



The Relational Contexts, Forms, and Functions of Affect in Yasawa, Fiji



Matthew Gervais & Daniel M.T. Fessler

Center for Behavior, Evolution, and Culture
Center for Culture, Brain, and Development
UCLA Department of Anthropology

Introduction

- Affect is integral to the adaptive regulation of social relationships (Aureli & Schaffner 2002; Damasio 1994; Fiske 2002; Haidt 2001; White & Kirkpatrick 1985).
- Yet, there is no consensus about the **structure** of affect (Barrett 2006; Scherer 2005), or how to compare the **functions** of affect across cultures (Kitayama & Markus 1994).
- An understanding of the **local affective lexicon** is key to studying the structure and functions of affect in established social relationships (Lutz 1988).

AIMS:

- Elicit a local affective lexicon, and characterize its functional structure.
- Evaluate the **Attitude-Scenario-Emotion model** of social affect (Gervais 2008).
- Lay the groundwork for an in-depth study of the functions of affect in existing, face-to-face social relationships in Yasawa, Fiji.

Methods

- 13 weeks** in Teci & Dalomo villages, Yasawa, Fiji
 - Structured interviews and observations
- Affect Lexicon Elicitation Interviews**
 - Freelists (n = 15)
 - Attitude targets incl. roles, character traits, & kin (n = 16)
 - Emotion scenarios (n = 10)
- Affect Lexicon Characterization Interviews**
 - Antecedents & Consequences (n = 10)
 - Card Sorts: open-ended, intensity, & duration (n = 20)
 - Attitude X Scenarios = Emotions Interview (n = 50)



Attitudes vs. Emotions

The feeling terms most frequently directed at people differ from those applied to scenarios

Interview 1: Attitude Targets

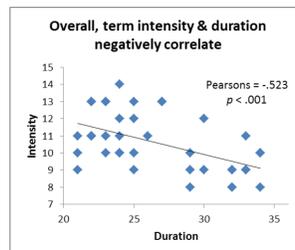
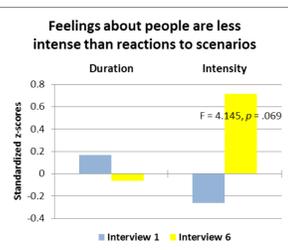
"E dau vakacava na l vakarau ni lomamuni na l Taukei me baleti ira na ____?"
"How do Fijians tend to feel towards X?" (e.g., Chief, clever person, liar)

Most Frequent Responses	Freq	Z
Lomana (Love)	20	5.1
Sevaka (Hate)	17	4.2
Sega ni taleitaka (Don't Like)	14	3.4
Cati (Hate)	9	1.9
Raici ira sobu (Look down on)	9	1.9
Raici ira cake (Look up to)	8	1.6
Taleitaka (Like)	7	1.3

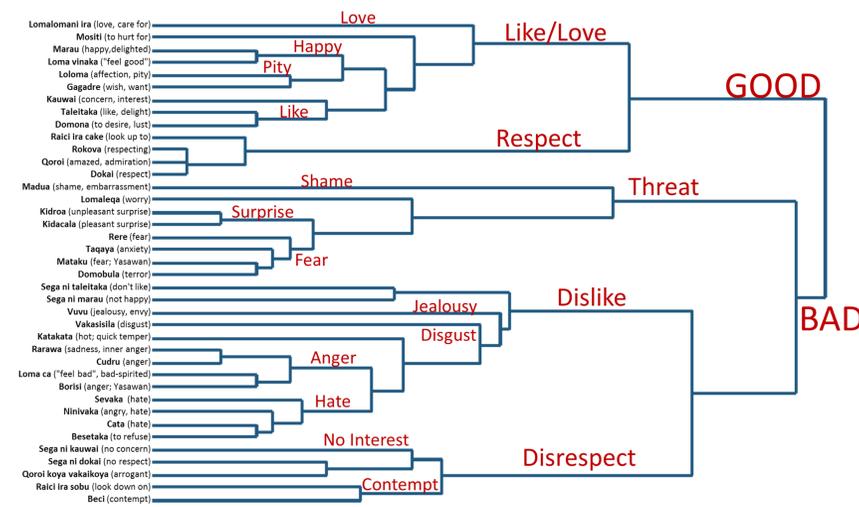
Interview 6: Emotion Scenarios

"E na vakacava beka na vakarau ni lomamu, kevaka ____?"
"How would you feel if X?" (e.g., the elders praised you, your boat capsized)

Most Frequent Responses	Freq	Z
Marau (Happy)	80	7.3
Cudru (Anger - outer)	33	2.8
Madua (Shame)	28	2.3
Rarawa (Anger - inner)	18	1.3
Rere (Fear)	13	0.8

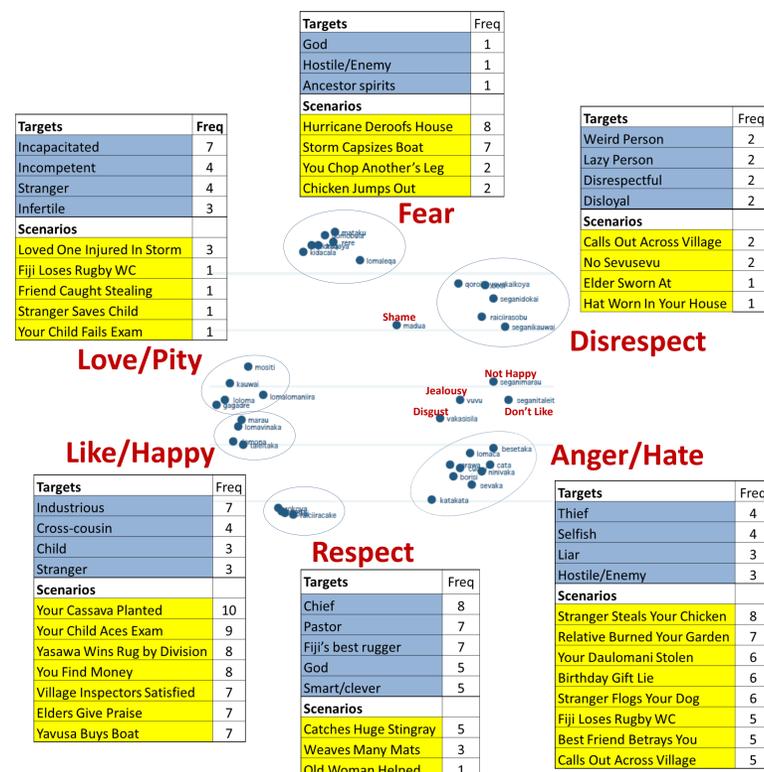


Sorting Yasawan affect terms



Hierarchical cluster analysis of open-ended card sort data that utilized 39 key affect terms generated in elicitation interviews. N = 20, 10 female.

Term clusters apply to distinct people and scenarios



Multidimensional scaling

produced two dimensions with clustering corresponding to the hierarchical cluster analysis

- X-axis: **valence**
- Y-axis: ?

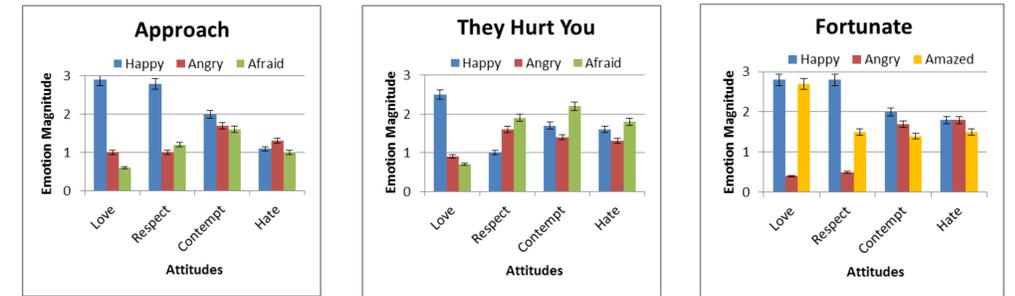
Blue tables show the types of **people** (Interview 1) towards whom the terms in each cluster were most frequently directed

Yellow tables show the types of **scenarios** (Interview 6) to which the terms in each cluster were most frequently applied

Noteworthy patterns:

- Industrious people are **liked**, clever people are **respected**
- Hated** people are overtly costly, **disrespected** people fail community expectations

Attitudes moderate emotions in scenarios



Attitude conditions (5, between-subjects; n = 10 each): *lamana* ("love"), *dakai* ("respect"), *sevaka* ("hate"), *beci* ("contempt"), and *rerevaka* ("fear").
Scenarios (5): *Approach*, *They Hurt You*, *You Hurt Them*, *They Are Fortunate*, and *They Are Injured*.
Emotions (6): *marau* ("happy"), *borisi* ("angry"), *mataku* ("afraid"), *qoroi* ("amazed"), *kauwai* ("concerned"), and *loma ca* ("bad feeling").

Each participant (n = 50) indicated a magnitude for each emotion in all scenarios (30 questions) involving a hypothetical person viewed with one attitude.

Three-way interaction of attitude, scenario, and emotion ($F = 1.468, p < .01$).

Two-way interaction of attitude and emotion for *Approach* ($F = 3.63, p < .01$), *They Hurt You* ($F = 1.8, p < .05$), and *They Are Fortunate* ($F = 2.76, p < .01$).

Approach: happy, amazed, and feel bad varied across attitudes ($p < .05$); emotions differed within love and respect ($p < .01$).

They Hurt You: happy and afraid varied across attitudes ($p < .05$); emotions differed within love ($p < .01$).

They Are Fortunate: happy, angry, and amazed varied across attitudes ($p < .05$); emotions differed within love and respect ($p < .001$).

Summary

- Suggestive evidence of distinct forms and pragmatics for feeling terms applied to people (**attitudes**) and feeling terms applied to reactions to scenarios (**emotions**).
- Attitudes and emotions cluster together according to the **functional affordances** of others and appropriate responses to those affordances – with greater specificity than simple valence and arousal
- Distinct **attitudes** intelligibly frame social scenarios, and significantly **moderate** emotional responses to those scenarios
- These findings are tentative, and stand to be complemented by conversational, ethological, and experimental economic data
- This research lays the groundwork for an in-depth study of the functions of affect in existing social relationships in a small-scale society

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Acknowledgments

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