New Zealand Studies in Applied Linguistics
2025, Vol. 31 (1), [1–23]
https://doi.org/10.59690/dz30642

Gagana olo'o fa'aaogā i Sāmoa: Post-colonial language practices in the Samoan linguistic landscape

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Abstract

Such studies as there have been of linguistic landscapes (LLs) in Pacific island countries have tended to focus on colonised contexts or countries where the indigenous language has been minoritised. Sāmoa, independent since 1962, is not the former and yet it would be naïve to think that the Samoan LL is immune to the global influences found elsewhere and that may result in minoritisation. This study explores two separate LLs, one on each of Sāmoa's two main islands, to investigate the extent to which language practices reflect an independent Samoan identity and the extent to which they are shaped by external factors. While English emerges as a dominant force in the LL, there is also a strong sense of Samoan identity created in part by icons used on signs and in part by the lexical response to external influences.

Keywords: post-colonial, anti-foreign, anti-Chinese, Sāmoa, Samoan, indexicality, hybridity

Introduction

The field of linguistic landscape (LL) research has expanded dramatically in the decades since Landry and Bourhis' (1997) seminal article drew a link between the languages on view in public spaces and ethnolinguistic vitality. The field was quickly expanded to include a wide range of semiotic resources (Shohamy & Gorter, 2008), and to move beyond ethnolinguistic vitality, recognising in the process that a LL may not always be a reflection of languages actually in use in that place. An indication of the current breadth of the field is conveyed by the 19 contemporary areas for LL research included in Blackwood et al. (2024) along with four suggested future directions. One of those future directions is settler colonialism and acts of decoloniality, and it is in that direction that this article is headed by investigating the post-colonial LL in Sāmoa, a Pacific island nation that was subjected to colonial control until achieving independence in 1962.

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Post-colonial LLs have received some attention in the literature, although the concern can be on minoritised languages, indigenous languages that have been marginalised to a greater or lesser extent by the introduction of an exogenous colonial language (Migge, 2023). In Mozambique, for example, local languages "remain tightly glued to the local and the modern-day precariat" (Guissemo, 2019, p. 41) with Portuguese, the language of the former colonial power, retaining status and visibility, even affecting the orthography of local languages in the LL. However, one study that was not focused on minoritised languages was conducted in Shantou, China (Yuan, 2022); while China may not seem an obvious example of a post-colonial context the justification for this categorisation was that Shantou had been a treaty port. The study looked at translational creativity in the use of English and Chinese and argued that the former oriented "towards modernity and cosmopolitanism" while the latter preserved "locality", with these practices being "interpreted as a means of resistance" (p. 79), a way of balancing the local against the forces of globalisation. Although claiming similarities between China and Sāmoa may not seem immediately plausible, the Shantou study and this study both investigate contexts where the local majority language must interact with and respond to the pressures of globalisation as represented linguistically by the dominance of English. In the Pacific, as in Shantou and Mozambique, there is likely to be a tension between the local and the global. To date, however, LLs in the Pacific remain largely unexplored.

Linguistic landscapes in the Pacific

There are 15 independent Pacific island countries located in a roughly triangular area formed by New Guinea, Hawai'i, and New Zealand, encompassing millions of square kilometres of ocean. The largest of these countries – and the world's most linguistically diverse nation – is Papua New Guinea, the smallest at 21 square kilometres is Nauru. Only one of the island countries – New Zealand – is classified as a developed country, and this may in part explain why LL studies in the Pacific are rare, and primarily conducted in New Zealand, for LL studies are generally conducted in urban spaces. In New Zealand, studies have explored the place of the indigenous, minoritised Māori language in the LL (Johnson, 2017; Macalister, 2010), the educative function of airport signs (Cunningham & King, 2021), the educative value of the LL for the study of Chinese (Xie & Buckingham, 2021), and aspects of memorialisation (Macalister, 2020). New Zealand also features as one of the four case studies in Johnson (2021) which stands out as the sole book-length treatment of LLs in the Pacific. In addition to New Zealand, she investigates Hawai'i, Tahiti, and New Caledonia, claiming that "[i]n each case, the languages and cultures of the indigenous peoples have been subjected to a combination of neglect, ridicule, suppression, and exploitation" (p. 11), and concludes that these studies "signal the neglect of Pacific languages and, with it, the neglect and continuing marginalization of those whose lands have been plundered" (p. 124), although it is worth noting that three of the four studies were conducted in

colonised rather than post-colonial contexts. Elsewhere the only other LL studies in a Pacific island country that we are aware of were in New Caledonia (de Saint Léger & Mullan, 2021, 2023). While the first of these was more focused on the educational potential of the LL than the LL itself, the later publication provided a thoughtful account of the slow evolution towards inclusion of Kanak languages and identity in the centre of the capital city, a slightly more optimistic portrayal of the New Caledonia LL than that provided by Johnson. Despite these existing studies, there remains a paucity of LL research in the Pacific, and of LL studies in arguably less contested contexts than those mentioned above. This study of Samoan LLs aims to address that gap, as well as exploring the tension between the global and the local in a novel context.

Sāmoa

Social and historical background

Humans have inhabited Sāmoa for 3,000 years or so, but the islands did not impinge onto European consciousness until their sighting by the Dutch Jacob Roggeveen in 1722 and a visit by the French Louis-Antonie de Bougainville in 1768. Sustained contact between Samoans and Europeans did not really begin until the 1830s, with the arrival of missionaries from the London Missionary Society, along with those seeking economic benefit through trade and whaling. Furthermore, three Western powers – Germany, Britain, and the USA – wrestled for control of the islands, their rivalry twice leading to armed confrontation which was finally resolved with the signing of the Tripartite Convention in 1899, which allowed America to annex the eastern islands (becoming American Sāmoa) and gave the western islands to Germany. The focus of this study is the western islands.

The German administration only lasted until the outbreak of World War I. In 1914, New Zealand troops, at Britain's request, took control and a New Zealand administration remained until Western Sāmoa gained independence in 1962, changing its name to Sāmoa in 1997. The relationship between New Zealand and Sāmoa was not always smooth, with its nadir being the suppression of the Mau independence movement in the 1920s and early 1930s. Today, however, the relationship can be described as friendly and around 4% of the New Zealand population identify as Samoan, with Samoan being the third most spoken language in that country. Indeed, numerically the Samoan population of New Zealand is comparable to that of Sāmoa itself, 205,557 people according to the 2021 census, of whom 97.5% are Samoan-born and only 1,218 not citizens (SBS, 2022). It should be noted that New Zealand is not alone in hosting a large Samoan population. A similar number live in the USA, and around half as many in Australia. In terms of each country's population size, however, the Samoan presence in New Zealand is significantly greater than in either Australia

or the USA. The fact that the Samoan diaspora is found in Anglophone nations may serve to amplify the influence of English in Sāmoa.

Sociolinguistic background

For millennia Sāmoa had "a talking, orally transmitted culture" (Keesing & Keesing, 1956, p. 6) but, as has been the case around the world, when the missionaries arrived they set about creating an orthography for the Samoan language. They also set up a formal education system to help with their religious and cultural goals (Meleisea, 1987) and literacy in the Samoan language quickly became widespread across the nation. The literacy rate in the Samoan language was estimated to be nearly 100% by the time Germany annexed Sāmoa in 1900 (Keesing, 1934; Tuia & Schoeffel, 2016).

When New Zealand wrested control of Sāmoa from Germany, a secular free education system was introduced. Throughout the early years of its rule over Sāmoa, school lessons were taught in Samoan, and English was being studied by elite individuals – pastors, high chiefs, foreign residents, and bi-racial Samoans (Keesing & Keesing, 1956; Thomas, 1967). As a result, Samoans began to place a high value on the English language, and following Independence in 1962 there was an increase in the number of colleges that taught students using the New Zealand school curriculum (Tuia & Schoeffel, 2016) with the medium of instruction therefore being English. However, due to increasing concerns about language loss, the Samoan language was introduced as a subject into the school system in the late 1960s (Mayer, 2001) and today the education system aims at bilingualism (Lameta, 2005).

The only explicit mention of languages in the Constitution that was adopted at independence concerns language use in Parliament, and allows for both Samoan and English. Recognition of Samoan as an official language appeared 42 years later in the Sāmoa Language Commission Act 2014.

Samoan scholars, meaning both Samoans and non-Samoans who have made Sāmoa an object of study, have at times debated the merits of linguistic dualism versus linguistic hybridity. To a large extent this is a debate about the result of language contact. The idea of dualism traces back to the 1930s and the claim that "[t]he Samoan people are undoubtedly entering a period in which linguistic dualism is going to be a necessity" (Keesing, 1934, p. 444), which appeared to be saying that Samoans would need to learn and use both Samoan and English because "it is more profitable to use the wider means of communication". Kruse Va'ai (2011, p. 11), however, took issue with this, arguing that "[d]ualism is a term which suggests a co-existence without interaction" and made the case for hybridity, citing multiple instances of English influence on Samoan language and culture, such as the word and the game of *kilikiti* from, but not the same as, *cricket.* Yuan (2022, p. 76) also invoked linguistic hybridity

in her Shantou study, defining it as "the combination of linguistic codes in a semantic or syntactic unit" and noting that its existence suggests "an audience who transcends linguistic and cultural borders".

For historical reasons English appears to have been the only exogenous language to have influenced Samoan, but it is not the sole language to leave a trace. The influence of German was restricted to 1900 – 1914 and may today be most evident in the sale of *German buns*, but at the time administration-related borrowings from German such as *kaisa* (Kaiser)*, kaisalika* (imperial government)*,* and *fenika* (a coin of small value) were found in Samoan language newspapers (Muaiava, 2020). A more consistent presence than that of the Germans was the Chinese. Wai (2015) has suggested four waves of Chinese migration, beginning with free migrants in the second half of the 19th century, followed by indentured labourers (along with workers from the Solomon Islands) until the Second World War. The remaining waves consist of those related to Chinese already in Sāmoa, and a fresh wave of free migrants with no existing connection to the country. Linguistic influence of Chinese is identifiable in Samoan, such as *sapasui* [chop suey], but the most recent wave of migration has raised some concerns about threats to local businesses (Goerling, 2016), with multiple reports of village councils banning Chinese businesses from being established on customary land as a means of protecting indigenous lands and improving local businesses (Likou, 2017a, 2017b).

In summary, then, Sāmoa is a relatively small Pacific island nation and one that has been the object of colonial competition in the past. Demographic information suggests that the population is overwhelmingly Samoan and has not been shaped by immigration, although emigration, particularly to New Zealand, has seen large numbers settle overseas. These observations lead to the research questions that guide this study:

1. To what extent do language practices in two distinct LLs in Sāmoa convey an independent Samoan identity?
2. What external influences shape language practices in two distinct LLs in Sāmoa?

Methodology

Research sites

The two main islands of Sāmoa are Upolu and Savai'i. The capital, Apia, is located on Upolu, as is the international airport. The two islands are connected by a regular hour-long ferry service, with the entry point to Savai'i being Salelologa. The survey areas were Vaea Street in Apia, and Salelologa Street on Savai'i. The Vaea Street survey area

ended at the Apia Town Clock Tower, a local landmark. In Salelologa the chosen area began at the wharf and ended at the only traffic lights on Savai'i. Both survey areas are located in the main areas where different kinds of commercial activities take place; this is important because commercial actors generate a very large number of the signs that are inserted in the linguistic landscape, and in both survey areas diverse commercial activities are encountered.

Data generation

Data, in the form of photographs, were collected by the first author over a two-week period in mid-2019. This pre-dated the Covid-19 pandemic, but was immediately prior to a deadly measles outbreak later in 2019. Following Backhaus (2006, p. 55), "any piece of written text within a spatially definable frame" was treated as a sign.

Data analysis

The primary analysis of the data was quantitative. In the first instance, the focus was on the languages present, classified as English, Samoan, or Other. From this, seven categories emerged (see Table 1). In determining which languages were present, a Samoan toponym was considered as English if a macron was absent over the /a/ in Sāmoa or the apostrophe was missing in Savai'i. While this had the potential to distort the picture of the languages used and over count English, in reality it did not have that effect. A place name was never a sole example of an English word on a sign. The same principle for identification of a language was applied consistently. For example, a word from a non-alphabetic language rendered orthographically in English, such as kimchi, was treated as a borrowing into English rather than as an instance of Korean.

Following this, the analysis focused on the actors in the LL using Macalister's (2010) five actor framework shown in Figure 1. This was chosen as it allows for a more nuanced understanding of who is contributing what to the LL than the traditional binary distinction of top-down/bottom-up widely used in LL research.

The quantitative analysis then provided a basis for qualitative analysis of selected signs which was of particular relevance to addressing the second research question. In what follows, the quantitative analysis is presented as Findings with the qualitative reserved for the Discussion section.

Figure 1

Continuum of actor framework

In vitro ⟷ In vivo				
Official	Commercial national	Commercial local	Community local	Individual
I.e. from national or local government	I.e. from a business such as a bank or telco	E.g. from a family-run store	E.g. from a church or social group	E.g. graffiti

As part of the more qualitative discussion, thought was given to the lexical responses to external influences in the LL, following Muaiava's (2020) adaptation of Macalister's (2007) categorisation of the lexical outcomes of language contact. Macalister was considering the Māori lexical presence in New Zealand English, where Māori words retain their form, whereas in Samoan, loanwords from other languages adopt Samoan orthography; English *cricket*, for example, becomes *kilikiti.* In this analysis the two key categories identified were loanwords and semantic extension, where a new meaning reflecting an external influence is added to an existing word in Samoan.

Also in the more qualitative discussion, consideration was given to non-linguistic elements on a sign, although to qualify for inclusion in this study the presence of language was the prerequisite. Scollon and Scollon (2003) discussed three types of sign – indexes, icons, and symbols – but also suggested that "it might be more accurate to say there are two types of signs, icons and symbols, and that all signs achieve their meanings through properties of indexicality" (p. 28). Figure 3, for example, combines sign as icon (the stylised wave, the running figure) with sign as symbol (the bilingual textual element) which work together to index Sāmoa, just as the arrow indexes the escape route. Indeed, and to make the point that classifications are not always clear-cut, the fact that the figure is running in the direction of the arrow is also indexical.

Findings

As can be seen in Table 1, the analysis of languages present in the LL revealed an overwhelming dominance by English in both sites. Well over 90% of signs were found to be solely in English or to use English with one or more other languages. As a result, Samoan was relatively infrequent, especially when present as the sole language on a sign. On the five signs classified as English + Samoan + Other, all were English-

dominant, although the indigenous language was preferred on 73, around two-thirds, of the signs classified as English + Samoan.

Table 1

Languages present in Samoan LLs

	Upolo	Savai'i	Combined
English only	437 (79.3%)	363 (83.3%)	800 (81%)
Samoan only	29 (5.3%)	19 (4.4%)	48 (4.9%)
English + Samoan	66 (12%)	54 (12.4%)	120 (12.4%)
Samoan + Other	1 (0.2%)	0	1
English + Other	10 (1.8%)	0	10
English + Samoan + Other	5 (0.9%)	0	5
Other	3 (0.5%)	0	3
Total	551	436	987

The other notable feature of Table 1 is that languages other than Samoan and English were only found in Apia. This appeared to be the main difference between the two sites until the contributions of individual actors were considered (Tables 2 and 3). Official actors played a much greater role in the LL of Savai'i than on Upolu, providing 15.6% of signs as opposed to 8.7%. Conversely, however, national commercial actors contributed nearly twice as many signs to the LL of Apia as their counterparts in Salelologa, 17.8% as compared with 9.4%, perhaps reflecting the attraction of the capital city and main commercial hub to such actors. Individual and community actors were slightly more active on Savai'i than Upolu, but in both places the dominant actors in the LL were local commercial enterprises. An interesting observation here is that differences in the proportion of actors in each category did not affect the overall distribution of languages. Elsewhere, as is the case with Portuguese in Timor-Leste (Macalister, 2023), official actors tend to promote the official language through the signage they introduce; in Sāmoa, Samoan is not obviously preferred. This is also the case for community and individual actors who, again, might be expected to favour Samoan.

Table 2

Languages x actors in the Upolu LL

	Official	Commercial National	Commercial Local	Community	Individual	Total
English	28	80	319	6	4	437
Samoan	15	4	9	1		29
English + Samoan	5	5	53	3		66
Samoan + Other			1			1
English + Other		5	1		4	10
English + Samoan + Other		4	1			5
Other			3			3
Total	48	98	387	10	8	551

Table 3

Languages x actors in the Savai'i LL

	Official	Commercial National	Commercial Local	Community	Individual	Total
English	49	34	267	0	13	363
Samoan	11	3	3	2	0	19
English + Samoan	8	4	35	4	3	54
Total	68	41	305	6	16	436

Discussion

A reasonable expectation at the start of this study might have been that the Samoan LL would be dominated by the Samoan language. After all, 97.5% of the population are Samoan-born Samoans, the official language is Samoan, and the reality is that Samoan is the language of daily communication between the people. Unlike, for example, Tahiti, Hawai'i and New Caledonia, Sāmoa is an independent nation, not a part of the United States or the French Pacific, and unlike New Zealand the indigenous people are not a minority people in their own land. Yet this reasonable expectation did not prove to be the case. The Samoan LL is very clearly dominated by the English language. One explanation for this might lie in the reliance on tourism. According to PSDI (2021), tourism accounts for almost one quarter of the country's GDP, with over two-thirds of visitors arriving from New Zealand and Australia. The fact that over one

third of visitors give visiting friends and relatives as the reason for visiting suggests that family ties rather than tourism *per se* may be playing an important role, but even so, a large proportion of annual visitors to Sāmoa will be Anglophone tourists. As well as the income generated, tourism accounts for around 15% of the country's employment, and thus the LL is going to be appealing to that market. Other studies have shown how tourism can be an influence on the introduction of a global language. In Malaysia, for instance, the introduction of multilingual road signs was linked to tourist promotion (Ng, 2008), just as addressing a tourist audience was proposed as the reason for the strong code preference for English on metal rod sculptures in Penang (Macalister & Ong, 2020). Not, of course, that the global language need be English. In Tanzania, for instance, Italian has been linked to tourism (Gallina, 2016). This might seem to be a plausible explanation for the dominance in Apia and on Upolu, where 80% of tourist accommodation is found (PSDI, 2021), and could also go some way to explaining the presence of English in Savai'i.

Another possible explanation is the close ties between English-dominant New Zealand and Sāmoa. New Zealand was the colonial power for almost half a century and ties between the two countries remain strong. This can be seen by the signs in the LL such as the use of a Māori toponym or the introduction of te reo Māori and other languages introduced by a sign inserted by New Zealand's national carrier, Air New Zealand. The Air New Zealand sign, incidentally, was the most linguistically diverse in the LL, conveying greetings in formal and colloquial English, Māori, Fijian, Tongan, French, Chinese, and Samoan. As such it is a good example of a professionally designed national commercial sign intended for use in multiple locations with the perhaps unfortunate result that Samoan featured last in the languages used on this sign in Apia.

Hybridity in the LL

While the dominance of English-only signs in the LL may suggest dualism in the sense that the global language is used because, as Keesing (1934) argued, "it is more profitable" (p. 444), it is not the case that the LL shows "co-existence without interaction" (Kruse Va'ai, 2011). It is not the case that languages are being used for specific functions. Rather it is a case of hybridity as claimed by Kruse Va'ai (2011). The idea of hybridity is further strengthened when we consider lexical influences on Samoan from English as can be seen in Figure 2.

Figure 2

Official health sign

This sign is an official, bilingual sign (Samoan and English, with Samoan being dominant). English is most clearly present in the hashtag at the bottom and the names of the sponsoring organisations (Ministry of Health, and World Health Organisation) that appear at the top of the sign. The influence of English is also apparent in the loanwords *numera* (number) and *misela* (measles), both of which are transliterations from the English. These word formation processes are evidence of hybridity, rather than dualism, at work. Thirty such examples of transliterations were identified on signs in the LL and are available in Appendix 1, which is arranged alphabetically and divided into common and proper nouns.

The sign shown in Figure 2 also demonstrates how Samoan language resources are drawn on to name a new, or foreign, concept. The words *tui* (injection) and *puipui* (protect) are Samoan words but collocate to create the meaning of 'vaccination'. Many instances of this process of semantic extension, whereby a new meaning is added to existing Samoan lexical items, were found in the LL and shown in Appendix 2. These include both new entries into the material culture, such as a passport or a camera, and new concepts that shape social culture, such as working/opening hours and a wedding day. They also include the names of government ministries and similar agencies, as these are new concepts. It is worth noting that this process was more commonly found than transliteration, with 51 examples identified.

Hybridity in the LL

The desire to make the new Samoan was also found in other semiotic resources in the LL, perhaps most delightfully in the figure of a person running from a tsunami at bottom right in Figure 3. This is an important public information sign and, although bilingual, is very clearly addressing a Samoan-speaking population. The use of a lavalava on the icon (the running figure) indexes the placement of the sign in the world, indicating that 'this tsunami evacuation sign is located in Sāmoa'. The sign demonstrates the deployment of icons and symbols to add a Samoan identity to the LL.

Figure 3

Official tsunami warning sign

As suggested by Tables 2 and 3, in terms of code preference Figure 3 is not typical of signs inserted by official actors. What is significant about the official actors is their preferred use of the English language over Samoan which indicates a potential weakness in the processes and procedures that an official actor supposedly goes through, such as heeding the Sāmoa Language Commission Act which is in place to promote and monitor the use of the Samoan language throughout Sāmoa, including public spaces.

Figure 3 is also a little unusual in that it provides the same information in both languages, although font size is a clear indication that Samoan takes precedence. Far more common was the presence of Samoan and English on a sign, with the languages conveying different information, as can be seen in Figure 4. Here, based on location and font size, Samoan appears at first glance to be dominant, yet *talofa* (welcome) and a solitary toponym are the sole Samoan elements; the informational content of the sign relies on English. In part this suggests the difficulty that can arise in trying to determine

code dominance on a sign, but it also raises a question about the role of Samoan in this example. Its function seems to be primarily symbolic, indexing the place where the sign is installed (the symbolic/informational distinction was proposed by Landry and Bourhis, 1997).

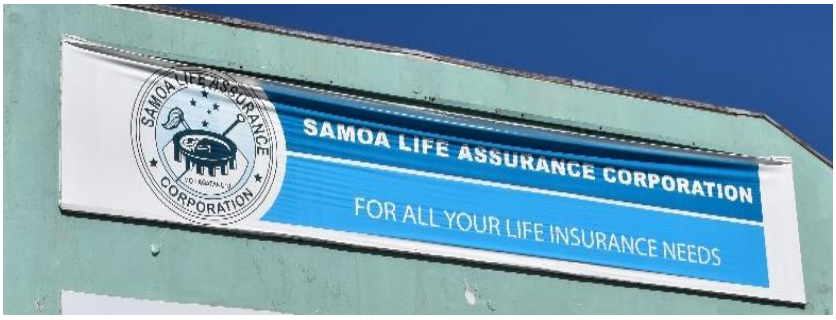
Figure 4

Bilingual business sign

Figure 4 is one example of language being used indexically, but this role is also performed iconically, as in Figure 3, and in Figure 5 below. This is a sign that was found in different versions, both with the text fully in Samoan and fully in English, which version is shown below. In addition to the very obvious written text, the symbol, on the left is the company logo at the centre of which is a tanoa (a wooden bowl) accompanied by two items associated with Samoan oratory and surmounted by the Southern Cross constellation. The icon extends the clear message about insurance to signal that 'this sign is about getting life insurance here in Sāmoa'. Beneath the tanoa, harder to read but further reinforcing this message, are the words *Mo tagatanu'u* meaning "for the people".

Figure 5

Insurance sign



The role of other languages

As was previously mentioned, other languages played a small role in the LL (Table 1) and were exclusively found on Upolu (Table 2). Most were employed by commercial actors, both national (N = 9) and local (N = 6). The remainder were introduced into the LL by individual actors. In addition to the languages found on the previously mentioned Air New Zealand sign, the languages present on other signs were French, Italian, Spanish, Chinese, Bahasa Malaysia, and Māori, and with the probable exception of Chinese their presence was unlikely to be indicative of a local language community. Rather, the code choice served either informational or symbolic purposes or in some cases, as in Figure 6 below, both.

Figure 6

Foreign languages in the LL

Figure 6 was the sole sign on a food truck and employed Italian (or possibly Spanish) *uno* with the 'o' formed by a stylised view of a coffee cup cleverly conveying the nature of the business and French. Note that the accented 'é' on *café* identified this as French rather than English; in this study, where *cafe* was unaccented, the word was considered as English. The purpose of this sign, reinforced by the stylised coffee cup, is informative – we sell coffee – but also through code choice conveying the idea that drinking coffee is stylish. This association between the use of French and/or Italian

has been found in multiple studies, and is not unique to Sāmoa. It does however suggest that this discourse is universal, and has found its way into the Samoan LL. Other examples of Italian include the names of different types of coffee (*latte, cappuccino, macchiato*) on a hand-written blackboard sign.

A similar, but perhaps more intriguing, example is shown in Figure 7, which contains the sole example of a word from Bahasa Malaysia (or Indonesia), *sarong.* A sarong is a length of material wrapped around the waist, and in Sāmoa called a lavalava. The preference for *sarong* over the Samoan *lavalava* is perhaps intended to indicate a degree of exoticism, adding appeal to a common form of local apparel, making it seem through foreignness a fashion item.

Figure 7

Multilingual sign

Of the foreign languages present, the only one likely to indicate the existence of a speaking community was Chinese. Chinese characters were salient on three signs, which may in part, as the example in Figure 8 suggests, be more a result of past language practices than contemporary ones. However, Chinese in the form of personal names was used on five signs classified as English – *Chan Mow* Co Ltd (twice), John *Fong* Ltd, *Ah Liki* Wholesale, Pat *Ah Him* Co Ltd. This is an additional indication of the historic Chinese influence on the commercial activities of Sāmoa, and symbolises the history of Chinese settlement in Sāmoa. These signs reference the Chinese migrants who arrived in the first wave (who intermarried and identified as Samoan) and the second wave (those who arrived as indentured labourers). The use of

Anglicised names on these signs also demonstrates an awareness of audience; if written in Chinese characters the signs would be undecipherable to an almost exclusively non-Chinese potential customer base. The most recent wave of Chinese migration was also captured in the LL, on a sign for a local transport company, with Chinese text below the company name.

Figure 8

Chinese in the LL of Apia, Upolu

The presence of Chinese in Apia, and its absence in Salelologa, is not only a reflection of the capital's role as the country's commercial centre but also likely to be linked to the anti-Chinese discourse on Savai'i that was reported earlier. While Sāmoa has not had the riots experienced since 2006 in Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and Tonga in which "key targets are 'Asian shops' and 'Asian businesses'" as an expression of grievances against foreigners (Dobell, 2022), noting that 'Asian' equates with 'Chinese', it is not immune from such discourses.

Conclusion

The questions that this study sought to investigate concerned the roles of the local and the global in a post-colonial context. Prior to independence, Sāmoa experienced both German and British/New Zealand colonialism although neither experience resulted in a settler population of any note. The population of modern-day Sāmoa remains overwhelmingly Samoan with Samoan being both the official language and the language of daily communication. It is neither a minority nor a minoritised language. For all that, however, English plays a dominant role in the LL, both in the capital city

Apia on the more urbanised island of Upolu and in Salelologa on the more rural Savai'i. While consistent with the bilingual aspirations of language education policy, this English language presence more likely reflects both Sāmoa's relationships with the wider world and the global dominance of English as a *lingua franca.* Sāmoa is strongly connected with New Zealand in particular, but more broadly with an Anglophone world where the Samoan diaspora resides, and is a country that draws a sizeable proportion of national income from tourism, the tourists largely coming from New Zealand and Australia. The presence of English ties Sāmoa to a wider world, and indexes modernity and economic opportunity. Other languages, although a minor contributor to the LL, play a similar role. French, Italian, Bahasa Malaysia index modernity and style, as they do elsewhere. A discordant note is struck, however, and particularly noticeably on Savai'i, by the relative absence of Chinese in the LL. Here Sāmoa is channelling anti-foreign discourses and attitudes found elsewhere in the Pacific and beyond. As with the other foreign languages identified, global discourses enter the local environment.

Yet, despite the presence of English and other languages in the LL, the local does not appear to have been swamped by the global. In Sāmoa, at least, the picture that emerges for Samoan is more healthy than that suggested by Johnson (2021). In large part, no doubt, this difference is explained by the contexts being investigated – Sāmoa is post-colonial, not colonized, and Samoan is the majority language, not minoritised. This healthier picture is painted by the hybridity of language practices, Samoan and English working together to convey meaning through both symbols and icons, and by the lexical outcomes of contact. On the evidence of the LL, at least, Samoan is making greater use of semantic extension than of borrowing as seen in transliterated loanwords, thus constraining the lexical influence of English. This is similar to, but stronger than, the 'resistance' to globalisation found in Shantou (Yuan, 2022). Actors in the Samoan LL appear to be drawing on the bilingual linguistic repertoire shared with their Samoan audience to create and convey meaning, and to ensure that meaning is true to the context, that, in other words, it remains grounded in Sāmoa.

Fundings

Faith's study at Te Herenga Waka-Victoria University of Wellington was supported through a partnership with the National University of Sāmoa.

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Appendix A

Common nouns	Proper nouns
Aisa [ice]	Aperila [April]
Araisa [rice]	Faraile [Friday]
Fa'alenatura [...of nature]	Iesu [Jesus]
Falaoamata [flour]	Kerisiano [Christian]
Inisiua [insurance]	Tesema [December]
Keke [cake]	
Laisene [license]	
Loia [lawyer]	
Mami [mumps]	
Miliona [million]	
Minute [minute]	
Misela [measles]	
Numera [Number]	
Ofisa [office]	
Palota [ballot]	
Pepa [paper]	
Pepe [baby]	
Pine [pin]	
Pisinisi [business]	
Rupela [rubella]	
Rupi [ruby]	
Sipuni [spoon]	
Suka [sugar]	
Sunami [tsunami]	
Telefoni [telephone]	

Appendix B

Department & agency names	Semantic extensions
Fa'alapotopotoga faaputugatupe… [National Provident Fund] Fa'alapotopotoga o Inisiua [Insurance corporation] Matagaluega o le soifua maloloina [Ministry of Health] Matagaluega o Tina… [Ministry of women…] Pulega tau suavai [Water authority] Faalapotopotoga Kerisiano [Youth for Christ]	Apainu [drink in a can] Aso fa'apitoa [wedding day] Aso fanau [birthday] Auala sulufa'i [evacuation route] Auaunaga tau suavai [water services] Avetaavale [driver] Elei toniga [print uniform] Fa'ama'i pipisi [contagious diseases] Fa'alavelave faafuase'i [emergency] Fale pu'e ata [Photo Shop] Fale talavai [pharmacy] Fale tusi [stationary shop/library] Fesuia'iga o tupe [exchange money] Fogafale I luga [top floor] Itula faigaluega [working /opening hours] Malupuipuia [safe] Mea pu'e ata [digital camera] Moavao [lawn mower] Ofu fa'aipoipo [wedding dress] Ofutino [shirt] Oloa sii atoa [bulk products] Ositaulaga sili [the greatest sacrifice] Povi masima [raw salted beef] Pusa apa [a box of canned mackerel] Pusa pisupo [a box of canned corn beef] Pusa saimini [box of noodles] Pusa susu [box of milk cartons] Pusa vai [box of water bottles] Salafai sasa'e [east] Ta'aiga ie [material?] Tui puipui [vaccination]

	Tupe faamomoli [transfer money overseas] Tupe lafo mai fafo [remittances] Tusifolau [passport] Tusitupe [cheque book] Uila vilivae [bike] Vaega loto'ifale [Mea pu'e ata [camera] Foma'i [medical doctor] Vili [call] Suavai lafoa'i [waste water] Fa'atauina atu [to sell] Se'evae [shoes] Ata [photo/smile] Uga [plastic]