

**Communication:  
An Arena of Development**

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## LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION—WHAT DEVELOPS? DETERMINING THE ROLE OF LANGUAGE PRACTICES FOR A THEORY OF DEVELOPMENT

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Development does not lurk directly in the population(s) studied but resides fundamentally in the perspective used. (Kaplan, 1983, p. 196)

This chapter presents the theoretical framework for a notion of development that is centrally based on language and communication. Thus, I will not start with some commonly accepted linguistic unit and ask where and how children come to grips with this unit, but rather ask the question: What can language and communication contribute to a better understanding of what development is? I will argue that language, understood as practice (and for this reason I will use language and communication largely synonymously), functions as the basic condition for humans to become agentive and make active (and productive) sense of a world. Thus, language practices are at the core of a determination of what it means to be (and become) human. The issue to be considered therefore is how we construct ourselves as human individuals in and through language and communication.

**THE PROBLEM OF CONNECTING LANGUAGE,  
COMMUNICATION, AND EMOTIONS TO A PRODUCTIVE  
THEORY OF DEVELOPMENT**

**Is Language a Resource for Communication?  
Current Misconceptions as Obstacles to a More Productive  
Theory of Communicative/Language Development**

Having taught Language Development and Communicative Development to graduate and undergraduate students at the college level (in different departments across four continents) over the last 20 years, I have consistently come across very similar ways interested lay-people are approaching how languages are learned by children. This kind of folk-approach to the development of language and communication seems to consist of three relatively simple, though ultimately inconsistent components:

**Language.** Consisting of a system of forms and a system of rules; the rules connect the forms productively into strings of well-formed and meaningful sentences.

**Communication.** The way the forms and rules of "language" are put to use in (social) situations for (individual) needs and purposes. Communication here is defined in terms of an exchange of "ideas" or "concepts," where "language" serves as a conduit (just like other "sign-systems"), that is, transporting ideas (or symbolic expressions) from one person to another.

**Development.** Learning the forms and rules of "language" and how to put them to use communicatively; starting from early sound perception and sound production, and gradually extending and shaping them through the input (strings of forms in situations) into well-formed sentences and thereby refining the conduit of ideas in communicative situations. This learning takes place in and through "experience," that is, active participation in communicative situations with those who are experienced.

Where this folk approach to language development has its roots and how it has emerged is open to speculation, although I assume that the students' exposure to the "rules" of their native language in schooling as well as to the teaching/learning of foreign languages is as central as our common folk-notion that most of this type of development does take place in the form of "collecting experience" (= learning) within our heads.

Of interest here is the undercurrent that poses a problem for connecting these three components into a consistent theory of language development. While "language" is defined predominantly in terms of *knowledge*, that is, knowing the appropriate forms and rules of the particular language, and as such is supposed to function as the resource for communicating appropriately, "development" is defined in terms of *practices and activities* that function as the resource so that the knowledge of language forms and language rules can be extracted from what is heard and put to use. Thus, one direction of the acquisition process orients from lin-

guistic knowledge to its communicative application in practices and activities, while the other direction orients from communicative participation in practices and activities to the emergence of linguistic knowledge.

As soon as this contradiction in folk-theorizing has been spotted and pinpointed by my students, they begin to divide into two groups with two divergent opinions: One group is willing to accept that the child starts out with a knowledge base in a very abstract format (of some general linguistic knowledge), and from there develops this abstract knowledge into its language specificity (the knowledge of the particular language), with its communicative application in practices and activities as something that is more of an applied nature, and therefore secondary. Knowledge is privileged as primary, its application resulting in communication and social, conventional activities. This group of students then is willing to approach the development of communication with a very similar orientation: Where and when to apply a particular set of language rules can be thought of as "pragmatic knowledge," which in turn can be conceptualized developmentally in a very similar way as the more basic "linguistic knowledge." From this way of theorizing to the more general nativist theory, according to which "language development" can be described principally as a maturation process with the linguistic competence as the telos of this maturation, is only a small step.<sup>1</sup>

The other group of students starts from the other side and views "experience" as the privileged starting point from (and in) which learning takes place—from where experience itself becomes shaped and transformed into higher and better functioning in (social) situations. Out of participating in these social situations (somewhat miraculously) the correct usage of language forms and linguistic rules emerges. Along the same lines, children learn to use language (and other communicative means) pragmatically appropriately through "experience." This way of folk-theorizing leads easily to either a behaviorist or a social constructivist way of theorizing, both starting from the assumption that participation in practices forms the foundation for any knowledge acquisition or knowledge construction.

This contradiction between these different components of a common folk-theorizing of language and communicative development is not easily commensurable. The two different positions vis-à-vis the question regarding the resource and the telos of development result either in the privileging of knowledge over activity and practices, or vice versa in the privileging of practices and activities over knowledge—with language either *as knowledge* or *as practice*, but not both in the same way and at the same time. These two positions have been picked up and developed to a highly sophisticated degree in the more theoretical and "scientific" business of studying language and communication—as part of the discipline of cognition or as part of a more ethnomethodologically defined enterprise. The assumption that the (human) organism comes genetically endowed with a knowledge system of a highly abstract nature (of *principles*) and the acquisition process as an unfolding of these principles, is a possible route for a (maturational) theory of language acquisition. However, privileging knowledge over practice, and pitting them against one another

er, may have been politically correct to fight and overcome the limitations of a behaviorist theory of language acquisition, but it re-erects (and probably cements) the dichotomy between mind and body that is so necessary to overcome—or at the very least, problematize in more productive theorizing about language and communicative development.

I am strongly convinced that any attempts to derive language (as a system *or* as practice) from communicative practices and activities is ultimately bound to reify it, leading to an a-developmental position that seriously disregards the centrality of language in human sense-making. Language is first of all *language use*, that means it has its empirical existence and validity in the form of human practices. This, however, does not imply that it cannot be treated *as* a knowledge *system*, one that can be (more systematically) reflected upon. However, the forms that are becoming the object of systematization are hypothetical tools to reflect on language practices and interpret them. As such they can become *topics* of study, that is, how they are being used to attain certain communicative practices. From here to the assumption that the systematicities between linguistic forms (and the role these forms fulfill in their communicative practices), that is, the hypothesized “system of language” is the resource for human (communicative) practices, seems to be a cognitivist aberration. Before we can continue to elaborate this position into a more productive theory of language and communicative development, let me briefly further problematize the notion of “development.”

What distinguishes the development of language and communication from, let's say, the development of walking, swimming, or writing, is the fact that language and communication are central to sense-making, while those other skills are not. Thus, changes in the development of walking and writing can be studied from a point in time, when the organism clearly was not able to walk or to write to different degrees of perfection, and these can also be compared to some ideal definition of walking or writing. Furthermore, the presuppositions for the ability to learn how to walk and how to write can be established with relative certainty, although forms of assistance can be established that function to aid this development such as artificial legs or walkers for walking, and tactile systems for writing. When it comes to language and communication as developmental domains, this turns out to be a lot more complex, although there are very clearly domains of human functioning that are not based on language or communication, that is, they are not *per se* linguistic. However, it is language (and communication) where (and *how*) this domain of extra-language is sensibly defined and made sense of (see the works of the German language and discourse philosophers Karl Apel, Gernot and Hartmut Böhme, and Jürgen Habermas, in Rötzer, 1987). Furthermore, if language is so central to sense-making and thereby to the human existence, where is its developmental starting-point, and what is its developmental telos, because these two are essential presuppositions for the possibility of mapping out a course of developmental changes?

Any attempts to reduce language to a “system” that is in competition as a communicative conduit with other systems, such as gesture, eye-gaze, or even dress-

code are consequently bound to fail to do justice to language as the central sense-making tool. Equally problematic are any attempts to pit verbal versus nonverbal communication and argue that (only) the former qualifies as “language” and can be explained in terms of a continuous developmental course with preverbal communicative behaviors as its roots (see Užgiris, in this volume).

Thus, in order to account theoretically for the central sense-making function of language and communication, we are lacking a clearly stated starting point for development, as well as a clearly stated telos. Consequently, it is impossible to describe the course of development in terms of additive changes from “less” to “more” and “better.” In contrast to this more simplistic, though commonly shared folk-theoretical model of development, I want to suggest viewing the development of language and communication as a continuous process of *differentiation and integration* (following Werner, 1957; Werner & Kaplan, 1984; and our own take of Werner's “orthogenetic principle” in Bamberg, Budwig, & Kaplan, 1991; and Budwig, 1995).

Acknowledging that language primarily functions communicatively in context serves as the basic means to simultaneously collapse (*integrate*) self and other, as well as *differentiate* self from other. Thus, seeing the other as yourself (and self as the other), in accordance with seeing the other as different from self (and self as different from the other) primarily achieved in and through language. In other words, the differences and commonalities between us as social beings, and differences between us and objects in the world, are founded culturally and historically in our language/communicative practices—or, as Agar (1994) put it, in our “*languaculture*.” To reduce these commonalities and differences to biological or ‘organismic needs to survive as systems does not do justice to the role of the human agent, who communicates—and in communication reproduces him-/herself *vis-à-vis* the other. Thus, the view of development purported here does not lend itself primarily to the empirical study of changes. Rather, it is a theoretical notion that is introduced to explain as its utmost telos the sense of self that we resource in situations to construct ourselves—and this, to me, seems to be unthinkable without language. Furthermore, since there is not one decisive and definite sense of self, but always only locally achieved senses, development is not achieved in a once-and-for-all fashion. Rather, the telos of development is an *ideal*—a practical guidepost for participation in everyday practices, and theoretically operative for the imposition of a rationality or humanity in communication in a principled way.<sup>2</sup>

The focus on language and communication practices as resources for becoming a self (in a global sense as a human being, and locally as a “competent” participant in sociocultural contexts) documents a shift in five respects:

- Thought and cognition on the one hand, and culture, social structure, and history on the other, are no longer pitted against language and communication. Rather, the orientation adopted here is very much in line with current work in linguistic anthropology, which views culture *as* communication, where words, and linguistic constructions do not “stand for” an object or a concept, but rather

are made to “point to” and “connect” within a context (see Duranti’s and Ochs’s principle of “indexicality” [Duranti, 1997; Ochs, 1990, 1996] and Gumperz’s concept of “contextualization cues” [1981, 1992, 1996]).

Language practices function as resources for social structures and linguistic systematicities—in contrast to the traditional (and folk) belief that language is the outcome of thought (or other *internal* states), and language structure (wherever it comes from) is the resource for communication (see also Bourdieu, 1977; Giddens, 1979; Rogoff, 1990; Vygotsky, 1978; Wertsch, 1991).

Development is no longer the acquisition process of a particular skill or competence, but rather a lifelong (socialization) process of participation in local processes of newly positioning self vis-à-vis other (differentiating and integrating self and other) (see also Ochs, 1996; Rogoff, 1990; Werner & Kaplan, 1984). Since changes of the use of linguistic constructions (forms) are intricately tied to functional purposes (see Budwig, 1995), developmental studies need to take into account the functional situatedness of forms and activities performed. Thus, the mapping out of changes in the use of forms across time does not qualify as a developmental study, if it is not tied to the practices that those forms are in the service of (see also Chapter 10, in this volume).

Finally, the person as agent of development is no longer pitted against culture and history as agents of development. The notions of practice in general, and language/communicative practices in particular, are tied to local ways of making sense—of self and other in situated contexts, varying from situation to situation. The sense of a telos as combining and uniting this variability across practices, across time, and across cultures can always be carried into the local practices, although not necessarily as a principled a priori that enables people to act on a principally moral basis; but rather as a post hoc practice to “look for more”—and to justify what *is*.

### If Language and Communication are Privileged for the Development of Self, What About Emotions?

A seemingly reasonable argument against the above proposal to base human development in language practices could easily be launched from the assumption that there are “other” sense-making ways that are more basic than language and communication—such as for instance in emotions. This view, in line with our folk-beliefs that emotions are internal (bodily) states that cannot be totally laid open and argued about in words, because they do not work along the lines of rationality (as “language” does), falls prey to the same opposition (as the folk-beliefs we have critically evaluated above) between the body and the mind—but here romanticizing the body as the principled organizer of meaning in a pre- (and anti-) rational fashion.

Without being able to follow this dichotomy by critically reflecting its internal consistency, I simply will summarize the principles that I have developed elsewhere (Bamberg, 1997b) orienting toward a more integrative view of emotion and com-

municative practices, one that nevertheless pays tribute to the role of the body in language and communication practices. Rather than viewing “the” emotions as (yet) another systematic domain that runs its own developmental course, independent from the two domains of language and communicative development, I see them as integrally connected. Situations, the way they are talked about, that is, the way the characters are positioned vis-à-vis one another, and the way they are ordered across time and space, always convey a sense of what *should have* or *ought to have* happened—even if the speaker attempts to be neutral and impartial. In other words, the indexing of *affective stance* (Ochs, 1996; Ochs & Schieffelin, 1984) and thereby conveying a *moral position* (Bamberg, 1997a) are built-in into the language practice framework that is adopted in this line of work.

In contrast to theories that view emotions and language as two realms or domains that are linked via the organization of the lexicon (Wierzbicka, 1994), or the organization of image schemas (Kövecses, 1995) that underlie both, I have been suggesting an inversion of the traditional realist picture, where it is assumed that happenings and events take place in the world, to be re-presented in people’s thoughts and feelings, so that we subsequently can speak *about* them. In contrast, I have suggested that in the business of communicative practices both events as well as stances toward them (evaluative and cognitive) are organized—not because they are stored and available as resources previous to and outside of the discursive context, to be executed subsequently in communicative situations—for discursive purposes. Rather, events and the way they are thought about and valued, including their affective stance, are borne out of the purpose of local talk. Consequently, the way in which the purpose of talk is manifesting itself in interactive contexts is not a by-product, but rather the starting point for the analysis of the local display and the meaning of affect and emotions.

Most relevant in these attempts to tie emotion and affect closer into communicative practices, where they can become recognized as meaningfully situated practices, is the notion of *positioning*. In talk about others and about self we position characters at the content plane (what the talk is about) with regard to one another, and we order them in time and space. In addition, since talk is dyadic, the speaker positions him-/herself vis-à-vis the audience: *S/he* wants to be understood as neutral, as involved, as taking sides with one or more of the characters *s/he* is talking about—for the purpose of making an accusation, giving an apology, or to let the listener know that *s/he* is wrong. In bringing to bear the content in the here and now of the communicative situation, a moral position is drawn up for which the speaker can be held accountable—irrespective of whether the speaker him-/herself has been the theme or whether anonymous others have been thematized.

In the following I will illustrate a way to investigate development that is in line with the arguments that have been laid out with regard to the way I see language, communication, and emotion all intertwined in how we construct ourselves as persons in and through language practices. In spite of the fact that I could present data that document “developmental” changes over time in the way children participate in what could be considered “the same” task,<sup>3</sup> I will focus instead on how children,

irrespective of their age, solve different tasks. However, the set-up and arrangement of the tasks, and the way the participants in the study approach the tasks can be interpreted developmentally as well (Bamberg, 1996, 1997b, 1997c).

### ANGER: WHO IS DOING WHAT TO WHOM?— WHY PERSPECTIVE AND GENRE MATTER

#### Anger Talk: From Two Perspectives and in Three Genres

The project I will draw on in the following consisted of collecting talk of children from different age groups on the topic of emotions. Emotions were picked initially as situations that give rise to different evaluative orientations. At the same time, it was assumed that children are likely from early on to be able to speak to questions that probed into emotions; and similarly, we also assumed that this would allow us a large degree of “control” over the topic of the children’s narratives, and at the same time open up the space for their own personal experiences and their very own sense-making capacities. With this in mind, we asked 80 children from four grades (preschool, kindergarten, first grade, and third grade) 24 different questions—varying along the dimensions of four topics, two perspectives, and three genres:

- The 24 questions were differentiated with regard to *four* different emotion TOPICS (I–IV):
  - angry (I)
  - sad (II)
  - scared (III)
  - happy (IV)
- Further, the topics were subdivided according to *two* different Perspectives<sup>4</sup> (A and B— *Making* versus *Being* “angry”):
  - someone making someone else angry/sad/scared/happy (A)
  - someone being made by someone else angry/sad/scared/happy (B)
- In addition, we asked to them take these two perspectives on these four different emotion situations in *three* different Genres<sup>5</sup> (a–c):
  - the first-person genre (a)
  - the third-person genre (b)
  - the generalized-person genre (c)

The discussion in the following will be confined to how children between preschool and 3rd grade relate the “angry” topic (I) from the two different perspectives (A and B) in the three different genres (a–c), and what this can tell us about children’s (communicative) development. But let me first briefly expand on some of the motivations for why we asked for accounts of emotion situations along the lines of perspective and genre.

First, it should actually come as a surprise that most of the emotion research (with adults or children) is based on verbal responses from subjects describing in one or another way an emotional situation, whereby the description is taken to be a reconstruction of an event that has led to (or in some other way is connected to) “the emotion” (see Bamberg, 1997b, for a discussion of this issue). Even in research that focuses less on verbal resources and more centrally on other expressive means such as transpiration, heartbeat, adrenaline level, or pupil dilation, we are left with interpretive issues regarding the question of how these symptoms are experienced and what they actually mean to the person, since none of the subjects is taking these symptoms for the emotional experience itself, while a verbal description (of, for instance, what happened) is more than just a symptom or a symbol. Upon further consideration, however, and in light of our introductory remarks on the foundational functions of language and communication, it should not come as a surprise at all that phenomena that are taken to be at the core of psychology such as intentions, emotions, and motivations are researched via their “verbal expressions”. How else are we supposed to gain access to such “interior” constellations but through our verbal and communicative means to make sense.<sup>6</sup>

Thus, talk about an emotion such as “anger” as a topic may be done for quite different purposes. It nevertheless requires an ordering along temporal dimensions and actor involvement that reflects such discursive purposes and simultaneously instantiates them. It is exactly for these reasons that we chose “emotion talk” as the domain for our inquiry.

At first glance, the issue of *perspective* seems to be irrelevant when it comes to talk about particular situations. What seems to be the basic fabric of emotion situations is that two people interacted in a particular way so that a particular (emotional) outcome could have been generated. Why should it matter from whose point of view one is reporting or describing the sequence of events? However, as we know from other instances, it may become highly relevant whether “*Monica kissed Bill*” or “*Bill kissed Monica*”—and it may become even more important where and how they are forced to talk about “their kissing.”

For this reason, we posed two different question types to our subjects: (A) to report an event, where someone made someone else angry, and (B) to report an event, where someone had been made angry. The difference between the two question types is simply one of word order and/or phrasing the statement in the active versus the passive voice. In addition, and this should not go unnoticed, the first question (perspective A) differs from the second question (perspective B) in the aspectual (temporal) quality: While question (A) orients toward the sequence of actions that led to the emotional outcome, question (B) focuses on the state of the emotion and is likely to be taken up from there to give the sequence of events that led up to this state.<sup>7</sup>

Finally, the request to report the emotion situation in a number of different genres, is similarly not geared toward the actual emotion situation, but to something that is closely related to a particular “perspective” from which the sequence of

events and its emotional relevance seem to be "evaluated." I may have been quite differently involved in a situation, where my own emotional well-being was at stake than in—let's say—in Bill Clinton's or Monica Lewinsky's case, or in a situation where someone unknown or a generalized other who doesn't even have a name, is centrally involved. And this involvement may figure into the description that is given of the temporal order of who did what to whom so that the emotional outcome that is commonly recognized as "anger" could be generated. To probe into this potential to generate descriptions that differ along the dimension of involvement (and detachment), we asked our subjects to present the two perspectives (A and B) in three different genres. The first-person genre (a) required our subjects to switch from the perspective as making someone angry from *the I* as the perpetrator's perspective (A), to *the I* as the victim's perspective (B). In the third-person genre, our subjects were asked to place themselves in *a friend's* shoes, and play out the perpetrator's versus the victim's perspective from his/her point of view. Finally, in the generalized-person genre, the subjects were asked to present the same two perspectives from the *generalized* point of view, which actually dissolves into "nobody's point of view."

In sum, we asked preschoolers to 3rd-graders the following six questions:

- (I-A-a) Can you tell me about one time, when you made someone very, very angry?  
 (I-B-a) Can you tell me about one time when you were very, very angry?  
 (I-A-b) Pretend you have a friend whose name is Paula/Paul. One day Paula/Paul made someone very, very angry. Can you tell me what happened?<sup>8</sup>  
 (I-B-b) Pretend you have a friend whose name is Paula/Paul. One day Paula/Paul was very, very angry. Can you tell me what happened?  
 (I-A-c) Imagine I was from far, far away, and I wouldn't know what it means to make someone angry. How would you explain "how to make someone angry"?  
 (I-B-c) Imagine I was from far, far away, and I wouldn't know what it means to be angry. How would you explain "what it means to be angry"?

In a follow-up investigation, we changed the wording of the third-person genre questions from the imaginative mode to a supposedly more realistic stance. Instead of imagining a friend of the name Paul or Paula, we asked to remember a "real," lived event, where someone once made someone else very, very angry (for the *Making* "angry" perspective), and where someone else once was very, very angry (for the *Being* "angry" perspective). When any of the children asked whether it could be about them, we discouraged this option.

## OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS

Comparing the responses to the anger questions along the perspective dimension (*Making* versus *Being* "angry"), two response types were found. Typical responses to question (I-A-a) are presented in examples (1) and (2):

- (1) <<ME - making my brother angry>>  
*it was a couple of years ago*  
*when I took the crab away from my brother*  
*then I stuck my fist out*  
*and he ran into it*  
*and got a bloody nose*
- (2) <<Me - making someone angry>>  
*we were fighting maybe*  
*I don't really know*

while a typical example of an answer to question (I-B-a) is (3):

- (3) <<ME - being angry>>  
*I was in the room*  
*and my sister kicked me*  
*and it went right into the rib bone*  
*and I went down to my mother*  
*and told her*  
*my sister got into trouble*

In terms of how the responses to the *Making* "angry" question (I-A-a) differ more generally from the responses to the *Being* "angry" question (I-B-a), we were able to distinguish the following discursive devices:

for *Making* someone "angry":

- individuating the undergoer/experiencer as well as agent in highly specific <graphic> terms
- marking the action as highly transitive
- elaborating lexically on the effects or consequences of the actions
- positioning the undergoer/experiencer in direct object slot, and the agent in subject slot—resulting in the construction of a highly transitive scene

for *Being* "angry" (= having been made "angry"):

- frequent use of vagueness markers and hedges (e.g., *maybe*, *probably*, *kind of*, *like*)
- de-individuating the agent (e.g., by use of pluralizing *we*)
- de-individuating the undergoer/experiencer (e.g., by use of pluralizing *them*)
- partially agentivizing the undergoer/experiencer (e.g., by ascribing actions to him/her, e.g., *running into someone's fist*)

Thus, the employment of these linguistic devices results in two quite different displays of the agentive positioning within which the two characters are presented: While the agency (and control) of the character who causes "anger" in the *Making* "angry" situation is downplayed, it is highlighted and accentuated in the *Being* "angry" situation. Thus, although at an abstract level both "angry" situations seem to consist of the same "make-up," namely one person causing "anger" in another person, the two presentations in the form of answers to the two different questions differ drastically. It seems to be obvious that these differences are not accidental but can be traced back to the discursive positioning of the narrator vis-à-vis his/her audience: While it is in the interest of the speaker with an answer, as in examples (1) and (2), to construct an identity that maintains in good standing, it is in the interest of the speaker to present an identity such as in example (3) that has been invaded, requesting some empathy or other forms of assistance from the audience. Both presentations are versions that construct descriptions of what has happened for discursive purposes. None of the two descriptions is neutral or innocent; both versions are fashioned to account for a different orientation in the speaker-audience relationship. In sum then, as the responses from the two different perspectives demonstrate, two characters in interaction with one of them ending up angry, is not a neutral situation. The characters are viewed from a moral perspective in terms of who is right and who is not right. The possibility of taking sides with one of the characters in such descriptions, versus the other, results in two very different situations. The presupposition that both situations are similar, in the sense that both result in the emotion called "anger", as may have been suggested by the interview questions, can definitely not be concluded from the responses given.

### Differences Between Genres

#### *The Generalized-Person Genre*

Having discussed the striking differences in responses in the first-person genre (I-A+B-a) to the two perspectives (the *Making* versus the *Being* "angry" perspective), we will turn next to the differences between the two perspectives on "anger" in answers in the two remaining genre-types, that is, when talking about third-person others (genre b) and generalized persons (genre c) *Making* someone "angry" or simply *Being* "angry." I will first turn to the generalized-person genre, because the answers in this response-type are quite different from those in the first-person genre. In addition, it will be easier to extrapolate the responses in the third-person genre against the backdrop of the first- and generalized-person genre.

A typical response to the *Making* "angry" question in the generalized-person genre employs the singular form *you* or *one* for the agent in the role of the perpetrator, and the plural *they* for the undergoer, as in the following example:

- (4) <<SOMEONE - making someone angry>>  
*like if you bother them*  
*they get mad and angry*

The typical answer to the *Being* "angry" question similarly employs the plural *they* as the contrast to the singular *you* or *one*; though here the deindividualized plural *they* is reserved for the role of the perpetrator, while *you* or *one* typically figure in the role of the undergoer, as in the following example:

- (5) <<SOMEONE - being angry>>  
*you are angry at someone*  
*because they did something to you*  
*and you didn't like*  
*what they did*

In general, both answers reserve the singular *you/one* to refer to a generalized audience who seems to be taken as "behind" the raised question, while "the other" (in example 4 the undergoer, in example 5 the perpetrator) is referred to by use of the plural *they*.<sup>9</sup> Thus, although the undergoer and the perpetrator are clearly differentiated and set apart by use of two different forms, the particular use of the forms seems to be a function of what perspective has been asked for—the *Making* perspective or the *Being* perspective.

In general, both answer types can be summarized in terms of employing the following grammatical devices:

- an unspecified agent in subject slot (*they* or *one/you*)
- an unspecified undergoer/experiencer of the action (*one/you* or *they*)
- use of <relatively> unspecified action verbs (*bothering* or *doing something*)
- use of clause modus that is marked by *if* or *when*, indexing a potentialis or irrealis mode
- use of the present tense (taking the situation as a whole into the timeless and possible realm)

Interestingly enough, the differentiation between the two perspectives (A and B) in this genre (c) does not rely in any way on a differential marking of the agentive positioning of any of the involved parties. In general, the answers (when compared to the first-person genre) are shorter and lack the more detailed and more graphic descriptions of the affected undergoer (blood, broken ribs, or broken objects) in the *Being* "angry" perspective. Equally, they lack any efforts to downplay the involvement and agentive role of the perpetrator in the *Making* "angry" perspective. The verbs chosen to characterize the incident that resulted in "anger," such as *bothering* or *doing something* (as in examples 4 and 5), are sanitized, relatively neutral, and not graphic descriptions at all. They characterize the actions from a relatively detached and uninvolved position, one that clearly marks that nothing much is at stake in either situation. In sum, both perspectives, the *Making* "angry" as well as the *Being* "angry" perspective in terms of their semantic characterization of the situation, look the same; the differences that were so characteristic for the first-person genre are totally washed out.

### The Third-Person Genre

The answers given with respect to the imaginary third-person (Paul or Paula), who made someone angry or who was angry, were almost indistinguishable. Here, with example (6) a typical answer to the Making "angry" perspective

- (6) <<imaginary friend PAUL - making someone angry>>  
*he <Paul> broke their toy  
 and the person got really mad*

and in example (7) a typical response to the Being "angry" perspective:

- (7) <<imaginary friend PAUL - being angry>>  
*someone was probably playing with him <Paul>  
 and he pushed him <Paul>  
 Paul got really really mad  
 and he ripped the person's cards  
 and they got into a fight*

Although the action depicted for the instantiation of the anger incident was relatively agentive (*breaking something, pushing, and the like, that is, most of the times involving an incident of physical force*), the referents *Paul/he* and *someone/she* are mutually exchangeable: The Being "angry" and the Making "angry" perspective are presented, so to speak, "from the same angle."

This picture is similar when we asked our subjects to report a real, lived event, where someone *made* someone else very, very angry, or where someone *was* very, very angry, as illustrated in examples (8) and (9):

- (8) <<my DAD - making my brother angry>>  
*my dad and my brother  
 my brother was bad  
 so my dad took away his television rights for a whole week  
 and so my brother got really mad at my dad*
- (9) <<my MOM - being angry>>  
*my mom, she was angry because of my brother  
 because my brother messed up the house*

While there seems to be little difference in terms of how the actions are depicted that led to the anger incident in the two perspectives (*taking away television rights, or messing up the house*), there is nevertheless an interesting parallel to be found in example (8) when compared with the *Making* "angry" situation in the first-person genre (see examples 1 and 2): In line 2 of example (8), the narrator gives reasons or motives for his dad's actions. In other words, the actions of the perpetrator (the dad) are somewhat justified, similarly to when our subjects gave accounts where they had to portray themselves as potential perpetrators. However, this did

not stand out as a distinguishing feature between the two perspectives: Some of the children also gave accounts that downplayed the volition involved (and therefore the agency of the perpetrator) in the *Being* "angry" perspective, and removed, so to speak, some of the empathy for the person who was presented as *Being* "angry" (the mom) as in the following example:

- (10) <<my MOM - being angry>>  
*my mom was angry  
 because my sister had moved the chair  
 but my sis didn't really know  
 so it wasn't really her fault*

When comparing this example with the typical response given in the *Being* "angry" perspective of the first-person genre (example 3), we see almost a reversal of the strategy used to mark the perpetrator as highly agentive and responsible for the incident. Here, in example (10), the actual perpetrator (the sister) is presented as not at fault for what happened.

Thus, while we were not able to clearly distinguish (in terms of their linguistic construal) between the *Making* and *Being* "angry" perspective in the third-person genre, there nevertheless was an interesting difference in the way the imagined scenario was constructed vis-à-vis the real, lived experience. While *real, lived* experiences of siblings and parents usually (though not always) are presented employing discursive devices typically found in the first-person genre, responses to an *imagined* anger scenario typically (though not always) employ discursive devices typically found in the generalized-person genre (see for instance the use of *someone, the person*, and even the plural form *they* in reference to Paul's adversary in examples (6) and (7), while the two parties in the real, lived experience are always concrete characters).

### SUMMARY

Comparing the differences in responses to what can be construed at a more generalized and abstract level as the same "underlying" request to describe a scenario in which (typically) two people were involved in an action constellation that resulted in one person being "angry," it turns out that the perspective *from* which this event is "viewed" as well as the genre *for* which it is "viewed" are of utmost relevance. However, although there were clear distinctions in some of the genre and perspective dimensions, neither the genre nor the perspective are clear predictors of what response type is to be expected. While the response types in the first-person genre seem to be organized for two contrasting discursive purposes (justification versus attributing blame—and thereby presenting the self of the narrator in a particular light), the responses in the generalized-person genre are governed by the discursive

purpose to avoid any such ascriptions in terms of actor motives or action constellations. The speaker positions him-/herself as clearly neutral and objective vis-à-vis the sequence of events as well as the characters involved. The responses in the third-person genre seem to fall somewhere in the middle: At times, the speakers "take sides" (with their dads or their sisters—against their mothers or their brothers) and attribute motives, that is, they clearly index their own position from which they "view" the incident. At other times, they remain "outside," that is, they signal a neutral, uninvolved position from which the incident is presented. This latter choice of discursive means not only washes out the differences between the two perspectives, it also contributes strongly to the impression that the incident "really" (objectively) happened this way—not tainted by the presenter's perceptions or his/her taking sides with anyone resulting in a "biased" description.<sup>10</sup> Similarly, taking sides with one of the characters in the third-person genre results in the impression that the sequence of events is presented from an "interior" viewpoint, namely that of one of the characters: The speaker indexes some privileged access to his or her point of view (see also Moffett & McElheny, 1966, p. 521).

Comparing the response types across the two perspectives and the three genres, we can arrange them on a continuum with the first-person genre on one end, the generalized-person genre on the other, and the third-person genre in the middle.

First-Person	Third-Person	Third-Person	Generalized-Person
<i>real, lived</i> involved	<i>real, lived</i> involved	<i>imagined</i> detached	<i>imagined</i> detached

Arranging the anger responses along a continuum that invokes *involvement* and *detachment* as the two basic organizing principles should not be mistaken as the construal of a principle that has its origins and primary existence outside of discourse. A detached as well as an involved "viewpoint" are always discursively achieved, that is, they are not achieved independently of the way perspective and genre are organized. However, it remains of interest that most often the involved viewpoint is more revealing of the moral stance that is taken vis-à-vis the conflict between the parties, while the detached view conceals or is above any commitment vis-à-vis the involved parties. Having said this, it should follow that a detached viewpoint can be adopted for first-person or third-person real, lived experiences, just as involved viewpoints can be imposed onto accounts in the third-person, imaginary genre or even possibly in the generalized-person genre. However, these kinds of attempts happened extremely rarely in our corpus. While further research is needed, this possibly can be attributed to the fact that the accounts were given by relatively young children.

### MORAL ORDER AND MORAL POSITIONING

As documented in the above examples, though to varying degrees, all of them display the attempt to give order to (and by way of) a sequence of linguistically constituted events. Apart from the temporal and spatial characteristics, a particular way of giving order was achieved by positioning the characters in a particular relationship, so that perpetrators could come to existence, blame attributed, and revenge plotted. However, the arrangement of the characters was not an outcome of a given situation, but dependent on such factors as genre and perspective, pointing up that the positioning of the characters in the story realm is not independent of the world in which the story is being told. In previous work (Bamberg, 1997a; Talbot, Bibace, Bokhour, & Bamberg, 1996) I have referred to these two ordering activities as two levels of positioning: At the level of what the narrative account is about, characters are positioned with regard to one another (level 1), while simultaneously the narrator positions himself vis-à-vis his/her audience (level 2).

It is interesting to note that in first-person accounts the moral position was much more accentuated than in fictionalized third-person accounts or in the generalized-person genre. However, this does not necessarily imply that the generalized genre serves as the neutral standard, that is, as a more objective account that gets closer to what "really happened," from which the moralized versions in the first-person genre can take off as a more subjective version. Neither is it clear whether it can be assumed that the first-person account is the primary mode of representing a "moral experience," which subsequently can be modified for third-person others, before the moral voice becomes somewhat washed-out in fictive accounts and explanatory reasoning in the form of the generalized-person genre. The relationship between the different genre types as well as the different possible perspectives that play a role in the way a moral position becomes accentuated in narrative accounts is still somewhat underexplored. It should nevertheless be mentioned that it was due to Carol Gilligan (1982) that research participants were asked to give accounts of their real-life moral conflicts, while the field of moral psychology and its development relied mainly on reasoning discourse within an uninvolved and fictive third-person or a generalized-person genre (Kohlberg, 1981, 1984).<sup>11</sup>

Establishing a moral order in language practices such as giving accounts in the first-person genre or giving explanations in the generalized-person genre, and in addition seeking out a particular perspective from which the order is presented underscores the centrality of stance (see Ochs, 1996, pp. 419–425). While the above examples were meant to illustrate the point that perspective and genre activity do play an important role in the construction of moral orders, further analyses have to follow through with more details of how affective stance and epistemic stance are being achieved, including for example the analysis of the intonational contour of utterances and the display of hesitational and fluidity markers. This type of work will ultimately contribute to how social identity work is done (and achieved) in

more conversationally situated accounts than the interview data that were used for illustrations for the above arguments (see Goodwin & Goodwin, in this volume).

### DEVELOPMENT AND CHANGE

In this section, I would like to return to the question I raised in my introductory remarks: What can talk about a particular topic (that is, emotion situations, or, more particularly, anger situations) tell us about development? It should be clear that the topic of this chapter has not been changes across different populations that typically differ in age, or less typically, gender or socioeconomic background, in order to qualify as developmental studies. Neither have I dealt with changes within the same population across a particular age-span, but rather changes in performance within a population across different situations. The fact that this population consisted of children is accidental and not basic to the argument being developed. Thus, the fact that the population under consideration performs differently in different tasks should not come as a surprise, and its developmental implications are not at all intuitive and straightforward.

However, the differences in performance across the three genres and two perspectives of "anger-talk" can be arranged in terms of a developmental order, giving rise to the following three possibilities:

- from abstract to concrete/personal
- from personal to abstract/detached
- resembling a process of differentiation between different social discourses, integrating these social discourses into a developing sense of self.

Taking the first possibility, one could argue that children develop their personal, involved, moral positioning from a prior more abstract and neutral stance that forms the rational presupposition for any stance taking. This more realist orientation vis-à-vis the issue of events as happening in the world takes an involved, personal perspective to be derived from a general, detached perspective, where the latter is more open to rational debate and consensus, while the former is more subjective and therefore intersected with emotional and aesthetic judgements.

The second possibility starts from the personally involved perspective as an experiential grounding from where the perspectives of third-person others can be explored, resulting in the developmental telos of the ability to take and to display a neutral, value-free orientation. The detached, impersonal positioning therefore is a result of a developmental process from the more concrete, personal, and subjective value orientation toward a more "objective" orientation that takes others and as its highest value the generalized person into account. Thus, according to this possibility of ordering developmental changes, the course of development progresses from the level of personal experience and personal stance to one that is grounded in what's of general value for all.

The third possibility avoids the pitting of individual stance taking against general, social values that is common to both possibilities discussed thus far. It values both types of perspectives as social discourses that function as contributing to the differentiation between the perspectives of others and self. Thus, both discourse modes are constitutive of the realization of self as different from other, and simultaneously underscoring the possibility of realizing commonalities between self and other. In other words, the difference between these social discourses (and the practicing of these discourses as a participant) is viewed as opening up the possibility to realize differences and commonalities that ultimately enable the construction of a sense of self as a responsible agent in a world with others.

Although it is possible, and perfectly sensible, to reduce language, communication, and emotions to domains that can be investigated in terms of how they become domain-like constituents in adult functioning, I purposely took a different venue. Instead of asking, what are the changes (and constancies) that constitute the domains "language," "communication," and "emotions" developmentally, I have tried to turn around to the question of how language and communication (and in a more indirect sense, emotions) contribute to development—development here understood as the development of a moral person. Taking up on Kaplan's assumption that development can't be read off of people's actions or behaviors, but is a (value) perspective used to make sense of changes and constancies (Kaplan, 1983), the perspective that I have carried into the notion of "person" and "personhood" is admittedly a dyadic and communicative perspective that bases "being human" and "humanity" on language and communication. Having said this, I would even go one step further and argue that changes and constancies cannot be read from people's actions or behaviors without a sociohistorical center within which communication and language practices "deliver" the categories that form figures and grounds so that changes can emerge against something that remains constant (and vice versa). Sameness and difference are not parts of themselves, but emerge in situations, where sense and value are always already operating. And the perspective presented here is not a neutral one, but rather grounds itself in language practices that have their own histories, and are made use of to form and transform self and humanity.

In rather general terms, I have attempted in this chapter to contribute in three ways:

- First, I have tried to redefine the boundaries between language and communication. Rather than exploring both in terms of systems, that are explorable in themselves, where one figures as the potential resource for the other, I have suggested to fuse them in terms of language/communicative *practices*. This fusion bypasses the dichotomy between *a* language and *a* world (that is external to language), where words or sentences refer to objects or events in the world. Rather, I have suggested to view language as a mode—possibly the central mode—of engagement *with*, but always *in* the world. A world that is external, and ultimately reflectable and "conquerable," is a result of the previous human engagement *within* the world—with language as the central mode.

- Second, I have tried to make the point, following Kaplan's (1983) statement quoted in my opening, that not only is it impossible to read off *development* directly from phenomena in the world, but that it is equally impossible to see or read off *changes* and *permanence* directly in the world. What we, as humans, consider as remaining the same and what we consider as changing, requires a perspective from which a figure and a ground can come to existence, so that time can be infused as a meaningful entity and serve as *tertium comparationis*, the common third, from which a comparison of "constancies and changes over time" is possible. I have employed this argument to illustrate that it is also possible to study development in other contexts than temporal ones.
- My third contribution to this volume, although not as central as the previous two, lies in the attempt to converge and bring back (more strongly) the issue of emotion, value and moral stance into the domain of language practices. Although I only have dealt with talk that makes emotions (more specifically: anger) the topic, in the sense that the talk is *about* "anger," perspective and genre are choices with which the person is *always already* confronted, even at an early age. Emotionality and morality as central components of meaning making do not temporally kick in at a later point in "development," but are part and parcel of language and socialization practices that are ongoing as long as there is humankind.

In sum, these three modifications of language, development, and emotionality/morality and their interrelationships can serve as a challenge to rethink our current practices as psychologists, linguists, and anthropologists who are in the business of investigating the language practices of infants, children, adolescents, and adults.

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Comparing the students across the three different disciplines I have taught: Linguistics students are much more likely to take this orientation than psychology or sociology students.

<sup>2</sup> See for further lines of argument the discussions about "consensus" as the built-in principle of human communication (Giegel, 1992; Habermas, 1981; Wellmer, 1992) and of indexing self and other in a continuous dynamic (Ochs, 1996).

<sup>3</sup> The dilemma for this type of approach to document development empirically is that often it is not clear whether from the participants' point of view the task is really the same. This issue became apparent in our cross-linguistic developmental study of wordless storybook narration (Berman & Slobin, 1994): To tell a story from a wordless picture book might mean something quite different for 4-year-olds than for 12-year-olds. Although the task is exactly the same, younger children might interpret the set-up as a picture description situation, while older children are more likely to read this as a storytelling situation. To interpret this difference in task interpretation as a development difference might be highly problematic.

<sup>4</sup> The term "perspective" for this type of orientation toward an event type is chosen to resemble the term "perspectivity" as used by Berman and Slobin (1994).

<sup>5</sup> The term "genre" is being appropriated to differentiate between these types of talk without further specifying what particular genre is at work (a recount, anecdote, exemplum, explanation, or narrative).

<sup>6</sup> Maintaining that such verbal expressions lead us to "emotion concepts" does not contribute to further clarifications. We still are in need of an account of how "concepts" are distilled out of language, and what their role is in "regulating" human actions and interactions.

<sup>7</sup> It is interesting to see how a temporal constellation, or better, a differential temporal stance, is involved in what we call *perspective taking*: "Bill's kissing of Monica" not only implies a different point of view than "Monica's kissing of Bill," but much more so a different temporal ordering of the sequence that led up to "the situation." We will get to the different implications regarding the actors' involvement (the agency constellation) in due course.

<sup>8</sup> Boys were asked to imagine *Paul*, and girls were asked to imagine *Paula*.

<sup>9</sup> "The other," as contrasting with "you, the listener" (who had asked the question) is also occasionally referred to as *someone*, as in the first line of example 5. In such cases, the second person *you* is reserved for the listener, while *someone* is consistently used to refer to "the other."

<sup>10</sup> Ironically, the impression of an objective stance is typically achieved in situations where our subjects were asked to imagine.

<sup>11</sup> Interesting aspects of moral voice are being explored by Tappan and his colleagues (Day & Tappan, 1996; Tappan, 1992, 1997; Tappan & Brown, 1989), making the very important point that accounts are often intricately intertwined with different moral positions/voices.

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