

Reduplication in Samoan

Data from Churchward's dictionary. Thanks to Keli Vaughan, Sarah Conlon, Claire Moore-Cantwell, Kris Ebarb, Ingrid Norrmann, Violeta Osegueda, Alex Grabarchuk, and Karyn Maczka for data entry!

Instructions/explanation

- This assignment is a bit different. I'm giving you most of the relevant data that exists in the language, in most of its messy glory. There isn't necessarily a neat solution that covers all the data; your job is to explain as much as you can.
 - Download the Excel file. It contains pretty much all the Samoan roots that have plural (often better glossed a) pluractional) and/or frequentative forms, except for the messiest cases, which I removed.
 - Currently the file is sorted according to how the plural is formed. I used various shorthand codes whose meaning should be clear from looking at the examples they apply to.
 - Transcriptions: pretty much IPA except "g" is velar nasal and "q" is glottal stop.
 - Samoan stress works pretty much like the Fijian case that you recently analyzed, so you can assume right-aligned moraic trochees.
 - In the default case, the plural reduplicates a light syllable. Start by analyzing those cases: make sure you cover how much is copied and from where.
 - Then consider the cases that form the plural in some other way. You can first consider what the expected light-syllable reduplicated form would be and why it doesn't win.
 - If there are factors you can identify to determine which of the many alternatives occurs, great.
 - Sometimes that may not be possible. For example, I don't know if there's any way to predict phonologically (in most cases) whether the prefix *fe-* or *ta-* will occur, and when *fe-* appears alone and when with the suffix *-Ci*, where "C" stands for any consonant, including zero. In those cases you'll have tableaux that (incorrectly) predict that multiple candidates could be the winner, with no systematic way to choose between them.
 - What should the input look like? It would be strange to say that all these things are expressions of a morpheme RED_{affix}.
 - One way to do it would be to have the input be just, e.g., /PLUR+fusi/, where you explain in the text the different morphemes that PLUR can represent. You will probably want constraints like PLUR=RED to express the preferred morpheme.
 - Next, turn to the frequentative forms. You can sort the spreadsheet by frequentative type. You'll notice that things are more regular here—most of these work the same.
 - Ignore the *faqa-* prefix that sometimes occurs (means causative and various other things).
 - There seems to be a prosodic-word boundary at the end of this reduplicant, because there is always a stress on its penultimate mora too.
 - First consider the regular cases (coded as "21", for penultimate and ultimate moras being copied). Make sure that your analysis of the plurals still works in light of these data.
 - Then consider the irregular cases and do your best to explain them.
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- I could be forgetting some important piece of instructions or background information, so when you run into things that are confusing, please ask questions!