

The phonetic component in the missionary grammars of the Philippines (17th-18th centuries)

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ABSTRACT: This paper explores phonetic-orthographic aspects of missionary-colonial grammars from the Philippines. Drawing on a corpus of 16 grammars created by missionary-linguists during the 17th and 18th centuries, we describe the treatment of the phonetic systems of the Philippine languages as subjected to grammatical analysis in these works. In addition, we aim to show the importance of this analysis within the broad grammatical process that began in Europe with vernacular languages and continued in the Hispanic tradition with Amerindian and Philippine ones. To this end, we establish links between these three traditions, examine the methods used by missionaries in analysing this specific area of language structure, and note the most significant aspects of this process of grammatization. As we will observe, certain concepts arise from the analysis of the phonetic particularities of the Philippine languages under study, others derive from the Amerindian tradition, whereas many others, albeit with significant adaptations, are inherited from the vernacular European and Graeco-Latin tradition.

Keywords: Missionary linguistics; phonetics; phonology; history of linguistics; the Philippines.

RESUMEN: *El componente fonético en las gramáticas misioneras de Filipinas (siglos XVII y XVIII).* En este trabajo abordaremos los aspectos fónico-ortográficos de las gramáticas misionero-coloniales de Filipinas. Partiendo de un corpus de 16 artes realizadas por misioneros-lingüistas durante los siglos XVII y XVIII, describiremos el tratamiento del componente fónico de las lenguas filipinas que someten a arte y mostraremos su importancia en el amplio proceso gramatizador que se inaugura en Europa con las lenguas vernáculas y que, en la tradición hispánica, continúa con las lenguas amerindias y filipinas. Estableceremos los vínculos entre estas tres tradiciones, trataremos las formas de proceder en el análisis de este nivel de lengua por parte de los misioneros y señalaremos los aspectos más importantes de este proceso gramatizador. Como podremos observar, algunos conceptos surgen del análisis de las particularidades fónicas de las lenguas filipinas que someten a arte, otros proceden de la tradición amerindia y muchos de ellos, no sin adaptaciones importantes, son herencia de la tradición europea vernácula y grecolatina.

Palabras clave: Lingüística misionera; fonética; fonología; historia de la lingüística; Filipinas

1. INTRODUCTION

Missionary linguistics is a discipline that crystallises in the early 21st century, although there are many previous studies (see Segovia-Gordillo, 2023, or Esparza-Torres & Niederehe, 2023 for a complete bibliography), and as a discipline it encompasses a wide range of territories and languages (Acevedo-López, 2022a, 2022b; Acevedo-López & Esparza-Torres, 2020). Such studies have shown how the grammars and vocabularies produced in the Spanish colonies between the 16th and 19th centuries are of special interest for the history of linguistics, in that they reveal significant aspects of the extensive processes of grammatization that involve the knowledge of, and reduction to, grammars of European and non-European vernacular languages, Amerindian and Philippine in the Spanish case, starting from the Renaissance. This is the result of a much broader transcultural process that involved constructing, understanding and describing the culture of these peoples, discovering new realities, and communicating the doctrine of the Catholic faith in the language of other speakers (Zimmermann, 2006).

There are numerous works on grammars of American origins, whereas those dedicated to the languages of the Philippines are not as plentiful. Hence, we believe that there remains a need to situate these languages in the context of a Hispanic tradition, as products of their own epistemological framework and as examples of a contrastive approach which uses Latin and the missionary's vernacular language as points of reference.¹

In the remarkable process of the grammatization of the languages of the New World and the Philippines, it is fundamentally Nebrija's *Introductiones* (along with other notable influences), in its *Recognitio* edition or in subsequent editions, that integrate them within the long Graeco-Latin tradition.² As Baños-Baños & Téllez-Nieto (2015) point out, the influence of this grammatical treatise can be observed early on in missionary-colonial grammars, first in America and later in the Philippines. In their analysis of Andrés de Olmos's *Arte de la lengua mexicana* (1547), they accurately identify the model provided by the *Introductiones* (see also Cuevas-Alonso, 2011; Acevedo-López, 2022a) and date Olmos's source to an edition following the *Recognitio*, probably the *editio cantabrica extensa* of 1508 or a

later one (the Venetian or Lyon editions, 1512 and 1513, respectively), which, of particular relevance to us, contained the minor work *De vi ac potestate litterarum*.

That said, as these authors acknowledge, and as Esparza-Torres also notes, we cannot assume that the missionaries who arrived in the Philippines aboard the Manila Galleon from New Spain (along with copies of the *Introductiones*) simply relied on this work, which they would undoubtedly have studied in their religious training, continuing as it did the de-Latinisation of grammar initiated by Nebrija. Rather, they “conocían no solo por sus estudios las obras del gramático, sino también el modo en que sus compañeros habían aplicado sus saberes a la gramatización de lenguas muy diferentes del latín” [knew not only the works of the grammarian through their studies, but also the way in which their companions had applied their knowledge to the grammatization of languages very different from Latin] (Esparza-Torres, 2023, p. 96; see also Esparza-Torres, 2015 and 2016)³. The expectation that the learner would recognise the Graeco-Latin model and that of the missionary-colonial tradition allowed grammarians to omit extensive explanations of the meanings of metalinguistic terms (vowel, consonant, penultimate *prorrepta/corrupta*, diphthong, *herir* (to weaken a vowel or consonant), etc.), explanations that occur when these terms are redefined to adapt to the reality of the languages they describe, or concerning the internal structure and organisation of the grammar itself.

In this regard, we must bear in mind that if an indigenous grammatical tradition existed, in many cases, and particularly for the Philippines,

dicha tradición [...] no era apta en absoluto para su aplicación entre los españoles [...] No se trataba de reducir las reglas de las lenguas filipinas para el aprendizaje de los hablantes naturales de dichas lenguas, sino de los hablantes foráneos de lengua materna española. Los misioneros se veían en la obligación de acceder al código mientras elaboraban un metalenguaje explícito y familiar que les permitiera controlar los mensajes. Dudamos mucho que pudieran plantearse siquiera emplear o adoptar un metalenguaje ajeno a su tradición, que les hubiera supuesto un esfuerzo adicional enorme y con seguridad baldío [...]

La tradición de descripción gramatical [propia] no tenía por qué estar tan extendida entre los pueblos filipinos [...] En la práctica, a día de hoy, el esfuerzo descriptivo de los misioneros y sus

¹ On numerous occasions, missionaries from the Hispanic tradition also use varieties of Spanish as a point of comparison, and even other languages, such as Chinese or Hebrew.

² Regarding the Graeco-Latin grammatical tradition, see Matthews (2019).

³ All translations our own.

informantes nativos constituye la primera fuente lingüística histórica sobre dichas lenguas. Y casi la única. (García-Medall, 2010, p. 308)

[that tradition [...] was not at all suitable for application among the Spaniards [...]] The aim was not to reduce the rules of Philippine languages for the learning of native speakers of those languages, but for foreign speakers whose mother tongue was Spanish. The missionaries were obliged to access the language system while developing an explicit and familiar metalanguage that would allow them to manage communication. We greatly doubt they could even consider using or adopting a metalanguage foreign to their tradition, as it would have required an enormous additional effort and would have certainly been futile [...]

The tradition of [their own] grammatical description did not have to be so widespread among Philippine peoples [...] In practice, today, the descriptive effort of the missionaries and their native informants constitutes the first historical linguistic source of these languages, and almost the only one.]

However, as we will see, they use terms from that tradition to explain particular features of the language, as happens, for example, in the case of *uayaon*, or else they establish correlations between these and Latin ones, as we will see in the case of soft and hard vowels (*malatà* and *matigàs*, respectively, in the Filipino tradition) (see also Cuevas-Alonso, 2011).

Spanish is the language of description,⁴ and Latin grammar constitutes the foundational descriptive framework from which the metalanguage is adopted. This metalanguage is modified with new methods and explanatory approaches in order to bring it into line with what has come to be called the *vernacular turn*. This adjustment uses the data from the languages that are being analysed, but without proposing much new metalanguage that would be more in line with the linguistic characteristics of those languages (Breva-Claramonte, 2008a, 2008b; Nieto, 1975, vol. II, p. 39; Suárez-Roca, 2000; Swiggers, 2003, 2004).

However, they did develop and seek out original descriptive solutions (Altman, 1999), and in this way declensions, word classes, etc. became the initial foundations on which contemporary theoretical frameworks are built, frameworks that “[son] producto de la aguda capacidad para percibir diferencias intrínsecas, rasgos únicos o

construcciones originales” [are the product of an acute ability to perceive intrinsic differences, unique features or original constructions] (Galeote, 2002, p. 1727).

As Esparza-Torres (2023, p. 96) argues, “la caja de herramientas con la que contaban los gramáticos incluía un instrumental de origen grecolatino, pero cuando empiezan a trabajar en Filipinas, atesoraban ya una experiencia de muchísimos años” [the tools available to grammarians included Greco-Latin instruments, but by the time they started working in the Philippines, they had already gained extensive experience] from their work on Amerindian languages. This is clearly seen through the various references in these works not only to Nebrija, but also to earlier texts from the missionary-colonial tradition, from which they borrowed strategies and examples (see also Cuevas-Alonso, 2011; Ridruejo, 2011; Esparza-Torres, 2016). In many cases, there are references to earlier missionary grammars, particularly that of Blancas de San José (Fernández-Rodríguez, 2014; Cuevas-Alonso, 2011).

The approach involves a dual process. On the one hand, given that the grammatical artifice from Europe is applied, we find a form of exogrammatization. On the other, since they use grammatization tools from the missionary tradition, they are aware of the typological affinities between the languages they describe. These instruments of grammatization were developed for other languages – whether European, Amerindian, or specifically Philippine – regardless of whether these belonged to the same linguistic family or not.

As various authors have noted, the application of the Latin model was not done unthinkingly; as Suárez-Roca (2000, p. 78) observes, the languages that the missionaries described required new methods and explanatory schemes. The missionaries themselves were aware of the inadequacy of the Latin mould, and indeed they adapted, redefined and transformed it, a fact which the grammarians themselves acknowledged.⁵ Klötter (2011, p. 89), for example, points out that, alongside knowledge of the Greco-Latin tradition, we find other explanatory elements in the missionary grammars: “(1) the use of transcriptions and the arrangement of examples, which are not related to terminology in any way; (2) the avoidance of terminology; (3) the questioning of existing terminology by denying its relevance;

⁴ This was not the case with all missionary grammars. For example, the grammar *Lingua Mariana* (1668) by Sanvitores was written in Latin, likely because, as the author points out, not all missionaries were Spanish speakers (see Winkler, 2016).

⁵ Let us simply note the title of Oyanguren de Santa Inés’ work: *Tagalysmo Elucidado, y reducido (en lo posible) á la Latinidad de Nebrija*. On some occasions, despite being aware of the differences between Latin and the language they seek to describe grammatically, they adopt Nebrija as a reference. This can be observed, for instance, in the prologue of Francisco López’s Ilocano grammar (1792=1627).

(4) the redefinition of existing terminology; and (5) terminological innovation” (see also Gómez-Asencio, 2001; Galeote, 2002, p. 1725; Cuevas-Alonso, 2011, chap. 4; a concept recently revisited by Winkler, 2016, though without citing these earlier works).⁶ This results in an intermediate phenomenon between exogrammatization and endogrammatization.

In this regard, recent research, seen from the perspective of the transmission of knowledge, identifies three stages in the history of missionary-colonial linguistics in the Americas, which could potentially include the Philippines. The first stage involves missionaries acquiring knowledge, which they then organise and structure to fit a specific model, as previously noted. In the second stage, they aim to understand grammatical structures and vocabulary in order to facilitate evangelisation. Finally, they document this knowledge in writing for broader dissemination (see Loon & Peetermans, 2020).

It should be noted that the missionaries recognise the typological proximity of the languages. Nonetheless, they do not often establish a concrete linguistic genealogy or explain the common origins of these, as observed in the following passages:

las lenguas de estas yslas y, en especial, las nombradas [se refiere a Tagalo, Pangasinan, Bisaya e Iloco], no son entre si totalm[ent]e diversas, y mas se pueden llamar dialectos de una sola lengua que lenguas diferentes, como en la griega no lo son los dialectos attico, ionico, aeolico, comun, etc. (Benavente, 1699, fol. 6).

[The languages of these islands, and especially the named ones [referring to Tagalog, Pangasinan, Bisaya, and Ilocano], are not entirely diverse from each other, and they can be more accurately called dialects of a single language rather than different languages, just as in Greek the Attic, Ionic, Aeolic, Koine, etc., are not considered different languages]

De todas [las demás Artes] me he valido, y de otras de lenguas de estas Islas, porque ciertamente no son totalmente diversas entre si; sino varios Dialectos de una misma lengua, que dicen sèr la Malaya; como en la Griega los Dialectos Attico,

Ionico, Eolico, y comun. Y de la Latina las lenguas Italiana, Española, Portuguesa y Francesa. Y en el Norte los Dialectos de la lengua Godt, ò Teutonica (Gaspar de San Agustín, 1787=1703, Prólogo al lector).

[I have utilised all the other grammars, and other languages of these Islands, because they are certainly not entirely diverse from each other; rather, they are various dialects of a single language, which is said to be Malay. Just as in Greek there are the Attic, Ionic, Aeolic, and Koine dialects, and in Latin, there are the Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, and French languages. And in the North, the dialects of the Gothic or Teutonic language (Prologue to the reader)].

El Dialecto Tagalog, ó Taga ylog es dialecto de la Lengua Malaya segun se infiere de las Historias, y Conquistas primeras, que escribieron los primeros Españoles: llamase este Dialecto Tagalog, por los Indios Tagalos, que la hablan, y porque es la mayor parte de los que habitan entre rios, que esto es lo que quieren decir estas dos voces, ò una voz compuesta de *Taga*, y de *ylog*; *hoc est*, natural del rio: este Dialecto de divide en otros muchos como en el de Camarines, Pampango, &c. y sirve como de Matriz à los otros Dialectos, no obstante las muchas diferencias de vocablos, y mutacion de letras, que ay en todos los Dialectos, y la introduccion de muchas voces nuevas, con la comunicacion de otras Lenguas, y Dialectos, y olvido de las voces naturales, y propias, que procedieron de la Torre de Babel, que unas se destruyeron del todo; otras se mezclaron con otras distintas, y otras se dividieron en distintos Dialectos (Oyanguren de Santa Inés, 1742, 1).

[The Tagalog dialect is a dialect of the Malay language, as inferred from the histories and early conquests written by the first Spaniards. This dialect is called Tagalog by the Tagalog Indians who speak it, and because the majority of them live between rivers, which is what these two words, or a single compound word, *Taga* and *ylog*, mean; that is, native of the river. This dialect is divided into many others, such as those spoken in Camarines, Pampanga, etc., and serves as a matrix for the other dialects, despite the many differences in vocabulary and letter changes that exist in all dialects. The introduction of many new words through the communication with other languages and dialects, and the forgetting of the natural and proper words, which originated from the Tower of Babel, led some to be completely destroyed, others mixed with different ones, and others divided into distinct dialects].

⁶ This explanation is not exclusive to the processes of missionary-colonial grammar formation. Swiggers (1988, 1991, 1997, 2003, 2004) highlights the relevance of harmonising Greco-Latin grammar with the data from the languages being grammatically described through five procedures: 1) literal transposition, 2) correspondence between elements based on a functional criterion, 3) restrictive use of the model, 4) analogical extension of the model, and 5) abandonment of the model. As Winkler (2016) rightly points out, although without considering these sources, and as has been described at length in a previous study (Cuevas-Alonso, 2011), in almost all cases there is a primarily functional criterion rather than a restrictive morphosyntactic one.

With the aim of teaching the missionaries who would arrive after them, a grammatization project was initiated. Almost from the very beginning, in America, this project involved, in addition to translations of gospels, lives of saints, confessional writings, etc., the creation of primers in the Latin alphabet, grammars (or artes), and vocabularies. These included descriptions of the phonetic units and some of the suprasegmental features, primarily (or almost exclusively) accent (Cuevas-Alonso, 2011; Máñez, 2023).

Grammars, therefore, were closely linked to the practical and everyday use of the language, the cultural immersion of the missionary in the indigenous society, the vocabularies, and the doctrinal and sacramental books, etc. These served simultaneously as guides for evangelisation and the administration of sacraments, and as tools for formalising the translation of sacred matters to ensure that they were in full communion with the doctrine of the Catholic Church. They differ, thus, from what was being done in Europe at the same time in a more formal and systematic way. In these grammars, for example, we do not find explicit definitions of either the letters or their properties.

The analysis described in the present study is based on 15 grammars and one orthographical work from the 17th and 18th centuries, produced by missionaries in the Philippines (references in the Primary Sources section). In selecting these works, we have attempted to cover most of the known documents of this type that have been preserved. We focus on the first stage of the grammatical description of indigenous languages, which can justifiably be termed missionary linguistics, in that it was carried out by religious figures and spans the 16th to 18th centuries (see Suárez, 1983; Sueiro-Justel, 2003; Cuevas-Alonso, 2011). In the 19th century, there was a decline in production, which Koerner (1994) associates with a growing interest in universal and philosophical grammar. Sueiro-Justel (2003) notes, as a primary reason here, a shift in language policy at the end of the 18th century. This shift, with the generalisation of the school system, led to the emergence of different audiences and a corresponding change in the methodology for describing languages, alongside the increased promotion of the teaching of Spanish (see Quilis & Casado-Fresnillo, 2008, §1.4.4.3). Additionally, civilians began to take part in this grammatical work as they moved increasingly into university education (Wesseling, 2003[1993]). In this study, we will not address other grammars from the same missionary sphere (such as Chinese or Chamorro) that relate to languages not spoken in the Philippines, even if they were printed there, such as the *Arte de la lengua chio*

chiu (see Klöter, 2011; Klöter & Zwartjes, 2008; Winkler, 2016).

2. THE DESCRIPTIVE ORTHOPHONIC FRAMEWORK

In previous studies (Cuevas-Alonso, 2011; 2015; 2022), we analysed how the missionaries in America and the Philippines described phonetic systems using the Latin alphabet as a reference. We noted the importance of the previous tradition and how, similar to the grammars of vernacular languages, we find contrastive grammars addressing language difficulties in the Spanish/Latin-Filipino context (see Quilis, 1982, 1997; Sueiro-Justel, 2002, 2003; Ridruejo, 2005a). This is also seen in the Portuguese tradition (see Carvalhão-Buescu, 1983).

In Filipino grammars, the section dedicated to the phonological component can sometimes appear at the end of the work, as in Francisco de San José (=Blancas de San José, 1614), following the model of Nebrija's *Introductiones*. It may even be placed within a section that includes orthography, the suppression/addition of letters, syncope, or the way of describing time, as seen in Ortiz (1740). In other works, it appears at the beginning, within the preliminary notes, as observed in Ezguerra (1747=1663) or Totanes (1745). This positioning reflects the way Nebrija's *Gramática de la lengua castellana* (1492) presents orthographic matters. After explaining the invention of letters, he identifies which ones from Latin are used for Castilian, which ones are not, and those that are absent from the classical language, adhering to Quintilian's principle (see Cuevas-Alonso, 2022). This final distinction, with clear pedagogical value for those familiar with Latin, is broadly followed in all the works analysed here.

However, as Ridruejo (2011) observes, in the anonymous Sambal grammar (1601), it is peculiar to find this section as a note in the fifth section, which is dedicated to the verb (although, as he points out, later correctors added a reference to this part on folio 1v). This may have been because it had originally a separate section at some point.

The missionaries were aware of the difficulty in pronouncing these new languages, due to differences in some sounds compared to the reference languages: Latin and Spanish, and in the Filipino case also the previously grammaticised Amerindian languages. They also recognised the challenge of oral comprehension for learners encountering languages so different from those with which they were familiar.

Castro, in the 18th century, expressed it thus in his orthography: "La mayor dificultad esta en

pronunciar natural y rectamente; y tambien en entenderlas quando el Tagalo las pronuncia; que si no tienes oido de corzo, y de buen musico, trabaxos te mando” [The greatest difficulty lies in natural and correct pronunciation, and also in understanding the Tagalog when they speak. If you do not have a keen ear and musical talent, you will face great challenges] (Castro, 1776, p. 48).

Although the Filipino languages had syllabic writing systems for various languages when the Spaniards arrived, the missionaries established a connection between these symbols, the Latin alphabet letters, and the corresponding sounds. They followed the same strategy used in America, based on Nebrija’s Spanish grammar, which draws on Latin. This involved distinguishing between letters that represent sounds directly (graphic-phonetic correspondence), letters that represent different sounds than in the reference languages, and letters that are not used in Spanish or Latin. For these, various strategies were developed, such as using trigraphs, adding signs to known letters, or borrowing from other alphabets (Cuevas-Alonso, 2015; 2022). They adhered, then, to the Quintilian maxim of ‘pronounce as you write and write as you pronounce’. Some grammarians, such as Blancas de San José (1610), recommended learning the Tagalog characters to pronounce them correctly, although he noted the great difficulty in reading “expeditamente la lengua Tagala en sus mismos caracteres” [the Tagalog language fluently in its own characters].

They describe “aquellos sonidos que, si bien son similares a los de español y latín, presentan diferencias relevantes, una fonootografía del castellano y del latín trasladada a estas nuevas lenguas (Cuevas-Alonso, 2011), aspecto este, el fonootográfico, que subyace a todo alfabeto (Moses, 1964, p. 33)” [those sounds that, while similar to those in Spanish and Latin, present significant differences, a phono-orthography of Spanish and Latin transferred to these new languages (Cuevas-Alonso, 2011). This phono-orthographic aspect underlies every alphabet (Moses, 1964, p. 33)] (Cuevas-Alonso, 2022), and creates terms for unknown sounds: *g gangosa*,⁷ *saltillo* or *cortadilla*, for example, which they describe in an impressionistic manner, although in many cases they leave the learning of these to a process of usage and practice with the native speakers (Cuevas-Alonso, 2011; Ridruejo, 2011). This impressionistic description is found even in the tradition prior to the arrival of the Spanish in the islands. For instance, Totanes – and later, Castro (1776, p. 32) – noted a differentiation that relates *avant la lettre* to the

degree of openness (greater articulatory tension in hard versus soft sounds):

A la *E*, y a la *O* las llaman *Malatà*, id est: blanda. A la *I*, y a la *V* las llaman *Matigàs*, id est dura. Assi se explican estos Indios, para violentarse al uso de nuestras cinco Vocales (Totanes, 1745, p. 2).⁸

[They call *e* and *o* *Malatà*, meaning soft. They call *i* and *u* *Matigàs*, meaning hard. This is how these Indians explain it, to adapt themselves to the use of our five vowels]

Thus, unlike the Spanish grammarians who adhered strictly to Nebrija’s orthography, these grammarians had some freedom to adapt the Latin alphabet to the linguistic realities they were describing (Cuevas-Alonso, 2011).

By the 18th century, the Latin alphabet had completely replaced the Filipino syllabaries.⁹ Oyanguren de Santa Inés noted in his Tagalog grammar: “Oy día se van olvidando de estas letras, porque los Españoles introdujeron las letras Gothicas, y los Operarios Evangélicos ayudan con incessante desvelo, manteniendo en cada Pueblo su Escuela” [These letters are gradually being forgotten, as the Spaniards introduced Gothic letters, and the Evangelical workers tirelessly assist by maintaining schools in every town] (Oyanguren de Santa Inés, 1745, pp. 3-4). This situation was similar to what happened with the American writing systems and symbols when the teaching of the alphabet was introduced to children (Motolinía, 1541). Such a shift was intended to resolve interpretation issues, as observed by Ortiz in his work on Tagalog (1740), and also noted by Castro in a text filled with colonial undertones:

Por esto pues [se refiere a las dificultades que conlleva la lectura de los textos escritos al modo tradicional], y por otras dificultades que diremos, se aburren los mismos Tagalos, y son muy pocos los que saben escribir y menos leer sus Caracteres: por lo qual asi que ellos vieron y entendieron los nuestros, fueron olvidando los suyos propios, y abrazaron con mucho gusto los nuestros, en los quales han salido muy diestros Pendolistas,

⁸ He also uses the term *dura* (Eng. *hard*) to refer to the nasal and lateral palatals.

⁹ Even in the early 18th century, we still find references to the rare use of Filipino characters, such as in Comintan (Gaspar de San Agustín, 1787=1703). However, the webpage dedicated to this writing system by the National Museum of the Philippines says that the Baybayin “was eventually replaced by the Roman alphabet but retained in the islands of Mindoro (Buhid-Mangyan and Hanunuo-Mangyan) and Palawan (Pala’wan and Tagbanua) until today” (<https://www.nationalmuseum.gov.ph/exhibitions/anthropology/baybayin/>).

⁷ For the treatment of this velar nasal consonant in missionary-colonial grammars, see Cuevas-Alonso (2011) and Urban (2020).

bien que defectuosos siempre en la colocacion y eleccion de las letras, por falta de Ortografia, é Idioma (Castro, 1776, 13–14).

[Due to the difficulties associated with reading texts in the traditional manner and other challenges we will mention, the Tagalogs themselves became discouraged, and very few knew how to write, and even fewer could read their characters. Thus, when they saw and understood our alphabet, they gradually abandoned their own and eagerly embraced ours. They became skilled scribes, although they always struggled with the placement and selection of letters due to a lack of orthography and language proficiency]

It is worth asking how the missionaries were able to determine the sounds corresponding to the letters. Let us briefly recall how in the European tradition, which these scribes knew well, primarily through Nebrija's Latin grammar, the concept of a letter held almost a phonematic value – the triple graphic-phonetic dimension of *nomen-figura-potestas* (see Pérez-Rodríguez, 1996 and 2002; for the Spanish tradition, see Martínez-Gavilán, 1983). Various researchers link this to an unconscious analysis of language “y la reflexión sobre la segmentación del continuum sonoro” [and reflection on the segmentation of the sound continuum] (Cuevas-Alonso, 2022; see also Abercrombie, 1965; Kramsky, 1974; Hoppers, 1980; Allen, 1981; Auroux, 1994; Cuevas-Alonso, 2011 and 2015). Zwartjes (2010) further notes that missionaries managed to identify the significant units of the languages they were describing, linking them to the written symbols by starting from the materiality of speech but using the Spanish phonological system as a filter. As Calvo-Pérez (2005) points out, orthography and letters are not arbitrary; the phonetic criterion leads us to “considerar que la palabra letra tiene dos significados: el de signo escrito y el de signo pronunciado” [consider that the word letter has two meanings: the written sign and the pronounced sign] (p. 166). This method explains why the authors make observations in their works that are close to phonology, although not in the current sense, as they lacked the systematicity and thoroughness of applying the principle of commutation.

However, they do not explicitly distinguish between a letter and its properties – *nomen*, *figura* and *potestas*; rather, there is an identification between a letter and its phonetic and graphic properties. This situation becomes evident when, in referring to the units of indigenous languages, they note the absence of some letters and the presence of others which differ from Latin, directly alluding to the presence,

absence, or necessity of certain letters. Consider this example:

ESTA LENGVA Tiene dos .g. la vna recia y clara como la nuestra [...] otra tienen gangosa en cuya pronunciacion (pues por momentos se ha de oyr) me remito a los mismos naturales. En lo que toca a la escritura para ñ se diferencie dela otra, siempre se le antepone inmediatamente la letra .n. por ñ la mesma pronunciacion parece pedillo pero por ñ la otra .g. también puede tener y tiene algunas vezes .n. ante si, sele pone a esta gangosa vna señal encima ñ en este libro sera desta manera .g̃. (Blancas, 1610, p. 4).

[This language has two types of *g*: one is strong and clear like ours [...] the other is nasal, and its pronunciation (which should be heard momentarily) is best explained by the natives themselves. In terms of writing, to differentiate it from the other, the letter *n* is always placed immediately before it, because the pronunciation itself seems to require it. However, since the other *g* can also sometimes have *n* before it, a mark is placed above the nasal *g* to distinguish it, which in this book will appear as follows: *g̃*]

Some grammars, however, refer to two different aspects: pronunciation on one hand, and the letter on the other. Nonetheless, within the same grammar, a proclivity to unify the two concepts is also seen:

Para que note cause confussion la variedad de pronunciar sus letras los Pampangos [...] has de saber que esta Lengua no tiene *r* tan dura, como la de *Rayo Carro*. Ni la oyra jamas. No tampoco tiene *r*, blanda, la de *caro orar*. Y aunque esta la oyra pronunciar por momentos: Sabete que no es *r*, sino *d*, la qual haze à dos manos. Pronunciandose ya como *d*, ya como *r*, segun el lugar en que se habla (Bergaño, 1736=1729, Advertencias proemiales)

[To avoid confusion regarding the variety of letter pronunciations among the Pampangos [...] one must know that this language does not have a hard *r*, as in *rayo* or *carro*. Nor will it ever be heard. It also does not have a soft *r*, as in *caro* or *orar*. Although one may hear it pronounced occasionally, be aware that it is not an *r* but a *d*, which acts in two ways. It is pronounced either as *d* or *r*, depending on the position in which it is spoken (Proemial remarks)]

The grammarians, then, begin with a synchronic description of the most widespread usage, keeping morphological aspects and syllabic restrictions in mind due to their relevance in determining and modifying roots and affixes. Using a contrastive

procedure, already attested in contemporary European grammars for foreigners, they employ a commutation method that we have previously described as *propaedeutic* (Cuevas-Alonso, 2011, 2022).¹⁰ This method allowed for a fairly accurate description of the phonetic component of the languages and addressed some issues related to contextually conditioned distribution, whether specific or not, with or without alternation. However, such descriptions are not without instances of under- or over-specification (see Smith-Stark, 2005, for Amerindian grammars; Cuevas-Alonso, 2011, for Filipino grammars); as Ridruejo (2011) points out, confusion sometimes arises between letters due to these cases of under- and over-specification. The same practice of a *propaedeutic* commutation is attested in Amerindian grammars, as noted by Monzón-García (2005), who also observes that the introduction of this *commutation*, when exemplified, often replaces the formulation of a rule.

Thus, we observe in our grammars that the grammarians are aware that a change in the phonetic unit – the sound component of the letter – results in a change in meaning. This is expressed by some of them in the following terms:

y quanto mas van descubriendo [los misioneros] de los primores que ay en el atar las palabras en el acentuallas, y en el difereciar vna misma voz de si misma segun la diferencia del sonido, q̃ siendo muy pequeña es muy grande la de la signifigaciō (Blancas, 1610, A los Padres Ministros).

[And the more [the missionaries] discover about the intricacies of how words are linked, accented, and how the same word can differ from itself depending on the variation in sound – a very small difference that makes a great difference in meaning (To the missionary Fathers)]

Y para conocerse se le añade una rayita encima, para huir de los equivocos de la significación, de aquellas voces cuya prolacion no es guttural: ut *Saṅga* (pc.) *nang sulasi*, rama de halbaca, *sanga* adargarse (Oyanguren, 1742, 6).

[And to make it recognisable, a small mark is added above it, to avoid misunderstandings in meaning, for those words whose pronunciation is not guttural: such as *Saṅga* (pc.) *nang sulasi*, ‘branch of basil’, *sanga* ‘to shield oneself’]

Also, in some cases they create tables with *oppositions* of word pairs. They even compare the phenomenon they are illustrating with what

happens in Spanish varieties, or by referring to earlier grammarians of the Amerindian or Filipino traditions. This can be seen again in the following example from Oyanguren de Santa Inés (1742, p. 7).

Los Cantabros, y Castellanos viejos pecan por carta de menos en no pronunciar la H, como aspiración: los Andaluces y Valencianos pecan por carta de mas en hacerla, y pronunciarla como letra; en el idioma Tagalog se debe pronunciar como letra, porque los primitivos Tagalistas la acomodaron en lugar de la J, y si no se pronuncia avrá muchos equivocos en muchas dicciones; como se puede vér en las dicciones siguientes, y en otras muchas, que se podían añadir, *vide alia in vocabul*.¹¹

<i>Agap</i> (pp) cuidado	<i>Hagap</i> (pp) cortesía	<i>Iquit</i> (pp) bailar
<i>Alal</i> (pc) limar	<i>Halal</i> (pc) elegir	<i>Hiquit</i> (pc) atar
<i>Alas</i> (pc) igualar	<i>Halas</i> (pp) arañar	<i>Olas</i> (pp) secar
<i>Asa</i> (pp) confiar	<i>Hasa</i> (pp) amolar	<i>Holas</i> (pp) deshacer

[The Cantabrians and Old Castilians err by not pronouncing the *h* as an aspiration; the Andalusians and Valencians err by overemphasising it and pronouncing it as a letter. In the Tagalog language, it should be pronounced as a letter because the early Tagalog grammarians adapted it in place of the *j*. If it is not pronounced, there will be many ambiguities in various words, as can be seen in the following examples and many others that could be added (see others in the vocabulary)]

<i>Agap</i> (pp) care	<i>Hagap</i> (pp) courtesy	<i>Iquit</i> (pp) to dance
<i>Alal</i> (pc) to file	<i>Halal</i> (pc) to choose	<i>Hiquit</i> (pc) to tie
<i>Alas</i> (pc) to equal	<i>Halas</i> (pp) to scratch	<i>Olas</i> (pp) to dry
<i>Asa</i> (pp) to trust	<i>Hasa</i> (pp) to annoy	<i>Holas</i> (pp) to undo

¹¹ The abbreviations *pp* and *pc* refer to Latin nomenclature related to the relationship between syllable length and stress placement: *penultima producta*, which indicates that the penultimate syllable is long and therefore bears the stress, and *penultima correpta*, which indicates that the penultimate syllable is short, and the stress falls on the antepenultimate. However, as noted in Cuevas-Alonso (2011, p. 375), the missionaries in the Philippines modified this theory to adapt it to the reality they sought to describe. For instance, Totanes uses the final syllable as the reference point instead of the penultimate.

¹⁰ In a similar vein, Loon & Peetermans (2020) note that the knowledge generated by the missionaries is practical, instrumental and aimed at skill acquisition (*ars*).

3. THE PHONETIC COMPONENT IN THE MISSIONARY GRAMMARS OF THE PHILIPPINES

As observed by Suárez-Roca (1992, pp. 82 and ff.) regarding the treatment of phonetic aspects in Nahuatl, missionary-colonial grammars from the Philippines reflect a somewhat unbalanced interest on the part of their authors on these issues. Additionally, they sometimes exhibit attempts by these missionaries to surpass or summarise previous grammars.

Nevertheless, compared to the sections dedicated to syntax or morphology, which are extensive due to the need for a detailed treatment of the particles attached to roots to convey syntactic relations and their various significations, the sections on phonetic aspects are relatively brief. These sections focus primarily on matching graphemes and corresponding sounds of the Latin alphabet to those of the languages being described – and, in the case of the Philippines, also taking into account what was learned in America – plus addressing pronunciation in the most practical way possible. This is done either impressionistically or in a more articulation-based approach, and includes the graphic representation of the sounds specific to the Philippine languages (Cuevas-Alonso, 2011, 2015).

On numerous occasions, spelling and pronunciation, along with other issues, such as the definition of *raíz* (Eng. *root*), are addressed in the preliminary remarks or in the prologue. These remarks have an eminently practical character, facilitating the correct interpretation of the subsequent grammatical text and, at times, presenting supplements (either in the same section or at the end of the grammar) that deal with accent, the pronunciation of the glottal stop (referred to as *cortadillo* in missionary terminology), reduplications, syncopations, etc., as we can observe, for example, in the grammars of Blancas (1610), Bergaño (1736=1729) and Oyanguren de Santa Inés (1742), among others. In some cases, there is even reference to prosody, mainly to accent and poetry (cf. Benavente, c. 1699) or to mutations related to morphophonemic matters associated with the composition of roots with particles, as in Ezguerra (1747=1663) or Ortiz (1740).¹²

In other works, preliminary remarks are not included, with spelling and prosody constituting independent chapters. Such is the case with the Tagalog grammar by Gaspar de San Agustín (1787=1703), which also addresses syncopations, contractions, mutation, and the addition of letters. It is noteworthy that this author titles the chapter

“De la Prosodia” (Eng. “On Prosody”) and begins it with the definition of the term. Interestingly, in this characterisation, he combines the classical definitions of spelling and prosody found in Nebrija, without making a clear distinction between the two:

Prosodia es aquella parte de la grammatica, que propuesto el acento, y cantidad de las syllabas, enseña la recta pronunciacion de las voces (Gaspar de San Agustín 1787=1703, 148).

[Prosody is that part of grammar which, given the accent and quantity of syllables, teaches the correct pronunciation of words]

Although we find cases where specific sections do not appear, such as in Coronel’s Pampanga grammar (c. 1621), Andrés de San Agustín’s Bicol grammar (1795), or Francisco López’s Ilocano grammar (1792=1627), phonetic issues are generally addressed throughout the texts. However, these often omit references to the alphabet/syllabary and their correspondence with the sounds of the languages undergoing grammatization. Such phonetic considerations are particularly linked to morphophonemic issues (composition, reduplication, etc.) or stylistic matters, which they refer to as “*elegancia de la lengua*” (Eng. “elegance of the language”): syncopations, epentheses, dissimilations and assimilations, haplogies, etc.

However, in most of the grammars, we witness one of the two patterns established by Nebrija. First, there is the pattern of the *Gramática castellana*, in which orthography and prosody appear at the beginning of the work – grouped together, unlike in the Latin grammar, for reasons of coherence (Calvo-Pérez 1994, p. 128) – similar to Dionysius Thrax, Donatus, or Priscian. This pattern is less common and is documented, for example, in Ezguerra (1747=1663) or Andrés López (1690).

Second, we find the more widespread model, that of the *Introductiones*. This work includes a section dedicated to orthography and the general theory of prosody after the paradigms of declensions and conjugations. The description is completed with a detailed treatment of prosody – of initial, medial and final syllables, and accentuation – which is contained in a fifth book, the final one of the work. This model is followed, for example, in the grammars of Blancas, Bergaño, Oyanguren de Santa Inés, and Agustín de la Magdalena (1679), and, as Calvo-Pérez (2005, pp. 165–166) points out, also in Amerindian grammars.

It seems, therefore, that although the possibility is left open for missionaries to consider orthography as a constitutive part of grammar, the majority regard it as marginal. Nevertheless, this does not diminish its pedagogical importance, as they themselves

¹² For issues of morphophonology related to the presence of ligatures in missionary grammars, see Ridruejo (2005b).

tend to indicate by labelling the relevant sections as “preliminary remarks”. This perspective is already evident in the Amerindian missionary grammars, where phonetic aspects are reduced to notes on difficulties: voice-letter correspondence, phonetic differences between the reference languages and the one being grammaticized, and, in some cases, particularly challenging aspects for Spanish speakers, such as the case of the glottal stop (see, e.g., Rincón’s Mexican grammar (1595, fol. 70)).

However, as Ramajo-Caño (1987) points out, the division into orthography-prosody-morphology-syntax was not the only one. Some grammarians, such as Villalón, Corro, and Correas (in his trilingual grammar), consider only three parts – orthography, morphology and syntax – while others include just two – orthography and morphology – such as in the anonymous Spanish grammar of Leuven (1555), Luna, Franciosini, Zumarán, etc.

Some grammarians also deviated from the manner in which these issues were addressed in previous and contemporary Spanish grammatical traditions. In some cases, the general structure and specific treatment of orthography resemble more closely what is found in the fifth book of Nebrija’s *Gramática castellana*, titled “De las introducciones de la lengua castellana para los que de extraña lengua querrán aprender” (Eng. “An introduction to Spanish for non-native speakers”); this could have been their model. This seems to be the case, among others, for Blancas, one of the earliest authors whose grammar is preserved and which we reference here. Blancas addresses phonetic issues in the second and fifth sections. The latter section focuses on two important differences between Tagalog and Spanish, the first of these being the presence of two types of *g*: one similar to the Spanish [g], represented by the letter *g*, and the other nasal *ng*, [ŋ]¹³. The second difference is that the combination ‘*u* + vowel’ always behaves as a semivowel. Near the end of the grammar, we find a chapter dedicated to “De varia doctrina” (Eng.

“Various doctrines”. As part of the fourth rule (pp. 298–303), the author discusses the pronunciation of letters.

As we can see, orthography and pronunciation do not occupy the same place in all the grammars analysed, nor do they all receive in-depth treatment. This is already evident in the American grammars, in contrast to what we find in the Spanish grammars of Nebrija, Corro, Villalón and Correas, where they occupy a significant chapter and are placed at the beginning rather than in a marginal position, as in Blancas. What is the reason for this treatment? Part of the answer lies in Blancas himself, as we previously mentioned: it is about resolving the difficulties that learners might face in developing their oral production, which cause problems in communication. It is not a systematic description, which is unnecessary for foreigners already familiar with the Latin alphabet’s phonetic values. Rather, it is a tool to assist in an immersive process of learning, serving as a manual for resolving doubts:

A ESTA regla vltima pertenecera todo lo q̃ ayuda a la pronunciacion [...] Dezir se han algunos apuntamientos que ayudan a poner cuidado en la pronunciacion al que trata cosas de importancia viendo quã pequeña mudãça en ella, haze la oración no inteligible o ridicula (Blancas 1610, 298).

[To this last rule belongs everything that aids pronunciation [...] Some notes will be given that help in paying attention to pronunciation for those dealing with important matters, seeing how a small change in it can make a sentence unintelligible or ridiculous]

In this regard, Zwartjes, when interpreting the grammar by Oyanguren de Santa Inés, argues that “la sección dedicada a la fonología y ortografía no es muy extensa, porque la fonología tagala fue considerada menos difícil que la china, y sigue, *grosso modo*, la pronunciación ‘europea’” [the section dedicated to phonology and orthography is not very extensive because Tagalog phonology was considered less difficult than Chinese, and it broadly follows ‘European’ pronunciation] (Zwartjes 2010, p. 52). We interpret this to mean that, for Tagalog, the letters that function independently are more numerous than for Chinese, and therefore, Tagalog shares more significant units with the Spanish or Latin system of that time than with this other Asian language.

3.1 Vocalism

The Spanish, on arriving in the Philippines, encountered a vowel subsystem consisting of three (i.e., /a, i, u/) or four (i.e., /a, e, i, u/) units (Zorc,

¹³ The velar or postvelar consonant *ng* appears in the missionary grammars, referred to as *g gangosa* (nasalised *g*). This description is not original to the missionaries of these islands. As Monzón-García (2005, p. 175) notes, it already appears in the missionary-colonial grammars of the Amerindian languages by Gilberti and Lagunas in the 16th century. Calvo-Pérez (2005, p. 158) also indicates the presence of this element in the Mapuche grammar by Luis de Valdivia (1606). The name itself is a metaphor, using as it does terms outside the grammatical domain, with the aim of describing the auditory sensation of this phonetic unit.

Luis de Valdivia acknowledges that no new character was invented “para escreuirla, sino con la misma (g̃) con aquella uirgulilla encima, lo qual ha sido difícil para la Imprẽta por no auer moldes destas figuras y auer sido menester hacerlos nuevos” (Luis de Valdivia, 1606) [was invented to write it, but rather the same g̃ with a small stroke above it was used, which poses difficulties for the printer, as there were no molds for these figures and new ones had to be created].

1977). Due to the introduction of Spanish vocabulary, this evolved into a system of 5 units, as noted by Quilis & Casado-Fresnillo (2008), Spitz (2001), and French (1988).

According to Zorc (1977), this expansion of the vowel inventory was not homogeneous. Rather, there are three groups of varieties characterised by the number of vowels: 1) three units (i.e., /a, i, u/), including Bantayanon, Bulalakawnon, Butuanon, Cebuano, Gubat, Masbatenyo, Tandaganon Sorsogon, Tausug and Waray; 2) four units (i.e., /i, e, a, o/), with Kinaray-a, Gimaras, Pandan, some varieties of Cebuano, and the dialects of the Samar-Leyte area; and 3) five units (i.e., /i, e, a, o, u/), including Alcantaranon, Banton, Capiznon, Dispoholnon, Hiligaynon, Kawayan, Looknon, Odionganon and Romblomanon.

In their description of vowels, the missionaries often provided an over-differentiation, something also observed in the American grammars, since they established five elements for five vowels.

However, the identification of five different graphemes does not imply that they were unaware of the fact that there were not five distinct vowel units. In many cases, the missionaries themselves noted that the distinctions [i/e] and [o/u] were “unnecessary”. Blancas de San José, for instance, stated that “en la escritura Tagala no se diferencian la .o. y la .u. como tampoco la .e. y la .i. pero en la pronunciacion las diferencian claramente [...] sabemos que escriuen las dichas vocales siempre al reues de como las pronuncian” [in Tagalog writing, there is no differentiation between *o* and *u* nor between *e* and *i*, but in pronunciation, they are clearly distinguished [...] we know that they always write these vowels in the opposite way to how they pronounce them] (1610), which Ridruejo (2006) interprets as a description based on the alphabet and the association of sounds to letters, with the awareness that the same letter can represent multiple sounds. However, it seems here that Blancas in fact refers to the native syllabary, and the Latin alphabet is used to represent sounds. Like almost all other grammarians, he does not establish meaning differentiations associated with [i] versus [e], or [u] versus [o].

This point is more clearly expressed by later grammarians. For instance, Gaspar de San Agustín (1787=1703) indicates that “aunque nos parece, que hacen poca diferencia en usar de *e*, *i*, *o*, *u*, la hay grande; porque no pronuncian *lopa* por *lupa*; *suput* sino *sopot*” [although it seems to us that using *e*, *i*, *o*, *u* makes little difference, there is a significant difference; because they do not pronounce *lopa* for *lupa*; *suput* but *sopot*]. Thus, he appears to suggest that there are cases of complementary or conditioned distribution. Similarly, these elements are described

in the Tagalog grammars of Agustín de la Magdalena (1679) and Oyanguren de Santa Inés (1742), with the former noting an intermediate pronunciation between [o] and [u]: “aunq̃ para ellos [los nativos] sea vna letra, algunos vocablos los pronuncian siempre con *o*, y otros siempre con *v* y otras veces tan sutilmente la pronuncian, que no se conoce si es *o*, ò es *v*” [although for them [the natives] it is one letter, some words are always pronounced with *o*, others always with *v*, and sometimes they pronounce it so subtly that it is unclear whether it is *o* or *v*] (De la Magdalena 1679, fol. 22 v.).

In Ortiz, we find an important distinction, as he observes five pronunciations – rather than three – and describes the syllabic positions in which the characters appear:

Los [caracteres] Vocales, que para escribir son tres, para hablar son cinco, porque vsan independientemente de la *E*, y de la *I*, como si fuessen vna misma cosa. Lo mismo sucede con la *O*, y con la *V*

Los Caracteres Vocales sirven para las Letras Vocales solas, y también para las Syllabas compuestas de Vocal en el principio, y de Consonantes en el fin (1740, p. 119),

[The [characters] vowels, which are three in writing, are five in speech, because they use *e* and *i* interchangeably, as if they were the same thing. The same happens with *o* and *v*. The vowel characters are used for the vowel letters alone, and also for syllables composed of a vowel at the beginning and consonants at the end]

This is also noted by Oyanguren

LAS vocales *I*, y *E*, las suelen trocar los Tagalos una por otra en medio, en principio ó final de la dicción: aunque en principio de dicción, no debe mudarse la *I*, por *E* (1742, p. 7),

[The vowels *i* and *e* are often interchanged by the Tagalogs at the middle, beginning, or end of the word: although at the beginning of a word, *i* should not be changed to *e*]

and by Totanes

son las vocales solas tres; porque la *E*, y la *I* las equivocan comunmente, y vsan quasi indiferentemente, yá de vna, ya de otra; especialmente en la escritura; aunque hablando, mas vsan de la *I*. En principio de diccion no hay que buscar *E* por ser barbara para los Tagalos. Lo mismo son la *O*, y la *V* las equivocan assi hablando como escribiendo (1745, p. 2),

[There are only three vowels; because *e* and *i* are commonly mistaken and used almost interchangeably, especially in writing; although in speech, *i* is used more frequently. At the beginning of a word, *e* should not be used as it is awkward for the Tagalogs. The same applies to *o* and *v*, which are often confused both in speech and writing]

who also speaks of the alternation between [o/u] in the formation of passives, without considering, in this case, the semi-consonantal nature of [u] before a vowel (Totanes, 1745, p. 3).

The description found in the Pampango grammars of Benavente (c. 1699) and Bergaño (1736=1729) is not very different from what has already been mentioned. However, unlike the previous observations, Benavente starts with the unchanging elements to indicate the pronunciations:

El 4º [carácter del silabario] sirve de *d* y *r*, pronunciándose ya de un modo ya de otro, segun el lugar q. tiene en la voz [...] reglas: (1) en el principio de la voz siempre es *d* [...] (Benavente, c. 1699, fol. 8 v.).

[The 4th [character of the syllabary] serves as both *d* and *r*, being pronounced one way or the other, depending on its position in the word [...] rules: (1) at the beginning of the word it is always *d* [...]]

Bisaya, Méntrida (1818=1637, pp. 244 and 245; 1884=1637) and Ezguerra (1747=1663, fol. 1 r.) barely refer to pronunciation, and in what they do mention, they hardly deviate from what has already been indicated: they recognise the existence of three vowel units, the occasional confusion between [e] and [i] and between [o] and [u], although, as Méntrida points out regarding usage, sometimes one cannot be pronounced in place of the other:

muchas [palabras] no se pueden pronunciar, e, por, i, aunque se escriba: ni o, por u, ni al contrario, porque no se pronuncia, *Seleng*, sino *Siling*, ni *Pulung*, por palabra, sino *Polong*, ni *Sunúr*, sino *Sonór*. Todo lo qual enseñará el uso (1818=1637, 244–245).

[Many [words] cannot be pronounced with *e* instead of *i*, even if written that way: nor *o* instead of *u*, or vice versa, because one does not pronounce *Seleng*, but *Siling*, nor *Pulung*, but *Polong*, nor *Sunúr*, but *Sonór*. Usage will teach all of this]

Andrés López, in his Pangasinan grammar, provides the most detailed explanations regarding the phonetic component (Sueiro-Justel, 2005), except, evidently, for Castro's orthography. Similar

to De la Magdalena for Tagalog, he acknowledges intermediate realisations for [i] and [e] and for [o] and [u], and identifies three characters in the syllabary. Notably, he includes minimal pairs of words to illustrate the difference in meaning associated with the change in phonetic element, which correspond to

quatro en la pronunciacion. S. A. que corresponde al primero, vna que media entre E, y, Y. que es la iota de los Griegos, la qual corresponde al segundo, y otra que media entre O, y v. que corresponde al tercero. Pronuncian tambien. Y clara que es la que los Griegos llaman ypsilon, para la qual no tienen especial caracter; suplen la con el segundo [...]

para la suficiente praxis de la lengua dire, que son cinco, con aduertencia, de que el Indio confunde la E, con la Y, y la O con la V. desuerte, que en una misma sillaba unas vezes parece que dizen E, y en otras Y. Y lo mismo es de la O con la U. Y aun muchissimas vezes en una misma pronunciacion individual del Indio, a unos Padres les parece con evidencia que dize E, y a otros con evidencia les parece que pronuncia

Y. Y lo mismo es de la O con la U. de lo qual es la causa (a mi parecer) que los Indios usan de las tales vocales medias que ellos pronuncian lindamente segun pide la lengua que Dios les dio, las quales como se asemej We do not find a specific section for the treatment of diphthongs in the analysed grammars; rather, they are mentioned where appropriate throughout the text. They define the consonant “uayaon,” distinguishing it from the diphthong, an a los extremos de E, y de Y, y de O, y de U. ay razon de apariencia por entrambas partes: Pero en otros vocablos (como dicho es) pronuncian. Y clara, lo qual se nota, por que depende de esto a vezes la significacion del vocablo. v. g. iquet con e significa malla de red, y iquit con y significa la tia, o madrastra. Piseng, chinche: pising, guisado de legumbres. Seret

R. de reventar postema: sirit, orina: temuel, grama: timuel, pulga: Y assi de otros que se hallaran en el vocabulario (López, 1690, fol. 1 v.-2 r.).

[...four in pronunciation. The first corresponds to *a*, one that is between *e* and *y*, which is the Greek iota, corresponding to the second, and another between *o* and *v*, corresponding to the third. They also pronounce *y* clearly, which is the Greek upsilon, for which they do not have a specific character; they substitute it with the second. [...]

For sufficient practice of the language, I will say that there are five, noting that the native confuses *e* with *y*, and *o* with *v*, so that in the same syllable it sometimes seems they are saying *e*, and at other

times *y*. The same is true for *o* and *u*. And even many times in the same individual pronunciation of the native, some priests clearly perceive it as *e*, while others clearly perceive it as *y*. The same is true for *o* and *u*. The cause of this (in my opinion) is that the natives use these intermediate vowels, which they pronounce gracefully according to the nature of the language that God gave them. As these vowels resemble the extremes of *e* and *y*, and *o* and *u*, there is reason for perception on both sides. However, in other words (as has been said), they pronounce *y* clearly, which is noted because the meaning of the word sometimes depends on this. For example, *iquet* with *e* means ‘net mesh’, and *iquit* with *y* means ‘aunt’ or ‘stepmother’. *Piseng* means ‘bedbug’; *pising* means ‘vegetable stew’. *Seret* means ‘to burst an abscess’; *sirit* means ‘urine’; *temuel* means ‘grass’; *timuel* means ‘flea’. And so it is with others that will be found in the vocabulary]

In the Ilocano grammar by Francisco López (1792=1628), unlike the Bicol grammar by Andrés de San Agustín (1795), a specific section for pronunciation and accent is included. Andrés de San Agustín’s work also contains notes on syncope (discussed in a separate section) and the pronunciation of vowels and consonants that are often confused: “assi mismo confunden siempre en el escribir, y hablar estas letras, la *I*. por *E*, la *o*. por *V*. la *R*. en *D*. et contra” [they always confuse these letters in writing and speaking, *i* for *e*, *o* for *v*, *r* for *d*, and vice versa].

3.2 Diphthongs and hiatuses. The consonant *uayaon*

In the grammars analysed here, we do not find a specific section for the treatment of diphthongs. Rather, they are mentioned where appropriate throughout the texts. The consonant *uayaon*, for example, is distinguished from the diphthong as a semiconsonant that does not form a diphthong in practically all of the texts.

The most precise description of these elements is found in Castro (1776, pp. 33 and ff.), since this work concerns orthography specifically. The author starts from the conception of a diphthong inherited from the Greco-Latin, Spanish, and Amerindian traditions, that is, as “una junta, combinación o ayuntamiento de dos vocales diferentes que por su naturaleza, constituyen una sola sílaba” [a joining, combination, or union of two different vowels which by their nature constitute a single syllable] (p. 33), meaning “una o muchas letras juntas en que se haya por lo menos una vocal” [one or many

letters together that contain at least one vowel] (p. 34). This approach deviates from the tradition that defined the syllable as a relationship between stress and syllabic nucleus¹⁴, aligning instead with other 17th-century peninsular grammarians who organised the syllable around an essential element: the vowel (see Martínez-Gavilán, 1983, pp. 236 and ff.).

Returning to Castro, he notes that while every diphthong can be a syllable, not every syllable can be a diphthong. He assumes that the presence of an accent – acute, according to his explanation – breaks the diphthong, although he does not observe that this must coincide with the vowel that can carry the stress. He identifies six diphthongs in Tagalog: /ai, ao, io, oi|ui, ua|oa, ia/.

In the Pampango grammars, Benavente indicates that “q.do concurren dos vocales, ya sean *a* con *a*, *o* con *o* o *u*, o ya sean *o* con *a* o *a* con *o*, para quitar el diptongo o elision, se suele intercalar una *y*, la qual hiere la vocal siguiente” [when two vowels occur together, whether it be *a* with *a*, *o* with *o* or *u*, or *o* with *a* or *a* with *o*, to remove the diphthong or elision, a *y* is usually inserted, which elides with the following vowel to form a syllable] (c. 1699, fol. 8 v.). As we also see in Bergaño (1736=1729), Benavente, at the end of the section dedicated to pronunciation, identifies the two diphthongs of this language /ai/ and /ao/, adopting the traditional definition of a diphthong: “sus dos vocales, se quantan por vna sola Sylaba” [their two vowels are counted as a single syllable] (Bergaño, 1736=1729, Advertencias Proemiales) and “no se deben contar por dos silabas, sino por una, y asi las voces dichas no son trisilabos sino siguen las reglas de los disilabos” [they should not be counted as two syllables, but as one, and thus the mentioned words are not trisyllabic but follow the rules of disyllables] (Benavente, c. 1699, fol. 10 r.). However, Benavente adds a metric factor based

¹⁴ Nebrija, for example, defines the syllable in his Spanish grammar as “aiuntamiento de letras: que se pueden coger en una herida de la voz & debaxo de un acento” [a union of letters that can be gathered in one breath of the voice and under one accent] (1492, fol. 17 r.), and in his Latin grammar as “Comprehensio litterarū enūciata: quæ uno accentu & uno spiritu indistanter profertur” [an utterance composed of letters: which is pronounced with one accent and one breath] (1495, *De erotymatis prosodia*, ch. iii). Furthermore, for authors in the tradition, a single vowel did not constitute a syllable in Latin — “nam si una vocalis syllabam facit per se ipsam non appellabitur proprie syllaba” [for if a single vowel forms a syllable by itself, it will not be properly called a syllable] (1495, *De erotymatis prosodia*, ch. iii, in the commentary) – nor in Castilian — “por que quando las vocales suenan por si: sin se mezclar con las consonantes propria mente no son silabas” [because when vowels sound by themselves, without being mixed with consonants, they are not properly syllables] (1492, fol. 17 r.). However, Nebrija also acknowledges that “assi que puede tener la silaba impropria mēte assi llamada una sola letra si es vocal” [thus, a syllable, improperly called so, can consist of a single letter if it is a vowel] (*ibid.*). For more on this topic in the Greco-Latin tradition, see, among others, Cuevas-Alonso (2011).

on the number of syllables in the root, which we also find in Castro's orthography and Oyanguren's Tagalog grammar.

In these Pampango grammars, we also find explanations of morphophonemic processes. For example, they indicate, although with different conditions, that in a final word diphthong /ai/, when the following sound is a vowel, the *i* becomes a consonant or the diphthong is reduced to a single vowel when the word ending in a diphthong is not at the end of an utterance:

quando no terminan la clausula, muy frequentem[en]te se mudan porque el ao pierde la a, v.g. *pamanalo na*, la azion de visitar, y si no se le siguiere el *na*, seria *pamanalao*. El *ay*, asimismo qdo no termina, se convierte en *e* [...] Dixe frequentem[en]te, mas no siempre, que qdo es [ilegible] de substantivo y adjetivo, pasan de otra manera (Benavente, c. 1699, fol. 10 r.)

[When they do not end the clause, the diphthongs are very frequently altered because *ao* loses the *a*, e.g., *pamanalo na*, the act of visiting, and if *na* does not follow, it would be *pamanalao*. Similarly, *ay*, when it does not end the clause, becomes *e* [...] I said frequently, but not always, because when it is [illegible] of noun and adjective, they change in another way]

la tal Sylaba [diptongo] para las ligaturas, se reputa por consonante, por lo qual se dize. *Balayà maragul*, y no *balaying maragud*, aunque se dize *Babaying masampat*, porque no es diptongo.

Lo tercero, que has de notar, es, que quando se intercalan no se pronuncian claras las dos vocales, sino que se mezclan, como *Pamanlacao*. No dira *Pamanlacao*mo, sino *Pamanlacom*o, ni *Balaymo*, sino *Balemo*, de modo que el de, *ay*, suena mas la *e*, que la *a*, como *Palay*, *Palemo*, y en el de *a*, *o*, mas la *o*, que la *a*. (Bergaño 1736=1729, Advertencias proemiales).

[The syllable [diphthong] for ligatures is regarded as a consonant, therefore it is said *Balayà maragul* and not *balaying maragul*, although it is said *Babaying masampat* because it is not a diphthong. The third thing to note is that when they are inserted, the two vowels are not pronounced clearly, but rather they blend together, as in *Pamanlacao*. One would not say *Pamanlacao*-mo, but *Pamanlacom*o, nor *Balaymo*, but *Balemo*, so that in *ay* the *e* is more pronounced than the *a*, as in *Palay*, *Palemo*, and in *a*, *o* the *o* is more pronounced than the *a*]

For the Bisaya language, Ezguerra (1747=1663) dedicates a section to diphthongs and hiatuses in his work, which is also found in Métrida (1818=1663,

pp. 236-238; 1884=1637) in the first chapter of the fourth book, on poetry. The diphthongs coincide with those found in Tagalog studies: /ai/, /ao|au/ – “aunque pocas veces suena la, *o*, como la, *u*” [although the *o* rarely sounds like *u*] (p. 236) –, and /ei/, /oi/ by synaeresis. Regarding /ei/, he notes that in Tagalog writing, “la *e*, es *a*” [the *e* is *a*] and thus they are “Diphthongos aquellas dos letras” [diphthongs of those two letters], that is, a variant of /ai/, using the Latin ligature *æ*, used precisely for the Latin diphthong /ae/. He also mentions that “la silaba, que corresponde en nuestra lengua á su letra *o*, como, *va*, *ve*, *vi*, *vo*, *vu*, es una silaba” [the syllable that corresponds in our language to their letter *o*, such as *va*, *ve*, *vi*, *vo*, *vu*, is a single syllable] (p. 237).

The Pangasinan grammar by Andrés López (1690, fol. 2 r.-v.) includes an extensive explanation of diphthongs and, starting from a general rule, notes the exceptions (see Sueiro-Justel, 2005). He defines these as “dos vocales en que se acaba una dición” [two vowels in which a syllable ends], where he seems to understand *syllable* as equivalent to *word*. Unlike some earlier works, he does not consider two vowels of the same type as a diphthong if the last vowel is *a*, the sequences *gui* and *ai* (with some exceptions), or those with a *cortadillo*, which he indicates with an *interpunctus*. In justifying this latter point, he follows Quintilian's definition, stating that “*diphthongo sunt duæ, vocales sub uno punto prolatae*” [diphthongs are two vowels pronounced under one mark] (fol. 2 r.).

To conclude this section, it is essential to address issues related to semivowels and semiconsonants, specifically the Tagalog *uayaon*. Blancas de San José (1610) already refers to a liquid element represented by the letter *v*, which does not signify a full consonant – for which *b* is used (thus applying the Quintilian and Nebrija premises) –, but rather “no se lea consonante *q̃* hiera la Vocal siguiente, sino líquida, al modo *q̃* pronuncia el Español, ygual: porque en Tagalo no ay .*v*. ni .*u*. que hiera, *q̃* la *b* hace esso” [it is not read as a consonant that affects the following vowel, but as a liquid, in the way that Spanish pronounces *igual* because in Tagalog there is no *v* or *u* that affects, as *b* does] (Blancas 1610, 4). He calls this *uayaon* (Tagalog character *wa* + demonstrative in Tagalog), which contrasts with the *cortadilla*, that is, the presence of a glottal stop in the prenuclear margin. This is described in Blancas' text, where we can find an interesting impressionistic characterisation of the pronunciation of both elements:

TAMBIEN les proviene muchas veces la diferencia a las palabras de dezirse con *vayaon* que ellos escriuen [carácter *uayaon* del silabario] o sin el [...] Lo qual se deue advertir para pronunciallos

bien, porque sino es vayaon [carácter *uayaon* del silabario] sino *q̃* una vocal se sigue a otra: ha de ser aquella primera cortada breuemente, de manera que parezca detener el aliento en ella vn poco. Pero con el vayaon ha de ser seguido y como encogiendo vn poco los labios. Como tambien consiste muchas vezes la diferencia en atar y juntar la consonante con la vocal siguiente o pronunciallas apartadas y cortada la vocal de la consonante que le precede (Blancas, 1610, p. 300).

[The difference in words often arises from being pronounced with or without the *uayaon* that they write [...] This should be noted to pronounce them correctly, because if it is not *uayaon* and one vowel follows another, the first vowel should be cut briefly, so it seems to stop the breath slightly. But with the *uayaon*, it should be followed smoothly, with a slight pursing of the lips. Similarly, the difference often lies in either connecting and joining the consonant with the following vowel or pronouncing them separately, with the vowel cut off from the preceding consonant]

A similar description is found in other Tagalog grammars. Perhaps the most specific is from De la Magdalena, who distinguishes between what should be written – representing the meaningful unit – and what is pronounced – which may vary from what is written: “y aunque se escribe, porque de no se escriuir mudará sentido, apenas se pronuncia como en *bauo* que significa viudo, y *bao* casco de coco, y *tauo* se pronuncia como si se escriuiera *tao*” [and although it is written, because if it were not written it would change the meaning, it is hardly pronounced as in *bauo*, which means widower, and *bao*, coconut shell, and *tauo* is pronounced as if it were written *tao*] (De la Magdalena, 1679, fol. 23 r.).

For his part, Oyanguen de Santa Inés (1742, p. 8) relates this element to diphthongs by indicating that an *u* placed between two vowels does not form a diphthong – pronounced as a single vowel – but rather “se pronuncian como dos” [they are pronounced as two].

Castro, in his orthography, uses the term *semiconsonántico* (Eng. semiconsonantal) and denies that it forms a diphthong. Drawing on Nebrija¹⁵, he states:

¹⁵ Nebrija says: “La .u. como diximos de la .i. tiene dos oficios: uno p̃prio cuãdo suena por si como vocal: assi como en las primeras letras destas diciones .uno. uso otro prestado cuãdo hiere la vocal: cual pronũciacion suena en las primeras letras destas diciones valle. ṽgo. los gramaticos antiguos en lugar della ponian el digama eolico *q̃* tiene semejaça de nuestra .f. & aun el son no esta mucho lexos della” (Nebrija, 1492, fol. 10 r.) [The *u*, as we said about the *i*, has two functions: one proper when it sounds by itself as a vowel, as in the first letters of the words *uno* and *uso*, and another borrowed when it affects the vowel, as in the first

ni bien es consonante porque nunca hiere de lleno a la vocal que se le sigue. ni tampoco es vocal perfecta porque no suene ni se pronuncia por si sola. sin ayuda de otra. Y por eso le llamaremos aqui semi-consonante y equivale a nuestra *v* de corazon, cuya pronunciacion recta (dice Nebrija) que se perdio entre los Españoles; porque no es lo mismo pronunciar *vivir*, que decir *bibir* [...] nunca hiere de lleno a la vocal, y siempre hace silaba y voz aparte, pero no diptongo [...] y assi para pronunciar rectamente, has de hacer cuenta como si fuera vocal rigurosa (Castro, 1776, pp. 28-29). [it is not quite a consonant because it never fully affects the following vowel, nor is it a perfect vowel because it does not sound or is pronounced by itself without the help of another. Therefore, we will call it a semi-consonant here, equivalent to our *v* in *corazón*, whose proper pronunciation (says Nebrija) was lost among the Spanish; because pronouncing *vivir* is not the same as saying *bibir* [...] it never fully affects the vowel, and always forms a separate syllable and sound, but not a diphthong [...] and thus to pronounce correctly, you must treat it as if it were a strict vowel]

In the Pampango grammars, although the term *uayaon* is not mentioned, the consonantal value of the letters *y* and *v* is noted, and Bergaño (1736=1729) indicates that the pronunciation of *u* is liquid. Benavente, providing more details, establishes the different contextual conditions, describing the complementary distribution of the vocalic and semiconsonantal elements:

Nota mas q̃ asi como la *u* se hace consonante en Latin y Romance, asi se hace consonante en Pamp[ang]o, mas con muy diversa pronunciacion, porque antes de *a* como en *vacas*, *tavar*, se pronuncia como si le precediese *g*, v.g., *guarda*, *agua*, y antes de *e* como en *vevay*, como si tambien le precediese *g*, v.g. *guebo*; pero antes de *i* como en *visic* se pronuncia como si le precediese *h*, v.g., *huir* mas no se expresa nada de [g? h?] y asi esta *o* o *u* se queda consonante (Benavente, c. 1699, fol. 9 v.-10 r.).

[Note that just as the *u* becomes a consonant in Latin and Romance languages, it also becomes a consonant in Pampango, but with very different pronunciation. Before *a*, as in *vacas*, *tavar*, it is pronounced as if preceded by *g*, e.g., *guarda*, *agua*, and before *e*, as in *vevay*, as if also preceded

letters of the words *valle* and *vengo*. The ancient grammarians used the Aeolic digamma in its place, which resembles our *f* and even the sound is not far from it]. It should be recalled here that the Aeolic digamma represented an approximant sound [w].

by *g*, e.g., *guebo*. However, before *i*, as in *visic*, it is pronounced as if preceded by *h*, e.g., *huir*, but neither *g* nor *h* is actually expressed, and thus this *o* or *u* remains a consonant]

3.3 Consonantism

We noted in previous studies (Cuevas-Alonso, 2011, 2015) that, in terms of consonantism, the missionaries, in applying the Quintilian principle, tend to prefer a consistent spelling when two graphemes correspond to the same sound or assign them different functions, as the above description of the treatment of the *uayaon* indicates.

As we have already mentioned, most missionary grammarians, following the strategy found in Nebrija's Spanish grammar, focus on letters that stand on their own, those that serve other letters, and those specific to the Philippine languages. In one case, the Tagalog grammar by Blancas (1610), barely any reference is made to these; they are, though, noted in the work of Agustín de la Magdalena (1679) when he observes the absence of the letters *ç*, *ch* and *ñ*, that is, the sounds [tʃ] and [ɲ] – which, according to him, would be pronounced as the group *ny* [ɲj]. Regarding this latter sound, Benavente (c. 1699, fol. 9 r.) notes that it is characterised by “engendrarse del concurso de *n* y *y* consonante” [being produced from the combination of *n* and *y* consonant] where “también se hiere la *y*” [the *y* is also sounded] (Bergaño 1736=1729, Advertencias proemiales [Proemial remarks]).

Regarding *c* and *k*, the grammarians note that they are pronounced [k], with or without a liquid *u*, and they observe the existence of a consonantal *y*, which is not pronounced in intervocalic position and is used instead of *ll*. Gaspar de San Agustín (1787=1793, p. 149) also notes that in the groups *qu* + vowel and *su* + vowel, the *u* is liquid and not pronounced, even though it is written, except in “todas las de dos syllabas, cuya segunda lleva antes *V* liquida, piden *pen.correp* Vg. *Saguan*, *saguac*, *sicuan*, *tacuil*, *saliguay*, *aua*” [all those of two syllables, where the second syllable has a liquid *v* before it, which requires a penultimate correction. For example, *Saguan*, *saguac*, *sicuan*, *tacuil*, *saliguay*, *aua*] (p. 157). Castro (1776) corrects this missionary by referring to the Tagalog characters and a very fine distinction between being liquid and being short (*penúltima correpta* (Eng. penultimate correction)):

Fr. Gaspar de San Agustin, al fol. treinta y tres de su Arte Tagala dice, que es liquida la *u* en esta palabra *saguan* penultima correpta. A que respondo, que una cosa es ser liquida la vocal, y otra cosa es el pronunciarse breve. La diccion *Saguan* es Trisilaba, y la *u* es breve, y no disilaba

como el Padre quiere; por lo qual es breve en su acento y pronunciacion pero no se pronuncia liquidamente y de corrida, sino que es menester hacer silaba en la dicha *u* diciendo- *sa-gu-an* (Castro, 1776, pp. 28-29).

[Fr. Gaspar de San Agustin, on page thirty-three of his *Arte Tagala*, states that the *u* in the word *saguan* is liquid in the penultimate syllable. To which I respond that being a liquid vowel is one thing, and being pronounced briefly is another. The word *saguan* is trisyllabic, and the *u* is short, not disyllabic as the Father suggests; therefore, it is brief in its accent and pronunciation, but it is not pronounced smoothly and continuously. Instead, it is necessary to form a syllable with the said *u*, saying *sa-gu-an*]

This meticulous orthographer also uses the theory of the Greco-Latin and European tradition regarding pronunciation in the case of the letter *qu*, linking it to the *potestas* and the number of units in the constitution of the syllable and to the quantity of the liquid in Latin. Thus, relying on the Quintilian maxim and noting the loss of *potestas*, he states:

Esta misma *u* despues de *Q*: nunquam *liquæscit in hac lingua* esto es: que no solo se pierde su fuerza en quanto al numero y cantidad, como en la lengua latina sino tambien en cuanto a su sonido y pronunciacion; y assi se pronuncia tacitamente y de corrido, sin hacer silaba ni vocal distinta, o por ser mexor decir, no se pronuncia ni se escribe tampoco v.g. *Quisquis*, que significa raspar, ellos la pronuncian, y escriben assi: *qisqis*. Y en esto observan puntualmente la regla que dice: se debe escribir como se pronuncia; y se debe pronunciar como se escribe (Castro 1776, pp. 25-26).

[This same *u* after *q* never *liquæscit in hac lingua* (Eng. becomes liquid in this language); that is, it not only loses its force in terms of number and quantity, as in the Latin language, but also in terms of its sound and pronunciation. Thus, it is pronounced silently and continuously, without forming a separate syllable or distinct vowel, or rather, it is neither pronounced nor written at all, e.g., *Quisquis*, which means to scrape, is pronounced and written by them as *qisqis*. In this, they precisely observe the rule that says: it should be written as it is pronounced, and it should be pronounced as it is written]

The concept of *suppletion*¹⁶ appears in De la Magdalena when referring to Spanish loanwords,

¹⁶ A concept originating from the European grammatical tradition – *suppletio* – which we already find in Priscian, referring to the construc-

and we find it in some of the other grammarians as well, such as Ortiz (1740) and Oyanguren (1742), among others. In these cases, it is noted that the native speakers use the sounds of their language that have phonetic similarities to the corresponding Spanish sounds: *f* [f] is replaced by *p* [p], and *j*, *x*, *z* [x, ʃ, ks, θ] are replaced by *s* [s]¹⁷. Additionally, there is a notable differentiation in meaning produced by *g* and *k* [g, k] in postnuclear positions. These substitutions, among other issues, lead Oyanguren, who was very concerned with fidelity to pronunciation, probably due to the desire to preserve the accuracy of religious texts, to assert that the native speakers “*resulta que suelen ser buenos escribanos, pero muy mentirosos*” [often turn out to be good scribes, but very deceitful] (Oyanguren de Santa Inés, 1742, p. 4).

Similarly, in other grammarians, we find descriptions of consonants. Gaspar de San Agustín (1787=1703) also notes that “*que la D. y R. suenan de un mismo modo, como digma, rigma, dulas, rulas*” [*d* and *r* sound the same, as in *digma, rigma, dulas, rulas*] (p. 148).

At times, we also find distinctions based on the position of the syllable – medial and preceded by a vowel, or final and medial preceded by a consonant. This is the case with the distinction between [r] and [l] found in Totanes’ grammar:

Tampoco tienen *R*, fuerte, y assi para decir Ramo dicen *Damo*, porque la suplen con la *D*. Esta *D* en medio de dición, antecediendola vocal, la convierten en *r*, y assi para pronunciar ellos Dedo, dicen *Dero*; pero en fin de dición, y en medio antecediendo consonante, muchas veces la pronuncian como *L*, (no liquida, porque tampoco la tienen) y assi dicen, *Polocoladol* por Procurador (Totanes, 1745, p. 2).

[They also do not have a strong *r*, and thus to say *ramo* they say *damo*, substituting it with *d*. This *d*, in the middle of a word and preceded by a vowel, is turned into *r*, so to pronounce *dedo*, they say *dero*; but at the end of a word, and in the middle when preceded by a consonant, they

often pronounce it as *l* (not liquid, as they do not have that either), thus they say *polocoladol* for *procurador*]

Due to space restrictions, we will not elaborate here on two elements we have already discussed in previous studies (see Cuevas-Alonso, 2011, 2015): the nasal *g* and the *h*. We will also not address the *cortadillo*, as it will be the subject of an extensive study on the notion of accent in missionary grammars.

4. FINAL WORDS

The phonetic description of Philippine languages follows the path established by the European tradition and Amerindian colonial missionary work. As we have seen, numerous studies have noted the early influence of Nebrija’s Latin grammar on the Amerindian grammars and how the edition likely used was one published after the *Recognitio*. However, as has been observed, this was not the only influence on the Filipino artes, just as it was not in the Americas, since the missionaries brought with them a prior grammatical tradition that they were familiar with and used as a model for the development of their own grammatical treatises. Rather than simply adopting this tradition, they reworked and adapted it to fit the specific characteristics of the Amerindian and Philippine languages, continuing what Percival (1999) calls the *vernacular turn* or what Swiggers (2003) refers to as the ‘*vernacularisation*’ of *la grammaire*.

Thus, in the grammars analysed here we have found references to both the earlier European tradition, primarily Nebrija, and the missionary tradition, particularly in the Filipino context with Blancas de San José. In this regard, as Gómez-Asencio (2001) points out, what matters most is not the origin or modification of the terms used to describe these languages, but rather the exceptional descriptive adequacy that the grammarians achieve through their redefinitions, as in the case of the Latin penultimate law, or by introducing new terms, such as *saltillo* or *cortadilla* to refer to the glottal consonant. In this adaptation of Latin material, they did not hesitate to incorporate concepts and metalanguage from the native “linguistic” tradition that existed prior to the arrival of the Spaniards. This is evident in the definition and description of the *uayaon* or the hard and soft vowels.

In this context, we find that the way phonetic aspects are introduced in the works we studied, with the exception of the Sambal grammar described by Ridruejo (2011), aligns with what we observe in Nebrija’s *Introductiones*. Specifically, they appear either at the end of the work or, serving a

tion of the past tenses of *sum* plus participle (Ridruejo, 2006). However, in the vernacular tradition – Nebrija, for example – it referred to providing alternative constructions in Romance languages that were not present in Latin. In the Amerindian and Filipino traditions, it acquires a new dimension through the contrast of languages: 1) it expresses in the native language constructions, phonetic units, or categories of Spanish or Latin that are not present in the same way in that language; and 2) it allows the application of the Priscian concept of addressing “carencias” (Eng. deficiencies) with structural resources from the languages being studied.

¹⁷ Castro (1776, p. 23) also observes that this latter substitution can be made with *s*, which “*es más suave y dulce*” [it is softer and sweeter], and, in relation to Spanish, he reflects that this change is also found among “*Andaluces, Valencianos, Mallorquines, y otras muchas Naciones políticas*” [Andalusians, Valencians, Mallorcans, and many other regions].

preparatory purpose for those familiar with Latin, at the beginning, as seen in Nebrija's Spanish grammar. These two positions are also attested in the Amerindian missionary tradition.

Despite the existence of native syllabaries at the time of the Spaniards' arrival, the missionaries did not hesitate to use the Latin alphabet as a reference. This gradually led to the replacement of the existing writing systems with the Latin alphabet.

The descriptive procedure in these grammars follows a pre-established script. This framework seems to follow the one found in Nebrija's grammar, which is also attested in the Amerindian missionary artes. Thus, in the grammars where a section on orthography appears, we observe that the relationships between the Filipino syllabaries and the Latin alphabet are indicated, coincidences and differences are determined, and elements absent in the reference languages (Latin and Spanish) are described. This approach respects the Quintilian maxim expressed in Nebrija's Latin grammar as *litterae in usu* and focuses on adapting the reused alphabet to represent pronunciation accurately. As is attested in the Americas, graphemes are conceived as signifiers of pronunciation, with graphemic diversity reflecting phonetic diversity. This also has pedagogical value. It involves comparing the sounds of Philippine languages with those of Latin, which were well known to the missionaries, and is approached from an orthographic perspective. In addition, references to various Spanish dialects or other languages are often made to illustrate the pronunciations of the languages in this archipelago.

In the missionary-colonial tradition, a "practical" or "pedagogical" shift can be observed, which aims to teach learners the differences in meaning that result from changes in the signifier. It should be noted that this approach is never adopted as a systematic criterion for recognising the units of the languages being grammaticized, leading to under- and over-differentiations. Nevertheless, this significant feature of changes in meaning caused by changes in the signifier is thoroughly exemplified in the grammars analysed here.

Like the Amerindian grammarians, the Filipino grammarians are capable of describing phenomena such as specific realisations or context-conditioned alternations, recognising a difference between what should be written (significant unit) and what is pronounced, which may vary.

We find descriptions of particularly challenging aspects, such as the *uayaon* or the treatment of semivowels, which are often addressed together with vowels or consonants.

Finally, we believe that we find here a notable chapter in the history of phonetics and phonology,

showcasing the development and adaptation of linguistic ideas to accommodate the foreign languages of that era. The descriptions, in their form, structure and content, are very similar to each other, and this similarity extends to the Amerindian artes and even to Nebrija's grammar, aligning with the idea that we are dealing with *gramáticas en cascada* (i.e., grammars produced in a series, copying one another and innovating upon what came before) (see Galeote, 2002, for the Americas; Cuevas-Alonso, 2011, for Philippine languages) characterised by a distinct methodological sequence. This is the result of grammatization processes common to the missionary-colonial sphere, where the prior knowledge and experience of the missionaries – both European and missionary (in the Americas and the Philippine archipelago itself) – play a significant role in this sequence. These grammars, while developed within a shared framework, also reflect individual originality (Hernández-de-León-Portilla, 2003).

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AUTHORSHIP CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

Miguel Cuevas-Alonso: conceptualisation, data curation, investigation, methodology, supervision, writing – original draft, writing – review & editing.

Pablo M. Tagarro: conceptualisation, investigation, methodology, writing – review & editing.

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