

CUBAR, NELLY I. 1974. The Philippine linguistic landscape: 16th - 19th centuries. *Philippine Social Sciences and Humanities Review* 39.311-470.

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Research on Philippine linguistic endeavors of the 16th to the 19th centuries is scanty, and whenever a new study gets published, it draws the attention of students of linguistics. If Nelly I. Cubar's *The Philippine linguistic landscape: 16th - 19th centuries* had no other merit but to increase the number of studies in such a field, it would still deserve commendation.

The study comes in three parts: the first part is a bird's eye view of Philippine linguistics during the Spanish era; the second is a running commentary on Fr. Joaquin de Coria's syntax of Tagalog; the third part, set as an appendix of the second, is Cubar's translation of four chapters of the *Nueva Gramatica Tagalog Teorico-practica* written by Fr. Joaquin de Coria and published in Madrid in 1872.

The first part is meant to provide a backdrop to the commentary on Coria's syntax. In fact, since Cubar's commentary does not describe the extent of Joaquin de Coria's dependence on previous Tagalog works, it is not easy to see the connection between the first two parts of the volume. For this reason the remarks in the present review will refer separately to the three parts of the paper.

In the words of the author herself, the first part shows

... the nature and extent of the grammars of Philippine languages written by the Spanish missionaries. Manuscripts of Tagalog and other Philippine languages are first listed, followed by annotated bibliographies of published grammars of Tagalog and other Philippine languages. The Manila libraries where some of the still existing works are to be found are also indicated. A summary of dates of publication of these grammars is also given to give an idea of the number of published works on grammar during the Spanish era. The last two sections list published bibliographies and general bibliographies of Philippine materials.

A research of this nature can hardly ever be complete and without error. The present study, however, seems to possess more than an ordinary share of oversights. It gives us first a chronological list of some manuscripts in Tagalog, gathered, it appears, from the works of Ernest J. Frei, Frank R. Blake, Trinidad H. Pardo de Tavera, and Marcelino A. Foronda, with allusions to the works of Emma H. Blair and James Alexander Robertson and Jose T. Medina. The list includes sixteen titles. However, in the next section, a few pages ahead, dealing with the manuscripts of the grammars of Philippine languages, the author gives us another list of twenty-six titles, including those already mentioned in this first section.

One wonders why the author duplicated the list. If she intended to tell us who among the friars was the first to write a grammar of Tagalog we should have been referred

to the excellent and lengthy essay with which Edwin Wolf prefaced his edition of *Doctrina Christiana: The First Book Printed in the Philippines* (Philadelphia, 1947) or to the equally good *Ensayo Historico-Bibliografico* added by Fr. J. Gayo Aragon to *Doctrina Christiana: Primer Libro Impreso en Filipinas* (Manila, 1951). Or at least she should have mentioned the remarks made by W.E. Retana in *Origenes de la Imprenta Filipina* (Madrid, 1911) on whom both Wolf and Gayo Aragon depend so heavily as Fr. Gayo readily acknowledges. As a matter of fact, Cubar does not mention any of these three works.

The first list does not indicate the religious order to which the authors belong and even the names are not systematically arranged. In some cases the surname comes first, in others it is the Christian name that comes ahead. The names themselves are often misspelled. Number five (5) in the list is one Montes y *Escamilla*, without a first name. His manuscript is dated 1600. Later, in the second list his name appears as Jeronimo Montes y *Escamilla*, and his manuscript is not given any date although he himself is said to have died in 1610. It is known, however, that Fr. Jeronimo Montes y Escamilla, a Franciscan, was still alive in 1614. (Fr. Eusebio Gomez Platero, *Catalogo Biografico de los Religiosos Franciscanos*, Manila: 1880, p. 60).

In the same list there appear other authors, without any indication of dates: Fr. Bencuchillo, J. Monte and Miguel Sanchez. In the second list of manuscript Tagalog grammars, Cubar says that Fr. Sanchez died in 1716. Fr. Francisco Bencuchillo, an Augustinian, is not included at all in this second list, although both W.E. Retana and Fr. Miguel Selga, authors appearing in the bibliography cited by Cubar, say that he wrote an *Arte Tagalog* and that he died in 1776.

Regarding the manuscript attributed to J. Monte, this reviewer has a sneaking suspicion that it is the same work referred to above as belonging to Fr. Jeronimo Montes. His name appears in some sources written as Jeronimo Monte. If so, this entry would be a duplicate of the other already examined.

The task of checking out the data offered in Cubar's entries of manuscripts and books is difficult because all too often names are incorrectly spelled, and indication as to the religious order to which the writer belonged is sometimes missing or incorrectly given. Thus, on page 323 of the monograph, two abbreviations are given to represent the Augustinians: O.E.S.A. and O.S.A. while in the list of manuscripts we find three such abbreviations, O.E.S.A., O.R.S.A. and O.S.A. A cursory check of the names reveals that O.R.S.A. indicates the writer was an Augustinian Recollect, but O.E.S.A. and O.S.A. point out an Augustinian (in Spanish, Orden de Ermitafios de San Agustin).

The list of manuscripts of grammars of Philippine languages has been compiled almost exclusively from the works of Robert Streit and Jack H. Ward. Streit is cited, the number of his entry given, along with the volume and page, but references to Ward just mention his name. Other entries in Cubar's list give no reference at all.

The list of manuscripts is certainly impressive and should perhaps lead to a revision of John Leddy Phelan's reference to the linguistic work done by the Spanish friars as laborious, even heroic, but inadequate.

After the list of manuscripts, Cubar offers us her list of Tagalog grammars written in Spanish from 1610 to 1899. She means, of course, manuscripts that reached printing. The books are given first in chronological order with bibliographical notes. The list certainly includes all Tagalog grammar books printed during the Spanish period plus the brief treatise on the Tagalog language written by Jose Rizal but printed in 1943 for the first time, and the studies on Tagalog grammar by Pedro Serrano Laktaw that came off

the press in 1929. Unexpectedly also, we see on this list of printed books the work of Pedro Andres de Castro, which is not a grammar at all but a description of the structure of the ancient Philippine syllabary. A beautiful copy of this manuscript was owned by the bibliophile Antonio Graño, but now it is deposited in the Lopez Memorial Museum. It is this manuscript that was reproduced in facsimile, not printed, in 1930, and 150 copies issued. It is, therefore, surprising to read what Cubar says about this book: 'Most copies are reproductions from the original'.

The bibliographical notes incorporated in the list, although compiled from well-known sources, are of interest precisely because thanks to Cubar they are now made available to us in a compilation. Surprisingly, Cubar does not seem to have used Retana's *Aparato Bibliografico* as a source of bibliographical information.

It is unfortunate that the bibliographical notes include some erroneous statements. For example, on page 332, we are told that the *Arte* of Fr. Francisco de San Jose is the 'oldest production from a printing press in the monastery of the Franciscan order in Bataan'. In fact, Fr. San Jose was a Dominican and his book was printed under his personal supervision in the Dominican convent of Abucay, Bataan. It is likewise erroneous to say that the book is addressed by San Jose to his fellow-Franciscans, or that it is the first book printed in the Philippines.

On page 334 Cubar tells us that Fr. Ortiz finished the manuscript of his *Arte y Reglas* in 1739, but the correct date is 1729. On page 337 it is stated that the third to the twelfth editions of Fr. Hevia Compomanes's *Lecciones de Gramatica Hispano-Tagala* were printed at the University of Santo Tomas, implying of course, that the first, second and third were printed somewhere else. The fact is that those three editions were printed at Santo Tomas. The title of Serrano Laktaw's grammar is given as *Sobre la Lengua Tagalog*, but the complete title is *Estudios Gramaticales sobre la Lengua Tagalog*.

The author has also arranged the list of the Tagalog grammars in alphabetical order, this time adding indications about which book repositories in Manila possess copies of these grammars. These details seem to have been taken from the *Union Catalog of Philippine Materials* by Maxima Magsanoc Ferrer (Quezon City, 1970). A number of editing lapses are found on this list, too; notable among them is the inclusion of Fr. Miguel Selga's *Estudio Bibliografico del Arte y Reglas de la Lengua Tagala de Fr. Tomas Ortiz*. This is a fine bibliographical study on Fr. Ortiz's book, but it is not a grammar book at all.

In the next section the author lists the grammar books of other Philippine languages printed during the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries. The lists can hardly be said to be complete and the bibliographical notes accompanying them are taken almost exclusively from Pardo de Tavera. The author does not seem to have utilized the monumental *Aparato Bibliografico* of Retana. Had she used it she would not have said, for instance, that the *Arte de la Lengua Bicol* of Fr. Andres de San Agustin was printed only three times, in 1647, 1795 and 1879. Retana describes the second edition done in 1739. She would also have found out that Fr. Santos Herrejon's *Lecciones de Gramatica Bicol-Hispano* is rather a bilingual textbook intended mainly to teach Spanish to children whose native language is Bicol.

The list of Cebuano grammars includes only three entries. Cubar does not mention the *Gramatica Visaya-Cebuano* of Fr. Manuel Vilches, O.R.S.A. (Manila: 1877).

About the first edition of R. Francisco Encina's *Arte de la Lengua Zebuana* (1801), we should be told that it is a pirated edition without place and date of publication, although there is no doubt that it is Encina's *Arte*.

Cubar attributes to Fr. Julian Bermejo an *Arte de la Lengua Zebuana* printed in

1800. The existence of such grammar, however, is quite doubtful. We have not seen it cited in any reputable bibliography. Besides, it is known that Fr. Bermejo arrived in the Philippines in 1797 and three years of residence in the country is too short a period to learn a language well enough to write a decent grammar of it.

Perhaps with not too clear consistency, Fr. Nicolas Gonzalez's *Gramatica Bisaya-Cebuana* is entered under the name of Fr. Francisco Encina. For, if it is correct that Fr. Gonzalez's work is just a paraphrase of Fr. Encina's work, so too, Fr. Bermejo's *Arte* was worked out of Fr. Encina's earlier grammar.

Fr. Ramon Zuco's *Metodo del Dr. Ollendorff para aprender a leer, hablar y escribir un idioma cualquiera adaptado al Bisaya* (Manila, 1871), really a grammar of Cebuano, is mentioned together with his *Compendio de la Gramatica Bisaya-Espanola* (Guadalupe, 1889), which is rather a method for Bisayan speakers to learn Spanish. However, Fr. Antonio Sanchez's *Gramatica Bisaya-Hispana*, written for Waray speakers, is not mentioned by Cubar at all, nor is Fr. Pedro Nolasco de Medio's *Gramatica Ibanag-Castellana*, which is a similar work for Ibanag speakers.

Again, with puzzling inconsistency, Cubar includes De La Cuesta's *Gramatica Ilocana-Castellana* and Vivo y Juderias's *Breve Compendio*, which are rather Spanish grammars for Ilokano children, but she omits Fernando Ferrer's *Manual Iloco-Castellano*, which has the same purpose.

Writing about the Pampangan printed grammars, Cubar fails to mention Fr. Francisco Coronel's *Arte de la Lengua Pampanga*, printed in 1617. She also fails to cite a previous *Arte de la Lengua Pangasinan* written by Fr. Andres Lopez and printed in 1690.

The last paragraphs of this first part of Cubar's study offer a bibliography of Philippine Materials. It is fairly complete although we do not see mentioned here either a *Catalogue of Filipiniana at Valladolid* edited by Helen R. Tubangui (Quezon City, 1973), or the *Philippine Retrospective National Bibliography: 1523-1699* by Gabriel A. Bernardo, Natividad Verzosa and John N. Schumacher, or *Filipiniana Materials in the National Library* by Isagani R. Medina (Quezon City, 1972), or the *Union Catalogue of Philippine Materials* by Maximo Magsanoc Ferrer (Quezon City, 1970). However, the field of Philippine bibliography has been well researched in the past and so none of these bibliographic volumes would have added items to the list provided us by Cubar.

The second part of the research is a commentary on the Tagalog syntax of Fr. Joaquin de Coria. Cubar justifies her study of this particular work on the grounds that Coria's *Arte* is the only one that includes a section on syntax. Although Pardo de Tavera stated that Coria's treatment makes it impossible to tell the true nature of Tagalog, Cubar believes otherwise. She tells us that even though Coria framed his Tagalog syntax on existing Latin and Spanish grammar models, since languages share a number of categories which are universally valid, he came out giving us a pretty good idea of the syntax of Tagalog.

Cubar seems fascinated by a number of ideas she has read in Coria's *Arte* that foreshadow contemporary developments, particularly those brought to the fore by Charles Fillmore and Wallace Chafe. The description of Tagalog cases is one of them, so also is the analysis of reflexive affixes, the statement that no sentence can exist without a verb at least implied, and that Tagalog *sa* is a marker of the accusative case.

Coria states that Tagalog *na* is the equivalent of the Spanish *que* and therefore a relativizer and subordinative particle. Cubar, however, seems to be uncommitted on this point. Still, she does see in Coria's treatment of this part of the grammar another way of expressing the notion of sentence embedding.

Cubar also notices that Coria's idea of government seems to provide a causative explanation for the existence of certain parts of the sentence. It is correct that Coria gives that impression, but one wonders if a real causative relation is implied by Coria, or simply the factual presence of a part of the sentence dictated by the presence of another, more or less like Hockett and Chafe assert.

A deeper study of Coria's ideas would reveal that most of them were not really his own. They had been said before, although rather than Gonzalo Correa's *Arte de la Lengua Española Castellana*, cited by Cubar, who wrote more than two hundred years before Coria, we should look for them in the grammatical books of Vicente Salva, J.M. Hermosilla, Pedro Martínez López and Eduardo Benot, and above all in the *Gramática de la Lengua Castellana* of the Real Academia Española. Coria's *Nueva Gramática* follows the outline of the official *gramática* of the Real Academia.

This second part of the monograph is likewise very poorly edited. The misprints are too numerous to be listed down here. On two occasions Cubar misquotes Coria and makes him say the opposite of what he wrote. In some two dozen instances the English translations added to Coria's examples differ from the translations found in the appendix that follows Cubar's commentary.

Appended to the commentary is the English translation of the four chapters from Coria's *Nueva Gramática* containing his ideas on Tagalog syntax. This translation, too, is a work of Cubar. In the preface she acknowledges that her translation is literal. So it is, to the point of being unintelligible at times. This plus the poor editing makes its reading an unpleasant task. One instance of such editing: pages 415 and 418 contain comments made by Cubar side by side with the translation itself. They should have been incorporated into the commentary itself or placed in a footnote.

Cubar's work points out a field of profitable linguistic research. It is too bad that her labors have not been presented to students of Philippine bibliography and linguistics with a bit greater care. Still she succeeds in making her point: the landscape reconstructed from books on Philippine languages written by the Spanish friars must be studied systematically and its linguistic landmarks not to be ignored. Truly, for those times of unsophisticated linguistic methods, such works should be considered great.