

## SHORTER COMMUNICATIONS

### Gagana Taumualua – Dual Medium Language methodology: Keynote Speech presented at a Conference on Bilingual Education, July 7, 2014, Pago Pago, American Samoa

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I wish to acknowledge but at the same time refrain from reciting in detail the dignified honorifics of the dignitaries present today, as I believe these have already been orated earlier by the previous speakers. Suffice it to say that I pay honour and tribute to these as is traditionally expected. And so I say *Tulou, tulou, tulouna lava* to the chiefs and orators, as well as the social and cultural hierarchies of Tutuila and Manu'a, similarly, I pay tribute to the Lieutenant Governor of American Sāmoa and the office holders of the Senate, members of different denominations, all the dignified guests present, and particularly the Director of Education and the Department of Education.

*'Ou te manatu 'ole'ā lē toe paopaoina fa'atupemuli o taulafoga pa'ia ma sā ma faigatā o le asō 'auā o lea 'ua mē'a ona paepaeulufanua i saunoaga 'ua mē'a ona folasia i malae. 'Ole'ā ta'oto fo'i fa'amaene o tai loloto, 'ou te lē toe auauina, 'ae tau lava ina 'ou pa'i ma fa'atulou i pa'ia ia 'ina ne'i alu loa se fa'amatalaga, ona faitauina ai lea o le tautalaga. Tulou tulou tulou lava pa'ia o Tutuila ma Manu'a 'ua potopoto i le asō, 'aemaise fo'i pa'ia fa'alemālō, i le afio o lau afioga a le Sui Kovana, 'ae fa'apea fo'i sui mamalu o le Senate, 'o pa'ia fa'aleAtua, 'ae tainane lau afioga a le Fa'atonu Sili o Ā'oga, ma le 'Ōfisa o Ā'oga.*

I acknowledge that we have also offered our gratitude to the Almighty for the generosity of his love and his gift of life that has enabled us to meet in good health and spirits today. Secondly, I thank the Director of Education and the Dual Medium Language committee for giving me the opportunity to explain the new dual medium language approach for teaching the children of Tutuila and Manu'a, and to introduce the team from New Zealand, consisting of two senior lecturers and experts on bilingual education from Auckland University, as well as a senior editor of children's reading resources from the Lift Education branch of the South Pacific Publishing company of Wellington, New Zealand.

*'Ou te talitonu fo'i 'ua mē'a ona momoli le vi'iga i le Atua 'ona 'o lona alofa ma lona agalelei 'ua tatou feiloa'i ai i le lagi e mamā ma le soifua manuia. 'O lona lua, e 'ave la'u fa'afetai 'i le afioga i le Fa'atonu Sili ma le Komiti o le Gagana Taumualua 'ona 'o le avanoa 'ua tu'uina mai 'ou te faia ai se 'upu e autala ai, ma taumafai e fa'amanino le agaga o le fa'amoemoe o lenei vaiaso tāua. 'O se avanoa tāua fo'i e fa'ailoa atu ai le 'aumalaga o faiā'oga sinia po'o sikola o le iunivesitē o 'Aukilani 'aemaise le ali'i fa'atonu sinia o alagā'oa tau a'oa'oga mai le kamupanī lomitusi a le Pasefika i Sautē o Ueligitone.*

There are three appropriate proverbs or sayings in Samoan which I have chosen to highlight the points I want to make.... and I believe they can stimulate as well as focus our thinking... and they are..: (i) a tree does not bend on its own free will... secondly, each new breadfruit crop requires its own harvesting pole... and thirdly, our heritage has great bearing on our identity. A focusing question as well should help to direct our minds to the reasons for change, and that is, Why change the methodology of teaching in one language to that of using two languages; from English... to English and Samoan?

*E tolu ni alagā'upu po'o ni fa'a'upuga fa'atōmānatu 'ua 'ou fa'aaogāina e fa'atomua ai le mau o la'u tautalaga, ma e fa'apea: muamua (i) e lē falala fua se lā'au; (ii) lona lua, 'o le fuata ma lona lou;... ma lona tolu, (iii) 'o le tagata ma lona tupu'aga, 'o le tagata fo'i ma lona fa'asinomaga. 'O le fesili e ao fo'i ona fai, e ta'iala ai se manatu, e fa'apea: 'Aiseā 'ua sui ai le metotia e a'oa'o ai le fānau mai le gagana 'Igilisi, i le metotia fou, 'ole'ā fa'aaogā ai i le gagana Sāmoa ma le gagana 'Igilisi?*

Viewpoint: A tree does not bend of its own free will. The Department of Education especially the Director is concerned that an urgent solution be found for the very high failure rate of students who sit a key basic test to determine their educational futures each year. A system clearly needs fixing when a huge percentage, in this case, 70 percent fail the test. That means out of every hundred students who sit, only 30 will pass this test while 70 do not. This is a huge failure rate and a major disappointment for the families and students concerned.

*'O le mau: E ala ona falala le lā'au ona 'ua agi se matagi. 'Ua iai le naunauta'iga o le 'Ōfisa o Ā'oga 'aemaise le Fa'atonu Sili, e sa'ili se fofō 'ona 'o le maualuga tele o le fuainumera o tamaiti e lē pāpasi i tausaga ta'itasi i su'ega e ta'ua o 'fua fa'ata'atitia' (standard tests) a le 'Ōfisa o Ā'oga. E na'o le 30 e pāpasi i le ulua'i su'ega ('basic') 'ae 70 e lē au; mai se to'aselau o tamaiti e su'e i tausaga ta'itasi. 'O se numera maualuga tele leni 'ua lē papasi, ma 'o se fa'anoanoaga tele fo'i i mātua ma 'āiga o nei tamaiti.*

No doubt the government and country would also be very concerned about these disastrous results, and it would also be very unfair and also unjust for a whole lot of people to fail such a basic educational hurdle early in their life journeys. Clearly it must be changed. This is the principal reason why the Director has moved to remedy this situation, by introducing a method, as well as a new pathway which will provide a solution. It must be remembered that the method that has been used for about forty years has used only one language- English for the education of Tutuila and Manu'a's children. It is time to replace this unworkable approach and put in place one that works, and one that creates hope. It's time that the educational journeys of the young of Tutuila and Manu'a is imbued with that hope, and rewarded well with success.

*'Ou te talitonu 'olo'o popole fo'i le mālō 'aemaise le atunu'u 'ona 'o le lē lelei ma le lē manuia (unfair; unjust) o lea itū'āiga a'oa'oga, mo alo ma fānau a Tutuila ma Manu'a. 'Ua tatau ona sui. 'O le māfua'aga lea 'ua a'e ai le tōfā ma le utaga i le Fa'atonu Sili e sui se metotia, sui se ālāfua se'i sa'ili ai se fofō o le fa'afitāuli. 'Ia manatua, 'o le metotia 'olo'o fa'aaogā nei, e tusa ma le 40 tausaga o fa'aaogā pea, 'ae 'o le gagana 'olo'o fa'aaogā, e na'o le gagana 'Igilisi. Ua siliga tali i seu le fa'alagolago pea i leni metotia, 'ua lē maua ai se fa'amoemoega. 'Ua fia maua se mapusaga ma se fa'amanuiga a le faigamalaga fa'alea'oa'oga, a alo ma fānau a Tutuila ma Manu'a.*

Each new breadfruit crop needs its own harvesting pole. The proverb suggests that a problem needs its particular solution. In the view of the Director, based on research and international experience, there is a workable and proven solution for this major challenge. That solution requires the use of two languages to teach our children. The method is a proven approach, and works and has been researched widely internationally, and found appropriate for countries or populations // whose children are taught in a language different from their first language. The method is a bilingual approach, called the dual medium language approach where Samoan and English work side by side in teaching the children of Tutuila and Manu'a in the classroom.

*'O le fuata ma lona lou: E talitonu le mau, e tofua lava le fa'afitāuli ma lona fofō fa'apitoa. 'O le talitonuga o le Fa'atonu Sili, e fa'avae i sa'ili'iliga mai potu ā'oga 'ese'ese o le lalolagi, 'ua iai se fofō 'ua fa'amaonia lona aogā mo leni fa'afitāuli. 'O le māfua'aga lea 'ole'ā fa'aaogā ai gagana e lua e a'oa'o ai le fānau. 'O leni ālāfua po'o le metotia, 'ua fa'amaonia lona aogā mo atunu'u e 'ese a latou gagana muamua, ma le gagana lea a a'oa'o ai a latou fānau, e pei o Tutuila ma Manu'a. 'O le metotia e ta'ua o le bilingual po'o le dual medium language approach, lea 'ua filifilia e fa'aaogā e Tutuila ma Manu'a, e gālulue va'ava'alua ai le gagana Sāmoa ma le gagana 'Igilisi i ona potu ā'oga.*

It is a method that has been named Gagana Taumualua, as it is a title that captures the essence but also the spirit and the purpose of the policy. The name itself was fashioned and shaped from an ancient, significant sailing vessel called the 'alia, which had great importance to the islands of Manu'a. It has been renamed *taumualua* to reflect the shape and nature of the vessel – which was that it had two hulls joined firmly together to provide strength and security for the ancient paramount chiefs such as the Tui Manu'a and Malietoa who used them to traverse the wide Pasefika/ Pacific Ocean, the largest ocean on our globe. The title name also anchors the program firmly to these shores as it has been shaped specifically as a method to be used here. The method itself has been widely researched by bilingual and dual medium language experts internationally.

*'Ua fa'aigoaina nei 'o le Gagana Taumualua, 'ona 'o se igoa e fetauti / toe talafeagai mo le fa'amoemoe. 'O se igoa e āfua mai i tala'aga fa'aanamua o 'ele'ele nei o Tutuila ma Manu'a. Sā iai i aso anamua se va'a tele o le Tui Manu'a na ta'uua o le 'alia, 'ae 'ua fa'aigoaina mo lenei fa'amoemoe 'o le taumualua, 'ona e lua va'a sā sai mau fa'atasi, sā fōlau ai le Tui Manu'a, ma isi tupu o Sāmoa e pei o le Malietoa i le vasa Pasefika, // 'o le vasa pito sili ona telē o le lalolagi. 'O le māfua'aga lea 'ua fa'aigoa ai le metotia 'o le Gagana Taumualua. 'Ua filifilia e taula ai le polokalame, i 'ele'ele tonu nei 'ua tamua ma fa'aaogā ai lenei metotia. 'O lenei metotia 'ua fa'amaonia i su'esu'ega a liguisi 'aemaise i latou e fa'amatua i a'oa'oga i gagana e lua.*

### **Evidence to support the choice of using two languages (*Fa'amaoniga o lona aogā*)**

*I le mau a Cummins (2007), 'o se tasi o toe 'ulutaia o matā'upu tau gagana taumualua o le lalolagi, 'ua ia fa'apea mai ai: 'o 'auala e a'oa'oga ai se tamaitiiti i lana gagana muamua 'ina 'ia iloa ai fa'alogu, tautala, tusitusi ma faitau tusi, 'ole'ā aogā tele fo'i e a'oa'oga ai lana gagana lona lua. 'O le mau fo'i lea a Colin Baker, (2011), ma isi toe'ulutaia e pei o Ofelia Garcia o a'oa'oga i gagana e lua.' 'O lona uiga, 'a mausalī le fa'avae o se tamaitiiti i lana gagana muamua, 'o se papa mālosi lea e fau a'i ma atia'e ai lana gagana lona lua. 'A lelei ma 'ato'atoa lana fa'alogu, tautala, tusitusi ma le faitau i lana gagana Sāmoa, 'ole'ā mautū le fa'avae e fafau ai lana gagana 'Igilisi. I se taimi mulimuliane ole'a outou fa'afogoga ai i alii ma tama'ita'i tomai i gagana taumualua mai Niu Sila. 'Ole'a latou saunoa ma molimau i le tāua o lenei metotia, ma fa'apupula atili ai le tōfā manino ma le loloto o le filosofia o a'oa'oga e fa'avae i gagana e lua.*

Researchers like Jim Cummins (2007), one of the greatest proponents of the bilingual approach in classrooms argues clearly that: the skills and approaches used by a child in using and learning about his first language to listen, speak, write and read will be very useful and can be transferred to the learning and the use of his / her second language. Other experts such as Colin Baker (2011), Ofelia Garcia (2009) and many others all support this central belief and approach. When the child has begun to build his or her skills in listening, speaking, writing and reading in Samoan, a solid platform is being built for the second language, English to be used. Later today and in the week we will hear my colleagues from New Zealand who are experts in bilingual education talk about the importance of this approach but also the deep philosophical foundations of the approach which centres squarely on the use of two languages.

At the outset of the programme, the Samoan language will be used at the ratio of 95 percent Samoan and five percent English at the K5- Level One. It is a method recommended by research and classroom experience to cater for the young Samoan child whose listening skills will be shaped and whose learning will also be maximised by the fact that he or she understands all that is taking place / as it is his or her first language being used. It will also expand the child's mind and this will begin the

process of unravelling the surroundings of his or her the environment and assist his or her learning of the important relationships of family, friends as well as the school.

The ancient Greek philosopher, who is also the father of Western philosophy, Socrates, is well known for the depth of his philosophical belief when he said, Know thyself – and I would add, firstly and foremost.

*‘O le ‘amataga o le polokalame, e fa’aaogā le gagana Sāmoa e ‘amata ai le a’oa’oga o tamaiti i vasega ‘amata (K5 – Vasega 1) i le 95 pasene i le gagana Sāmoa. ‘Ua māfua lea mea, ‘ona ‘o le talitonuga e fa’avae i sa’ili’iliga, ‘ua fa’apea mai, e matuā manino lelei ai le māfaufau o le tamitiiti i so’o se mea e a’oa’o ‘auā ‘ole’ā mālamalama lelei ai. E lē gata i lea, ‘ae ‘ole’ā matala ai lona māfaufau ma ia iloa fetu’una’i mea e na te va’aia, mea e na te fa’alogo i ai i lona si’osi’omaga, ma a’oa’o lelei ai fo’i ma lana tautala ‘auā, e mālamalama ai mai lona ‘āiga, ana uō, ‘aemaise lana ā’oga. ‘O le sini ‘autū lea o so’o se potu ā’oga. ‘Ina ‘ia a’oa’o le tamitiiti e tusa ma ona ala, e tusa ma lona si’osi’omaga, e tusa ma lona lalolagi ‘olo’o ola ane ai..*

*‘O le mau fa’afilosofia po’o le talitonuga a le tamā o le tōfā manino a atunu’u o Europa, le potu mai Eleni o Sokarate, (Socrates) o anamua, faimai; ‘Sa’ili muamua ‘ina ‘ia ‘e mālamalama i lou tagata ma lou lotoifale.*

### **Additional views (Nisi mau fa’aopoopo)**

Supportive views can be found from University research based on secondary school experiences in Sāmoa and New Zealand where Samoan students are learning. In these classes, findings have shown that Samoan students who are studying science, chemistry and mathematics have clearly found it advantageous to use Samoan via their teachers being speakers of Samoan as well as English- to understand the complex concepts that are part of these subjects. The studies by Hang and Carter (1996), and Latu (2006) of Auckland, showed an increase in the marks as well as the comprehension of these students after the Samoan teachers engaged the Samoan language in explaining difficult vocabulary used in English.

*‘O isi mau fa’aopoopo, e maua mai i sa’ili’iliga a lunivesitē sā faia i totonu o ā’oga mauululuga i Sāmoa ma Niu Sila, i vasega e ā’o’oga ai tama ma teine Sāmoa. ‘Ua fa’amaonia fo’i i nei sa’ili’iliga le tāua tele o le gagana Sāmoa i le fa’amaninoga o vāega ‘ese’ese o matā’upu e pei o le saienisi, kemisi (chemistry) fa’apēnā fo’i ma le matematika po’o le numera. ‘Ua molimauina i nei sa’ili’iliga le lelei ma le mauuluga o togi po’o maka o tama ma teine e lelei a latou gagana Sāmoa, ma ‘ua fesoasoani tele e mālamalama ai i vāega o lesona e lē manino ai i latou i le ‘Igilisi. E fa’amaonia e faiā’oga nei sa’ili’iliga na faia e le lunivesitē o Waikato, (Hang & Carter, 1996) ma le lunivesitē o ‘Aukilani (Latu 2006)*

### **Some criticism of the bilingual method (or in this case, of using Samoan) Faitioga māسانی**

I believe I have made my argument clear, but I know that there are some criticisms by those who either have no knowledge of the method or approach, or simply say that Samoan has no useful place in the classroom of their children.

*‘Ou te manatu ‘ua manino le mau, ‘ae ‘ou te lagona e tatau fo’i ona tali nisi fesili ‘olo’o tula’i mai pea ‘ona ‘o le fa’aaogāina o la tatou gagana i le potu ā’oga. E iai lava nisi e lē talitonu e iai le aogā, ma lana galuega tāua e faia i totonu o potu ā’oga a Tutuila ma Manu’a ma Sāmoa fo’i.*

I ask two questions and answer them to illustrate the point. (Ua ‘ou ‘aumaia nisi o nei fesili e tali atu ai le mau.)

### **Question one (Fesili muamua)**

Are there enough words in Samoan to teach the different subjects in the curriculum? Response: Like other languages of the world, if there are no words to cater for new knowledge or new concepts, usually brought in from other cultures or new disciplines, all languages will have ways of dealing with this need. For example, here are Samoan words borrowed from English, Greek and other languages: democracy, senate, parliament, watch, dollar, internet, minute, and thousands of other borrowed words which now have become Samoan words. English itself has borrowed so many words over the years that 60 percent or more of English words are borrowed words from other languages. Linguists and other related academics collect, study and expand and explain the meanings and often the origin of these words, and write dictionaries to list and explain them.

*E lava ni 'upu o le gagana Sāmoa e a'oa'o ai matā'upu 'ese'ese o le ta'iala? Tali: E pei o isi gagana o le lalolagi, 'a leai se 'upu e fa'amatala ai se mea fou, ona sa'ili lea o se 'upu e fa'aaogā. Fa'ata'ita'iga: " O 'upu nei na nonō mai i le gagana 'Igilisi, 'Eleni ma isi gagana Europa e fa'amatala a'i mea sã le masani ona iai i aso lã: Temokarasi, senate, palemene, uati, matematika, tãlã, 'intaneti, mĩnute, ma le afe ma afe o 'upu fou 'ua fa'aulufale mai i le gagana Sāmoa. E fa'apēnã le gagana 'Igilisi. E tusa ma le 60 pasene o 'upu o le gagana 'Igilisi e nonō mai isi gagana o le lalolagi. 'O le galuega lea a liguisi ma tagata galulue i gagana e tapenapena ma fa'amaopoopo tusitusiga o nei 'upu fou ma tapena lelei ma fa'aaogā i tusi lolomi fefiloi 'auã a'oa'oga.*

### **Question two (Fesili lona lua)**

Can we get jobs by learning Samoan? Answer: Yes. This is what happens when a language becomes valued and used normally in all activities of the life of a community. There are a large number of people in this gathering whom I believe are employed in a number of key positions in connection with or directly involved with the use of the Samoan language in the classroom at all levels of the educational ladder. If we all combine our beliefs and our faith in the power inherent in our language granted to us by God as many of us believe, then we should use it and look after it – and value it – otherwise we will lose it.

*E maua ai ni galuega i le gagana Sāmoa? Tali: 'loe. 'O le tasi lea o mea e mautinoa e tupu mai pe'ã fa'aaogā le gagana Sāmoa e atia'e ai polokalame i totonu o a'oa'oga. 'O le olaola ma le tapenapena ma fa'atāua o la tatou gagana Sāmoa, 'o le mautinoa fo'i lenā o le tuputupu pea o galuega a tagata e popoto e fa'aaogā le gagana i so'o se vāega o le soifuaga. 'O se fa'ata'ita'iga, 'olo'o iai tagata i lenei potopotoga e galulue i vāega tau a'oa'oga e fa'aaogā ai le gagana Sāmoa. 'O le mea moni lava lena e tupu mai pe'ã tatou loto naunau ma loto gatasi e una'i la tatou gagana ona fai mai le talitonuga, 'o le meaalofa a le Atua. Tatou fa'apelepele lã 'i ai ma fa'aolaola 'i ai i lona fa'aaogā i aso 'uma ma taimi 'uma ma vāega 'eseese o lo tatou olaga.*

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