            Now [I'll] leave the divine grace of the Lord work

            i lau Afioga.
            with your Highness [or with your decision].

? :         Mālie!

? :         Mālie lava!
```

Moe'ono: Ioe.   E le uma le gaosi aso.
           Yes.   The days [given us by God] are not over.

           Ae- ((LOUD)) SOLĒ!   O FAI EA SE KAKOU
           But-   *Hey you guys! Have you made any*

           SUAVAI?
           food for us?

Notice the use of the vocative **sole** in addressing the young matai and
the untitled men sitting outside the back of the house. **Sole** is used
in informal interaction with either a peer or a lower status person.
It is not appropriate to the speech genres of a fono. In this case,
there is also a change in suprasegmental features: from slow speech,
in not too high a volume, to a fast, shouted modality, addressing
people who are normally not directly addressed during the proceedings.

Attempts to conclude, such as the one just illustrated, can be
challenged by other matai in the assembly who feel strongly there
should be further discussion. Such a case can be found in (19), which
is the continuation of the transcript quoted in (18):

(19) (Fono January 25, book III, p. 68)

Moe'ono: SOLĒ!   O FAI EA SE KAKOU SUAVAI?
           Hey you guys! Have you made any food for us?

?:   La e fai.
           [They] are doing [it].

?:   (?   ) (Ae o oulua ma lau āvā.)
           (But you two go with your wives.)

Moe'ono: ((Surprised)) 'Oi!
           Gee!

Fulumu'a: (Leai) e le'i- (2.5) saugoa mai fo'i 'Āiga gei.
           (No)   these chiefs here have not (2.5) spoken.

           Se'i kakou fa'alogologo.
           Let us listen [to them].

           'Aua kakou polepole!
           Let us not be hasty!

Moe'ono: Ia lea fai aku po'o o kama o:-
           Well, I was just telling the boys-

```
                    o ku'a po'o  ┌─ (      ?      ) fai se    gasese.
                    in the back if │              do some preparation.
         Fulumu'a:                 │
                                   │ Ia auā ua 'ese a (lelei)  fa'akasiga
                                   └─ Because our getting together is

                      fo'i a kakou.   Aemaise 'Aiga.
                      extraordinary.   Especially the chiefs.

                      Pe'i ga'o ga (      ?       )
                      As just-
```

Moe'ono: Ia lelei=Saugoa!
           Very well, speak up [honourable chiefs]!

Others: Saugoa!
           Speak up [honourable chiefs]!

           (At this point the chief Tevaseu begins his speech)

Tevaseu: Ia o le ga ua kele'i saugoa aku Lealaisalagoa ...
           Well, Lealaisalanoa has just spoken ...

In the example above, we can see that whereas some matai go along with Moe'ono and accept his invitation to eat and therefore conclude the discussion (there is even what looks like an attempt to make a joke 'But you go with your wives [instead of eating here with us]'), the old orator Fulumu'a from Sanonu challenges Moe'ono's attempt and exhorts the assembly not to be too hasty, given that there are still some chiefs who have not spoken (and he refers here to a chief from the subvillage of Salesalete). Moe'ono must then 'retreat' excusing himself (I was just telling the boys in the back ...) and invite the chief to speak.

Other attempts to close the meeting can be more discrete. One of the two Matua or a high chief may make a pre-announcement of the sort 'perhaps we are done ...' as illustrated in example 20:

(20) (Fono April 7, book III, pp. 99-101) (The matai have been discussing the question of whether Loa had lied to the assembly when he said that the district representative [Fa'amatuainu] was going to visit and bring some presents.)

Salanoa: Ia=   ai akogu: (1.0) ua   'uma.
           Well= perhaps   (1.0) it's over.

           Ua   'uma lea maka'upu, (1.5)
           This topic is over,

Ae fa'apegei
But [let's do] like this

aua a ge'i ku'ua se mea
don't put anything aside

e lē- le kogu ma sa'o kogu
[that/it] is not straight and right

lea la la'a kakou feiloa'i
when we will meet

ma   Lufilufi (1.0)
with Lufilufi (1.0)

ae a:- pa'u mai le Susuga
[we'll get] the opinion

a Fa'amakuaigu (1.5)
of Fa'amatuainu (1.5)

i luma: o kakou gu'u
in front of our villages

"ou ke le'i fa'kogua se Loa"
[he will say] 'I didn't instruct Loa'

//la.   Uo'u iloa
//That's it. I know

ua o'o loa le fa'alavelave ia ke 'oe.
that's when you'll get in trouble.

Loa: hehehe ((soft))   (1.0)
hehehe ((soft laughter)) (1.0)

Moe'ono: o le kulaga sa'o   //legā.
          That's the right thing *//to do.*

? :   (?   ) sa'o lea.
                                            That's right.

Moe'ono: Ma le fe:-umia'i (o) a kakou mea.
          And the way to make things long.

? :   Mo'i.
          True.

???:   (Unclear, several people speaking at the same time.)

Moe'ono: la.   O(u)ke masalo ua leai sesi
          Well. I guess we don't have anything

```
                    a kakou maka'upu.  ┌ // Ua uma.
                    else to discuss.   │ // It's over.
          ? :                          │   Ioe.
                                       └   Yes.
```

Moe'ono: Ae:- K(a)kala ia lo kakou gu'u.
          And - Our village is dismissed.

In this case, given that no one has objected to either Salanoa's or
Moe'ono's attempt to close the discussion, Moe'ono can officially
declare the fono over and dismiss the assembly. Whether or not a
kava ceremony is performed at this point seems not so important,
given that Moe'ono actually *says* part of what the final kava would
otherwise imply (see 4.3.2.2).

Finally, I must mention another common means of concluding the
event, namely, *laughter*. At a certain point, once the language has
already acquired some of the features of 'before fono', someone will
make a joke and others will laugh loudly at it. This is a signal that
the discussion is concluded and people should relax. The conventional
nature of laughter as a means to close is proved by the fact that
Moe'ono himself may sometimes invite people to laugh, as shown in
example 21, in which the beginning of the final kava and the
invitation to laugh coincide:

(21) (Fono January 11, p. 43)

Moe'ono: ((Starts clapping)) Paki le   kākou 'ava!
                              Clap [for] our   kava!

Tufa'ava: ((Announces that the kava is going to be served))

           (...)

           ((End of clapping))

Moe'ono: Ia.   Kākou koē!
          Well. Let's laugh!

The above examples show that closing the fono is a more gradual
enterprise than opening it and that participants must agree upon the
appropriate time for it. At the end of the meeting, people are not
the same as they were when the fono started. The political equilibrium
of the community has reassessed, certain individuals have lost face,
others have gained prestige. For some people, to agree to end the
event might mean losing an important chance to redeem themselves or
their allies. For others, it might mean having to contribute a heavy

fine. Whereas the fact that there is going to be a meeting can hardly
be avoided once the matai have gathered in the fono house, the end of
a fono is always open for negotiation.

1. Goffman (1974:255-56) writes: '... it is reasonable to assume that the beginning bracket not only will establish an episode but also will establish a slot for signals which will inform and define what sort of transformation is to be made of the material within the episode.'

2. 'Closing brackets seem to perform less work, perhaps reflecting the fact that it is probably much easier on the whole to terminate the influence of a frame than to establish it.' (Goffman 1974:256).

3. On these occasions, the kava ceremony is performed in a sort of subdued modality. The introductory phrases are not shouted, but rather whispered and after the first round, the cup is just passed around with no 'blessing' of the kava. In fact, people talk with one another while drinking, and try to sit close enough to each other so that the cup can be passed without having someone stand up.

4. The systematics of turn-taking in other kinds of adult-adult interactions such as family settings, women's meetings, etc. have not been worked out yet and therefore what is said in this section should be taken, for the moment, as restricted to matai verbal interaction. Patterns of child-adult (namely, caretaker) interaction are, however, discussed in Ochs (1980a).

5. Whether only one or two (very rarely three) orators sit in the front row is a function of several factors. One is space, that is, whether there is enough room for more than one person from each sub-village to be sitting in the front. Another factor is the particular subvillage to which the orators belong. Thus, given that Moe'ono and Iuli do not perform lāuga, there should always be another orator from their subvillage just in case there is need for someone to perform a lāuga.

6. Taofiuailoa's apology to Fulumu'a is justified by the fact that
Fulumu'a went to sit in the front row, defining himself as an active
orator/participant in the meeting. Had he gone to sit in the back,
Taofiuailoa's apology would have not been appropriate, given that the
arrival of the other orator would have not been seen as competitive
with respect to Taofiuailoa's role in the proceedings.

7. 'The person of Fonotī' refers to Fulumu'a, being part of his
ceremonial greeting.

8. This image refers to God's power to end anyone's life at any time
and implies the recognition of God's love to the assembly for letting
the matai gather as they had planned.

9. See the discussion of the fa'alupega in Chapter Three.

10. Those who may try to violate these rules are more likely to be
higher rank matai, e.g. high chiefs. The two Matua, Iuli and Moe'ono,
however, have the authority to stop even a very high rank chief from
violating the pre-allocated order of speakers.

11. In one case, for instance, an orator was reprimanded by Moe'ono
for speaking in defense of a chief from his own subvillage.

12. Although there are differences in terms of 'primary' and
'secondary' functions. Thus, for instance, negative sentences, which
are, for Chung, only a secondary environment, are, in my data, the
most typical context for the presence of -Cia in conversation.

13. A context-bound description of the Cia suffixes has been also
proposed by Tuitele, Sapolu and Kneubuhl (1978:48): 'Nowadays, in
conversation we do not actually use all of these suffixes. However,
they are used in lāuga and in polite/formal writing'. (Translation
mine)

14. According to Givón (1979), this difference is typical of what he
calls 'tight subordination' and 'loose subordination' respectively,
with the former being found in unplanned or 'pragmatic' modality and
the latter in planned or 'syntactic' modality.

CHAPTER SIX

Lāuga and Talanoaga: Two Genres in One Event

6.1. A Homology

We have seen in the preceding chapter that several aspects of the
linguistic interaction among matai in the fono house change with the
beginning of the meeting, such a change being marked by the opening
kava ceremony. Whereas matai before the kava ceremony are engaged in
conversation, once the meeting starts, turns become much longer,
pre-allocation is found for a number of turns, responses are, to some
extent, predictable. Furthermore, vocabulary terms are consistently
used which change the syntactic shape of utterances. Finally,
morphosyntactic features are found in the fono speeches that are either
absent or less frequent in conversational Samoan. All of these
features were taken thus as characteristic of fono verbal interaction.
As I will show in this chapter, such a conclusion needs further
specification. When we analyse more closely the language of the fono
speeches across the whole event, we find that there is a gradual and
systematic progression from ceremonial, highly planned and predictable
orations to less predictable, more conversation-like speeches. The
key for understanding such a change is given by Samoans themselves in
a distinction that they make between two speech genres[1] used in a
fono: lāuga and talanoaga (hereafter L and T respectively).

A fono always starts with an L, a ceremonial speech in which the
dignity of the participants as 'gods on earth' is recognised and
praised, God is praised as the Almighty, and the agenda of the meeting
is only briefly and vaguely mentioned. Only in the T, literally
chat, talk, although maintaining some features of the Ls, can the
speakers present arguments, quarrel, accuse, scold, and try to
convince each other. T is then in antithesis to L in allowing the

expression of disagreement, doubts and blame, in recognising conflict and focusing on individuals rather than common interests and collectivity.

I propose here to consider the opposition between L and T as a homology of the contrast between two sets of antithetical concepts embodied in every Samoan fono. Some possible candidates for such an opposition are listed in Table 6.1.

TABLE 6.1.

Two Antithetical Sets of Concepts
and Values in a Fono

Lāuga	Talanoaga
Shared values	Unshared values
Shared information	Unshared information
Predictable	Unpredictable
Common views	Personal views
Common interest	Personal interest
Agreement	Disagreement
Harmony	Conflict
⋮	⋮

The opposition between the two sets and each pair of terms must be seen as along a continuum, that is, what is said in a T might never be completely *personal* or may never be in total disagreement with the views of others at the assembly, but it will be *more personal* than what is said (even by the same individual) in an L.

As we shall see, the meeting progresses from one set towards the other. Furthermore, within the same speech, we will see also a progression from one set of concepts and attitudes towards the other. The homology is then extended from the organisation of the fono as a whole to the organisation of each particular speech.

In order to understand the opposition represented by the two genres L and T, we must refer back to the social and cultural aspects of a fono, as discussed in Chapter Three. A fono is called when a breach of some social norm has taken place or is anticipated. Such a breach (actual or potential) creates a crisis in which the harmony of village life is disrupted, the ideal mutual love of the members of the

6.0. Two orators during the discussion part of a fono.

community is suspended. For a moment people are not in agreement on
some basic issue or norm, life becomes unpredictable, common interest
and values are questioned. The first L in a fono momentarily
recreates the lost equilibrium so that the matai can talk to each
other and work together to restore the social balance of the
community. Only when the L has been delivered, and hierarchies,
social roles, history and beliefs restated, can the real discussion
start and different voices be heard. Only after the L(s), can T(s)
take place.

6.2. L and T: A First Distinction

The first speech in a fono is always an L. It is delivered by an
orator from Sanonu who sits in the front part of the fono house (see
Chapter Four on the seating arrangement) and it is considered as the
introduction (tūvaoga). It conforms to the basic format of ceremonial
speeches performed in other social events, with some differences that
I will discuss in Chapter Seven. The orator must here announce why
the fono is in session (agenda of the day), but he cannot discuss the
issue(s).

Once the first L is over, two things can happen: (a) Moe'ono, who
chairs the meeting, will speak, or (b) another orator from Moe'ono's
subvillage, Sagapolu, will speak. The two alternative procedures are
illustrated in Figure 6.1. As one can see, if (a) is the case, there
will be no more Ls for the day, given that Moe'ono's first speech is
always a T and once there has been a T all other speeches after that
are also considered Ts. Notice that talanoaga is both the name
given to each single speech starting with Moe'ono's turn and to the
whole discussion part of the meeting.

6.3. The Organisation of an L in a Fono

In this section, I will illustrate the internal organisation of an
L in a fono. As we will see with more details in the next chapter,
Ls in a fono are different from Ls in other social events such as
saofa'i, paolo, etc.

Since, as I will explain, Ls change structure in the course of a
fono, the organisation that I will first discuss (see Table 6.2) must
be seen as an ideal model which is at its best followed by the first
speaker, but less so by the subsequent speakers. Furthermore, one
must leave room for individual variation.

Speaker:	1st	2nd	3rd	...nth[a]...	n + 1...
Subvillage:	Sanonu	Sagapolu	Saleapaga	...(see Ch. Four)...	....

kava ceremony	first lāuga	(a) second lāuga	third lāuga	...nth lāuga...	Moe'ono opens the discussion
		(b) Moe'ono opens the discussion	talanoaga	talanoaga	...

[a] $4 \leq n \leq 7$

Figure 6.1. The progression of lāuga and talanoaga in the fono.

TABLE 6.2

Basic Plan of an L in a Fono

Parts of a Lāuga in a Fono vaega o le lāuga i le fono
1) 'ava[a]   *kava*
2) fa'afetai i le Atua   *thanksgiving to God*
3) taeao   *mornings*
4) pa'ia   *dignity of the sacred names*
5) tulouga   *formal greeting*
6) mata'upu o le fono   *agenda of the meeting*
7) fa'amatafi lagi   *wish of a good health*

[a]This 'kava', part of speech, should
not be confused with the kava
ceremony discussed in Chapter Four.

6.3.1. 'Ava or Acknowledgment of Previous Speakers

As we have seen in Chapter Five, in a fono the first L comes
immediately after the kava ceremony. Instead of the list of the
various kava roots offered to the assembly[2] and of the names of the
chiefs who will be served to drink, this kava part in a fono L
consists of the recognition of the work done by the tufa'ava in the
preceding kava ceremony. This is partly due to the fact that in a
fono the first L is delivered after the kava ceremony, whereas in
other social events, usually the L precedes the kava ceremony. In
a fono, the orator simply repeats, with different words, what the
tufa'ava has just announced in closing the kava ceremony, namely, that
the kava is finished. An example of the transition from the kava
ceremony to the first L in a fono is given in (1) below:

(1) (Fono January 25, pp. 10-11)

Tufa'ava: Moko le agakogu
The kava is at an end

Ua makiva le fau
The strainer is poor

Ua papa'u le laulau
The wood is shallow

Makou fa'asoasoa
We will share

i kua gei
here in the back

ma aga'i-kāgoa
with the kava-assistants

ma le kaukū o ga koe!
and the cup-bearer what is left!

Audience: Mālō!
Well done!

(8.0)

(Someone from the back:

Malie lau fofoga i le kaeao!
How nice your crying out in the morning!)

(5.5)

First Speaker: Ia. Ua makū fau
Well. The strainer has dried out

... i le fa'asoa pa'ia
... with the sacred sharing

a se ku'ua i le-..'Āiga Pule ...
*by the one who comes from...the Family
with Authority*

Ia ... (Ua) kapa ipu fo'i lo kakou kaeao.
Ia ... Our morning has had its cups.

Ua kaumafa 'ava o...le aofia ma le fogo.
The assembly and the fono have drunk kava.

... Ia ...
... Well, ...

The first three sentences quoted in (1), which I have arranged in
three different lines for convenience, are increasingly opaque in
their literal meaning, but all convey the same message, namely, there
is no more kava in the bowl. This message is, however, another
metaphor for saying that the kava ceremony is over (for there is
always some kava left in the bowl for later on). By repeating with
different expressions that there is no more kava, the first orator
warrants his turn to talk. Since the kava ceremony is over, he can
start his L.

This way of 'looking back', connecting oneself with what has just
happened (e.g., so-and-so talked) is typical of all fono speeches.
Every speaker starts by acknowledging the preceding speaker(s). Since
the first speaker does not have any other speaker to acknowledge, it
seems natural to refer to the tufa'ava who has just performed.

Notice that the orator does not mention the tufa'ava's name (or
title). He uses instead a circumlocation that stresses his social
identity and social function: 'the one who comes from the Family with
Authority'('Aiga Pule). This refers to the fact that the tufa'ava
comes from a particular group of the orators of Sanonu, who have the
'authority' (pule) to decide over the distribution of goods and the
amounts of fines.

When several Ls are delivered, the speakers after the first do not
mention the kava nor the tufa'ava, and their speeches usually begin
by recognising the previous speakers. The last one who spoke is the
first mentioned, then the one before, and so on. This pattern is
shown in the following excerpt from a fono in which five Ls were
delivered. Upu, the orator whose speech is partly reproduced below,
was the fifth speaker:

(2) (Fono March 17, p. 26) (The order of speakers before
Upu is, starting from the first one, Taofiuailoa, Alo,
Fanua, and Nu'ualitia.)

Upu: Fa'amālō akū- (1.0)
        Congratulations to (1.0)

(4th)→ fekalai, Gu'ualikia. (2.0)
        your speaking, Nu'ualitia. (2.0)

        O le Afioga momoli a lea ia Alai'a-sā,
        [*You*] *have expressed the message of Alai'a-sā,*

        Sa'o'ese'ese.
        [*of*] *the Sa'o'ese'ese.*

```
           (2.0)  Fa'aogu'u fo'i ma le Usoali'i.
           (2.0)  and also of Fa'aonu'u and the Usoali'i.

(3rd)→     (2.0)  Ua- (1.0) fekalai fo'i Fagua  (2.5)
           (2.0)  Also - (1.0) Fanua has spoken (2.5)

(2nd)→  Ia ua vagaga fo'i lā Alo (4.0)
        And a speech has come from Alo (4.0)

(1st)→  Ua fekalai le Laukogia i lo kakou kaeao,
        The Lautogia has spoken in this morning of ours,

?:      Māliel

Upu:    i sā ma faigakā o Moamoa.
        About the sacred people of [our malae] Moamoa.
```

This passage illustrates a 'mirror image' pattern of acknowledg-
ments in an L. Given a sequence ABCD of speakers, they will be
mentioned by speaker E (who speaks after D) in the inverse order
DCBA.

In the same passage we also find further evidence for the tendency,
in an L, to identify people in terms of their social connections, to
refer to them as part of a larger group. Thus, for instance, when the
fourth speaker (Nu'ualitia) is acknowledged, a whole section of the
fa'alupega (see Chapter Three) of his subvillage (Gaga'emalae) is
quoted. This stresses Nu'ualitia's right to speak only as a
representative of all the matai from his subvillage. Finally, when the
first speaker is mentioned, we find, instead of his title, the title
Lautogia, a term which can be synonymous with 'Āiga Pule explained
before, but it is often used for referring to the whole subvillage of
Sanonu, from which come both the tufa'ava and the one who delivers the
first speech.

6.3.2. Fa'afetai or Everyone is the Same in Front of God

The second part of the L in a fono is the fa'afetai i le Atua
Thanksgiving to God, also called alofa o le Atua God's love.

Two main themes are pursued in this part with numerous metaphors
of varying contents and connotations: (1) God has the supreme power
on all humans and He can terminate our lives at any time, and (2) we
must thank Him for letting us gather here this morning as we had
planned. The latter theme is usually expanded in various images that
illustrate people's happiness for God's love, for His generosity in

giving them health and concord. Both (1) and (2) are illustrated, in the reverse order, in the following passage:

(3) (Fono April 7, book II, pp. 3-4) (First lāuga of the day)

T :   ((The orator has just finished mentioning the kava.))

Ia a'o lo kakou kaeao
And as for our morning,

ia ua le kugoa fo'i legei kaeao ...
Yes, there is a reason for this morning ...

Kakou fa'akasi ...
[when] we gather together ...

ogo'o le aofia ma le fogo o lo kakou gu'u
because of the assembly and the fono of our village

pei oga ... liliu i ai le kōfā ma le- ... fa'aukaga fo'i
as it was decided by the chiefs and by the orators

legā vaiaso ua kuaga'i aku ...
on the week that has just passed ...

Ia e::- ... e ausaga le kū 'a'ao lava ...
And ... [like] swimmers who cannot touch [with] their feet

le kōfā ma le fa'aukaga ...
are the decisions of chiefs and of orators ...

i le figagalo (o) le Akua.
in front of God's will.

? :   Mālie!

What the orator has said could be rephrased (much less poetically) as the following: 'Even if we all decided to meet today for some specific reason, our decision would not matter, if God had not given us the chance to accomplish our plan'.

The whole Thanksgiving can be seen as a statement of equality and solidarity of humans in front of God. It is this opposition between Man and God that allows the whole village in general and the fono in particular to be 'one', united. The frequent use of the pronoun kākou, first person plural inclusive, stresses the unity of the matai:

(4) (Fono April 7, book II, pp. 4-5) (First speaker,
'Thanksgiving'.)

→ T: Ua- ... KĀKOU ... 'oa'oa i faleseu
       We all rejoice in the hunter's shelter

→   ma ua KĀKOU sa'o i ma'o mālie ...
       and we all are in good health ...

→   la go'o le alofa ma le agalelei o lo KĀKOU Makai ...
       Yes because of the love and kindness of our Matai ...

→   KĀKOU fesilafa'i i luma o le gu'u
       We all meet in front of the village

       ae le 'o kua o le gu'u ...
       and not in the back of the village ...

       leai   ⌐ // se kala vale
       there is no | // *unpleasant news*
   ?:   ⌐ Mālie!
                      Well said!

T: po'o se mea e fa'apopoleiga ...
       nor anything to worry about ...

       ... ga'o le leo le fiafia
       ... only the happy voice

→   ma KĀKOU ke 'ave ai le vi'iga
       and we all give our praise

→   i lo KĀKOU Makai o i le Lagi ...
       to our Matai who is in Heaven ...

This use of kākou also used in referring to God (i lo kākou Makai
i le Lagi *to our Matai [Father] who is in Heaven*) contrasts with the
mātou (*our* exclusive) found in prayers. Whereas in a prayer the
speaker directly addresses God, in a fono, he addresses the other
chiefs and orators present.

Finally, notice the use of the article lo with the o of inalienable
possession in lo kākou Makai *our* (inclusive) *Father*. God is everyone's
matai, almost inherently. His power on all humans cannot be taken
away and this makes everyone alike.

6.3.3. Taeao and Pa'ia: Two Interchangeable Parts

I have decided to discuss the two parts **taeao** and **pa'ia** together; not because they seem particularly similar in their content or structural organisation, but simply because they are, in the fono, interchangeable. We find at times taeao before pa'ia and other times pa'ia before taeao. The performance data are also confirmed by matai's statements on the triviality of the relative order of the two parts.

Why are not taeao and pa'ia strictly ordered? For now, I can make only some speculations, based on what I understand of their meaning and function within the whole lāuga, in the fono context.

The term **taeao** *morning(s)* is a metaphor for important events in the history of Samoa (cf. Milner 1966:224, Love 1979, Ch. 1). The image of *morning*, with its immediate connotation of light (**malamalama**), is associated in the Samoan mind with 'good deeds', and public, socially approved conduct (**aga**, cf. Shore 1977). Taeao is then paradigmatically contrasted with **pō** *night*, when bad actions can take place (because people cannot see and social control is relaxed). The expression **e lē ai sou taeao**, lit. *there is no morning of yours*, or *you don't have any morning*, means *you haven't done anything socially good or useful*.

There are several of these 'mornings' or important events that an orator can quote. In a fono, the one usually mentioned is the arrival of the Gospel to Samoa:

> (5) (Fono April 7, book II, p. 6)
>
> T: ... O ikū i kaeao, ...
> *Moving on to the mornings* ...
>
> Ia 'o kaeao masagi lava
> *well [they] are very well-known mornings*
>
> o le aukugu'u
> *of our country*
>
> kaeao (o) le Loku
> *the morning [of] the Church*
>
> ma kaeao⁻ le Kusi Pa'la
> *and the morning [of] the Bible*
>
> Ia ... o kaeao lava ...
> *Yes ... real mornings* ...

Ua kuaga'i ia kaeao
Those mornings have gone

ma kaeao- fo'i sa fa'asilisiliga
and the mornings on which we have met

i o(u)kou figagalo
according to the wishes of you [chiefs]

ma o kakou fa'amoemoe, ...
and the hopes of us [orators] ...

la 'ae o le kaeao sili a legei
well this is the most important morning

ua kākou aulia maguia
when we meet in good spirit

legei kaeao fou
[on] this new morning

ma legei aso fou ...
and this new day ...
fa'akaugu'uiga ai
to accomplish

le- le kōfā ma le fa'aukaga
the decision of the chiefs and of the orators.

As can be seen in this passage, the taeao ends with the emphasis
on the particular morning on which people have gathered to take some
important decision. That is then the most important morning for the
moment. Notice the use of the adjective fou *new*, that seems to
contrast with an unsaid 'old' of the history of Samoa. It is the
here and now that we should be concerned with, seems to say the orator.
It is a change of scene, from past to present, from what has been
accomplished by the founders and fathers of the country to what must
be achieved in the meeting.

The pa'ia, on the other hand, is the acknowledgment of the dignity
of the chiefs. Pa'ia means *sacred* and is usually associated with
chiefs (ali'i pa'ia were the very high chiefs of ancient Samoan
history, cf. Brown 1910:283; cf. also Freeman 1964). The corresponding
term for orators is mamalu. However, in this case, pa'ia seems to
refer to both chiefs and orators, with no particular distinction.
Other terms that are found next to pa'ia are sā *holy*, and also
forbidden (fale sā is the Church building, a house that cannot be

violated), and faigatā *difficult*. These terms remind us of the universally recurrent equation of sacred beings as separated beings (Durkheim 1915).

(6) (Fono March 17, pp. 6-7, first lāuga)

T : Ia o oukou pa'ia 'Āiga
And you [all] sacred chiefs

ma oukou sā ma oukou faigakā
and you holy and you difficult

Ia. Gu'ugu'u oukou pa'ia.
Yes. I'll not go on [with proclaiming] you [all] sacred.

E le'o gi pa'ia avage ai
They are not sacred [names] that [I am] conferring you

'O pa'ia lava mai le vavau
They are really sacred from the past

e o'o i le fa'avavau
to reach eternity

(...)

Notice that the speechmaker must emphasise that he is not conferring the attribute 'sacred' to the matai, but rahter that they are so from ever and will always be. No matter what happens or what it said, no one will be able to detract anything from the transcendental dignity of the matai of Samoa:

(7) (Fono April 7, book II, p. 6)

'O pa'ia lava mai le vavau e 'o'o i le fa'avavau
They are very sacred from the past to reach eternity

E le ai se kasi ga ke koe koesea se 'upu
There is no one who could subtract a word

pe koe fa'aopopoiga ...
or add anything ...

This kind of statement is clearly used to assure the audience that whatever the outcome of the meeting will be, the sacred names of the village will stay untouched, and no one will doubt their glory and respectability.

Pa'ia is very close to the tulouga part that I will discuss in the next section. Tulouga too is an acknowledgment of the dignity of the matai's titles represented in the fono. A possible explanation for

the interchangeability of pa'ia and taeao is that they are both possible transition points from the thanksgiving to the tulouga, and finally, to the subject of the fono. Taeao can be linked to the praising of God on one side (by playing on the theme of the arrival of Christianity) and, at the same time, can be used as a way to move towards the present (through history). Pa'ia, on the other hand, can either relate to the thanksgiving as a passage from the God in Heaven to the 'gods on Earth', i.e. the matai, or can be used as an introduction to the tulouga part. Both taeao and pa'ia, although in different ways, move away from past towards present or future. Taeao moves from past accomplishments to present, pa'ia from the past glory of the matai to their future one. At the same time, both parts stress common grounds and recognise and praise events and beliefs that cannot be threatened by current circumstances. Both taeao and pa'ia are then appropriate for preparing the atmosphere for the forthcoming confrontation.

6.3.4. Tulouga

This part is found only in Ls in a fono. It praises and greets all the important titles of the village, arranging them in hierarchical order and quoting their respective fa'alupega. It usually starts with the mention of the name of the malae and ties that name to the name of the malae of the village considered as the head of the district. If the orator wishes to do so, he can continue his greeting to include the title of the whole district (he must, however, first finish the greetings of the titles of the subvillages represented in the fono).

The order in which the various subvillages are greeted matches their hierarchy as defined in Chapter Three: (1) Sagapolu, (2) Saleapaga, (3) Gaga'emalae, (4) Sanonu, (5) Falevao, (6) Sauano, and (7) Saletele.

In this way, Leutele, the highest chief in the village, and Moe'ono, who are both from Sagapolu, will be greeted first, followed by the high chief Lealaisalanoa and Iuli (see Chapter Three). To this order, there is however, a constraint which involves the orator's own subvillage. The speechmaker may either leave his subvillage out (especially if he is not giving the first L of the day) or place it towards the end of the hierarchy, following a politeness norm that says that one should not praise his own family, group, or subvillage.

The word tulouga (or tulouna)[3] is, according to Samoans, related to the expression tulou! *pardon [me]!*. This etymological tie makes this

part of the lāuga sound like an apology, a disclosure of the orator's
responsibility. And in fact, we do find such expressions as **tulouga
a le sautia ma le viligia** which could be translated as *apology for
your arriving early in the morning.* However, most of the tulouga part
is made up of typical greeting expressions (e.g. **afio mai, e'e ta'i
mai**, etc.), or by the expression **lē liua** *does not change* followed by
the fa'alupega of the most important title. The latter phrase conveys
the same meaning of the pa'ia, that is, a confirmation of the
sacredness of the titles, beyond time and historical accidents.

Tulouga can thus be seen as more than one act at the same time:
a formal and careful greeting to the assembly; a recognition of the
titled that have the right to sit in the fono; the reaffirmation of
the village hierarchies and alliances; and an apology for the
inconvenience of having to get out of the house early in the morning
for attending the meeting. And all of these meanings seem a perfect
introduction to the next part of the speech, namely, the official
statement of the agenda of the day.

The tulouga reaffirms the Samoan view of the relationship between
a title and its holder(s). The title, its attributes, and the
accomplishments of its holders (or its originator) in the past are
beyond doubt and discussion. No matter what, they will stay the same
as they were. The actions of the individuals who hold the title
cannot affect the dignity of the name, its past and eternal glory.
However, if a title-holder does not behave according to his office,
does not honour his matai name, it is the duty of the fono to remind
him of his tie to that name, to that past glory. The title becomes
then the point of reference, the model, of appropriate social
behaviour. The relationship between the title and the individual
holder can then be seen as parallel (although of a different 'logical
type', as Bateson [1979] would say) to the relationship between the
fono as an ideal structure and the fono as an active body of leading
members of the society engaged in a socially vital endeavour (see
Chapter Three).

6.3.5. The Agenda of the Day

Once he has recited the ideal structure of the fono and its bonds
to the district, the orator can move to what is perhaps the most
difficult part of his speech: the statement of the agenda of the day
(**'o le mata'upu o le fono** *the topic of the meeting*).

Although everyone usually knows what is going to be discussed, this first statement is the official announcement of the crisis, the recognition by the members of the fono that a violation of the social norms has taken place and an action must be taken. At times, the fono may be called for simply taking a decision about some future event and no actual violation can be claimed. The matai may all agree on a certain proposal made by some group or individual. However, even in such cases, I would argue that the potential for conflict and social distress is there and the announcement of the agenda is itself a challenge to the ideal social order of the community. Although in some cases the crisis may be less obvious or visible, the need for a discussion and confrontation of ideas and opinions is a threat to the harmony and hierarchy declared in the preceding parts of the L.

In announcing the agenda, the speechmaker must find the right equilibrium between accuracy and vagueness. If he is too vague, Moe'ono may ask him to repeat, more precisely, what the assembly must discuss (cf. example 4 discussed in Chapter Four). On the other hand, he does not want to be too accurate either, given that it is difficult to say exactly what the problem is without somehow committing oneself to a particular view on the issue. The avoidance of commitment is also seen in the fact that, if there are more than one, the speakers after the first usually either skip the mention of the agenda or simply say that it has been already illustrated by the first speaker.

6.3.6. Closing with a 'Clear Sky'

After the announcement of the agenda of the meeting, the orator is almost at the end of his speech, and he may say so in various ways: 'that was my voice', or 'those were my words', etc. These statements, however, are not the real end of the L, which must be completed by the fa'amatafi lagi, literally *clearing [of the] sky*. The name of this part comes from the expression lagi e mamā ... *clear sky [to]* ... which is used as a metaphor for a life with no problems, the latter being represented by the image of clouds that darken the sky. This part is then a wish of a good, healthy life to all the people present. There are several metaphors that the orator can use in addressing different parts of the assembly. Each metaphor has a connotation with respect to different statuses (namely, chief vs. orator), and two expressions can be also used to distinguish between the whole body of orators and the two matua, Iuli and Moe'ono. The last one to be wished a long life is the orator himself:

(8) (Fono January 25, p. 20)

T : Ia gi lagi mamā ...
Be a clear sky

i le pa'ia iā ke oukou 'Āiga ...
to you chiefs

... Ma Sā-Fegugu'ivao
... and the family of Fenunu'ivao

ma 'Āiga Sā-Alai'a-sā
and the family of Alai'a-sā

ma Aloali'i ...
and the [two] sons of the chief.

'Aua ge'i usuia le fogo pe lafo le fue
Don't leave the fono or remove your orator's stick

iā oulua Matua ...
from you, oh Matua ...

Ia laumea lelei a le 'a'ai a Fogokī ...
And good leaves to the village of Fonotī ((the orators))

Ia ae ou ola!
And may I live!

? : Malō   // fekalai!
     Congratulations   // *for your speech!*

T :   Maguia le aofia ma le fogo!
                             Good luck to the assembly and the fono!

(...)

By wishing the matai a long life ('do not die!' is what the various metaphors actually say), the orator is recognising and creating a dramatic change of scene. The matai are now seen as mortal human beings and no more as sacred, unreachable semigods, whose deeds are eternal. They may die. They have then become individuals, men who will have to deal with the fortune and misfortune of living. This happens after the orator has announced the agenda of the day, publicly recognising the crisis and the need for a discussion. The precariousness of the present, of human conditions and contingencies is finally on the stage. The meeting is a social arena, open to expressions of resentment, disagreement, conflict, and anger.

The last line *maguia le aofia ma le fogo! Good luck to the assembly and to the fono!* is the most common closure of an L and of any speech in the fono, in general. I will refer to this expression as the CODA, borrowing the term from music, where it is meant to be 'a passage added after the natural completion of a movement, so as to form a more definite and satisfactory conclusion' (The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary).

In the Ts, or even in the Ls after the first, when the speaker does not have to go through all the parts, the coda can be used not only as a final salutation and signal that the speech is over, but also as a condensed version of the 'clearing of the sky' part.

6.3.7. A Summary of the Lāuga Plan

Let us review, very briefly, the various parts of an L, in their temporal succession. I will present them here as consecutive steps, a sort of memorandum for the speechmaker, in Table 6.3.

TABLE 6.3

Lāuga Plan

---

1) Connect your speech with what has preceded you. (a. Mention of the kava; b. acknowledgment of previous speakers.) Warrant your right to speak ('ava).

2) Stress precariousness of life and human planning (namely, the fono) in front of/compared with Almighty God. Thank the Lord for satisfying the matai's wishes to have a meeting on that particular day (fa'afetai).

3) Establish common historical grounds (taeao). Declare that whatever was accomplished in the past, must now be concentrated on the present fono.

4) Reaffirm the dignity and sacredness of the matai titles (pa'ia).

5) Acknowledge and greet the most important titles represented in the fono (tulouga), listing them according to families and subvillages in hierarchical order.

6) State the reason(s) for this particular fono; mention the agenda of the day (mata'upu).

7a) Wish a good and long life to the members of the assembly (fa'amatafi lagi).

7b) Wish good luck to the whole assembly (Coda).

The seven steps just outlined can be also seen as a recursive progression along an imaginary time-axis from past to future through the present.

Part 1 is a connection to the immediate past (the preceding activity/speaker). Part 2 starts with mention of the plan for the meeting and goes on to stress the eternal and almighty power of God. Part 3 is again a jump in the past, when important events affected the history of the country. It ends, however, with emphasis on the day of the fono, when new achievements must be pursued. And we could go on like this, ending finally with the mention of the agenda of the meeting (present crisis) and the wish of a long life (future).

Along the same lines, we could say that an L is then a micro-model of the fono itself; at least to the extent to which it deals with something that has recently happened, it restates past and eternal (traditional) values, and finally points to a way of resolving the crisis and reaffirming those values in the future, through public discussion.

When there are four or more Ls delivered, the ones after the first do not have to follow all seven steps outlined above (although their respective order is by and large maintained).

It is up to each orator to decide whether he will skip or not some of the parts and which ones. Usually, however, if the speechmaker decides to skip a particular part, he will announce that he is about to do so by acknowledging that the previous speaker(s) has(have) already spoken about that particular theme. This is especially the case with the agenda of the meeting.

(9)   (Fono March 17, book I, p. 22, third speaker)

F :   Oga fa'apea ai a lea o lo'u kaofi, ...
      Coming now to express my concern, ...

      Leai ua lava ma kokoe le fekalaiga iā Loa,
      No. The speech given by Loa will be sufficient and remain

      o lea fo'i ua fekalai iai le kofā iā Alo.
      now that also His Highness Alo has also spoken about it.

? :   Mālie!

F :   A'o le asō,
      But as for today,

      ... leai o lea ua fa'afofoga le pa'ia i 'Āiga
      ... no. Now 'Āiga

> ma Aloali'i
> *and the two aloali'i*
>
> o Makua fo'i ma kagaka o le Kuiakua,
> *as well as the Matua and the people of the Tuiatua*
>
> ua fekalai le Laukogia
> *have listened to the Lautogia*
>
> make'upu o le Aofia ma le fogo.
> *about the topics of the assembly and the fono.*

The orator manages then not to repeat the agenda of the fono.
In other cases, however, in acknowledging the previous speakers, the
orator may also add a sentence or two that actually constitute a
shortened version of that particular part of the L. And as we shall
see later in discussing the T, this technique also characterises the
speeches at the beginning of the discussion.

6.4. Talanoaga

There are two basic features by means of which one can distinguish
between L and T. They are (1) L precedes T, and (2) only in Ts, can
the agenda of the meeting be discussed. However, as I will point out
in this section, in practice the distinction is not always an easy one
to make, given that Ts are basically shaped on the L-plan and use
many of the same vocabulary and expressions.

6.4.1. The Overall Organisation of the Discussion

As I mentioned before, the term **talanoaga** refers both to the whole
discussion and to a speech performed within it.

Moe'ono, being the one who always starts the discussion, has the
privilege of introducing the issue(s) and expressing first his opinion
on the matter. In this sense, the speeches after Moe'ono's can be seen
as answers to his speech, as a vote, in Western terms, for or against
his opinion.

If present, Iuli will usually speak immediately after Moe'ono,
followed by the other orators from the various subvillages. In his
first T, each orator must speak as a representative of his subvillage,
that is, he is seen as the voice of a certain chief or group. If he
wants to speak out for himself, he must usually wait for a second
turn later on.

Chiefs usually wait to speak after the orators, unless one of them feels directly involved in the issue that is being discussed and wants to clarify some points at once. After the various opinions have been expressed and argued for (Moe'ono usually speaks more than once, as the chairman of the meeting), it will be the chiefs' turn to speak, as a whole. At times, Moe'ono himself may invite them to express their opinion, suggesting that it is time to conclude the meeting.

At this point, the highest chief present will address the audience, as a representative of 'Āiga. He will summarise some parts of the discussion and some of the arguments and concerns presented by the parts, and, finally, propose the direction for a solution or conclusion of the meeting (at times, this may simply be the convocation of another, perhaps broader, meeting).

As a matai once told me, the chief is here seen as a judge who listens to the contendents and eventually issues the verdict.

Whatever the high chief may say, he will never get into the details of the final decision. His speech will be in general terms, although it must be sharp, straight to the point, saying what needs to be said. At least this is the way in which Samoans think of a high chief's speech, but it may not be matched by reality, given that there are often too many possible reasons why even a high chief may not want to be too direct and harsh.

If a fine must be assigned, it will be left to the orators from Sanonu to decide on the exact amount, a high chief being too dignified to get into such trivial matters. If a fine is to be assigned to a high chief, the assembly may leave it to him to decide his own fine; for minor figures of lower rank, instead, the orators in charge will spell out very clearly the exact number of cans of fish or beef or the exact amount of money to be paid to the assembly.

6.4.2. Telescoping

I will propose here that the structural organisation of a T as a single speech must be understood as having the L-plan discussed above as a reference point.

In the same way in which Ls vary moving away from the beginning of the fono, for which the second or third L, if any, may skip some of the parts that must appear in the first, Ts change as well. The first speeches in the discussion part of a fono will resemble more earlier Ls than later Ts. They will have a certain L-flavour: This will tend to be the case also for the same speaker,for, if a matai gives more

than one T about the same topic, his first speech will likely be more
L-like than the second. I will refer to this phenomenon as
TELESCOPING, meaning the tendency of speeches over time to be more and
more reduced versions of the basic L-plan.

The basic structure of a T can be characterized as composed of
three parts, with the middle one taking precedence over the other two
in terms of importance, time, and complexity.

The first part is the acknowledgment of previous speakers (1), the
second part the discussion of the issue at hand (comparable to 6 in
the lāuga), and the third and last part the good wish to the assembly
(cf. 7).

However, as I said, the first Ts tend to have some other remnants
of the L-structure, and we may find a shortened thanksgiving and a
mention of the dignity of the chiefs.

In Figure 6.2 below, I have schematically illustrated the
TELESCOPING effect in going from Ls to Ts, from the beginning of the
fono towards the end of the discussion.

(a)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7a	7b
(b)	1ᵃ	2		4		6	7a	7b
(c)	1ᵃ	2		4		6	7a	7b
(d)	1ᵃ					6		7b

ᵃRemember that after the first lāuga, part 1
consists of acknowledgment of previous speakers.

Figure 6.2. Telescoping effect from lāuga to talanoaga

a is the typical first L of the day; b is a possible format of an
L after the first (optional); c is a possible speech (T) towards the
beginning of the discussion; and d is a T in the middle or towards the
end of the discussion.

We see then in Figure 6.2 that the last L and the first T are
likely to be structurally similar. This may be due to a tendency for
different genres co-occurring in the same event to become more similar
to one another.

Figure 6.2, however, gives the wrong impression about the
respective weight and length of each part of the speech. I have thus
reproduced the telescoping effect in another figure (Fig. 6.3), in
which the width occupied by a certain part is proportional to the time
spent by the orator in delivering it.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7a	7b
(a)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7a	7b
(b)	1	2		4		6	7a	7b
(c)	1	2	4			6	7a	7b
(d)	1					6		7b

Figure 6.3. Telescoping effect in the time proportions

At the beginning of the discussion, then, we find that Ts present some of the features characteristic of the later Ls. One of these features is the need for the orator to refer back to parts of the L-plan and to the fact that they have already been mentioned and declaimed by a previous speaker (especially by the first one). Although saying 'I don't need to say this again', the speaker is at the same time taking the opportunity to restate some of the points stressed in the L.

An example of such a custom is provided in the following passage that illustrates a typical speech immediately after Moe'ono has opened the discussion:

(10) (Fono April 7, book II, pp. 14-15)

F :   Ia fa'afekai aku lava Moe'ogo ...
       Well thank you very much Moe'ono

       O lea fo'i ua- ... e vagaga fekalai
       you have also spoken

       ma ua ... fa'akigo fo'i lou figagalo
       and expressed your preference

       ua fa'auso le fogo ...
       opening the discussion

       ia. O lea ua ... uma fo'i oga ...
       Yes. And also ... His Highness the Lautogia

       si'i e le kōfā i le Laukogia le vi'iga ma le fa'afekai
       has raised the praise and the thanksgiving

       i lo kākou Makai ...
       to our Matai ...

>   Ia o gei lava aso uma o aso uma a ga fa'apa'ia e leova
>   *since all these days are all days blessed by God*
>
>   . . .

? :   Mālie!

F :   E le koe kau fa'apa'iaiga la
      I will not try again to mention

      i gi saugoaga ma gi fekalaiga,
      the dignity of the chiefs and of the orators

      Leai ua pa'ia lava le aso ma le kaeao ...
      No. The day and the morning are sacred

      Kulaga la pei o lou figagalo Moe'ogo, ...
      Issues that you have expressed concerned for Moe'ono,

      Ia o lea fo'i ua- ... fa'afofoga lo kākou gu'u
      Yes, our village has listened

      . . .

Notice that after saying that the Lautogia (the first orator from Sanonu, that is) has already said the Thanksgiving to the Lord, the orator adds the line 'all these days are all days blessed by God', an expression appropriate for the Thanksgiving. After that, again he acknowledged the mention of the dignity of the chiefs and orators (pa'ia), but then adds that 'the day is sacred', confirming it in his own words.

When a fono has been going on for some time, the speakers do not need anymore to do much introductory work, and may go on with the discussion of the various points, after a brief recognition of some previous speakers. One way to explain this variation over time, from longer to shorter 'prefaces', is to say that *the speakers after the very first ones can build on what has been said before, that is, their speech can be considered as a continuation of previous talk* and in this respect they can take advantage of the introductory work done by those who spoke before.

Notice, for instance, how, in the following passage, Moe'ono gets into the discussion of the second topic after only one sentence of recognition of the (second) kava ceremony that has just taken place:

(11) (April 7, book III, p. 2)

Moe'ono: ia ua mae'a lo kakou agakogu ...
          Well, our kava is finished ...

          O leisi a kakou maka'upu, ...
          As for the second of our topics, ...

          E fikoikogu ia ke 'oe Savea Sioge ...
          It concerns you Savea Sione ...

          ma;- ma ... o lea ua sau fo'i le ea ...
          and ... It just came on the air

          ua 'e kukulu i le kulafono ...
          that you have complained to the court ...

          (...)

Furthermore, we find variation not only from one speaker to another, but also comparing two speeches of the same speaker. The first one will usually be more elaborate in the introduction part and in the lāuga expressions than the second one.

6.4.3. How to Remedy a Loss of Balance

At this point, we must introduce another factor that will help us to understand some apparent regressions into L-style. In the middle of a heated discussion, a matai may start a speech that for its organisation and content resembles more a T towards the beginning of the discussion.

These are very often cases in which the speaker is trying to recreate a balance that is being lost. As I explained before, the language of Ls is used as a preface to the more direct language of the discussion. The various messages and values expressed in the beginning of a fono are the necessary foundations for the confrontation arena of the following part of the meeting. The L, as well as beginnings in general, which address shared values, creates an atmosphere of mutual respect and solidarity that should survive the threat of litigation and confrontation inherent in the fono. However, such a balance between the two ends of such a continuum, with agreement and hierarchy on one side, and rebellion on the other, must be maintained at any cost. When one matai goes too much over the bridge, and loses track of the solidarity side, a curtain of respectful and ceremonial language will be dropped to protect the individuals present and the institution of the fono from the too overt violation of appropriate public conduct.

This use of ceremonial language has been very incisively captured by Shore (1977, 1980) in discussing the use of what he calls 'polite speech' or 'respectful address' in every day contexts:

> 'A common and important use of respectful address is to diffuse a volatile situation. Open expression of hostility or anger between people is generally discouraged in public settings in Samoa. If one does openly express interpersonal hostility, particularly in an inappropriate ... relationship, the response of the party addressed will commonly be to slip into a deferential posture and to erect a wall of polite speech, thereby buffering the anger and creating a context suggesting constraint and dignity.'
> (Shore 1980)

What just said does not imply, however, that direct expressions of condemnation or explicit reprimanding and blaming do not appear in a fono. They do, as I have shown in Chapter Three, but they must come from the appropriate source, from those who have been invested of the public roles of accusers and reprimanders: Iuli and Moe'ono, and, perhaps, some very high chief. This right to scold, to be angry, is at times explicitly recognised in some of the fono speeches. Below, the orator suggests a peaceful solution of the crisis, but at the same time reaffirms his respect for Moe'ono's right to be upset:

(12) (Fono April 7, book II, pp. 18-19)

F: ... kusa lā ma legei maka'upu
      ... with respect to this issue

      ua 'e: ... ku'uiga mai
      [that] you have presented

      i lau kōfā a le Makua ...
      from your high opinion of the Matua ...

      ia e popole iava le mafaufau i ia kulaga ...
      well [my] mind worries about those matters ...

      fa'apea ai iea o so makou leo ...
      and this is the way my voice goes ...

      Moe'ogo, ... silasila a i le Akua ma Loga galuega
      Moe'ono, ... look at God and His actions

      a'e pesi fo'i lou lē mālie ...
      but strike also with your disagreement ...

      ia ua kakau ga 'e lē mālie
      yes it is right for you to be upset

uā 'o 'oe 'o le kamā o le gu'u.
because you are the father of the village.

? : Mālie!

(...)

By reminding Moe'ono to look at God's actions, the speaker is
proposing a christian, that is, reconciliatory solution. However, he
stresses the fact that Moe'ono can *strike* (pesi) with *disagreement*
(lē-mālie *not agree*), a euphemism for *anger*, because he is the
'father of the village'. The last image is based on the Samoan
cultural assumption that a good father is one who scolds and hits his
children, if necessary, in order to teach them how to properly behave.
As in the case of the declamation of the dignity of the chiefs, the
orator is here protecting his contrary advice by restating Moe'ono's
office in the council, namely, the right to show anger and to scold
those who have misbehaved.

If someone else, say, an orator of lower rank, shows anger and
publicly blames or threatens other matai, his words will be seen as a
violation of the fono balance, a break of the tacit rules about who
can be angry, at which point and how.

When an elder orator from the subvillages in Fagaloa gets carried
away and expresses resentment and anger to the matai from Falefā, and
especially to Moe'ono, for proposing Fagaloa's expulsion from the fono,
we witness such a violation of the rules (Fono April 7).

At first both Moe'ono and Iuli try to stop the orator from going
any further, finally, when it becomes clear that they cannot succeed,
a chief from one of the two subvillages in Fagaloa initiates a speech
that has the flavour of an L more than of a T. It starts with a long
greeting to the various titles and main subdivisions of the fono,
repeated in several different ways, recognising previous speakers, the
titles of the matai present, and traditional ties even with other
families outside the district. Only when he feels that calm, order
and predictability have been restored, and confusion, insubordination,
and direct confrontation removed, does the chief begin his assessment
of the facts, slowly moving towards the discussion of the accusation
raised against himself and the other matai from his subvillage.
T is back again. The chief can now respond to the various points
raised by previous speakers and firmly, although politely, deny the
charges against his group.

The latter case is an example of a necessary, and this time successful, attempt to recreate, within one speech, that balance between agreement and discord, harmony and conflict that the opposition between L and T exemplifies in more general terms. It is the sustained stepping back to the themes and expressions of the L and its shared values that allows the chief to re-establish the appropriate atmosphere for asserting an unshared point of view. This is then one of those cases discussed in the sociolinguistic literature (cf. Brown & Fraser 1979), in which the social and cultural connotation of a particular genre or style are used to alter a situation or to redefine the relationship among the participants. *Speech is here not simply a marker of a change independently occurring in the situation, it is also the channel and code through which and by means of which such a change becomes possible.*

6.5. Linguistic Correlates of the Change from L to T

In addition to the differences in terms of structural organisation and use of particular themes and expressions just described, there are several other correlates of the distinction between the two genres L and T, and more generally, in terms of the two sets of values and concepts that they embody. In this section, I will discuss turn-taking and use of address and reference forms in the fono-speeches showing that they vary across the event.

6.5.1. Taking of Turns

As I have mentioned in Chapters Four and Five, the set of potential and actual speakers vary considerably going from L to T. Only orators, and only those who are sitting in the front row (see the discussion of the seating arrangement in Chapter Four) can deliver an L, but any of the matai participating in the fono can speak in the discussion and therefore deliver a T. This means that both orators and chiefs can talanoa, and also that even those sitting in the back of the house can express their opinion or clarify some points raised by others in the course of the discussion. In so doing, however, a matai sitting in the back must start his speech by apologising for speaking from his 'place in the back', and ask permission to the assembly to talk, which is usually granted.

A broader participation is possible once at least one orator for each subvillage represented in the fono has spoken. This enlarging

of the set of potential participants operates in two opposite
directions. On the one hand, it allows higher rank chiefs to speak
once the preliminaries are over; on the other hand, it allows any of
the lower rank matai in the back to speak out if necessary. Although
the latter group rarely uses such a privilege unless directly or
indirectly invited to do so, the possibility itself makes the central
part of the discussion a more open and egalitarian forum for various
groups and individuals to be heard. This very fact contributes to
making the discussion part less predictable and controllable, at least
to the extent to which the status and rank of the participants is less
restricted and the quality of the speeches less uniform. Although not
always confirmed by the facts, it is believed that lower rank, younger
matai do not know how to express themselves with the appropriate and
necessary style required in a fono.

In the discussion we also find, at times, instances of what
resembles more conversational interaction. In particular, we find
Question-Answer pairs. Thus, for instance, within a speech, the
speaker may ask a question that can be answered by a particular
member of the assembly. If he is present, he may either answer
immediately (often taking advantage of a brief pause in the current
speaker's turn), or select himself as the next speaker. An example
is provided in (13) below:

(13) (Fono April 7, book III, p. 70)

Moe'ono: ... ou ke le magigo lelei lava
          ... I am not very clear

          o lea ou ke makau aku fo'i fa'apea o 'upu
          and what I want to know is whether these words

          pe o gi upu a Igu po'o gi upu a kagaka o kakou
          are words said by Inu or by some of our people

          fa'apea ua o le fāsefulu ga fai e Igu
          saying that Inu gave forty dollars

          lea ga e alu ai gei
          so that [you] would run for the elections

          le paloka
          in this village.

          o mea a ga
          These are the things

          e fia fa'amagigo.
          that I would like to be explained.

Savea: E Moe'ogo ga'o ga ou koe sosō aku
          Moe'ono, I am approaching you again

          e fia maua fo'i se kali
          understanding that our assembly

          e lo kakou aofia i lo'u kagaka
          would like an answer from me.

          o 'upu lava a makai o le gu'u
          Those were words said by some matai from this

          legei.
          village.

Moe'ono: 'Upu a o makai o le gu'u legei?
          Words said by a matai from this village?

Savea: Le gu'u legei 'o Savea
          This village [said] 'Savea

          la e kokogi e Fa'amakuāigu
          had the forty dollars paid by Fa'amatuāinu'

          le fāsefulu kālā'
          but I am not going to say

          ma ou ke le ka'u akua
          the name of the matai.

          la suafa makai a'u fai gei ...
          It was said here ...'

In this passage, Moe'ono is asking Savea to clarify whether the
defamatory words that he claims someone said about him were coming
from the district representative (Fa'amatuainu, short form 'Inu') or
by some matai in Falefā. Notice that Savea's name is not even mentioned
by Moe'ono, but it is obvious from the context that he is the one who
should be answering Moe'ono's question. The transcript shows how, for
a few seconds, the interaction resembles a conversation, with
Moe'ono expressing surprise at Savea's statement, instead of formally
taking notice of it.

Another feature of conversation that we can find in the discussion
part is the occurrence of overlaps and competition for the floor.
However, they are rare and to some extent predictable, as in the case

discussed above about the orator expressing anger and resentment to Moe'ono and the other matai of Falefā. Overlapping and competition for the floor occurs at points in which a major breach of the rules for talking takes place, such rules defining the range of topics to be discussed by whom, at which point in the meeting, and to what extent.

6.5.2. Titles and Names in the Fono Speeches

When someone is given a matai title, people stop calling him or referring to him by his former untitled name (igoa taule'ale'a); instead they use his title (suafa or igoa matai) both publicly and privately.

When more than one person holds the same title, they are all called by that same title. If ambiguity arises, one may use (particularly in referring rather than in addressing) the untitled name next to the matai name. Thus, for instance, in Falefā, at the time of my stay, there were three men holding the orator title 'Alo, and two holding the chief title Savea. In the rare cases in which context was not sufficient to clarify who was meant, the speaker could specify 'Alo Filipo, or 'Alo Eti, and so on.

At the beginning of the fono, both in the kava ceremony and in the Ls only reference to the title is made. No mention is ever found of individuals. This means, for instance, that if there are both people holding the Savea title sitting at the fono, their 'cup's name' (see Chapter Four) is called out only once during the kava ceremony and they are served kava 'at the same time'.[4]

In the Tulouga part, in an L, when various titles are greeted, they are presented as indivisible units, each of them being mentioned once.

Even in the announcement of the agenda of the day, when one may predict a need for specifying which particular person's actions are to be discussed by the assembly, there is no mention of personal names. Thus, for instance, in the fono where Savea Sione's suit against the district representative Fa'amatuāinu was discussed (April 7), despite the fact that the other savea (Savea Savelio) was present, only the title (Savea) is mentioned.

Later on, in the same fono, once the first topic has been exhausted, Moe'ono introduces and opens the discussion about Savea's case. This time, we find him saying *which* Savea is meant (see the relevant passage in [11] above).

The change from lāuga to talanoaga and, more generally, from the more ceremonial introductory part to the more active and spontaneous discussion is then reflected in the switch of focus from titles as historical, mythical figures or social identities (in the lāuga) to individual holders at a particular time (in the talanoaga). The alternation from TITLE to TITLE + NAME (e.g. Savea vs. Savea Sione) corresponds to a narrowing of interest from abstract, eternal attributes of symbolic characters and social roles, to more concrete and contingent features of living individuals, with their merits and faults.

In a T, we find statements like 'so-and-so (a matai) is just a kid' or 'he doesn't know the tradition very well', or 'he's old and you know how old people are ...', all of which would be out of place in an L.

Finally, another correlation of the passage from L to T is the tendency, in an L, not to shorten titles,[5] which are instead said in their full form. Whereas in everyday interaction one usually hears people say 'Moe'ono' rather than 'Moe'ono'ono', or 'Salanoa', rather than 'Lealaisalanoa', in Ls the full form of the title is used.

The use of the shortened form makes Ts closer to everyday conversation than to ceremonial exchange. At the same time, the possibility and ability of a speaker to use the full form of titles identifies him as part of an elite group, given that people who do not participate in events in which Ls are delivered usually do not have access to that kind of information.

6.5.3. Inclusiveness, Exclusiveness and Personal Views

The change from solidarity to conflict, and from shared values to personal interests is also reflected in the differential use of the first person plural inclusive tātou versus the exclusive form mātou. In the first L, and particularly in the thanksgiving, as illustrated above, the inclusive *we* (tātou) is more common.

When the discussion has started, the first round of Ts presents to the fono the positions of the orators and of their respective subvillages. In this context, a speaker must be careful to separate his or his group's interest from the rest of the assembly. We find here expressions such as matou faufautua *our advices* or matou mafaufauga *our thoughts*, and so on. The plural form possesses an inherent ambiguity between a literal plural (a certain group) and a pragmatic singular (the speaker), which is advantageously exploited by the orators.

At the same time, we also find inclusive forms in the same Ts that employ the exclusive mātou. In this case, tātou seems to be used as a marker of in-groupness to precede and/or follow opinions contrary to those already presented by some important member of the fono. By stressing values and properties shared by all matai present, the speaker tries to find some common ground and common features that would at least in part mitigate the effect of a face-threatening act. Such a strategy seems to be a common one in what Brown and Levinson (1979) call 'positive politeness', that is, 'redress directed to the addressee's positive face, his perennial desire that his wants (or the actions/acquisitions/values resulting from them) should be thought of as desirable' (Brown & Levinson 1979:106).

Speakers of all statuses and ranks seem also to employ a great deal of elliptical, impersonal constructions for conveying statements involving first person (singular) reference. A list of some typical expressions is provided below. Notice the recurrent use of the deictic term atu (aku) *away from the speaker* for suggesting the speaker as the most likely actor or experiencer and the audience as the most natural goal or recipient of the process described by the predicate[6] (aku is then often translated as *to you*).

(14)   ... e makau aku e le'i usu pokopoko lo kākou (1.0)
       ... TNS *notice* DX TNS *not come together* ART *our*

       aufogo ...
       assembly

       '... *it is noticed* [*to you*] [*that*] *our assembly has not*
       gathered with all its participants ...' (or

       '... *I realise that not everybody has gathered in this*
       fono...')

(15)   ... a'o legei aso, (0.8) e momoli aku le fa'afekai i
       but this day   TNS *express* DX ART *thanks to*

       'Āiga o Kupu ma 'Āiga o Kama ...
       Family of Kings and Family of boys

       '... *but today the thanks is expressed to the Family of*
       Kings and the Family of young men'[7] (or

       '... *But today, I* [*wish to*] *express my thanks to the*
       Family of King and the Family of young men...')

(16) ... e   avaku a   mafaufauga e fai ai lo
     TNS *give* + DX EMP *thoughts to make* PRO ART

kakou gu'u
our village

'... *thoughts are given [to you] to make with them our village*' (or

'... *I am giving [you] suggestions to keep our village together*')

(17) ... o le mea lā   lea folafola malamalama aku ai i
     TOP ART *think there what untold clear* DX PRO *to*

lo kākou gu'u
ART *our   village*

'... *this is what is unfolded [to] explain to our village*'

(or '... *this is what I am unfolding so that our village will understand*')

The unoriented, ergative nature of Samoan transitive verbs[8] is here exploited by the speakers to avoid the explicit mention of the Agent or Actor. In English, we must necessarily translate with a passive construction to meet the requirement of English that a predicate stays unchanged, regardless of whether the Agent is expressed or not. Take, for instance, the verb mātau *to notice, recognise* (cf. [14] above). We can have a sentence like (18) below, from Milner (1966:137), or the corresponding elliptical ones in (19) and (20) with no morphological consequences on the form of the verb.

(18) Sā mātau mai e le teine le suiga o ona foliga
     PST *notice* DX ERG ART *girl* ART *change of his expression*

The girl noticed the change in his expression

(19) Sā mātau mai le suiga o ona foliga
'the change of his expression was noticed' or

'[someone] noticed the change of his expression'

(20) Sā mātau mai e le teine

'the girl noticed [it]' or

'[it] was noticed by the girl'

Both in (19) and in (20), the missing NP argument could be identifiable or not from the context. However, despite the widespread use of impersonal, 'uncommitted' predications, there are times when reference to the first person is explicitly made. This may be done either by means of a third person reference expression, often containing a first person singular possessive adjective (lo'u/la'u), or by explicit use of first person pronoun a'u (or clitic 'ou). Some examples from transcripts are given below:

Deictic term:

(21) ... auā   e iloa e igei. 'O igei e kupu
      because TNS *know* ERG *here.* TOP *here* TNS *happen*

      ai le fa'alavelava ...
      PRO ART *incident*

      '...because <u>*this/here*</u> *knows.* *It is because of*
      <u>*this/here*</u> *that the incident happened ...'* or

      '... because <u>*I*</u> *know.* *It is because of* <u>*me*</u> *that*
      the incident took place ...'

Third person referent +
possessive adjective *my* (lo'u/la'u):

(22) ... Lea   o igā kogu lava fo'i lea e maua   e
      That TOP *that right very also that* TNS *catch* ERG

      la'u fa'alogo ...
      my   hear

      '... That is the very right thing that <u>*my hearing*</u> *has*
      caught ...' or

      '... that is the very right thing that <u>*I*</u> *have heard ...'*

(23) ... e laloga fo'i (e) lo'u loko ma lo'u fa'a
                          (ERG) *my   soul   hope*

      moemoe o so'u fa'agoagoaga   i   ia kulaga ...
              top my   sadness   about those circumstances

      '... my·soul and my expectations also feel some of my
      sadness because of such circumstances ...' or

      '... <u>*I*</u> *also feel sad in my heart and in my hope*
      because of such circumstances ...'

(24)   lo'u kagaka
        my   person
        'I/myself'

        First person singular pronoun:
        (a) pre-verbal clitic pronoun

(25)   ... 'ou ke   fa'amalulū aku
            I TNS apologise DX
        '... I apologise [to you]'

(26)   ... pei ga 'ou kaukala aku fo'i ...
            as PST I   say   DX also
        '... as I already said ...'

        (b) full pronoun (a'u):

(27)   ... 'o a'u ou ke maga'o i le mea
            TOP I I TNS want PREP ART thing

        o le Akua 'o le fealofagi ...
        of ART God TOP ART mutual love
        '... as for me, I want what God wants, the mutual love ...'

The use of the different forms of first person reference varies
according to the time in the fono, the speaker's status and rank, and
the topic under discussion, that is, the extent to which the speaker
is involved personally in the argumentation.

The third person referent plus possessive adjective expressions are
the most common ones and are used by all speakers. They are one of
the typical features of oratory and convey a sense of respect for the
audience and detachment from the issue at hand.

The use of the deictic term is a self-deprecatory, humble
expression.

The most restricted, and perhaps most interesting, in their contexts
of usage are the first person singular pronouns. Here a distinction
must be made between the clitic form ('ou) and the full, independent
form (a'u), with the former usually found in background, or apologetic
statements, and the latter in rather strong, emphatic declarations.
The direct reference to the self tends to be restricted to matai of
high rank, or to a person who is defending himself from some serious
accusation and wants to report with some emphasis his feelings or
actions.

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The use of the first person pronoun, and particularly of the independent form a'u seems to imply the audience interest in the speaker's opinion or actions. This may be the case for either one of the following two reasons: (a) the speaker is an important member of the fono whose judgment is valued and must be taken into account; (b) the speaker is being accused of something against which he must have a chance to defend himself. (a) predicts that Moe'ono, Iuli, and high chiefs would use first person singular pronouns more often than other participants; and (b) predicts that status and rank differences will be ignored when someone is under direct and serious accusation. An example of the latter case is provided in (28), where a lower rank orator is defending himself against the accusation of having seriously offended the village's matai by addressing them with bad language.

(28) (Fono March 17, p. 47)

V : ... ou koe kū gugū a- ... me e kalu mai lo'u ala
'... *I stood up against silent ... and since I was born*

ou ke le 'i faia se mea ua 'ele'elea ai lo'u igoa
I have never done anything that could sully my name

e le muimui ai seisi ia ke a'u
no one can criticise me

ou ke kala mamā aku
I talk as an innocent

o le Akua la e silasila mai
may God be a witness

ma ou ke savalī akū
and I walked away

e augapiu ma sa'u upu ga faia i lea lava Aso.
without saying a single word on that very day.

? : Mālie!

V : Ou ke iloa lelei mea go'u alu (ai)
I know very well the places where I went

ou ke iloa lelei mea ga ou savali ai
I know very well where I walked

ou ke iloa fo'i 'ave la'u ka'avale
I know also that I drove my car

ou ke malamalama fo'i i a'u upu ga fai.
and I also have clear in my mind the words I said

What a difference between this speech and the ones usually found at the beginning of the fono! The man is here fighting for his honour, and he is also trying to avoid the considerable fine that he will have to pay if the council decides that he is guilty. If it were not for two or three fancy words that he used and the rhetorically repetitive construction of the last series of statements ('I know very well ...'), this passage would not be very different from what we may find in a conversation. Although in a completely different environment, this change of style that accompanies the matai's statements, in a moment in which emotions and direct involvement seem to control language rather than the other way around, cannot but remind us of the change of style recounted by Labov (1966) in his interviews, when speakers switched to more casual speech if recounting some personal, dramatic experience.

The alternation from tātou to mātou and, finally, to a'u is then another dimension along which to understand the evolving atmosphere of the fono, from the more predictable and impersonal Ls at the beginning of the meeting, to the unpredictable and personal Ts in the middle of the discussion, when people fight for their reputation and belongings, and the equilibrium and hierarchies of the social structure are exposed to threat and open to negotiation.

1. By *speech genre* I mean here a recognised (by the culture) unit of
discourse with its own sequential organisation, constraints on content
and form, socially defined appropriate contexts for its use.

2. The offer of the kava roots and the public announcement
(folafola'ava) of the offer are made before the kava ceremony. See
Love (1979, Chapter One) for a discussion of the various parts of the
folafola'ava. In the fono, however, the kava is often pounded and
prepared for being mixed with water much before the meeting starts and
the ceremonial presentation of the kava roots is not performed.

3. The variation from the form tulouna to tulouga seems related to
the alternation between n- and g-pronunciation (see Chapter Two,
section 3). My preference for the form with the g is due to two facts:
(1) it makes sense to me that the word tulouga be the nominalisation
of the verb tulou *pardon, excuse*, and the nominalising suffix is -ga
and not *na; (2) Kraemer (1902/3) reports the form in -ga, and that is,
as far as I know, the oldest source. Mead (1930), incidentally, also
reports a final -ga, although a repeatedly mispelled vowel (Tuloaga)
and general lack of precision in transcribing Samoan terms (cf.
Freeman 1972 for some comments and errata) prevent us from taking her
version as reliable evidence.

4. This is at least the way in which Samoans see it, although in
practice they are not, most of the time, served at the same time, and
the actual order is determined by various factors such as seniority
and where they are seated.

5.   This is a different kind of shortening from what has been reported by Love (1979; Chapter One) in the kava ceremony, when the **tufa'ava** in calling out the names of the various cups drops the final syllable of the title.

6.   On the use of the deictic terms **atu** and **mai** in informal conversation, see also Platt (1980).

7.   Another possible interpretation of the term **kama** is as a shortened form for **kamāli'i** *chief(s)*.

8.   Cf. also Milner (1973) and Chung (1978).

CHAPTER SEVEN

Lāuga In and Out of a Fono:
A Genre Across Social Events

7.1. Cross-events Systematic Variation

In the preceding chapter, we have seen that going from the beginning lāuga to the later talanoaga, several aspects of verbal interaction gradually and systematically change. Turns become shorter and questions-answer pairs appear, the content of speeches becomes less predictable, their complex structural organisation is reduced from seven to three parts, the range of forms of address and pronominal reference also varies. In order to explain such variation, I have relied on the native distinction between the two genres lāuga and talanoaga, which were said to represent an opposition between two sets of antithetical values and concepts.

In this chapter, I will examine one of those two genres, the lāuga, as it varies across different social events. I will show that a change in the components of the speech event results in systematic variation in the organisation of the speech, its content and forms of expressions.

The term lāuga is used by Samoans with a variety of meanings. A basic distinction must be made between two interpretations. In the more generic one, lāuga can refer to almost any kind of formal speech, comprising church sermons, announcements (folafolaga), or even the few expressions that a foreigner may say before leaving the family that has hosted him for some time. In this sense, the term covers both the lāuga and the talanoaga in a fono, given that even the second of those genres is rather formal and contrasts, as I have shown in previous chapters, with the talk that goes on among matai before and after the meeting.

The second interpretation of the term lāuga is, instead, more
restricted and refers to a well-defined (although, as we shall see,
variable) genre of traditional Samoan oratory, whose experts and
jealous keepers are the matai, in particular, the failāuga *speechmakers*
among them.

It is on lāuga in this second sense that I will focus in this
chapter.

Following Hymes' original suggestion that the same genre may vary
according to the particular event in which it occurs and also depend-
ing upon the change in some of the other components of the speech
event (Hymes 1972),[1] I will consider the ways in which the structural
organisation of the lāuga (L) and its content vary according to the
following components of the speech event:

   (a)   Purposes
   (b)   Sequences
   (c)   Participants
   (d)   Keys

We will see that there are several possible variants of an L, and
that they are related to (a) the purposes of the event in which the
speech occurs (e.g. a meeting of the village council, a ceremony for
the installation of a new matai, a Sunday communal meal in the pastor's
house); (b) the temporal sequence of Ls and/or other acts of the event
(e.g. whether the L is the first one or is in reply to other Ls
previously performed); (c) who participates and who is a potential
candidate for delivering an L; and (d) the way in which the L should
be performed and interpreted, that is, the role of 'performance' in the
sense of Bauman (1977).

Given our focus on the fono, this chapter contrasts the Ls in a
fono (as described in the preceding chapter) with Ls in other social
events. I will not then define and illustrate here all the possible
variants of Samoan Ls.

This chapter argues for a *functional perspective on genre-variation*.
Such an approach has both theoretical and methodological implications.
Theoretically, the term 'functional' stresses the fact that although
genres are important components of speech events and contribute to
defining them, they are also affected by other components of the event
and therefore should be expected to systematically vary when the
relevant features are altered. The same joke told by the same person
will be different according to the people to whom it is told. From
one situation to another, we may find differences in the words used,

in the organisation of the story, in the intonation, volume, and so on.

A society can, sometimes, codify the notion of 'variant' of a given genre by giving different names to what, in several respects, should be considered as one genre. Other times, a canonical form is available to people's consciousness as a continuous reference point, from which local variations depart.

Methodologically, from the point of view of the ethnographer, the functional perspective stresses that one cannot ask questions about a certain genre without taking into consideration the fact that the way the question(s) will be asked, the time of the conversation, the knowledge that the interviewer will manifest, and other factors as well will affect, often in unpredictable ways, the answer. In its extreme version, the functional perspective on genre-variation assumes that there is no one version of a certain genre and, further, that elicitation will not only tend to produce a rather limited range of variation available in a given community, but also favour conflicting or incomplete responses. An example from my own experience illustrates this point.

When I first started investigating Ls in Samoa, I would sometimes ask a speechmaker to perform an L for me, in front of a tape recorder. Once I also asked the orator to stop between parts (**vaega**) of the L. This procedure, I thought, would give me information on the structural organisation of Ls. After the recording, I asked the same orator to transcribe his own speech. After a few weeks, while going over the transcribed material, the orator and I discovered that his speech was a mixture of parts taken from different kinds of Ls. The L started out as a speech for a carpenter who had just completed a house and ended as a speech for an exchange of dowry and bridewealth. My request for 'a lāuga' without specifying any further, and my demand for the repetitious interruption of the performance may have caused the orator, a very knowledgeable speechmaker, to make such a mistake.

7.2. Purpose-bound Variations

The purposes of a particular event (the 'goals' and 'outcomes', of Hymes 1972) will determine (part of) the content of an L and its structural organisation.

We have seen in Chapter Six that the basic structure of an L in a fono has seven parts. One of those parts, the **tulouga** or formal greeting, is not found in other social gatherings of matai. The

tulouga is both a greeting to the whole assembly and a recognition of
the major titles and familes represented in the fono and their hier-
archies. By listing all the most important titles of the village
(and sometimes of the whole district), the first orator reaffirms the
traditional hierarchical structure of the village organisation, the
ties among different groups, and their importance in the history of
the country. As discussed in Chapter Six, this act is important in
a fono because in the discussion that follows the L(s), those
hierarchies and the dignity of the titles may be questioned or
threatened. Before the confrontation, everyone must be reminded of
who is who and of the implicit risk involved in trying to challenge
those traditional ties and hierarchies.

In other social events, the focus is more on one or two families
or groups instead of all the village titles, although the village as
a whole is always greeted and acknowledged with a short version of the
village ceremonial greeting (fa'alupega) (see Chapter Three). In a
saofa'i, for instance, a ceremony in which a family confers a title
on one of its members and asks the village to recognise it, it is the
fa'alupega of that particular family and of other related titles that
is usually declaimed, whereas the village as a whole is often mentioned
in a few words.[2]

In Chapter Six, we also saw that the first L in a fono always
starts with the recognition of the fact that the kava ceremony has
ended and it is now time to hold the meeting; thus, the first speaker
connects his speech to the preceding activity. If more than one L are
performed, the speakers after the first will start their speech by
recognising the previous speakers. In other events, the first L
usually comes *before* the kava ceremony. Further, there is always
negotiation, called fa'atau, in which the potential candidates for
performing the L argue about who should deliver the speech on behalf
of the whole group. In these cases, the L may start with a part called
folasaga, a sort of introduction, in which the orator proclaims sacred
the day and the house in which the ceremony is taking place. This
part may or may not be combined with pa'ia, the declamation of the
dignity of the sacred names of the matai.

If we compare the ideal structure of an L in a fono with the ideal
structure of Ls in a ceremony (what I will refer to as 'canonical
structure'), we see that the two structures (or plans) differ
basically in two of the seven parts, (1) folasaga and (2) tulouga,
as shown in Table 7.1.

7.0. Matai during a saofa'i. The second row from the
right is occupied by those who are going to be
conferred a title.

TABLE 7.1

Comparison of the Basic Plans of Ls
in a Fono and in Ceremonies

Parts of a Lāuga in a Fono	Parts of a Lāuga in Ceremonies
1) 'ava *kava*	1) folasaga *introduction*
2) fa'afetai i le Atua *thanksgiving to God*	2) 'ava *kava*
3) taeao *mornings*	3) fa'afetai *thanksgiving*
4) pa'ia *dignity of the sacred names*	4) taeao *mornings*
5) tulouga *formal greeting*	5) pa'ia *dignity of the sacred names*
6) mata'upu o le fono *agenda of the day*	6) 'auga o le aso *foundation of the day*
7) fa'amatafi lagi *wish of good health*	7) fa'amatafi lagi *wish of good health*

Part 6), although showing different names, is in fact the same in
both contexts. In a ceremony, that part is when the orator announces
the reason for being gathered on that particular day. In a saofa'i,
for instance, that is the time for instructing the new matai on how he
should behave in his new status. In example (1) below, in a saofa'i
in which four people (three men and a woman) were conferred a title,
the speechmaker tells the four new matai to be diligent, follow God's
will and serve the high chiefs and orators of their family:

(1) (Saofa'i, tape 4, side 1, pp. 32-33)

    ... Ia oukou magakua
    You must remember

    e lua aso kusia
    two are the days to mind

    o le lalolagi legei
    in this world

'O le aso e ke fagua ai
The day you were born

ma le aso e fai ai lau saofa'i
and the day you have a saofa'i

(...)

e kasa ma kulaga i oukou igoa kaulele'a
As for your untitled names

'Oe Kui ma Pai ma Lafal ... ma Seve
You Kui and Pai and Lafai (...) and Seve

O igoa ga fa'akaulele'a
Those are names of untitled people

'A' o legei ua fa'apa'iaiga oukou.
But now you have been made sacred.

(...)

Ia.   'O le mea muamua
Yes.   The first thing

Ia 'oukou ko'a'aga i le Loku
You must be diligent in the Church

Ia 'oukou faia le figagalo le Akua
You must follow God's will

'Aua kou ke solomuli i se mea kasi
Do not retreat in any decision

e fai ...
you will take ...

... Ia oukou auauga
... You must serve

ma le fa'amaogi
and be faithful

i le Afioga iā Salagoa
to His Highness Salanoa

ma le Makua a Iuli
and the Matua Iuli

ae kaigage a'u le Ga'ukuala
as well as to me the Ga'utaala

Ia kasi la'u leo
My voice is one

ma fai mea uma
and do all the things

ou ke fai aku ai
that I tell you to do

(...)

Ia oukou alolofa i le galuega
You all must love the work

uma le mea ua kou iai fai
everything you do

āua le mamalu o oukou 'Āiga
because the dignity of you chiefs

e le se mea faigofie
it's not an easy thing

le Makai 'o le mea faigakā
[to be] a matai is difficult

a- a augoa ma le fa'aukauka o le kagaka
without one's prudence

Ia kalofae i loga olaga
too bad for his life

ma loga makai ...
and his title ...

The speechmaker is giving advice to the new matai and stressing the difficulty of the task. This is quite different from the style of the first L of the orator in a fono when in Part 6) of his L, he mentions the topic(s) to be discussed in the meeting. Not only, as we saw in Chapters Four and Six, may the speechmaker try to skip that part altogether, but also, when forced to say it, he will try to be as short and vague as possible.

(2) (Fono April 7, 1979, book II, pp. 11-12)

(...)

T : Maguia le aofia me le fogo!
Good luck to the assembly and the fono

```
?:   (?) kai    ┌─ // fekalai
     (?) thanks │     for your eloquent speech
                │
M:              └─ O ā maka'upu ┌─ //
                   What is the  │    agenda
     o le fogo?                 │
     of the fono?               │
                               │
T:                             └─ O le maka'upu
                                  The agenda
```

o le aofia ma le fogo,
of the assembly and the fono,

Ia e fa'akakau kogu lava
Well, it's really about

i lo kakou Falelua[3]
our Falelua

Oga pau lava ga'o maka'upu
That's all for the agenda.

M: O le isi maka'upu o Savea.
     The other topic of Savea.

T: Ia. O leisi fo'i maka'upu
     Right. The other topic

     e uiga i le- le Afioga iā Savea
     is about His Highness Savea

     o go'o // o le lā-
     because // of that

     mea fo'i ma Fa'amakuāigu
     thing also with Fa'amatuāinu

     go 'ua kukulu Savea i- i le Malō
     given that Savea has complained to the Government

     Ia go 'ua ka'ua gi fa'akosiga
     because of what has been said in the campaign

     Fa'amakuāigu l le paloka
     [by] Fa'amatuāinu in the elections

     Ia oga pau go o maka'upu
     That's all for the agenda

     o le aofia ma le fogo ...
     of the assembly and the fono ...

Depending upon the purposes of the event, what is structurally the same part is performed with a different spirit. In the saofa'i, the speechmaker takes the opportunity to express his own and his group's opinion on the importance of the occasion and to remind the new matai of their new duties. There is both concern and satisfaction in the orator's words. It is an important day in the lives of those four people who leave their untitled status and are given the sacred status of matai. The speechmaker is contributing, by means of his verbal skills, to making the day memorable. In a fono, instead, the reason for the gathering is not a happy one. The matai are getting together in an attempt to solve a problem, but the result cannot be guaranteed. The village is divided in a fono, whereas it is united in a ceremony like a saofa'i. The saofa'i takes place once both the family and the village have made their decision to confer which matai titles and to whom. During the saofa'i, people exchange goods, and speeches are performed to acknowledge the change of status and the importance of the event. In a fono, except for the shared kava, there is usually no exchange of goods. Symbolising a crisis in the life of the community, it is not an event to be particularly proud of nor to remember. Although often necessary and an integral part of the social dynamics of a village, the meeting of the council is not something that most people look forward to. The words and actions in a fono may cause resentment and make personal and familiar relationships difficult in the near or even far future. The speechmaker who gives the first L in a fono is well aware of all this and his performance is affected by it.

The L-plan that I have illustrated in Table 7.1 for ceremonies should be taken to be an ideal plan, the 'canonical structure'. Such an ideal plan, as in the case of the seating arrangement discussed in Chapter Four and the L-plan in a fono, is subject to reductions and variations. I will now give an example of the way in which the purposes of the event in which the L is performed can affect the L-plan as much as to reduce it from seven to three parts. The event I will talk about is the to'ana'i,[4] that is, the communal sharing of food on Sunday, after the morning service, by the pastor's family and (some of) the matai of the congregation.[5]

Usually, in the case of the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa, there is a tofi every other week, that is, either a pastor (faife'au) or a lay-preacher (a'oa'o) comes from another village to perform the church service and/or deliver the sermon. The to'ana'i takes place after the church service. Several matai of the congregation

gather in the pastor's house and offer the tofi some kava roots, food,
and money. After the offering of the kava roots (there is no kava
ceremony) and the tofi's acknowledgement of the offer (folafola'ava),
one of the orators will deliver an L for the tofi on behalf of the
pastor and his congregation. The speechmaker is free to say only
three of the seven parts listed in the canonical structure of the
L-plan: (1) 'kava', (2) 'thanksgiving', and (3) 'wish of good health'.

   To start with the 'kava' part is a way of recognising the tofi's
previous speech. The 'thanksgiving' that follows the 'kava' is
usually the longest part of the L, and this can be explained, at least
in part, by the Christian nature of the occasion, the thanksgiving
being the recognition of God's love for all humans and of His immense
power. Within this part, however, the speaker will also pay tribute
to the preacher's sermon, as shown in (3) below:

   (3) (Lāuga Aso Sā, p. 3)

      ... Maua fo'i e legei Ekalesia-[6]
      ... *It has been received by this congregation-*

      Susuga fa'afeagaiga
      [by] Honourable pastor

      ma le falekua
      and [his] gracious wife

      ma legei Ekalesia
      and this congregation

      se lāuga makagofie
      a beautiful sermon

      ua fofoga iai legei Ekalesia
      to which this congregation has listened

      i legei kaeao.
      this morning.

   Although not recognised as such by Samoans themselves, this passage
could be seen as a short form of the part called 'foundation of the
day', that is, as referring to the reason for the gathering: the
thankful recognition of the preacher's performance by the members of
the local congregation.

   Given this end and the more general goal of re-establishing and
maintaining the ties among the members of the congregation and the
church hierarchies, the reduction of the L-plan is not only justified,

but it also expected. The fact that the speechmaker skips the
'mornings' (part 6) and the 'dignity of the sacred names' (part 5)
can be predicted on the basis of the religious rather than political
nature of the event. Instead of acknowledging the most important
titles of the village and of the district, as in a fono, the speech-
maker concentrates on the pastors of the congregation, the head of
the church organisation, the general secretary. The same individuals
(namely, the matai) who would be referred to only as members of the
family of chiefs ('Āiga) and of the group of orators (tagata o le
Tuiatua, etc., cf. Chapter Three) are in the to'ana'i referred to as
tiakono (kiakogo) *deacons*, their office within the church organisation
prevailing over their social status as members of the village council
and as heads of extended families.

7.3. Sequence-bound Variations

The time at which an L is delivered can also affect its structural
organisation and its content in various ways.

We have already seen two cases in which the L starts with the 'kava'
part as a way of linking with the immediately preceding activity or
speech. To start with proclaiming the house and the day 'sacred'
(as done when the first part of the L is the 'introduction' or when it
is the 'dignity of the sacred names') is more a way of starting from
scratch, as if there is no need to tie one's speech to what has just
preceded. However, within an L, there are several places in which the
orator can refer back to previous acts in the same event.

When more than one L are performed, the most common way of referring
back is to mention the previous speakers. As we saw in Chapter Six
discussing telescoping, in a fono the Ls after the first can skip some
parts that have already been performed by previous speechmakers. In
other events, this phenomenon is not found. In order to understand
why this is the case, we will have to wait until the discussion of the
interaction between genre and keys, in section 7.5.

Another important difference between a fono and other events in
which Ls are performed is that in a fono, the number of Ls that will be
delivered is not exactly known in advance. It could be only one, or
up to the total number of subvillages represented in the meeting;[7] as
I have discussed in Chapters Four and Six, it is up to Moe'ono to
decide (cf. Figure 6.1 in Chapter Six). In other events, particularly
in ceremonies involving two parties, such as a formal visit of a
travelling party (malaga), or an exchange of dowry and bridewealth,

etc., each party gives one L, and therefore the total number, two is
known in advance. In a saofa'i, on the other hand, there is only one
L. Once again, I must stress here that I am using the term lāuga in
a very restricted sense, and not in the generic meaning of 'formal
speech'. When the bride's and the groom's families meet in the
village of the groom's family for the ceremonial exchange of dowry and
bridewealth, for instance, several speeches are delivered, but only
two of them are lāuga strictly speaking, namely, the two speeches
performed, respectively, by the family of the groom (first L) and by
the family of the bride (second L) before the kava ceremony and the
exchange of fine mats. Later, the two families separate. The matai
from the groom's family gather in another house, where they will
discuss how to distribute the bridewealth among the members of the
bride's family (particularly among the orators who had an important
role in the ceremony). They will also argue about who will give the
speech to announce the presentation of money and fine mats (lafo).
Such a speech, however, is not strictly speaking an L, despite the fact
that it contains the same expressions found in an L, and even starts
in a similar fashion. This is shown in (4) below, where the beginning
part of the second L and the beginning of the announcement of the lafo
are compared:

(4a) (Paolo ma gafa, book I,   (4b) (Paolo ma gafa, book II,
       second L)   announcement of lafo)

      'Ua pa'ia Moamoa   (...)
      Moamoa is sacred

      'o kua o Lalogafu'afu'a   'Ou ke kalikogu
      the back of Lalogafu'afu'a   *I believe/trust*

      'Ua pa'ia fo'i Vaieē   'Ua pa'ia Vaie'ē gei
      Also Vaiee is sacred   *This Vaie'e is sacred*

      e afio ai Lealaisalagoa   auā o lea e'e ai le
      where Lealaisalanoa arrived   *because here came the*

                                            kei o Kupua
                                            brother of Tupua

      (...)   a'o le kamaamālili e fā
                                            and the man of the four
                                            malili

Lines 3 and 4 of the L (4a) and lines 2, 3, and 4 of the announce-
ment (4b) are somewhat different in their wording, but similar in their
content. In both cases, the speaker is saying that 'Vaie'e, the house
of the high chief Lealaisalanoa (the highest chief of the family of
the groom) is sacred'. In (a), the speechmaker directly mentions the
name Lealaisalanoa, whereas in (4b), the chief is referred to by means
of the declamation of his fa'alupega (*the brother of Tupua*, and
the man of the four mālili [*a kind of tree*]).

This example shows that in order to know whether certain words,
expressions, or entire sections of a speech are part of an L or not,
we need information that goes beyond the linguistic text. The same
words can be part of an L in one case and part of a speech which is
not an L, in other cases. Methodologically, this implies that one
cannot simply present a Samoan orator with a piece of a speech and
expect to be answered whether that text should be considered (part of)
an L. In the case just mentioned, one would also need information
about *when* those expressions are used within the event paolo.

7.4. Participant-bound Variations

The people who participate in a certain event can affect the format
and content of an L. This can be meant to refer to two kinds of
participants: (1) those to whom the L is delivered, and (2) those who
deliver the L.

Let me give an example of how (1) can affect an L. We have already
discussed the to'ana'i. One thing that can be added here to that
discussion is that the L delivered on that occasion may vary according
to who is the preacher of the day. If the preacher is from a nearby
village, or was born in the same village where the church service was
held, the L is less complex and generally performed in a subdued tone,
if at all. When the preacher is from far away (e.g. an occasional
visitor from New Zealand) or a high ranking representative of the
church organisation (e.g. the vice-president, the [ex]-director of
the pastors training college) the L becomes much more elaborate in its
format and content. The ranking of a preacher in terms of his social
(or church-wise) status is considered at least potentially correlated
with his ability as a speechmaker. Therefore, the performance of a
more complex and better L by the orator of the local congregation can
be interpreted as an anticipation of a following good L by the guest
preacher. The orators of the congregation have several occasions,
before the to'ana'i, for assessing a preacher's oratorical skills,

like, for instance, his sermon in the church and his verbal behaviour at the early morning breakfast that is held in the pastor's house before the church service.

Selection of the one to deliver an L in any given situation is, in large part, a function of who is present. At the same time, who is present is, in large part, a function of both the kind of event that is taking place and the topic to be considered in the event. The attendance at a fono, for instance, varies according to the issue being discussed. Some people stay away from thorny political issues, whereas others are attracted to them. On the other hand, the discussion of some serious offense may attract a large body of matai because of the prospect of a heavy fine to be inflicted on the violators, which will eventually be shared among the participants in the meeting. Whatever the reasons for a large attendance at a fono, the participation of many of the matai in the village enlarges the range of possible candidates for the delivery of Ls. At the same time, various rules are at play in determining who should sit in the front row (cf. the discussion of the seating arrangement in Chapter Four), and, consequently, who should be delivering the L for a given subvillage. These factors are important given that a greater competition will necessarily force the one who delivers the speech to do well, and not to underplay his performance in front of the other orators from his subvillage and the large audience. As I will discuss in the next section, the competition for the L-floor, that is, for establishing which of the potential speechmakers should deliver the L, is absent in a fono, but an important part in other social events. This fact, as we will see, is strictly related to the way in which the L is performed and perceived by the audience in different events, and, more generally, its role in each event.

7.5. Key-bound Variations

The notion of 'key' as a component of speech events was introduced by Hymes (1972:62) as referring to the

> 'tone, manner, or spirit in which an act is done...
> Acts otherwise the same as regards setting,
> participants, message, form, and the like may differ
> in key, as, e.g. between mock:serious or perfunctory:
> painstaking.'

Hymes also stresses the fact that key is often dependent upon other components of the event:

'seriousness, for example, may be the expected concomitant
of a scene, participant, act, code, or genre (say, a church,
a judge, a vow, use of Latin, obsequies).' (Ibid.)

In our discussion of the Ls, the concept of key becomes important
in our assessment of the various factors affecting form and content
of a speech genre across a number of social events. Since there can
be more than one key in the same event, one must find out which one
is relevant for distinguishing between different realisations of the
same genre. In this section, relying on Bauman's (1977) notion of
verbal art as performance, I will use the notion of key as referring
to the way in which speech is intended and perceived with respect to
the domain of performance; what I mean by this should become clearer
in the course of the following discussion. I will show that it is by
referring to such a notion of key that we can explain some of the
differences between Ls in a fono and Ls in other social events.

Performance, as proposed by Bauman, should be understood here as

a mode of spoken verbal communication [which] consists in
the assumption of responsibility to an audience for a
display of communicative competence ... Performance involves
on the part of the performer an assumption of accountability
to an audience for the way in which communication is carried
out, above and beyond its referential content. From the
point of view of the audience, the act of expression on the
part of the performer is thus marked as subject to evaluation
for the way it is done, for the relative skill and effective-
ness of the performer's display of competence. (Bauman
1977:11)

As I will discuss below, we find that Ls in a fono are much less in
the domain of performance than Ls in ceremonies like saofa'i, paolo,
or malaga (formal visit of a travelling party). Thus, the orator who
performs an L in a fono, although serious in his delivery and
purposes, is somewhat less committed to his audience; he does not need
to display too much of his knowledge or skill as a speechmaker, his
speech is not subject to evaluation to the same extent to which it
would be in other events, the range of his audience is more limited
and he seems at times performing his speech perfunctorily. His
audience, worried about what to say and how to say it in the forth-
coming discussion, is hardly listening to him. They are looking around
and trying to understand what alliances have been made. As discussed
in Chapter Six, the first L(s) is(are) a necessary introduction for
creating the appropriate atmosphere for the meeting, but people can
hardly enjoy it. There is nothing to be happy about. In other events,
instead, the L is the climax of the whole ceremony. It sanctions the

importance of the day, often by defining the new status of (some of) the participants: from untitled to matai (saofa'i), from unmarried to married (exchange of dowry and bridewealth), or redefines a relationship, e.g. friendship (malaga), membership to a religious congregation (to'ana'i). In these social events, but not in a fono, the orators have a formal debate (fa'atau)[8] for deciding who, among them, should represent the whole group in performing the L. The winner of the debate will have to prove himself skillful (poto) in front of his own group and his wider audience. Whereas in a fono only matai are usually present,[9] with a few untitled men sometimes sitting outside the house, in ceremonies such as saofa'i and malaga a much wider range of statuses is represented, from untitled to women to children.[10] Whereas matai usually do not talk about the L in a fono once the meeting is over, being rather concerned with the political discussion (talanoaga, Chapter Six), the participants in the abovementioned ceremonies, both untitled people and matai, often discuss and evaluate the beauty of the L for weeks or months after the event has taken place. As part of the code-conventions for the performance of an L in one of those ceremonies, the speechmaker usually raises the volume of his voice so that his speech may be heard by all the people around. Such a change of volume, which sharply marks the beginning of the L, can be used as a signal for letting the audience know that what is being said now is lāuga. Such a signal is not necessarily found in a fono. In some sense, the speeches in a fono (both Ls and talanoaga) are much more private, restricted to the circle of matai and of no concern for the other members of the community.

As discussed in section 7.2, the speechmaker in a fono may sometimes leave out the mention of the 'agenda of the day' (part 4 of the fono-L) and the chairman of the meeting can ask him, once the L is over, to repair his oversight. Such a late repair-request is not found in ceremonial Ls; rather, it is more common to find cases in which the speechmaker is formally interrupted (seu) by another matai *during* his performance. Although there can be different reasons for interrupting, often the intervention of another matai to shorten a speech is due to some fault in the way in which the L is being delivered (e.g., the speaker is saying something he should not say, e.g. genealogies [gafa],[11] he has said something inaccurately, he is taking too long, etc.). Such interruptions are, in part, formal evaluations of the L while it is still going on. They also point to the fact that the speechmaker has made himself vulnerable and his performance can be questioned by others.

The various aspects of the L and of the events in which it occurs as discussed in this section should be seen as variations related to the key in which the act of delivering an L is done. If we take into consideration the various characteristics of what Bauman calls 'performance' as referred to a mode of verbal art, we can see that the L in a fono is less characterisable in terms of such a dimension than the L in some of the other events described here. This should be even more apparent if we take the more general perspective of the whole event in which an L is performed. In a fono, where people are fighting for their rights, properties, respectability, and so forth, verbal skills are rather directed toward political eloquence, which is not only a matter of 'form', but also of content. To use Firth's characterisation of various types of oratory (Firth 1975), in a fono, oratory must not only be *homiletic* ('reinforcement of what is already known' p. 42), but also *persuasive, manipulative, expressive* ('putting feeling into spoken form [tension-release]' ibid.), and *informative* ('conveying new matter' ibid.). The function of the beginning L(s), although important, is secondary or preparatory to what follows, namely, the discussion.

The L in a fono is the formal and somewhat sad recognition of an unstable state of affairs. It is a prelude to the forthcoming confrontation. The ceremonial L, on the other hand, expresses an agreement or friendship already reached. It defines alliances that are not being threatened but consolidated. By adding the dimension of performance as suggested by Bauman (1977), to be interpreted as a key to speech genre variation across events, we can better understand the differences between Ls in and out of a fono.

1. 'Genres often·coincide with speech events, but must be treated as analytically independent of them. They may occur in (or as) different events (...) A great deal of empirical work will be needed to clarify the interrelations of genres, events, acts, and other components ...' (Hymes 1972:65).

2. When more detailed fa'alupega are declaimed and several titles are recognised (instead of giving a general appellation to all of them), we encounter terms and names not found in an L in a fono. This is the case, for instance, in the folafola'ava, the acknowledgment of the kava roots offered on a particular occasion (e.g. saofa'i, or the visit of a travelling party (malaga). In such a speech, the orator lists for the most important chiefs, their maota (lit. *house of a chief*), that is, the name of the place where their ancestors first established their family compound at their arrival in the village. These names are not mentioned in an L in a fono.

3. See Glossary.

4. This term is spelled to'ona'i in Milner (1966:277) and in Samoan written texts (toonai in Western Samoa now that the status of the glottal stop ['] as a consonant worth transcribing has been denied by the School Authorities). I have preferred the spelling to'ana'i because closer to the more common pronunciation (ko'aga'i in the k/g-pronunciation, cf. Chapter Eight).

5. The ritual I am referring to here is what I have observed on several occasions among members of the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa. It should not be taken to be also characteristic of other religious groups in Samoa.

6. The speaker starts listing those who enjoyed the preacher's sermon and he realises that he has not mentioned the pastor and his wife (who are present) first. He repairs by inserting them and repeating the mention of the congregation at the end. This kind of repair is discussed, for English, by Schegloff, Jefferson, and Sacks (1977).

7. The way the first L is perceived in a fono varies according to whether it is or not followed by other Ls. If the first L is also the only L delivered for that day, it is then interpreted as a speech for all the subvillages represented in the meeting. If, instead, it is followed by the Ls of the other subvillages, it is interpreted as the L of the particular subvillage to which the orator belongs.

8. The fa'atau is conducted in the language of traditional oratory and may or may not have been prearranged. Even when it has been prearranged, however, last minute afterthoughts can transform an apparently easy decision into a difficult one. This kind of debate can last only a few minutes or even half an hour or more. When the orators seem unable to reach an agreement, one of the high chiefs who are present can close the discussion either by deciding that no L should be delivered or by announcing that he will perform the speech (a distinction is made, in these cases, between chiefs who can and chiefs who cannot deliver Ls).

9. An important difference between fono and the other kinds of events mentioned in this chapter is that in a fono only matai sit inside the house where the meeting is taking place (cf. Chapter Three), whereas in ceremonies such as paolo or saofa'i, some untitled people, both men and women, can also sit inside the house.

10. Children are not allowed to be inside the house where a ceremony is taking place, but can hang around, next to their older siblings in the cooking houses (umu kuka) watching the food being prepared or playing around the cars of the visitors from some other part of the island. When the ceremony is over and food distributed to the matai inside the house, the children are allowed to go at the edge of the house to get the food that their fathers, uncles or grandfathers have left for them.

11. On the taboo about reciting genealogies in Samoa, cf. Freeman 1964.

CHAPTER EIGHT
ELICITED SENTENCES AND SPONTANEOUS SPEECH.
A CRITIQUE OF LINGUISTIC METHODS

8.1. Introduction

As discussed in Chapter One, the study of the fono as a speech
event presented in Chapters Three to Seven should be seen as a
fragment of an ongoing project aiming at the writing of a *socio-
linguistic grammar of Samoan*. By 'sociolinguistic grammar' I mean,
very generally, an explicit account of (aspects of) what Hymes
(1967, 1974) has called *communicative competence*. Such a project
involves, among other things, an adequate description of structures
and rules of Samoan grammar that would account for sociolinguistic
variation of the kind described by Labov (1966, 1972), for occurrence
clusters (cf. Ervin-Tripp 1972), for speech repertoires (cf. Gumperz
1964; Blom and Gumperz 1972), etc. Particular attention will have to
be paid to the range of grammatical and discourse structures that
characterise Samoan in different speech events as well as in different
parts of the same event. These concerns motivated part of the
discussion of the language of the fono in Chapters Five and Six.

In Chapter One, I stated that the following Dependency Hypothesis
should be taken as the sociolinguist's working assumption: THERE ARE
ASPECTS OF LINGUISTIC BEHAVIOUR THAT CAN BE EXPLAINED ONLY BY
REFERRING TO ASPECTS OF SOCIAL CONTEXT.

A major goal of Universal Sociolinguistic Grammar is to implement
the Dependency Hypothesis, refine it in particular cases, and hope-
fully arrive at valid predictions on the relation of linguistic facts
to socio-cultural context. To accomplish this, the sociolinguist must
equally pay attention to structure, variation, and function. The
latest trends in generative grammar, in discourse analysis, and

ethnography of speaking are somewhat disappointing in this respect,
they tend to favour only one of these dimensions and avoid the others.

The latest developments in generative grammar, for example,
(cf. Chomsky 1973, 1975; Culicover, Wasow and Akmajian 1977) confine
the linguist's interest to 'autonomous syntax', leaving out any
consideration of communicative function or social context as non-
pertinent to the syntactician's analysis. The following quote from
a recent book on historical change illustrates such an attitude very
clearly:

> '...if the distribution of <u>please</u> can be accounted for
> by a pragmatic rule, that would support the autonomy
> thesis, since one would not want the syntax to explain
> the distribution redundantly. In general, the autonomy
> thesis (...) is supported when one has an independent
> (e.g. pragmatic) account of some phenomenon, permitting
> the syntax to avoid any consideration of it.'
> (Lightfoot 1979:43-4)

The social motivation for historical change discussed by Labov
(1972), for instance, is not even discussed.

Within a different tradition from generative grammar, many of the
linguists who declare themselves interested in 'context' or
'communicative functions' (e.g. Firbas 1976; Halliday 1967, 1973;
Kirsner 1976, 1979; Longacre 1972; MacWhinney 1977; Parisi and
Castelfranchi 1976; Zubin 1979) hardly acknowledge or attend to those
aspects of social interaction and cultural expectations that are
considered in the ethnographic tradition (cf. Bauman and Sherzer 1974;
Bloch 1975; Gumperz and Hymes 1972). Ethnographers of speaking, in
turn, rarely reach the level of detail in grammatical description that
would attract or challenge the grammarian.

To become interested in social context is, as Goffman once wrote
(Goffman 1964), like crossing a bridge. When you get to the other
side, you find yourself too busy to want to go back. I often
experienced this sentiment. Starting from a pure interest in the
grammatical forms and rules for speaking in a fono, I would find my
interest rapidly absorbed in the political machinery behind the speech
events. Although this tendency should not be completely resisted,
being an important way for the linguist to integrate language and
social life; one must also be careful not to lose track of the
original goals of sociolinguistic research. They include, as an
essential part of the sociolinguist's job within the larger field of
linguistics, the task of going back and forth from one side of the
'bridge' to the other to maintain the link between linguistic form

and social conduct, between what should be said and what is actually said, between Chomsky's ideal speaker-hearer and the actual members of a community, who speak as a way of life.

This chapter is meant to be an example of the kind of dialogue that should be established between different schools and subfields of linguistics. To this end, I will evaluate two different methodologies for gathering linguistic data. Specifically, I will compare the data collected through elicitation with those gathered through the ethnographic method described in Chapter Two and applied for my analysis of the fono. By 'elicitation' I mean here the extreme but common case in which the linguist is not a speaker of the object language and must use a metalanguage (e.g. English) for communicating with the native speaker and collecting examples. Such a method is widely used by language typologists and universal grammarians who want to collect data from several languages in a relatively short time. Furthermore, it is also the method taught to linguistics students in field-methods courses. Its consequences have not so far received the consideration that they deserve.

8.2. Elicited and Spontaneous Speech Data

In the following discussion, I will take the side of the ethnographer and show that by limiting data collection of Samoan linguistic material to elicitation in informant-sessions with bilingual speakers, the linguist gathers a corpus that is very much constrained by the particular situation, and the cultural expectations that native speakers have with respect to it. By complementing the elicited material with the collection of spontaneous speech, the researcher is instead in a position to broaden his view of the language and make observations that are not only descriptively more adequate, but also potentially more interesting for linguistic theory at large.

It is well known that generative grammarians, following Chomsky (1965), think that competence (in Chomsky's sense) should be studied before performance. Methodologically, this involves studying speakers' intuitions and avoiding spontaneous speech, particularly conversation. Such an attitude and its underlying logic is well expressed in the following passage from a recent introductory book to generative syntax:

> 'At this point, many readers may be tempted to ask why
> we should take a fluent speaker's judgements about
> sentences as the data of our investigation, rather than
> studying his actual utterances. Might we not arrive at
> a more accurate idea of what he 'knows' about his language

by observing the actual utterances that he produces,
instead of merely asking him to make judgements?

In most instances, it is useful to prefer the
judgement to the actual utterance. The chief reason
is that many kinds of additional complexity are
introduced when we examine actual utterances.
...the study of actual utterances should ideally be
preceded by a study of grammaticality judgements.
The study of these judgements, in this view, will
lead to a generative grammar. This generative grammar
then defines a <u>norm</u>, or standard, toward which people
unconsciously aim, with greater or lesser success,
in their actual speech. We can then describe the
irregularities of actually occurring utterances in
terms of their deviation from this norm.'
(Baker 1978: 10-11)

Such a methodology has been often criticised by sociolinguists,
especially by Labov (1966; 1971) and Hymes (1974). It must be said
however, that it has the advantage of being explicit, whereas much of
the recent work on language typology does not include any discussion
of methods of data collection. This is a considerable omission given
that the problems one might find in the method of investigating one's
own intuitions are heightened when eliciting sentences and judgements
from speakers with whom the linguist shares neither language nor
culture. How does the researcher know in such cases *which ideal norm*
the native speaker is aiming toward? Is he, for example, aiming
toward the norm for the written standard? For spoken standard? For
casual vernacular? As I will show below, in the Samoan case, by
limiting the analysis to elicited linguistic form, one risks to be
describing only a single variety of speech, one which is in fact of
very limited use. In the case of Samoan, the variety elicited through
interviews does not closely correspond to either informal or formal
varieties of most spontaneous interaction in traditional settings.

8.2.1. 'Good Speech' and 'Bad Speech'

I will start my discussion by addressing the issue of which
phonological variety of Samoan should be described or simply used in
collecting examples. Such an issue, as we shall see, is an important
one because it affects other areas of grammar beyond phonology and
the very concept of linguistic norm.

The Samoan that has been so far described in the linguistic
literature (e.g. Anderson and Chung 1977; Chapin 1970; Chung 1978;
Churchward 1926; Milner 1961, 1973) exhibits an opposition between
/t/ and /k/ and between /n/ and /ŋ/ (written g). The distinctive nature

of the opposition between alveolar and velar is illustrated in the following minimal pairs:[1]

(1)   a. **tete**   *shivering*

         b. **tia**   *grave*

         c. **tī** (/tii/)   *tea* (from English)

(2)   a. **keke**   *cake* (from English)

         b. **kia**   *gear* (from English)

         c. **kī** (/kii/)   *key* (from English)

(3)   a. **ana**   *cave*

         b. **fana**   *gun, to shoot*

(4)   a. **aga** (/aŋa/)   *conduct*

         b. **faga**   *bay*

In this pronunciation, /k/ is found only in borrowings (both /g/ and /k/ in foreign words are realised as /k/ in Samoan). Another segment found only in borrowings is /r/ (e.g. kiterī *degree*). I will call this variety the 't/n-pronunciation'. This pronunciation was the one used by bilingual speakers whenever I elicited sentences using English as the metalanguage.

However, as I learned from living in the village, the language spoken by most Samoans in the widest range of daily activities (see below) does not manifest the oppositions illustrated in (1)-(2) and in (3)-(4). In most verbal interaction among Samoans, /k/ covers both the t's of examples (1) and the k's of examples (2). Further, /ŋ/ covers both the n's of examples (3) and the g's of examples (4). I will call this second variety the 'k/g-pronunciation'. In this variety, a word like aga could either mean *cave* or *conduct* - see examples (3a) and (4a) above. A word like keke could either mean *shivering* or *cake* - see examples (1a) and (2a) above. Further, the segment /l/ covers both /r/ and /l/ of the t/n-pronunciation. The Samoan word for *degree*, for instance, would be kikelī rather than kiterī.

Although the t/n-pronunciation is the variety in which Samoan is written and the way in which it is spoken in most radio programs, in church services, and in school instructions, it does not represent what one might call the social norm or standard in other speech

settings. The k/g-pronunciation characterises over 90% of casual speech among intimates and represents the phonological system of speaking in traditional formal events such as fono, saofa'i, etc. as widely documented in previous chapters.

The t/n-pronunciation, the variety in which the Bible was translated into Samoan by early missionaries, is called tautala lelei, meaning (roughly) *good speech*. Shore (1977, 1980) has written some illuminating pages on the possible historical and cultural explanation for such an attitude. From the point of view of descriptive grammar, it is important to say that 'bad speech' is not simply something that speakers 'slip into' or an 'accident' due to performance (in Chomsky's sense), rather it is a variety of Samoan that has a much wider distribution of use than 'good speech', and is used in both informal and formal settings. As typical of Samoan culture (see the discussion of the social roles of Moe'ono and Iuli in Chapter Three), 'good' and 'bad' must be contextually defined.

What is good in one context can be bad in another, and vice versa. The alternation between t/n- and k/g-pronunciation is not an exception to this general cultural pattern. In traditional Samoan settings of a 'dignified' (mamaiu) nature, such as a fono or a saofa'i (see Chapter Seven), the social norm is k/g- rather than t/n-pronunciation. That is, in the performance of traditional oratory and in the discussion of serious political issues, 'bad speech' becomes 'good'. This view is clearly expressed in the following passage from an interview with an old Samoan speechmaker (for further material and discussion, see Shore 1977):

(5) (Interview with A.E. at his house, September 1978.)

(Context: I have been asking A.E. several questions about different kinds of oratorical speeches (lāuga). Note: this English translation of the original Samoan transcript has been 'pruned' from overlaps and repairs for sake of brevity and clarity.)

A.D.: Is the voice different in different kinds of lāuga?

Orator: There are also differences in the voice in which to give a lāuga. ...One kind is the 'good speech'. ...Another kind is when it would not be right to use the good language. ...If you give a speech the way a pastor would, that's done in the good speech. ...If you give a speech in a fono the old Samoan way ... and you speak in the 'good language' ...That's BAD! ...It is good to speak in the 'bad language'.

From the point of view of the phonological inventory, formal, ceremonial Samoan groups with casual speech, rather than with literary speech. The phonological oppositions found in elicited sentences (e.g. /t/ vs. /k/) do not represent thus *the* norm 'towards which people unconsciously aim' (Baker, op. cit.), but only *one* norm, appropriate in some social contexts (e.g. talking to the linguist, praying), but not in other ones (e.g. delivering a lāuga in a fono or in a saofa'i, household interaction).

For the same reasons for which one would not want to limit the discussion of English grammar to the forms used, say, in church sermons or in newspaper articles one should not limit the description of Samoan to the t/n-pronunciation, which represents, as I have said, a rather specialised phonological variety.

A second reason for the linguist to take into consideration 'bad speech' *before* 'good speech' is that many Samoans are not as fluent in the latter variety as they are in the former. This is documented in the ethnographic literature (Shore 1977), commonly admitted by Samoans, and finds confirmation in the frequent 'hypercorrections', i.e. by those speakers who adapt to speaking in the 'good speech' by changing *all* k's into t's, even those that are kept as k's - that is borrowings - in the speech of fluent t/n-speakers. The word kitala from English 'guitar' is often pronounced titala or the word kalone from English 'gallon' is pronounced talone.

Finally, the reasons for being interested in the 'bad speech' go beyond phonology and involve other areas of the grammar. As Shore (1977) has pointed out, the 'good speech' is the appropriate way to speak in 'western-oriented activities' such as writing, church sermons, teaching, reading news at the radio, etc. The use of t's and n's evokes then a style that is more likely to match biblical Samoan or English grammar than traditional Samoan speech. This becomes apparent when we compare the sentences elicited during my first month in the village - when I did not speak Samoan and used English for talking to native speakers - with the sentences contained in the transcripts of spontaneous verbal interaction recorded in the following months.

In the following sections, I will discuss particular aspects of Samoan semantics and syntax. As we shall see, the analysis of spontaneous interaction provides some important information on the structure and meaning of sentence patterns that one would miss by only employing direct elicitation.

8.2.2. Lexical Choice and Sentence Structure

A typical feature of sentences elicited from bilingual speakers in informant-sessions is a tendency to translate word-by-word the English original sentences. Thus, for instance, one often finds in the linguistic literature sentences with the verb mana'o *want, like, need* used like the English verb <u>want</u>. Two examples are given in (6) and (7) below from Chung (1978:127):[2]

(6) Na mātou manana'o e   'a'ai, 'a e   peita'i
    PST *we   want*   COMP *eat*   *but*

    'ua 'ave 'ese mea'ai.
    TNS *take away food*
    We wanted to eat, but the food had been taken away.

(7) Pe   'e te mana'o 'e te alu i lo'u fale?
    Quest you TNS *want   you* TNS *go   to my   house*
    Do you want to go to my house?

Sentences of this type are not found in spontaneous interaction among Samoans. To express the meaning of 'feel like' Samoans would rather use *fia*, which has also a connotation of making the hearer feel sorry for the person who would like to do something. Thus, if someone would like to go someplace, but he could not, he would say fia alu [*I*] *wish* [*I could*] *go*. If someone wants a friend to buy him a drink, he would say fia inu [*I*] *feel like drinking* (the translation *I am thirsty* is correct, but does not capture the begging implied in it). Finally, in asking a friend whether he wants to go home, a Samoan would not use a sentence like (7), but rather he would use the dual inclusive form of the first person pronoun (kā) with the verb *to go*, as shown in (8):[3]

(8) kā   ō i le mākou   fale?
    two of us go to ART *our* (exclusive) *house*
    Shall we go to my house? or *Do you want to go to
                                    my house?*

Finally, in a traditional formal context, like, for instance, in addressing a high chief or referring to his wants, not the verb mana'o, but the Respect Vocabulary term (see Chapter Five) finagalo would be appropriate. One would, for instance, ask o le ā lou finagalo *What is your wish?* but not o le ā le mea e te mana'o ai? *What do you want?*

8.2.3. Word Order and Semantic Roles

The tendency to translate word-by-word the English sentences of the linguist's checklist turns out to be particularly damaging in the study of word order patterns and coding of semantic roles. The most typical constructions used by Samoans outside the interview situation are in fact, difficult to elicitate. Thus, for instance, when I presented English sentences like John gave a book to Sina or Sina washed the clothes for the pastor, I was given by informants sentences like those reproduced in (9) and (10):

(9) a.   Sā 'ave e   Ioane le tusi iā Sina
             PST *give* ERG *John*   ART *book* *to Sina*

       b.   'O Ioane sā 'ave le tusi iā Sina
             TOP *John*   *PST* *give* ART *book* *to Sina*

(10) a.   Sā fa'amamā e   Sina la'ei   mo le faife'au
             PST *wash*   ERG *Sina clothes* *for* ART *pastor*

       b.   'O Sina sā fa'amamā la'ei   mo le faife'au
             TOP *Sina* *PST* *wash*   *clothes* *for* ART *pastor*

Given the presence of 'o in the (b) versions of (9) and (10), a particle that can be found before any NP argument in preverbal position (e.g. 'o le tusi sā 'ave e Ioane iā Sina, 'o Sina sā 'ave iai le tusi e Ioane, etc.) the word order Verb-Subject-Object-Indirect Object (VSOI) – 'I' covers here both Indirect Objects and Benefactives – seemed the best candidate for basic word order in Samoan. Further, the particle 'o can also give a cleft sentence reading to (9b) and (10b), that is they can be respectively translated as *it was John who gave the book to Sina* and *it was Sina who washed the clothes for the pastor*. This fact suggests that the SVOI order is more 'marked' than VSOI. Finally, Samoan exhibits most of the properties attributed to Verb-Initial languages (cf. Greenberg 1966; Hawkins 1979; Keenan 1978).

A preliminary count of sentence types in spontaneous interaction both in informal conversational interaction and in formal fono discussion confirms that, out of those cases in which all three constituents appear VSO is the most common type of word order (see Table 8.1).[4]

TABLE 8.1

Transitive Sentence Types in Conversation
and in Fono (only **talanoaga**)

Total transitive sentences	Conversation (50)		Fono (58)	
V O (X)[a]	42.0%	(21)	36.2%	(21)
V S	18.0%	(9)	8.6%	(5)
V (X)	16.0%	(8)	5.2%	(3)
Pro V O[b]	6.0%	(3)	13.8%	(8)
V S O	10.0%	(5)	15.5%	(9)
S V O	2.0%	(1)	3.4%	(2)
V O S	0.0%	(0)	5.2%	(3)
V O I[c]	2.0%	(1)	0.0%	(0)
O V S	0.0%	(0)	5.2%	(3)
Others	4.0%	(2)	6.9%	(4)

[a]X = Adverbial Phrases or Obliques different from I

[b]Pro = Clitic pronoun referring to S

[c]I   = Indirect Object or Benefactive

However, Table 8.1 also shows that VO is the most common syntactic type across both contexts. Furthermore, Indirect Objects and Benefactives are hardly ever expressed - only one case in 8.1 and with the order VOSI!

A closer look at the internal structure of the O of VO sentences, however, reveals some interesting facts. The syntactic O constituent is often a complex NP which contains lexical information not only about the patient, but also about other semantic roles. The postverbal NP, in several cases (e.g. eight out of the twenty-one VO sequences in fono speeches), has a structure of the type illustrated in (11) below:

(11) NP → Art < Poss > N < Poss >

'Poss' stands here for a possessive adjective in prenominal position
and for a possessive pronoun or a genitival phrase in postnominal
position. (11) can thus be broken into two alternative rules:

(11) a. NP → Art   Poss Adj N

b. NP → Art   N   Poss Phrase

'Poss Phrase' can, in turn, be realised as (12a) or (12b):

(12) a. Poss Phrase → { $\begin{smallmatrix}a\\o\end{smallmatrix}$ } Pronoun

b. Poss Phrase → { $\begin{smallmatrix}a\\o\end{smallmatrix}$ } NP

the choice between the preposition a or o, both roughly meaning *of* is
determined by lexical and semantic considerations (cf. Milner 1966;
Tuitele, Sāpolu and Kneubuhl 1978).

If we analysed 'Poss' in (11) and (12) in terms of semantic rather
than syntactic roles, we find that it refers to one (or more) of the
following roles: (i) Goals; (ii) Benefactive; (iii) Agent. A few
examples below from transcripts of spontaneous interaction illustrate
these various functions of 'Poss':

(i) <u>Poss = Goal</u>

(13) (Pesio, book 17:151) (Mother asking for a glass
of water.)

Amai ni   vai   a a'u!
bring some water of me
Bring <u>me</u> some water! (lit. *Bring some water of me!*)

(14) (I le pō, p. 10) (A chief stopping another chief
from drinking warm beer and offering him a cold one.)

...'avaku   lau   fagu![5]
...give + DX your bottle
[I] am giving you [this] bottle or
[you] take the bottle for you
(lit. *take your bottle*)

(ii) <u>Poss = Benefactive</u>

(15) (Pastor and Deacon, p. 13) (Telling a story about
the distribution of money among members of the
church congregation.)

...la ou kago aku fa'a- fai le-
...So I get DX   some ART

le   afakalā   a Lua ia ma loga ko'alua

ART *halfdollar of Lua* EMP *and his   spouse*

So I got hold of about
fifty cents for Lua himself and his wife

(lit. *So I got hold of some-*
fifty cents of Lua himself and his wife)

(16)   (Pesio, book 17b:126) (A ten year old boy talking
to his mother, answering the question reproduced
in example [20] below.)

Sou alu e   fai le mea'ai a kamaiki a'oga

I   go COMP *make* ART *food   of kids   school*

I am going to make some food for the kids
at school.

(lit. *I am going to make some food of the kids*
at school)

(17)   (Before Fono April 7, book I, p. 6)

Vifo   le aufa'i lele

Cut+down ART *bananas there*

fai se   kakou pe'epe'e!

make some our   cream

Cut down that bunch of bananas over there
[*and/to*] *make some cream for us all!*

(lit. *Cut down that bunch of bananas over there*
make [*some of*] *our cream*)

(iii)   Poss = Agent

(18)   (Fono April 7, book 3, p. 93)

Ua aumai le figagalo a le Akua

TNS *bring* ART *wish   of* ART *God*

God gave [*us*] [*his*] *wish*

(lit. *the Lord's wish was given* [*to us*])

(19)   (Fono January 25)

Ua koso fo'i le va'a o le   Sa'o 'Ese'ese

TNS *pull also* ART *boat of* ART ((matai title))

The Sa'o 'Ese'ese pulled in his boat

(lit. *The boat of the Sa'o 'Ese'Ese was also*
pulled in)

(20)   (Pesio, book 17b:126)

Le a   lau mea la   e alu e   fai?

ART *what your thing there* TNS *go* COMP *do*

What are you going to do?
(lit. *what is <u>your</u> thing [that] go to do?*

These constructions are not usually found among the sentences provided by bilingual speakers in informant-sessions. This might be due to a combination of several facts, among which, the tendency to match the syntax of the original English sentences as well as the avoidance of structures that are too opaque with respect to their surface correspondence to underlying semantic or logic structure. In either case, sentences like those in (9) and (10) above - as well as (6) and (7) from Chung (1978) - could be seen as an attempt to adapt to the addressee's (i.e. the linguist) grammar. If this could be shown to be the case, the talk to and for the linguist would share some of the features that sociolinguists interested in 'registers' have called 'foreigner talk' (Ferguson 1975, 1977; Andersen 1977).

Finally, the importance of the discovery of the V NP structure of the type discussed above goes beyond the needs of a descriptively adequate grammar of Samoan and reaches implications valuable for linguistic theory.

The fact that, despite the unmarked VSO order of main declarative sentences, speakers tend to prefer either a Verb Patient sequence or a sequence of Verb NP, in which NP contains information on both the Patient and other semantic roles (i.e. Agent, Benefactive, Indirect Object) provides support for a hypothesis independently made in linguistic theory. Psycholinguists (Slobin 1975), typologists (Lehmann 1973; Vennemann 1974), logico-universalists (Keenan 1979) have all independently argued that there is a tendency in languages not to interrupt the sequence Verb Object. A VSO language is an obvious counterexample to such a claim. The Samoan data illustrated above show that even in a VSO language, alternative structures are available which are consistent with the VO hypothesis. In Samoan, the Agent need not appear as an independent NP immediately after the verb. As shown above, other alternative constructions are available. Those alternative constructions, however, cannot be easily elicited through informant-work. They need, instead, to be gleaned from spontaneous verbal interaction. The empirical method of ethnographic observation turns out to be the only way, in this case, to make Samoan grammar descriptively more adequate and explanatorily more valuable.

8.2.4. Nominalisations in Discourse

It has been claimed that one of the social markers of formality is represented by a higher percentage of nominal as opposed to verbal constructions (cf. Brown and Fraser 1979). This fact seems partly confirmed by the Samoan data, given that, as discussed in 5.2.3 (see Tables 5.1 and 8.1), the language spoken in a fono tends to have more noun phrases than the language spoken in conversation, in which it is more common to have a predicate with one or more of its basic NP arguments left out (or 'deleted'). The language of the informant-sessions, on the other hand, with its tendency to translate word-by-word the English sentences, represent the other end of the continuum, with a very high percentage of NP arguments expressed (both pronominal and nominal ones). As an example of this fact, it is sufficient to go and look at the examples in the linguistic literature on Samoan, where we rarely find sentences without major NP arguments expressed.

In addition to what was just said, however, the Samoan data from transcripts of spontaneous interaction also reveal another interesting fact, namely, the *frequent use of nominal forms and nominalisations from verbs*. As I will show in a few examples below, Samoan speakers use nominalisations within sentences or simply nominalisations or nouns without accompanying verb, in cases in which in other languages, for example, English, such a use would be peculiar or rather 'marked' in an informal register:

(21) (Drinking at night, p. 1) (Young men recalling the illegal night-time brewing of homemade beer.)

F: ...'a'o ke faku   lā
    ...*but I tell [you]* DX
                                (a)
→   o le magaia o ┌//le faiga (e) Sio
    ART *nice* *of* │ ART *doing by Sio*

K: └ Ae maua,
                       but catch

    e falepuipui i le lima kau ┌//saga.
    put in jail for ART *five years* │

L: └ A:?
                                     Uh?

K: A:
                                     That's it.

→   F: Magaia (o) le faiga e Sio o le mea legā.
          nice   ART *doing* ERG *Sio of* ART *thing that*

    F: *...But I tell you man,*
→   *Sio did such a nice job.*
    K: *But if they catch you*
       they put you in jail for five years.

    L: *What?*
    K: *That's it.*
→   F: *Sio did such a nice job in making that thing.*

(22) (Asiasiga; p. 8) (Three chiefs and one orator [T.]
     walking along the road and talking about the road
     and the space around the water falls, where tourists
     often stop by.)

    S: la mafai a lea pupugi (?)
       So can   EMP that close

       ma ō ka'avale i kokogu.
       and go cars   to inside

    T: Paka ai lea i le ikū lea.
       Park PRO there on ART *side there.*

    T: (A)uā (e) sa'o kele
       Because (TNS) *right very*

→   le fuaga e le palagi
       ART *surveying* ERG ART *foreigner*

       (o) le auala ga maga'o
       (of) ART *road he wanted*

       e oso i.
       to jump here.

    S: *We could close that part*
       so that the cars could go inside.

    T: *And park there on that side.*

    T: *Because the New Zealander was right*
→   *when he did the survey of the road*
       [that] he wanted to come inland.

Both **faiga** in (21) and **fuaga** in (22) are nominalisations of transitive
verbs (**fai** *to do, make* and **fua** *to plan, survey* respectively), -ga being
the nomalising suffix.

    Other times, we find in Samoan conversation utterances that must be
syntactically analysed as nominal forms, but in translating into English,
we must either change the nominal form into a verb, as in (23) below,

or we must 'frame' the noun phrase in a more complex embedding
structure, as in (24), which is a very common expression:

(23) (Uaki, p. 4) (Talking about the watch that he has
just lost, T. lists all its features.)

T: ...ae   le mafai fo'i ga   sesē.
   ...*and* NOT *can* EMP COMP *wrong*

F: Oh! A   le a m- ( ) me- e   le sesē
      but NOT   TNS NOT *wrong*

   pe fa'akogu a:,
   if check   uh,

T: ioe. E   le mafai a   ga- e   (ki)
   Yes. TNS NOT *can*   EMP COMP TNS *(wind)*

   'ae ki
   but wind

→ ga'o le ku'uku'u a   i lou lima.
   only ART *leave*   EMP *on your arm*

T: *...It would never be wrong.*

F: *Oh! It would not - not be wrong*
   when you check [*the time*].

T: *Yes. It doesn't -*
   but [*as for*] *winding it,*
→ *you only* [*have to*] *leave it on your wrist.*

(24) (This is an expression that I heard many times and
is also frequent in the tapes of my interaction with
Samoans. When someone would make a joke and I would
laugh, Samoans, amused by my enjoying the interaction,
would say:)

   Le   aka   a le ali'i!
   ART *laughter of* ART *guy*

   [*look how*] *the guy is laughing.* or [*look at*]
   the guy laughing.

This kind of data, which is particuplarly difficult to obtain
access to in informant-sessions, given that native speakers would
tend to translate English verbs into Samoan verbs, could turn out
to be very important not only for our better understanding of
contemporary Samoan grammar (in its own terms), but also for some
more general concerns about historical change and the nature of
ergativity. It has been claimed, for instance, that ergative case

marking and nominalisations are strictly related (cf. Allen 1964; see
Comrie 1978 for a critique of Allen's position). An analysis of the
relative frequency of nominal forms and nominalisations in discourse
would seem then essential to our understanding of how *use* may affect
grammatical change. Further, we may have to state that not only within
the same language there are differences in different contexts with
respect to the percentage of nominal versus verbal forms used, but
also that languages may vary with respect to the absolute use that
they make of nominalisations in discourse. We may have then *languages
that are more noun-oriented and languages that are more verb-oriented*.

8.2.5. Other Differences Between Elicited and Spontaneous Speech

So far, I have discussed only a few cases in which sentences
elicited in informant-sessions exhibit grammatical features that do
not match those found in spontaneous speech. In certain cases, these
features are not found in informal conversation (e.g. the use of mana'o
discussed in 8.2.2); in other cases, these features do not
characterise either formal *or* informal spontaneous speech in traditional
village life. The features mentioned thus far represent a subset of a
much larger set of grammatical constructions that vary according to
data collection methodology (namely, elicitation versus observation).

Other features affected by data gathering procedures include, among
others, the social and structural distribution of the transitive Cia
suffix (see 5.2.3), ergative case marking (cf. Ochs 1980b), reflexive
pronouns (which can be elicited but are not characteristic of
spontaneous speech), complementisers tense/aspect system (in which
locative deictic terms are used in spontaneous but 'deleted' from
elicited sentences), and Subject to Object Raising (which, again, can
be elicited, but is not found in spontaneous language use).

8.3. Implications

These differences indicate that Samoan speakers make use of
different grammatical constructions according to (how they perceive)
the social situation. To return to the Baker quote mentioned earlier,
Samoan speakers do not have *one* 'norm, or standard toward which people
unconsciously aim, with greater or lesser success, in their actual
speech' (Baker, op. cit.). This view implies that spontaneous speech
is a paler version of the rich material that can be elicited. In the
Samoan case, this is simply not what happens. Spontaneous Samoan can
not be represented as a subset of elicited Samoan. As demonstrated in

the above discussion, while certain norms span both elicited and spontaneous Samoan, others are characteristic of only spontaneous or only elicited forms. If the linguist wants his grammar to be *descriptively adequate*, he must rely on the ethnographic approach.

While these facts have been discussed in terms of consequences of data collection methodologies, they have other implications for linguistics. These features represent not only differences in data bases or linguistic corpora but differences in *registers* within the language.

The structures obtained through formal elicitation represent one register of Samoan; those obtained in formal spontaneous speech events another register, and so on. As noted earlier, the language used in informant-sessions has a distinct place in the Samoan linguistic repertoire. It is the 'good speech' register, appropriate to speaking to outsiders. In other words, in the informant-session, the linguist is eliciting *foreigner talk* (cf. Ferguson 1975, 1977).

In the case of Samoan, foreigner talk is phonologically distinguished. The shift to t/n-pronunciation is a clear indicator that the speaker is code-switching. In other languages and speech communities, the indices of registers may not be as salient. It might be harder then for the linguist to determine the place of elicited sentences in the repertoire as a whole. To determine its status, the linguist must first recognise that the informant-session is a type of speech event and second employ those sociolinguistic methods that have been discussed in this chapter and have guided the study of the Samoan fono presented in this dissertation.

1.   cf. Chapter Two for transcription conventions.

2.   I have adapted the glosses to my own conventions, but left Chung's original translation.

3.   I have also changed the possessive adjective lo'u *my* to mātou *our* (exclusive). A Samoan rarely thinks of his house as only 'his' but rather as of his whole family.

4.   These data are exclusively taken from verbal interaction among male speakers.

5.   In several of these examples, an important function is also performed by the deictic (DX) particles mai, aku, ifo, which convey information about the direction of the action (e.g. towards the speaker, away from the speaker). cf. Milner 1966; Platt 1980.

CHAPTER NINE
CONCLUSIONS

In the preceding chapters, in particular in Chapters Three to Seven, I have tried to show that to understand language use and systematic language variation (in terms of speakers, turns, genres, topics, grammatical patterns, etc.) one must take into consideration those aspects of social context that I have referred to as the *social event*. In my analysis of language use and variation in a Samoan community, the social event, rather than the sentence (as in Generative Grammar) or discourse (as in Discourse Analysis) or conversation (as in Conversation Analysis) constitutes the basic unit of linguistic analysis.

By looking at social events in terms of patterns of speaking, the researcher transforms them into *speech events*. As discussed in Chapter One, the study of speech events as intended in this dissertation refers to a perspective of analysis and does not imply an analytic distinction between, say, speech events - meant as social events in which rules for speaking play a major role in the interaction - and speech situation - in which speech plays a minor (or no) role (cf. Hymes 1972; for a discussion of this distinction).

This dissertation is not a sociolinguistic study of a whole Samoan community. I chose to foreground one event, the fono, and one group of speakers, chiefs and orators. Obviously, one cannot fully under-stand an event without knowing what goes on in other events in the same speech community. Although my study is mostly concerned with fono and with other formal events such as paolo, saofa'i, etc. (cf. Chapter Seven), I have also undertaken an analysis of language use in other events. The discussion presented in Chapter Eight draws on recording of casual interactions among friends and intimates as well as on interviews with native speakers. Further, I had the opportunity

of taking into account transcripts prepared by Elinor Ochs and
Martha Platt of child-child and child-adult interaction within house-
holds. Without a basic understanding of language use in these
different contexts, it would have been very difficult, if not
impossible, to evaluate the sociolinguistic relevance of the elaborate
and highly structured language of chiefs and orators in an event like
the fono.

The Dependency Hypothesis stated in Chapter One (THERE ARE ASPECTS
OF LINGUISTIC BEHAVIOUR THAT CAN BE EXPLAINED ONLY BY REFERRING TO
ASPECTS OF SOCIAL CONTEXT) was taken as the working assumption of the
sociolinguist in looking at language use within one particular event
or across a number of different events. Chapters Four to Seven, which
constitute the core of the study of the fono, offer examples of ways
in which such a general hypothesis can be made more specific. By
referring to the components of the speech event defined by Hymes
(1972, 1974), I show that there is a continuous and creative inter-
action among verbal and non-verbal features of the event.

Thus, in Chapter Four, I discuss the relationship between, on the
one hand, the order of speakers (who speaks when), the genre used,
and the topic addressed, and, on the other hand, the order of
distribution of kava drink in the opening ceremony, and the spatial
organisation of people sitting inside the fono house. In this analysis,
I show that principles behind social and political organisation within
the village (presented in Chapter Three) apply to the systematics of
speaking in a fono.

In Chapter Five, I present the distinctive features of the fono as
a speech event and show that rules for turn-taking, lexical choice,
morphosyntactic and intonational patterns shift once participants
commence the event of 'having a fono'. From a relatively casual
conversation before the kava ceremony, verbal interaction becomes
highly constrained, with strict norms for who can speak when, and for
the form and content of what is said. The transition is symbolically
marked by the ceremonial calling out of the names of those who are
going to be served kava. The kava ceremony is thus a clear example
of what Goffman (1974) calls a *boundary marker*. Although the same
ceremony can also be performed at the end of a fono, I show that
typically closing the event is a much more gradual process than
opening it, with frequent attempts to end and consequent negotiations
over the appropriate moment for concluding the discussion. This
feature of Samoan fono indicates that Goffman's (1974) idea that
closing is easier than opening does not apply to Samoan fono.

Chapter Six considers the organisation of discourse within a fono. It analyses the two major genres of discourse used, lāuga and talanoaga. It shows first that there is a consistent and gradual change in the form and content of discourse as speakers shift from one genre to the other. I call TELESCOPING the principle behind such a change, in which the seven main subdivisions of lāuga are reduced in size and number and the one sub-division devoted to discussing the issue at hand is expanded. Second, by referring to a cultural dichotomy between harmony and conflict, I explain systematic variation in turn-taking rules, address forms, and pronominal reference as genre boundaries are crossed.

Whereas Chapter Six analyses variation from one genre to another within the same event, Chapter Seven analyses variation within the same genre from one social event to another. I propose thus a functional perspective to genre variation (variants of a genre), one which takes into account the particular event in which a speech genre is potentially or actually used. Focussing on the genre of lāuga, I show that the structural organisation, the content, as well as the delivery vary when any one of the following components of the events is altered: (i) purposes; (ii) sequence; (iii) participants; (iv) key.

In Chapter Eight, I discuss variation and methods of data collection for the writing of grammars. In particular, I compare the data obtained by doing informant-work with the data obtained through observation and recording of spontaneous speech (for a definition of spontaneous and a discussion of various methods used in my study, see Chapter Two). I show that in the case of Samoan language - further research will have to show the extent to which and the ways in which this applies to other languages and cultures - data collections techniques dramatically affect the kind of and the range of data one gains access to. The Samoan that comes out of informant-sessions does not represnt *the* norm toward which speakers unconsciously aim, but only one particular kind of norm, that of talking to outsiders, or while engaged in certain kinds of western-oriented activities (e.g. writing, school instruction, radio broadcasting, church services). It does not, however, represent the language used in either informal, casual traditional interaction (e.g. family inter- action, friendly conversations) nor does it represent formal interaction in highly structured events, such as the fono. This chapter shows that important features of Samoan grammar, some of which

are particularly relevant to current theoretical issues in linguistics, are missed if one limits data collection to informant sessions. To reach descriptive adequacy, then, the linguist must also adopt ethnographic methods of recording spontaneous speech. These methods include an awareness and an understanding of language variation across social contexts. The study of language use in social events becomes then relevant to the structural description of grammatical patterns by characterising the informant-session as only *one* particular social event. The writing of a grammar needs a richer corpus of observed data. The ethnographic approach advocated in the study of language use and language variation in Samoan fono provides the necessary framework for such an enterprise.

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APPENDIX A

List of Abbreviations Used in the English Glosses

ART = Article

COMP = Complementizer

DX   = Deictic particle

EMP = Emphatic particle

ERG = Ergative case marking particle

NOT = Negation

PRO = Pronoun

PST = Past tense

TNS = Tense/Aspect marker

TOP = Topic particle

Glossary

'Āiga
Lit. '*(extended) family*'. In the fono speeches and in the fa'alupega, it refers to all the chiefs (tamāli'i or aii'i) in the village, as opposed to the group of orators (tulāfale).

fa'alupega
Ceremonial greeting of the village. See Chapter Three.

Falelua
Lit. '*two (lua) houses (fale)*'. It refers to the two (sub)villages of Saletele and Sauano in Fagaloa Bay.

Gaga'emalae
One of the four subvillages of Falefā. Highest chief title: Alai'a-sā; highest orator title: Fa'aonu'u.

Iuli
One of the two Matua.

lāuga
Traditional genre of oratorical speech, which varies in content and form according to the social event in which it is performed. See Chapters Five, Six and Seven.

malaga
Ceremonial visit of a travelling party.

malae
The traditional ceremonial ground in the ideal centre of the village; nowadays, often used for playing cricket matches.

mālie!
'*Nicely said!*' Expression of encouragement to a speechmaker while he is performing a speech. See Chapter Six.

matai
Titled person. Either a chief or an orator. Matai are the only ones who can participate in the fono discussed in this study.

Matua
Special orator title somehow above both chiefs and orators in the village. In Falefā there are two Matua: Iuli and Moe'ono. They are the only ones who can call or postpone a fono.

Moe'ono	(Short form for **Moe'ono'ono**.) One of the two Matua in Falefā. The holder of this title acts as the chairman of the assembly of matai in a fono.
pālagi	(Also **papālagi**.) *Foreigner, westerner.*
Sagapolu	One of the four subvillages of Falefā. Highest chief title: **Leutele**. Highest orator title: **Moe'ono'ono**.
Saleapaga	One of the four subvillages of Falefā. Highest chief title: **Lealaisalanoa**. Highest orator title: **Iuli**.
Sanonu	One of the four subvillages of Falefā. Also referred to as **Lautogia** or **'Aiga Pule**, because of the privilege that some of its orators have to make certain decisions (**pule**) about food distribution, amount of fines, etc. Highest chief title: **Suluvave**. Highest orator title: **Leuta**.
saofa'i	Ceremony of installation of a matai.
talanoaga	Lit. *chat, conversation.* Within a fono, the discussion part of the meeting and also any speech delivered in that part. It contrasts with **lāuga**.
tofi	Invited preacher in a Sunday church service. (Another meaning of this word is explained in Chapter Three, in the discussion of the **fa'alupega**).
tufa'ava	In a kava ceremony, the one who distributes (**tufa**) the kava (**'ava**) beverage among the chiefs and orators present.

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