

## Appendix 3

### Why “D” is “R”: Understanding the Filipino Language and Society by Tracing the History of Its Letters

Filipino language learners and even native speakers get confused: when do we use **din**, and when do we use **rin**? Or for that matter, **dito** and **rito**, **doon** and **roon**? What is the difference between **d** and **r**? To understand this, we need to know that in the ancient Tagalog script, the **baybayin**, there was only one symbol for **d** and **r**. But studying the **baybayin** and the path that Filipino orthography has taken tells us more than the history of **d** and **r**. It also tells us about the history of colonialism and the nationalist movement for independence.

#### The Baybayin

The **baybayin**<sup>1</sup> had seventeen basic symbols. Fourteen of these were consonant symbols with the inherent “a” sound (see the chart below): **ka**, **ga**, **nga**, **ta**, **da**, **na** **pa**, **ba**, **ma**, **ya**, **la**, **wa**, **sa**, and **ha**. Three symbols represented vowel sounds. To change the sound of the consonant symbols, diacritical marks called **kudlit** (or **corlit**) were used. With one of these marks placed above a consonant symbol, the sound became an “i” vowel sound; placed below the symbol, it became a “u” vowel sound. For example, the syllable for **ba** without diacritical marks, became **bi** with a **kudlit** above, and **bu** with a **kudlit** below. Here is how these syllables looked:



Each symbol, shown in the chart (see page 3), signifies a syllable that has a consonant and a vowel. In writing a syllable, however, that has for its components, a consonant, a vowel and a consonant (CVC), the final consonant is simply dropped.

According to William Henry Scott, the **baybayin** of the Philippines is among the indigenous Southeast Asian alphabets that are derived from India. Thus, they share the Sanskrit characteristic mentioned above—the unmarked symbol is pronounced with the vowel **a** while the addition of diacritical marks changes the vowel. For the past four centuries, this is consistent in documents categorized by Scott as follows: early

1. The word **baybayin** may have come from the Tagalog word **baybay**, which has two meanings: to spell, and to coast along. Some Filipinos erroneously believe that the ancient Tagalog script was called **alibata**. **Alibata**, however, was a term coined in 1914 by Dean Paul Versoza of the University of Manila. In his book *Pambansang Titik nang Pilipinas* (Philippine National Writing), 1939, he explains that he coined the word in 1914, in the New York Public Library Research Division. He based the term on three Maguindanao arrangements of letters from Arabic, *alif*, *ba* and *ta*. Coining a new term with no historical basis seems to have been inspired by the coining of the word “**Abakada**” as the Tagalog equivalent of “Alphabet.” This was done by two writers’ groups, the Samahang Mananagalog (Society of Tagalog Writers) and Aklatang Bayan (Association of Prose and Verse Writers) about twenty years before the coining of “**alibata**.”

Spanish works published in a formalized type; Spanish descriptions; old documents and signatures; and contemporary specimens.

The direction of the writing is from left to right, meaning the next letter is written on the right, after a **kudlit**. Although this has been questioned, Scott's study offers evidence by saying that "Tagalog signatures appear in documents as early as 1603, even among a pageful of Chinese signatures written vertically, often showing a penmanship with a graceful, Spencerian script. The confusion, however, occurs when the writer uses materials which offer more resistance such a bamboo and a knife (as used by the Tagbanua), and the writer holds the bamboo pointing away from the body, to engrave the letters toward or away from himself/herself. Thus, he/she appears to be writing "up" or "down" the bamboo.<sup>2</sup>

The earliest studies of the Tagalog language and its script were done by the Spanish missionaries of the Philippines during the Spanish colonial rule (1521–1898). Among these studies are the following: Father Francisco Blancas de san Jose's *Arte y reglas de la lengua tagala*, 1610; Gaspar de San Agustin's *Compendio de la lengua tagala*, 1703; Tomas Ortiz's *Arte de la lengua-tagala*, 1740; Juan Jose Noceda and Pedro Sanlucar's *Vocabulario de la lengua tagala*, 1754; Manuel Buzeta's *Gramatica de la lengua tagala dispuesta para la mas facil ineligencia de los religiosos principiantes*, 1850; Jose Hevia y Campomanes's *Lecciones de gramatica hispano-tagala*, 1872; Cipriano Martin Marcilla's *Estudio de los antiguos alfabetos Filipinos*, 1895; and Agustin Mara de Castro's *Ortografia y reglas de la lengua tagala* (written in the 18th century but published in 1930 using his pseudonym Pedro Andres de Castro); and Toribio Minguella y Asernedo's *Ensayo de gramatica hispano-tagala* and *Estudios comparatives entre el tagalo y el sanscrito*, 1888.

The first book published in the Philippines, the *Doctrina Christiana en la lengua española y tagala*, 1593, contained examples of the **baybayin** script. The **baybayin** texts in the book followed both the original text written in Spanish and its Tagalog translation written in Roman letters. Thus, although historical documents such as 16th-century letters signed in **baybayin** could also be found in the archives of religious congregations, it is the *Vocabulario* that provides historians and linguists with unrevised **baybayin** symbols.

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2. Data from Luther Parker's *The Early Bisayans* (typewritten manuscript, 1915) as quoted in Scott 1968. Although Parker talks about the Tagbanua, this could also be true for the Tagalogs using the **baybayin**.

Here is the **baybayin** chart:

a	ᐃ	i	ᐃ	u	ᐃ
ka	ᐃ	ki	ᐃ	ku	ᐃ
ga	ᐃ	gi	ᐃ	gu	ᐃ
nga	ᐃ	ngi	ᐃ	ngu	ᐃ
ta	ᐃ	ti	ᐃ	tu	ᐃ
da	ᐃ	di	ᐃ	du	ᐃ
na	ᐃ	ni	ᐃ	nu	ᐃ
pa	ᐃ	pi	ᐃ	pu	ᐃ
ba	ᐃ	bi	ᐃ	bu	ᐃ
ma	ᐃ	mi	ᐃ	mu	ᐃ
ya	ᐃ	yi	ᐃ	yu	ᐃ
la	ᐃ	li	ᐃ	lu	ᐃ
wa	ᐃ	wi	ᐃ	wu	ᐃ
sa	ᐃ	si	ᐃ	su	ᐃ
ha	ᐃ	hi	ᐃ	hu	ᐃ

Studies of the **baybayin** script reveal two characteristics of the Tagalog language that have passed down into the usage of the national language now known as Filipino. First, there is only one symbol for the letters “d” and “r.” The pronunciation depends on the location of the symbol. At the start of the word, it is pronounced “d.” Between two vowels, it is pronounced “r.” For example, the word **dalita**, meaning poverty, starts with the letter **d**. With the adjectival suffix **ma**, the word becomes **maralita**, meaning poor. Thus, in the contemporary use of the Roman alphabet in writing Tagalog, “d” is written as “r.” Second is the symbol for the syllable **nga**. Written in Roman script, “ng” remains as a single letter, albeit written with two characters.<sup>3</sup>

In 1620, Father Francisco Lopez attempted to revise the **baybayin** script by suggesting a new **kudlit** shaped like a cross. Placed below a symbol, the cross-shaped **kudlit** cancelled the inherent “a” sound. According to Verzosa, 1939, this suggestion was hence called the Belarmino style and was highly recommended by the authorities. This additional **kudlit**, however, was hardly used.<sup>4</sup> The unpopularity of the cross-shaped **kudlit** was remarked upon by Pedro Andres de Castro in his book *Ortografia y letras de la lengua tagala*, 1783. Apparently, the Filipinos politely refused to use it (from Marcilla 1895: 93–94 as quoted in Scott 1968, 59):

3. This discussion comes from Paul Morrow’s article “Baybayin—The Ancient Script of the Philippines,” in [www.mts.net](http://www.mts.net).

4. The Belarmino style was highly recommended by Verzosa in his book. However, since the **baybayin** was hardly used, the suggestion hardly took off. Even internet websites which have either developed or have links to **baybayin** computer fonts for **baybayin** enthusiasts do not use the Belarmino style.

They, after much praising of it and giving thanks for it, decided it could not be incorporated into their writing because it was contrary to the intrinsic character and nature which God had given it and that it would destroy the syntax, prosody, and spelling of the Tagalog language all in one blow, but that they did not mean to give offense to the Spanish lords and would be sure that special use would be made of it when writing words from the Spanish language in Tagalog script...

There are several theories on why **babayin** ceased to be used by the Filipinos. First was the limitations of the indigenous script, as repeatedly pointed out by the Spanish linguists, in expressing Spanish sounds; and consequently, the new words introduced and used in *Philippine colonial society*. In Totanes's *Arte de la lengua y manual para la administración de los Santos Sacramentos*, 1745, he remarked (Totanes 2 in Rafael 1993, 52): "They have no F but they supplement it with a P so they can say *confesar*, they say *kumpisal*. Nor Ll to say *caballo*, they say *cabayo*, because they substitute for it a Y. Nor do they have X, Z, or J..."

The examples given by Totanes, such as *confesar* (to confess), show the difficulty in writing, through the **baybayin**, words associated with the religious culture imposed by the Spanish colonizers, or writing the new "imports" such as the *caballo* or horse, words which at that point became integrated into everyday Philippine life.

Another reason for the decline in the use of **babayin** was the increasing number of Filipinos learning the caton, the system used by the friars in teaching the Roman alphabet. According to Almario (7-8), San Agustin was still criticizing the limitations of the **baybayin** in 1703 because many Filipinos were still using it while only a few knew the Roman system of writing. However, by the 18th century, very few were interested in learning the **baybayin** because the ability to read and write using the Roman system provided them with better chances in acquiring good jobs. This resulted in two kinds of "literacies": the young and the educated knew how to read and write in the Roman system, while the old and the impoverished read and wrote using **baybayin**. Later, many more would be attracted to learning the Roman system because this provided them with access to literature, from the religious **pasyon** (passion of Christ) to the metrical romances known as **awit** and **corrido**.

Vicente Rafael, in *Contracting Colonialism: Translation and Christian Conversion in Tagalog Society Under Early Spanish Rule*, 1993, offers another view. Rafael quotes the various criticisms the Spanish friars had of the **baybayin**, among them: inadequacy (based on Marcilla's comments that the diacritical marks do not suffice to make the texts readable); ambiguity (the reader needs to "guess" the breaks in each syllable referred to as "suspended consonants" by Lopez) and illegibility (de San Agustin's remarks that two letters can be read eight ways). Rafael notes that the word **kudlit** also means a "scratch" in Tagalog.

This, a **kurlit** (or **kudlit**) marks the boundary where writing is given up to voice, that is, the line that by giving value or stress to a syllable determines the sound of the signifier, thus delimiting the range of signifieds that can be attached to it; as called forth a multiplicity of sounds and consequently other signifiers.

Hence, from a Spanish point of view, the “illegibility” and “unreadability” of the script results from the lack of a direct and fixed correspondence between script and sound (Rafael 47).

For Rafael, the Spaniards failed to understand that Filipinos related voice and writing in a different way, and were not disturbed by ambiguity. His observations, however, can be affirmed if we look into indigenous Tagalog poetry, with its images and **talinghaga** (metaphor) that suggest a multiplicity of interpretations. These indigenous verses, transmitted as oral literature, contrast sharply to the fixed **aral** or lesson, found at the end of the religious poetry written by Filipinos during the Spanish colonial period.

Thus, while social expediency and practicality may have been valid reasons for the gradual but complete shift to Roman letters, the imposition of a new system of writing also reflected the imposition of the colonizer’s worldview.

### The Use of Spanish Orthography

From the 16th to the 19th century, the Tagalog texts written and published by the Filipinos (or perhaps more accurately, the Tagalogs who lived in the seat of commerce and government) were written using Spanish orthography. Thus, when writing their original works, they now used the letters of the Spanish alphabet: A, B, C, CH, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, L, LL, M, N, Ñ, O, P, Q, R, RR, S, T, U, V, X, Y, Z. Some articles on the history of Tagalog orthography (such as the article “Ortograpiyang Filipino: Isang Pag-aaral sa Istandarisasyon ng Wika” in the book *Pulitika ng Wika*, eds. Teresita Fortunato and Ma. Stella Valdez) during this period lists the letters “k” and “w,” and does not discuss the other characteristics of Spanish orthography as used by the Tagalogs from the 16th to the 19th century. However, according to Virgilio Almarino’s *Tradisyon at Wikang Filipino* (Tradition and the Filipino Language), 1997 as well as my own observations from studying the Tagalog dedication in verse, entitled “Ala purussima virgen y verdade ra madre de dios madre rey,” found in Fra Francisco San Jose’s *Arte y reglas de la lengua tagala*, 1610, and in Modesto de Castro’s *Pagsusulatan nang Dalauang Binibini na si Urbana at Feliza Na Nagtuturo ng Mabuting Kaugalian* (Letters Between Two Young Women Urbana and Feliza—That Teach Fine Manners), 1864, the following can be observed:

1. The letter “k” was not used during this time. The reason it exists in the new Spanish orthography is because of loan words in contemporary Spanish. From the 16th to the 19th century, it was substituted with:

- a. “c” such as in *capantay* (today spelled as **kapantay**, meaning equal) and *caavay* (today spelled as **kaaway**, meaning enemy), both words found in San Jose;
  - b. “q” such as in *quinalulugdan* (now spelled **kinalulugdan** which means something or someone one is fond of); or *daquilang* (now spelled **dakila** meaning great), both words found in de Castro;
  - c. or “cq” such as in *bacquin* (now spelled **bakit**, example given by Almario).
2. The letter “w” was also not used. Instead:
    - a. The diphthong “iw” was spelled “io” such as in *mapañgalio* (now spelled **mapang-aliw**, meaning “gives pleasure”); or “iu” such as in *aliu* (also spelled *alio*, now spelled **aliw**, meaning pleasure).
    - b. The diphthong “aw” was spelled “ao” such as in *malinao* (now spelled **malinaw**, meaning clear, found in San Jose).
  3. The letter “y” was used for the sound for the short “i” such as in the words *yna* (now spelled **ina**, meaning mother), and *ycao* (now spelled **ikaw**, meaning “you”), found in San Jose.
  4. The letter “f” was used for the sound of “s” such as in the words *fanglibotan* (now spelled **sanglibutan**, meaning “the whole world”) and *cafalanan* (now spelled **kasalanan**, meaning wrongdoing). This, however, is not true in the 19th century text, leading us to believe that it could be so because of printing limitations in the earlier text.
  5. The sound “ng” was written as g with a ~ above it, as in the words **manga<sup>5</sup>** (word that indicates the plural form for the noun following it, and **langit** (meaning heaven).

In 1610, Tomas Pinpin, a Filipino<sup>6</sup> who was then working for the Dominican press, published *Librong Pag-aaralan ng mga Tagalog nang uicang Castilla* (The Book that the Tagalogs Should Use in Learning Spanish). In the first chapter of the book, he advises fellow Filipinos to study Spanish orthography first: “**Hindi magaling na itoloy co, itong aral cong ito, cundi co mona kayo aralan, mga capoua co Tagalog nang di pagturing nang ibang mga letrang, na di natin tinotoran torang dati, ang uala nga fa uica nating Tagalog.** (It would not be wise that I continue this lesson, if you, my fellow Tagalog, do not study the letters that we do not know, that we do not have in Tagalog.)” (Pinpin 1610 in Almario 1993 54.) Virgilio Almario, former Director of the University of Philippines Sentro ng Wikang Filipino or UP Filipino Language Center, in his article on Pinpin, also noted how Pinpin explained the differences between “p” and “f,” “l” and “e” and “o” and “u.” Almario also pointed out that four centuries later, many Filipinos still find it difficult to distinguish the f from the p sound and how the

5. There should be a ~ on top of the g in this word.

6. Filipinos in the 16th century did not call themselves “Filipinos,” since the concept of the Philippines as a nation has yet to evolve. They identified themselves with their ethnolinguistic group so Pinpin would have called himself a Tagalog.

name “Nena” in Bulacan (Central Luzon), becomes “Nina” in Cebu (an island in the Visayas region).<sup>7</sup>

The following quote from Pinpin (as qtd in Almario 55) also shows how in the 17th century, the Filipinos were still grasping the Spanish orthography:

**...Ay ang lubha ninyong napagcamalan ay ang i at ang e fampon nang o at nang u at fa pagfulat man at fa pangongofap man ay inyong pinagpalit nang maralas, at fiya ding iquinalalayong lubha nang fangongofap niyo nang uicang Caftilla, fa totoong catouran...**

You usually make a mistake in using i and e and also, o and u, both in writing and speaking, you interchange these, and thus you make your speech far from the Spanish language, and that is the reason...

Two hundred years, later, Tagalog texts show a familiarity with Spanish orthography. An example is *Pagsusulatan nang Dalawang Binibini na si Urbana at Feliza Na Nagtuturo ng Mabuting Kaugalian* (Letters Between Two Young Women Urbana and Feliza—That Teach Fine Manners) by Modesto de Castro, 1864:<sup>8</sup>

**Paunau sa Babasa,**

**Cayo maña binata ang inaalayan ko nitong munting buña nang pagod, cayü ang aquing tinutungo<sup>9</sup>, at ipinamamanhic sa inyo na aco, I, pagdalitaang dinguin.**

Note to the Reader,

It is to you, young men, that I offer this humble fruit of my labor, you are the ones I address, and I ask you to hear me out.

Thus, D. Pedro Serrano Laktaw’s *Diccionario Tagalo Hispanico*, 1914, concludes that Tagalog spelling has three stages (as of 1914): the first stage, (1751-1754)<sup>10</sup> marked by the introduction of the Roman alphabet; the second stage (1754-1889), which he calls the “period of confusion and retrogression because of the use of unnecessary vowels and spellings from the Spanish orthography; and the third stage (1889-1913), where the former letters of the baybayin, w and k were reintroduced.<sup>11</sup>

This third stage could largely be attributed to the studies and recommendations of 19th-century Filipino scholars. Foremost among them was Jose Rizal,<sup>12</sup> who wrote

7. These views of Pinpin, writing in 1610 and Almario, writing in 1993, on “e” and “i” were not shared by Jose Rizal, writing in 1890.

8. The quoted text comes from 1902 printing by the Imprenta Y Libreria de J. Martinez in Manila.

9. The “g” in **ipinapatungo** should be written with a ~ above it.

10. Note however that the Pinpin text was written in the 17th century.

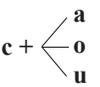
11. The observations of Serrano were discussed by historian Arsenio Manuel in his Introduction to his translation of Rizal’s article. The article’s translation was printed in *Filipintana Volume II: Linguistics*, ed Zoilo Galang. (Manila, Philippine Education co 1938).

12. Jose Rizal is the national hero of the Philippines and is the author of two classic Philippine novels, *Noli me tangere* (Touch Me Not), and *El filibusterismo* (The Subversive).

the article “*Sobre la nueva ortografía de la lengua Tagalog*” in 1890 and published it in *La Solidaridad*, the newspaper of the Propaganda Movement.<sup>13</sup> Other studies are: *Contribucion para estudio de los antiguos alfabetos Filipinos*, 1884 and *El sanscrito en la lengua tagala*, 1887, both by Trinidad Herminigildo Pardo de Tavera; *Diccionario hispano-tagalog*, 1889, by Pedro Serrano Laktaw; and *Los antiguos alfabetos de Filipinas*, 1895 by Wenceslao E. Retana.

### A New Orthography as Suggested by Pedro Serrano Laktaw

Laktaw’s dictionary, published in 1889 is considered to be the first complete dictionary written by a Filipino during the Spanish colonial period. Viveca Hernandez’s study of Laktaw’s work reveals that Laktaw proposed a new way of writing. He claimed that this new system made it easier to distinguish suffixes from root words. He also changed the 11 letters from Spanish (c, ch, f, j, ll, ñ, q, rr, v, x, and z). The chart below shows a summary of Laktaw’s proposals (Hernandez 10):

Dati (Old)	Bago (New)	Tunog (Sound)	Halimbawa (Examples)	Inkonsistensiya (Inconsistencies)
c + 	k	[k]	kargà, abaniko, hàmak	carne, escoba
c + e f	s	[s]	sepilio, palasio	cédula, oficio
ch	ts s	[c] [s]	tsarol, biskotso	bachiller
f	p	[p]	pirmà, kapé	inferno
j	h s	[h] [s]	husto, monha sabón	baraja
ll	li y	[ly] [y]	martilio, kutsilio	martillo
ñ	ny	[n]	kanyon	mangempeño
qu + e f	k	[k]	keso, sakit	makipagquilala
rr	r	[r]	gitara, pisara	correo
v	b w	[b] [w]	berso, yawe	vaso
x	s	[s]	Pelis	
z	s	[s]	sulsi, asukál	almirez

On the rightmost side of the chart, therefore, we can see the inconsistencies of the dictionary.

13. Rizal’s article was republished with slight typographical variance in *La Independencia*, October 1 and 5, 1898.

## A New Orthography as Suggested by Jose Rizal

In Rizal's article, he acknowledges the publication of Pardo de Tavera's *El sanscrito en la lengua tagala*, and remarks that Tavera's work "employed an orthography more perfect than I imagined though placing it, that is, the formed spelling of the word, in parenthesis in the transcription of the words." (Rizal, Jose 1890 trans. by Manuel 1938 350). Rizal then praises the three vowels and fourteen consonants of the ancient Tagalog alphabet, saying that these characters have continuously been able to express the words of the language. Although he did not specifically mention Pinpin's observation nor quote Pinpin to dispute the latter's criticism of the baybayin, Rizal explained in detail that the Tagalogs did not use "i" and "e" and "o" and "u" indifferently. The use of "i", for example, is imposed in the middle or the end of words, rejecting "e." Thus, Tagalogs never say **selid** instead of **silid** (meaning room).

Rizal then proceeds to suggest the following changes to Tagalog orthography:

1. The use of the letter K, which is not found in Spanish orthography. K not only has a value more fixed than "c" and "q", but also facilitates the grammatical formulation of verbs whose roots begin with "ka" and "ku." Also, the Tagalog syllables **ka**, **ki**, **ko**, **ku** do not sound the same as the Spanish *ca*, *qui*, *co*, *qu*, because the Tagalog "k" is subtly aspirated;
2. The use of the letter W as equal to *u*, as seen in the words **wala** (nothing) instead of *uala* and **araw** (sun) and *arau*, in which "u" is not a vowel but a consonant, and does not form a diphthong but a full and perfect syllable.
3. The long and stressed vowel should be marked with a grave accent (à) in stressed words, as **punò** (tree) and **tamà** (correct), because in these vowels, the long vowel has the "tonic" accent; but when this accent falls on the last vowel, the circumflex shall be used as in **masamá** (bad) and **batâ** (child). This rule makes writing simpler.
4. Words currently written with a hyphen because they are "contractions," for example **mas-dan** (from **masidan**, or to look) and **palab-sin** (from **palabasin**, or to let out), should use an apostrophe, thus **mas'dan** or **palab'sin** instead, or leave it without a hyphen.
5. The nasal guttural **ng** could be simplified into "g," for historical reasons, and also for simplicity, clarity, and logic.
6. The substantive particle **ay** when joined with another word ending with a vowel should be written as **ako'y** (I am) instead of **ako'i**, because there is no reason for the change of **y** into **i**.

Rizal then concludes his essay by saying that the new orthography is logical and easy as it is the national writing.

## Standardization of Tagalog Orthography

It was only, in the 1930s, however, that efforts were made to standardize Tagalog orthography with the establishment of the Surian ng Wikang Pambansa (Institute of National Language) in 1935. In President Manuel L. Quezon's speech, on December 30, 1937, he explained that the Surian, with its members representing various languages in the Philippines (Jaime C. de Veyra, Samar-Leyte Visayan, chair; Filemon Sotto, Cebu Visayan; Casimiro F. Perfecto, Bicol; Felix S. Salas Rodriguez, Panay Visayan; Hadji Butu, Moro<sup>14</sup> 10; and Cecilio Lopez, Tagalog and secretary), had recommended the selection of Tagalog as the national language (Quezon 1937 in *Filipiniana* 1938 403):

Hence, in deciding to adopt a national language culled from different languages spoken in the Philippines and mainly from the Tagalog, which was not only the native tongue of Rizal but also is the most developed of all the existing languages of the country, we are merely carrying into realization one of the ideals of our national hero as a means of consolidating and invigorating our national unity.

In Quezon's speech, however, there is no mention of the name by which the language should be called. The Surian set about its duties of developing the national language with the publication of Lope K. Santos's *Balarila ng Wikang Pambansa* (Grammar of National Language), the official textbook on Tagalog grammar in 1940 and a Tagalog-English dictionary. It was only in 1959 that the Department of Education issued a Memorandum, henceforth calling the national language Pilipino.<sup>15</sup>

Santos's *Balarila* has twenty letters: A, B, K, D, E G, H, I, L, M, N, NG, O, P, R, S, T, U, W, and Y. These letters comprise five vowels, A, E, I, O, U, and the fifteen consonants K, D, G, H, L, M, N, P, R, S, T, W and U.

With the incorporation of K and W, this alphabet followed the suggestion of Rizal. Moreover, with the objective of standardizing spelling, it removed the letters from the Roman alphabet that were used in spelling words that needed specific Tagalog sounds such as that produced by the letter K. Thus, we no longer find in this 1940 orthography the letters C, Q, and Ñ. Moreover, the identity of NG was recognized, which, according to Almario was written as g with a ~ above it during the Spanish colonial period.

The Filipino alphabet has changed twice since then. In 1973, it was recorded to have had 31 letters. This, however, this did not make much of an impact, as educational institutions, writers and editors seem to have followed the letters and guidelines set by the *Balarila* during succeeding decades. Finally in 1987, 8 more letters were added to the original 20 letters above of the *Balarila*. These were C, F, J, Ñ, Q, V, X, and Z. It is

14. **Moro** is a term deemed pejorative by Muslim Filipinos. Quezon's use of the term was thought to be reflective of his prejudice.

15. The discussion on orthography from Santos's *Balarila* to the 1987 Constitution comes from Almario 1997.

believed that only by adding these letters can Filipino be truly incorporate words from other Philippine languages. With these new letters, the new orthography recognizes the “F” in the Cordillera languages, the “V” in Ibanag, and the “J” in Ivatan. Thus, the creation of a new orthography is not just a political act that recognizes the need for a national language that responds to all the ethnolinguistic groups. By modernizing Filipino orthography, the national language remains relevant to the needs of Philippine society.

On August 1, 2007 the Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino (Filipino Language Commission) posted the article “Ang Ortograpiya ng Wikang Pambasa” on its website. According to the website the article is simply a draft (**borador**), and therefore, one can send in comments but cannot quote any part of it. The article was written through nationwide consultations with teachers, linguists, and Filipino language school supervisors in an effort to publish guidelines on Filipino orthography.

The need for standardization has also been responded to by other groups. The best spelling guidebook available is *Gabay sa Editing ng Wikang Filipino (tuon sa pagbaybay)* (Guide to Editing in Filipino [emphasis on spelling]) published by the Sentro ng Wikang Filipino (Filipino Language Center) of the University of the Philippines Diliman.

This standardization not only enables us to use **d** and **r**, it enables us to treat the Filipino language with as much care as we do the former colonizer’s language, English. In the past, many Filipinos were very careful with their use of English, both in speaking and in writing, as mistakes might result in being ridiculed or being viewed as uneducated.

Thus, to treat the language with care is to respect it, and to respect it is to pay tribute to the struggle of asserting for a national language in the Philippines.

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