

## CHAPTER 14

### Tongan Wordlists

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This chapter presents a preliminary linguistic analysis, tailored for a non-specialist audience, of a selection of Tongan wordlists collected during the 18-day stay of Bruni d'Entrecasteaux's expedition in Tongatapu in 1793. Two were published: one in La Billardière's *Relation* (LaB) and one in Bruni d'Entrecasteaux's *Voyage*, compiled by his editor Rossel (BdE). Others are unpublished manuscript wordlists transcribed during the voyage and now held in the Archives nationales de France in Paris: an anonymous 'Vocabulaire des isles des amis' (A) and three 'Voculaires' gathered by Pierre-Guillaume Gicquel Destouches (G).<sup>1</sup> The selected lists contain approximately 1,200 entries.

The earliest European encounters with the inhabitants of the wider Tongan archipelago had occurred during Dutch voyages. In 1616, Willem Schouten and Jacob Le Maire spent four days in the northernmost islands Tafahi and Niuatoputapu. A wordlist of the Niu language comprising 118 entries was published with Le Maire's narrative. In 1643, Abel Tasman stayed for nearly two weeks in Tongatapu and Nomuka and several island names were recorded. His journal mentions only two Tongan words, both derived from Le Maire's list. He complained that the Dutch 'did not understand them nor They us'—unsurprisingly, since Le Maire did not record Tongan words.<sup>2</sup>

More pertinent for comparison with the Bruni d'Entrecasteaux voyage vocabularies are several wordlists collected or words recorded by contemporaneous visitors in Tonga. The following is a rough tally of lexical items amassed by British or Spanish travellers and published at the time or subsequently: during the voyages of Cook (1774 and 1777, nearly 1,000 entries), Francisco Antonio Mourelle (1781, 83 entries), Alejandro Malaspina (1793, about 350 entries), and William Wilson (1797, 44 entries); by the renegade missionary George Vason (1797–1801, 66 entries); and by the castaway ship's clerk William Mariner (1806–10, about 1,800 entries).<sup>3</sup> Collectively, these and the French lists present a detailed picture of, and raise or answer many questions about the Tongan environment, culture, and language in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, before the arrival of resident traders and missionaries. Unlike parallel Fijian materials,<sup>4</sup> these early Tongan wordlists have not been subject to systematic linguistic analysis.

Space limitations prevent the inclusion in this chapter of the many words and features in the French wordlists which are identifiable in modern Tongan. I therefore

focus on entries differing from their modern forms and/or meanings, particularly those of linguistic and cultural interest. They are generally written here not as they appeared in manuscript or print, but as they were probably pronounced by Tongans in 1793, with a modified Tongan spelling: <g> represents the velar nasal [ŋ] and <j> the alveolar affricate which has become <s> today, as discussed below; vowel length (marked by a macron), glottal stop /ʔ/ and /h/ are supplied from modern sources where available.<sup>5</sup> For consistency and to enable efficient comparison of historical and modern forms, I use phonemic spelling for Tongan words throughout the chapter. This highlights misheard or mistranscribed words and possible changes in pronunciation in a way impossible if using the random orthography adopted by transcribers. I cite some similar or identical words recorded by other contemporary visitors but a detailed comparative study is also beyond my scope here.

### Perception and spelling of sounds

The main problem with recording the sounds of an unfamiliar language is that if we hear one that is not found in our own language, we will either mistranscribe it or not record it at all. In the case of French speakers, unless they were linguistically sophisticated or multilingual, they perceived neither the /h/ nor the /ʔ/ (glottal stop) of Tongan, since neither exists in French, and simply failed to record them. Another consonant that presented difficulties because of its absence in 18th-century French was /ŋ/ the velar nasal (as in <ng> in English ‘sing’), which they recorded mostly as <ng> or <gh>. Similarly, they did not hear differences of vowel length, which are crucial in Tongan. For example, these French travellers perceived the short vowel /i/ and the long vowel /ī/ as the same and transcribed them identically. They also regularly failed to perceive the second element in certain diphthongs, recording, for instance, *kouʔahe* ‘cheek’ without the /u/, and omitting other unstressed high vowels, such as *nufe* ‘caterpillar’ for *ʔunufe*.

The spelling of Tongan words in these lists was naturally based on French conventions: for example, using <ou> to represent /u/, as in *tolou* ‘three’ for *tolu*; <gu> for intervocalic /k/ before front vowels (/e/ and /i/), as in *taoguédé* ‘older son’ for *taʔokete*; and avoiding <au> for /au/, instead using <ao> or <ahau>. Spellings used by the four lexicographers differ only in minor respects (for example, La Billardière preferred <k> for /k/, while the others preferred <c>).<sup>6</sup> They probably copied from each other to some extent, given Bruni d’Entrecasteaux’s intention that the wordlists collected should be publicly shared, ‘so that everyone can assess the conformity and dissimilarities there are in the same words heard by different individuals.’<sup>7</sup> The ships’ libraries were well-stocked with the published narratives of previous voyages, including those of Cook which contain William Anderson’s Tongan vocabularies, but seemingly not including Johann Reinhold Forster’s *Observations* which also gives a short Tongan wordlist.<sup>8</sup> Bruni d’Entrecasteaux and his colleagues no doubt prepared for their encounter with Tongans by learning elements of Cook’s vocabulary. However, he found it of ‘feeble assistance’—perhaps, he thought, because of differing French and English pronunciation; or because Tongans had fed badly pronounced words back to the English approvingly—a problem, he claimed, that the French faced and eventually recognized.<sup>9</sup>

## Misunderstandings of meaning and form

Misunderstanding commonly occurs in linguistic exchange where the participants have no language in common. So while perhaps ninety per cent of the identifiable words and phrases are given correct or nearly correct meanings, others are incorrect. The meaning might have been understood as more general (e.g., *laupapa* ‘plank’ glossed as ‘wood’, *ʔūpē* ‘lullaby’ as ‘song’, *ʔovavatahi* ‘fan coral’ as ‘coral’, *lalaga* ‘weave’ as ‘do’, *meʔe* ‘dance’ as ‘feast, celebration’); or more specific (e.g., *figota* ‘sea creature’ glossed as ‘shellfish’, *tehina* ‘younger same-sex sibling’ as ‘younger brother’); or been completely misunderstood (e.g., *kakau* ‘swim’ glossed as ‘breakers’, presumably because a questioner indicated someone swimming in or near the breakers). In at least one case, a proper name was taken as a common noun, when the name *ʔulukālala* was glossed as ‘son’.

The forms of words were commonly misunderstood by the failure to recognize certain particles as not being part of the word under discussion. Verbs were sometimes combined with a preceding tense marker (e.g., *kuoji* ‘finished’ for *kuo ʔoji*) or a following particle (e.g., *mamaoia* ‘yawn’, consisting of *mamao* ‘yawn’ plus *ia* ‘3<sup>rd</sup> person singular pronoun, or ‘a particle of emphasis’; *tataupē* ‘the same’, consisting of *tatau* ‘the same’ and the particle *pē* meaning, in this context, ‘exactly’), and nouns with preceding particles (e.g., *koepule* ‘cowry shell’, where *koe* is the focus marker *ko* and article *e*).

## Historical phonology

Tongan exhibits a number of sound-changes that distinguish it from its reconstructed ancestor language Proto Polynesian (PPn), believed to have been spoken over two thousand years ago. The French and other early wordlists can help determine whether any of the sound-changes were still in progress in the late 18th century.

### \*s>h

Together with Niuean and East Uvean (Wallisian), Tongan shows the change of \*s>h, for example PPn \*sika ‘net needle’ > *hika*. There is no indication in the French wordlists that this change was anything other than complete: all instances of /h/ in contemporary Tongan are recorded as <h> or zero, as expected. We may conclude that this sound change took place well before the 18th century.

### Palatalization: t>č/\_i

Tongan changed (palatalized) PPn \*t to č (usually written as <j>) before *i* (a high front vowel), for example changing PPn \*koti ‘cut (hair)’ to *koji*. The French wordlists fairly regularly represent this sound initially as <tch> (e.g., *tchico* for *jiko* ‘defecate’ [G]) and between vowels as <dg> (e.g., *foudgi* for *fuji* ‘banana’ [LaB], *fatgi* for *faji* ‘break’ [BdE]). This difference may indicate that the sound was more voiced (pronounced with vibration of the vocal cords, in this case more like English <dg> in ‘judge’ than <ch> in ‘church’) between vowels, which is a natural tendency for consonants in all languages. However it is clearly not the case in contemporary Tongan, since this sound became [s] in all positions around the end of the 19th century, so that the modern Tongan word for ‘cut (hair)’ is *kosi*.

An exception is the word *mokojia* ‘feel cold’, the spelling of which by the French (BdE *magotzia*, A *magotsia* or *magothia*, G *magotsia*) suggests that it might have been pronounced more like [ts], and that the first vowel was /a/ rather than /o/. Yet Anderson had recorded the expected *mokojia* in 1777.<sup>10</sup> The fact that both Forster and Anderson in 1773 recorded the name of the *Ficus* sp, used as a dye, as *mati* (rather than expected *maji*), and that Wilson recorded *ɔinaji* ‘presentation to the Tu’i Tonga’ once as *enudee* (*ɔinati*) also suggests that /t/ may have survived in some forms as an alternative pronunciation.<sup>11</sup>

### Vowel assimilation

The Tongan vowel assimilation rule is unique to Tongan and states that unstressed /a/ became /o/ before or after a stressed /u/, and /e/ before or after a stressed /i/ (though there are many unexplained exceptions).<sup>12</sup> It gave rise to Tongan words such as *fefine* ‘woman’ and *fonua* ‘land’ from PPn \**fafine* and \**fanua* respectively.

The French lists confirm that this assimilation was complete in those words in which it appears in final position, e.g., *ɔuo* ‘lobster’ (PPn \**ɔura*), *noɔo* ‘belt’ (PPn \**noɔa*), *ɔuno* ‘turtle-shell’ (PPn \**ɔuna*). However, there are indications that it was incomplete in other positions. While the vast majority of words that show assimilation today also do so in the French wordlists, there are five partial exceptions: ‘ten’ (modern *hogofulu*) was recorded as *ogofulu* and *agafulu* by A; ‘ear’ (modern *teliga*) was recorded as *taliga* by G; ‘to thank’ (modern *monū* ‘good luck’) was recorded by BdE and A as *manū*; ‘land’ (modern *fonua*) was recorded in all wordlists except G’s as *fanua*, in the compound *alagifanua* ‘southeast wind’; and ‘red’ (modern *kulokula*) was recorded by BdE and A as *kulakula*. Taken in isolation, these might be viewed as misrecordings or mistranscriptions, but most of these exceptions were also noted by other early recorders: *taliga* and *fanua* by Forster, *manū* by Cook’s surgeon David Samwell, and *kulakula* by Mariner.<sup>13</sup> It thus seems likely that vowel assimilation was indeed incomplete in 1793.<sup>14</sup>

Further evidence for the chronology of vowel assimilation can be found in words and place names recorded in 1643 during Tasman’s voyage: he gave *Aicij* (*ɔaiki*) for ‘chief’, modern *ɔeiki*;<sup>15</sup> and an illustration in his journal renders the island now called Nomuka as *Anamocka*, with *Namocaki* for Nomukaiki and *Amatafoa* for Tofua.<sup>16</sup> These spellings indicate lack of vowel assimilation. Since Cook and his men were familiar with Tasman’s toponyms, their rehearsal of them does not confirm that vowel assimilation was still absent in the 1770s. However, other names lacking vowel assimilation were recorded in Cook voyage texts: *Otafoa* ‘Tofua’ and *Onuahtabutabu* ‘Niuatoputapu’ by Cook himself, while Anderson referred to ‘Anamocka or as the natives pronounce it Anna’mooka’.<sup>17</sup> In conjunction with the French evidence, this suggests that vowel assimilation in Tongan had not begun in the mid-17th century and was still incomplete at the end of the 18th.

### Voicing of initial /f/

Initial /f/ has been voiced to /v/ or /w/ in various environments in many Polynesian languages, especially in Eastern Polynesia, e.g. \**fafine* ‘woman’ > Māori *wahine*. This change has never been reported for Tongan, but there is a suggestion that it might have occurred in the word for ‘woman’, for which LaB gives *vifiné* and A both *viviné* and *fifiné*; Anderson had also recorded *ve faine*.<sup>18</sup>

### *Phonetic nature of the liquid*

As with most Polynesian languages, Tongan has only one liquid phoneme, conventionally spelt <l> but, as noted by Maxwell Churchward, author of the standard Tongan grammar, with a pronunciation ‘somewhat suggestive, at times, of *r*’.<sup>19</sup> Given that French distinguished between /l/ and /r/, the perceptions of our lexicographers may help indicate in which circumstances the pronunciation was more like [r]. There are no instances of <r> being written in initial position, and intervocally the <r> spelling is restricted to four words: *fale* ‘house’, *malaʔe* ‘cemetery’, *mālie* ‘good’, and *molū* ‘soft’. So there is no further indication here of the phonological environment that might trigger a rhotic pronunciation between vowels.

### *Phonetic nature of the stops*

The three Tongan oral stops, /p/, /t/ and /k/, are likewise noted by Churchward as having a pronunciation ‘somewhat suggestive, at times,’ of their voiced counterparts, that is, being sometimes pronounced like [b], [d] and [g].<sup>20</sup> The missionary Thomas West, who published a Tongan grammar, also claims that /p/ is sometimes pronounced like /b/ but is unclear about when, while the few examples he provides for /k/ being pronounced [g] (all at the beginning of a word) suggest that [g] occurs before /i/ and /u/ (high vowels).<sup>21</sup> Again, since French distinguishes between these pairs, we would expect their rendering in French-based spelling to suggest when such pronunciations might occur.

A survey of the French lists reveals that at the beginning of a word all stops were perceived as voiceless (p, t or k), whereas between vowels they were perceived as voiced (b,d or g) before certain vowels, an observation largely confirmed by other early visitors. Three generalizations can be made: first, that the first language of the observer is irrelevant in perceptions of voicedness of stops; second, that where there is a difference between word-initial and between vowels, it is always the consonant between vowels that is perceived as more voiced; and third, that where there is a difference in surrounding vowels, stops are perceived as more voiced before vowels other than /a/.

## **Numerals**

The French were so interested in numerals that two of them compiled separate lists. Their recorded numerals 1–9 are unchanged today, apart from possible anomalies in one of Gicquel’s lists. Their recording of ‘10’ does not enable reconstruction of whether it was *ogofulu* or (as today) *hogofulu*, though *ogofulu* is unambiguously indicated by most of Cook’s companions and by Mariner who, being English-speakers, would have recognized the /h/ phoneme had it occurred.<sup>22</sup> The tens were reported to be formed by the suffix *-(h)ogofulu*, rather than today’s *gofulu*, though its variant *-fulu* was used, as today, to form 20.<sup>23</sup> Whether this reflects a linguistic change, or analogical reconstruction by the French, or deliberate simplification by the Tongans (foreigner-talk) is unclear.

Among the higher numbers, *teau* ‘100’ and *afe* ‘1,000’ were also reported by Mariner and are in current use. The forms recorded for ‘10,000’ are *kilu* (BdE), *kilu afe* and *kilu* (LaB), and *mano* (G), while Mariner also recorded *mano*, the current form. For ‘100,000’

which according to Mariner and current usage is *kilu*, the forms recorded were *mano* (BdE, LaB, A) and *mano, kilu* (G). Given that *kilu* had been recorded by Anderson for ‘1,000’, there was probably some fluidity in the numbers for the higher powers of ten in the late 18th century. Mariner commented that La Billardière’s ‘general accuracy with respect to the numbers does him great credit’, but dismissed the higher numbers recorded by the Frenchman—up to 10<sup>15</sup>—as not being numbers at all but insults and obscenities which made him the butt of ‘Tonga wit’. Mariner was probably correct, but at least La Billardière’s terms *lauale* ‘10,000,000’ and *launoa* ‘100,000,000’ were recorded by BdE, G, and several other Europeans, including Anderson and Mariner himself. They thus seem to have been genuine numbers, albeit with lower values.<sup>24</sup>

In later editions of Mariner’s narrative, his editor John Martin endorsed the plausibility of Tongans having words for numbers up to 100,000: ‘we ought to reflect, that a people who are in the frequent habit of counting out yams, &c. to the amount of one, two, or three thousand, must become tolerably good numerators, by finding out some method of rendering the task of counting more easy’. Moreover, numbers up to 10<sup>10</sup> have been reported for languages spoken in Micronesia.<sup>25</sup>

## Registers

Churchward notes that in Tongan many meanings are represented by as many as five different words, according to what might be called ‘register’: that is, depending on the status of the person addressed or referred to. For example, the ordinary word for ‘eat’ is *kai*, the polite word is *tokoni*, the honorific is *ɔilo*, the regal is *taumafa*, and the derogatory is *mama*.<sup>26</sup> The French wordlists distinguish three registers of Tongan, noting that some words applied to *tuɔa* ‘servants, slaves’ (Churchward’s ‘commoner’), others to *muɔa* ‘chief of a district or family; second-class chief; person of second lowest rank’ (Churchward’s ‘high chief’s attendant’), and others to *ɔeiki* (chiefs). However, they give only two examples: ‘go’, *ɔalu* for *tuɔa* and *hāɔele* for *ɔeiki*; and ‘return’, *foki mai* for *tuɔa* and *maliu mai* for *muɔa* and *ɔeiki*. No other early wordlist mentions this phenomenon.

## Syntax

Little can be said of the grammar of 18th-century Tonga based on these wordlists, which comprise mainly single words. It is also clear from the few phrases cited there and in the narratives that a kind of simplified Tongan foreigner-talk was used in communication by both parties. Even Mariner, relatively fluent after four years in Tonga, evidently spoke a simplified Tongan with many mispronunciations. For example, La Billardière’s narrative includes the phrases *ɔikai mate* ‘do not kill him, let him not die’, uttered by Bruni d’Entrecasteaux; *ɔikai fakatau* ‘not selling, not being sold’, uttered by the Tongan ‘queen’, and *tapu mijimiji* ‘intercourse forbidden’, by the wife of the man the French knew as Fatafé (Fuanunuiava).<sup>27</sup> These phrases are all ungrammatical, lacking obligatory elements such as tense markers, subject pronouns, complementizers, and articles, as is typical in foreigner-talk. Similar ungrammatical phrases are found in the French wordlists: *au heni* ‘I am here’, *atu pē* ‘I give you this as a present’, *mai mata* ‘let me see’, *mate fieikai* ‘I am hungry’, and *tapu lea* ‘do not speak’. While unsurprising, the presence of a Tongan foreigner-talk has not been previously

reported—again in contrast to Fiji, where that used with and by pre-missionary visitors has been described in detail.<sup>28</sup>

### Fijian loanwords

Words in the French lists clearly borrowed from Fijian include *kulo*, *-pitu* in *taopitu* (discussed below); *isa* ‘interjection of impatience’; and *jiega* ‘no’ from *sega*. Parallel terms also figure in contemporary English vocabularies, but not in Churchward’s dictionary.

### Pronouns

As in most Polynesian languages, Tongan pronouns distinguish four persons (with inclusive/exclusive distinction in first), three numbers (singular, dual, and plural), and numerous syntactic functions, including independent, subject, and many types of possessive. There is no indication in the historical materials that this situation differed in the late 18th century, though information supplied is meagre. No visitor provided systematic lists of pronouns, as some did of numerals, and little is said on any other than the independent pronouns.

The most remarkable claim of the French lists, on which all four agree, is that there was a first person (presumably inclusive) independent pronoun of the form *ita* ‘us’, with *itaua* as the dual form and *itauatolu* the plural. Not only is this a different base from the usual *kita-*, but it also takes an otherwise unattested plural suffix *-uatolu*, rather than *-utolu*. Both forms are so unexpected as to invite scepticism. However, at least one other variation in pronoun form is well attested in early wordlists—the optionality (or absence) of the prefix *ki-*, first witnessed in Anderson’s *toooa* ‘both of us’ (for *taua*, now *kitaua*), and confirmed by Mariner’s *now’ooa* ‘The dual number of the pronoun *they*, used after the verb *them*’, and by West for all the independent non-singular pronouns.<sup>29</sup>

### Other vocabulary

The following is a semantically arranged vocabulary of other words in the French wordlists which are not found, or are given a different meaning, in Churchward’s modern dictionary.<sup>30</sup> Space limitations prevent the systematic inclusion of comparative references and preclude any discussion of whether such changes are real, due to mistakes in elicitation, or owing to Churchward’s gaps or mistakes.

#### *Geographical*

Unusually among the early visitors, the French made a detailed effort to elicit names for compass and/or wind directions, listed in the following table and compared with the modern equivalents. In contrast, Anderson noted only two ‘winds’.<sup>31</sup>

The only two of the French terms recognizable today are ‘north’ and ‘south’. *Luluga*, in ‘west wind’, today means ‘western islands of Ha’apai’. The word for ‘east wind’ means literally ‘wind from the sun’, and so may be a nonce word. The word for ‘northwest’ is almost certainly a mistranscription for *fakajiu* (with /j/ written as <tc>): E.E.V. Collocott recorded *taufakasiu* as an ‘old name’ for a ‘wind, apparently almost, or dead, north’.<sup>32</sup>

There is one other notable geographic term: *kō* ‘island’, perhaps a misunderstanding of *kō* ‘over there’.







*mijimiji* ‘coition (act of)’; also Samwell, but *cf.* Anderson, ‘to suck as a child. To suck water from a Cocoa nut’,<sup>41</sup> now ‘suck’. The notably libidinous Welsh surgeon Samwell might, like the French naturalist La Billardière, have been less coy in acknowledging sexual relations with Indigenous women than were the more prudish English or the Scot Anderson.

*tauloto* ‘middle finger’, now ‘middle’.

Society, kinship

*agi* ‘music’, perhaps misunderstanding of *agi* ‘to lead’.

*fagutua* ‘wrestle’; Anderson *fagutua*, *fagatua*, now *fagatua*.

*faʔē* ‘sister’, now ‘mother’, probably misunderstanding.

*foena* ‘my brother’; Anderson *fohena* ‘son, brother’.<sup>42</sup>

*hiva* ‘dance’; Anderson, ‘a song’,<sup>43</sup> now ‘sing’.

*liaki* ‘kind of game played with the fingers’, now ‘swing, toss, fling’.

*muʔa* ‘chief of a district or family; second class chief’, now ‘(in former times) high chief’s attendant’.

*tama* ‘child’, now ‘child, esp son’.

*tamajiʔi* ‘child, esp girl’, now *tamasiʔi* ‘child, esp boy’.

*taʔokete* ‘older son’, now ‘same sex elder sibling’.

*tuofefine* ‘oldest daughter’, now ‘male’s older sister’.

*ʔohoana* ‘marry, have a wife’; Mariner ‘a spouse, to marry’,<sup>44</sup> now ‘wife (obsolete)’.

### Houses

*ava* ‘window, hole’; Anderson *ava* ‘window, hole’,<sup>45</sup> now ‘hole’.

*tofoifu* ‘ridge of house or shed’, now *toʔufufū*.

*ʔato* ‘large shed’, perhaps misunderstanding; Anderson *ato e fale*, ‘roof of a house’, Mariner *ato* ‘to roof, to thatch’,<sup>46</sup> now ‘thatch, roof’

### Canoes and Sailing

*foheʔalo* ‘to paddle’

*kakaʔa*, *kakaha* ‘a paddle’

*ʔalo* ‘to paddle’

### Weapons

*kai* ‘log-shaped club’.

*kaifana*, *fana* ‘bow’; Forster *fana* ‘bow’, Samwell *kaufana* ‘bow’, Mariner *ʔakaufana* ‘bow’,<sup>47</sup> now *kaufana*; *cf.* *kaho* ‘reed, arrow’; Anderson and Samwell.<sup>48</sup>

*maui* (form uncertain), *tao* ‘spear’, now only *tao*.

*taopitu* ‘bamboo spear’; borrowed from Fijian *bitu* ‘bamboo’, *cf.* *pitu* ‘yellow bamboo’.

*toki* ‘spade-shaped club’; probably misunderstanding, since many early visitors recorded *toki* for ‘axe’.

*ʔakau* ‘club’, now *ʔakautā*.

*ʔulumata* ‘arrow’, now *gahau*; a loan from Fijian *gasau*, so ‘ulumata—possibly *ʔulumatā* or *ʔulumataʔa*—may be an earlier name for an Indigenous type of arrow that was superseded by the Fijian form, possibly composed of *ʔulu* ‘head’ and the now obsolete *matā/mataʔa* ‘obsidian’.

### Other Indigenous artefacts

*fohu*, *fou* 'tool made of shark's teeth'; *fofo* 'to pierce, make a hole' (probably *foufou* or *fouhufou*); Anderson *fou* 'gimlet, or shark's tooth, used for that purpose'.<sup>49</sup>  
*kulo* 'jar for storing or drinking water; earthenware pot'; Anderson *kulo* 'globular earthen pot, or vessel';<sup>50</sup> borrowed from Fijian *kuro* 'pot', now only 'pot'.  
*laulau* 'mother-of-pearl', now 'tray'  
*mimiha* 'pan's pipes'; Anderson *mimiha* 'a reed or small organ',<sup>51</sup> now 'mouth-organ'.  
*monumanu* 'inflated pig's bladder'  
*nofoa* 'seat'; Anderson *nofoa* 'a seat', Mariner *nofoa* 'chair or bench to sit on',<sup>52</sup> Samoa *nofoa* 'seat, chair'.  
*taka* 'fishing line', now only *afo*.  
*tui*, *hui* 'needle'; Anderson *tui* 'needle',<sup>53</sup> now only *hui*.

### Tattooing

*alapeka* 'tattoo in broad bands round the waist'.  
*fui* 'tattoo on the thigh'.  
*kafa* 'tattoo like a wart'.  
*lafo* 'tattoo like a freckle on the face'.  
*latetatau* 'tattooing instrument'.  
*male tatau* 'tattooing'; now *male* 'tap on the head'.  
*tafa* 'other kind of tattoo'; Anderson *tafa* 'raised marks burnt, to cut'.<sup>54</sup>  
*tai* 'tattooing in concentric circles on the arms and shoulders'.  
*tatau* 'black mark on the body'; Anderson *tatau* 'puncturation'.<sup>55</sup>

### Ornaments

*lei* 'ear ornament'; now 'whale's tooth, ivory'.  
*mate* 'burn on the face'.  
*pala* 'crown of red feathers'.  
*pulau* 'red feather headdress'.  
*tuki* 'mark on the cheeks from being struck'.

### Food

*mahi* 'fruit of *Tacca* [arrowroot]'; probably misidentification, cf. Wilson *mahi* 'sour paste';<sup>56</sup> Samoan *masi* 'fermented breadfruit', East Uvea *mahi* 'fermented breadfruit or bananas', etc.  
*pupuatahi* 'salt'; also Anderson; replaced by Fijian borrowing *māsima*, recorded by Mariner.<sup>57</sup>

### Introduced artefacts

*fana* 'musket ball, firearm'; cf. *kaufana* 'bow', now 'to shoot'.<sup>58</sup>  
*ipu* 'spoon, cup'; now 'cup'  
*kahoa* 'glass beads, necklace of glass beads'; Anderson 'bead, necklace', Samwell 'beads', Mariner 'necklace',<sup>59</sup> now 'necklace, garland hung round neck'.

*kumete* ‘our plates’; Samwell ‘a wooden dish,’<sup>60</sup> now ‘kava bowl’. Jan Tent and I proposed that this word was borrowed from Dutch *kommetje* ‘small bowl’ in the 17th century, most likely from Tasman. The fact that it is found in most of Polynesia might be taken as an argument against this etymology, but it may also conversely testify to the continuing long distance voyaging capabilities of Polynesians after the general reduction of such voyages around the 14th century.<sup>61</sup>

*pāpālagi* ‘any clothing; European clothes’; Forster ‘cloth, English, or any piece of our dress’; Samwell ‘our cloth’; Mariner, ‘white people; Europeans; also European manufactures, such as cloth, linen, &c.’<sup>62</sup> now ‘European, belonging to any white-skinned race’. Tent and I used such evidence to argue that *pāpālagi* in Fijian, Rotuman, and Western Polynesian languages originally denoted various European manufactures.<sup>63</sup> Mariner’s usage was probably on the cusp of the term’s semantic shift from signifying European goods to Europeans themselves.

*pipi*, *helekoji* ‘pair of scissors’; Anderson *pipi* ‘scissors’<sup>64</sup> now only *helekosi*, cf. *pipi* ‘kind of bivalve shellfish’. Tongans applied the word *pipi* to scissors by extension from their usage of a bivalve shell to shave their faces, a practice described by La Billardière.<sup>65</sup>

*puloga* ‘our hats’; Mariner *puloga* ‘hat, cap’<sup>66</sup> now ‘ceremonial covering’.

*tute* ‘a kind of linen’ (perhaps named after Captain Cook, whose Tongan name was Tute).

*ukamea*, *fehi* ‘iron’; now only *ukamea*, cf. *fehi* ‘kind of hardwood tree, *Intsia bijuga*’.

## Conclusion

Given the brevity of their stay in Tonga, the savants and mariners of Bruni d’Entrecasteaux’s expedition achieved remarkable success in their self-appointed task of documenting Tongan words and phrases. The value of the vocabularies they collected is enhanced by the timing of the French visit, at the midpoint of the four decades after 1773 during which—in the distant wake of very fleeting 17th-century Dutch passages—a growing body of linguistic materials was accumulated in the context of intensifying Indigenous encounters with seaborne or briefly resident Europeans. The historically rich lexicons communicated by Tongans and recorded with varying precision by visitors hint at longstanding local readiness to appropriate novel things or ideas. These wordlists throw useful anticipatory light on the linguistic, material, social, and environmental transformations of the ensuing two centuries.

This chapter in this book can only sample a small proportion of the lexical details recorded by the French and reflect only in passing on their implications. Similarly, the rich comparative potential for historical linguistics offered by differences in French, English, and Spanish phonology is here limited to citations from English wordlists, while Spanish materials have perforce been omitted entirely. These themes await my indepth comparative linguistic analysis in a specialist forum.

## Notes

- 1 Anon., [Vocabulaires]; Gicquel Destouches, [Vocabulaires], ANF (MAR 5 JJ 1<sup>4</sup>); La Billardière, 'Vocabulaire de la langue des îles des Amis', in *Relation du voyage ...* (Paris, 1800), II, Tables:47–57; Rossel, 'Vocabulaire de la langue des habitans des îles des Amis', in Bruni d'Entrecasteaux, *Voyage ...* (Paris, 1808), I:557–72.
- 2 Le Maire, 'Spiegel der Australische Navigatie ...', in *Nieuwe Werelt, anders ghenempt West-Indien* (Amsterdam, 1622):fol. 84–5; Sharp, ed., *The voyages of Abel Janszoon Tasman* (Oxford, 1968):149–71.
- 3 These figures are tallied from selected published materials only: Beaglehole, ed., *The Journals of Captain James Cook ...* (Cambridge, 1955–74), III:1045–8; Blixen, 'Vocabulario de la lengua de las islas del Señor de Mayorga (Vava'u), compuesto durante la estadia de la fragata Princesa, en 1781', *Moana: estudios de antropología* 1:8 (1976); Cook and King, *A Voyage to the Pacific Ocean ...* (London, 1784), III:531–42; J.R. Forster, *Observations Made during a Voyage Round the World ...* (London, 1778):facing 284; Lanyon-Orgill, ed., *Captain Cook's South Sea Island Vocabularies* (London, 1979):63–6, 141–53; Martin, *An Account of the Natives of the Tonga Islands ...* (London, 1817), 2 vols; (2nd edition, London, 1818), 2 vols; [Vason], *An Authentic Narrative of Four Years' Residence at Tongataboo ...* (London, 1810); Viana, *Diario de Viaje* (Montevideo, 1958), 2 vols; [Wilson], ed., *A Missionary Voyage ... in the Years 1796, 1797, 1798, in the Ship Duff* (London, 1799):97–111, 227–85.
- 4 Geraghty, 'Fijian Dialect Diversity and Foreigner Talk', in *Fijian Language Studies ...* (Suva, 1978):51–67.
- 5 Following the usual linguistic conventions, angled brackets < > indicate spelling; square brackets [ ] indicate phonetic transcription; slanting brackets / / indicate phonemic transcription; and asterisk \* indicates a reconstructed form (one that is believed to have been spoken in the past but for which there is no written record).
- 6 I have compiled a separate complete listing of spelling conventions used in these French vocabularies for each Tongan phoneme.
- 7 Bruni d'Entrecasteaux, *Voyage*, I:314.
- 8 Thevenard [Ministre de la Marine], 'Etat sommaire des livres de voyage, de navigation, de phisique, d'histoire naturelle et autres remises à M. d'Entrecasteaux ...', n.d., in SHD, 'Expédition du contre-amiral d'Entrecasteaux ...', 1785–1810 (MAR BB<sup>4</sup> 992).
- 9 Bruny d'Entrecasteaux, *Relation*, I:300.
- 10 Beaglehole, *Journals*, III:956.
- 11 Cook and King, *Voyage*, III:539; Lanyon-Orgill, *Vocabularies*:64; [Wilson], *Missionary Voyage*:264.
- 12 Clark, *Aspects of Proto-Polynesian Syntax* (Auckland, 1976):23.
- 13 Beaglehole, *Journals*, III:1047; Forster, *Observations*:facing 284; Martin, 'A Vocabulary, Tonga and English', in *An Account* (1817), II:[413] ff.
- 14 Vava'u might have been slower to adopt vowel assimilation, hence forms such as *fafine* recorded by Mariner, who spent most of his time in Tonga in Vava'u. Personal communication, Wendy Pond, 2013.
- 15 Tasman, 'Journael ...', 31 January 1643, Nationaal Archief, Den Haag <http://proxy.handle.net/10648/d7c4ff83-af91-4443-b1fc-d2df3d075aa1>
- 16 Sharp, *Voyages*:165–6.
- 17 Beaglehole, *Journals*, III:103, 162, 866.
- 18 Cook and King, *Voyage*, III:531.
- 19 Churchward, *Tongan Grammar* (Oxford, 1953):1.
- 20 Ibid.

- 21 West, *Ten Years in South-Central Polynesia* (London, 1865):455–6.
- 22 Beaglehole, *Journals*, III:1047; Cook and King, *Voyage*, III:531; Forster, *Observations*:facing 284; Martin, *An Account* (1817), II:389.
- 23 Churchward, *Tongan Grammar*:171.
- 24 Cook and King, *Voyage*, III:532; Martin, *An Account* (1817), II:389–91.
- 25 Martin, ‘A Grammar of the Tonga Language’, in *An Account* (1818):[345] ff; Harrison and Jackson, ‘Higher Numerals in several Micronesian Languages’, in *Studies in Micronesian Linguistics* (Canberra, 1984):61, 67.
- 26 Churchward, *Tongan Grammar*:304.
- 27 La Billardière, *Relation*, II:115, 128, 138.
- 28 Geraghty, ‘Fijian Dialect Diversity and Foreigner Talk’.
- 29 Cook and King, *Voyage*, III:537; Martin, ‘Vocabulary’ (1817); West, *Ten Years*:481–8.
- 30 Churchward, *Tongan Dictionary* (Nuku‘alofa, 1959). When in doubt, I checked with my Tongan-speaking colleague Tilisi Bryce, whom I here thank specifically.
- 31 Cook and King, *Voyage*, III:538.
- 32 Collocott, ‘Supplementary Tongan vocabulary ...’, *Journal of the Polynesian Society* 34:3 (1925):202.
- 33 Cook and King, *Voyage*, III:531; Martin, ‘A Vocabulary, Tonga and English’ in *An Account* (1818).
- 34 Watling, *A Guide to the Birds of Fiji and Western Polynesia...* (Suva, 2001):128, 161.
- 35 Cook and King, *Voyage*, III:533, 535.
- 36 White, Clark, and Bedford, ‘Distribution, Present and Past, of *Rattus praetor* in the Pacific and its Implications’, *Pacific Science* 54:2 (2000):105–17.
- 37 Watling, *Guide*:117.
- 38 Cook and King, *Voyage*, III:532; Martin, ‘Vocabulary’ (1817).
- 39 Cook and King, *Voyage*, III:532.
- 40 Lanyon-Orgill, *Vocabularies*:63; Mariner, ‘Vocabulary’ (1817).
- 41 Beaglehole, *Journals*, III:956, 1034; Cook and King, *Voyage*, III:539.
- 42 Ibid.
- 43 Ibid.:540.
- 44 Martin, ‘Vocabulary’ (1818).
- 45 Cook and King, *Voyage*:536.
- 46 Ibid.:532; Martin, ‘Vocabulary’ (1817).
- 47 Ibid.; Beaglehole, *Journals*, III:1045.
- 48 Ibid.; Cook and King, *Voyage*, III:532
- 49 Ibid.
- 50 Ibid.:535.
- 51 Ibid.:532.
- 52 Ibid.; Martin, ‘Vocabulary’ (1817).
- 53 Cook and King, *Voyage*, III:533.
- 54 Ibid.:531, 532.
- 55 [Anderson], ‘A Table, Exhibiting, at one View, Specimens of Different Languages Spoken in the South Sea ...’, in Cook, *A Voyage Towards the South Pole and Round the World ...* (London, 1777), II:facing 364.
- 56 [Wilson], *Missionary Voyage*:241.
- 57 Cook and King, *Voyage*, III:537; Martin, ‘Vocabulary’ (1817).
- 58 See notes above on ‘bow’ and ‘arrow’.
- 59 Beaglehole, *Journals*, III:1047; Cook and King, *Voyage*, III:531; Martin, ‘Vocabulary’ (1817)
- 60 Beaglehole, *Journals*, III:1045.
- 61 Geraghty and Tent, ‘From Lowlands to Islands: Dutch Loans in Polynesia’, in *Borrowing: A Pacific Perspective* (Canberra, 2004):127–30.
- 62 Beaglehole, *Journals*, III:1045; Lanyon-Orgill, *Vocabularies*:63; Martin, ‘Vocabulary’ (1817).
- 63 Tent and Geraghty, ‘Exploding Sky or Exploded Myth? The Origin of Papālagi’, *Journal of the Polynesian Society* 110:2 (2001):171–214.
- 64 Cook and King, *Voyage*, III:534.
- 65 La Billardière, *Relation*, II:120.
- 66 Martin, ‘Vocabulary’ (1817).