Analysis Of The Chavacano Language Phonology: Understanding Its Structure For The Development Of Language Theory In A Multicultural Setting

Vilma L. Pahulaya[1*]

[1*]Western Mindanao State University, Zamboanga City, Philippines

ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	This study is a descriptive study of the native Zamboangueño, particularly in the phonology of the Chavacano language. This study was conducted in the city of Zamboanga. The data were collected from native Zamboangueño informants belonging to seven domains: at home, at school, in the church, at the bus terminal, in the market, at the internet café, and at the mall. The *Chavacano de Zamboanga handbook* by Camins (1999), *Chabacano de Zamboanga compedenio y dicionario* by Santos (2014), and *Alfabeto chavacano* by Mangaser (2012) were used as guides for pronunciation and spelling, along with three native validators. It was discovered that there are two types of diphthongs in the Zamboanga Chavacano language, which differ from other native languages: the arising diphthongs or rising diphthongs /ya/, /ye/, /yi/, /yo/, /yu/, /wa/, /we/, /wi/ and falling diphthongs or descending diphthongs /ay/, /ey/, /oy/, /uy/, and /aw/ in the Chavacano language. It is noteworthy that words in the Zamboanga Chavacano language contain digraphs. The digraph /ŋ/ is derived from the native language, and the digraphs derived from Spanish are ch/ts/, ll/ly/, and ñ/ny/. The study found that although the sounds /b/, /d/, and /g/ are significant in this language, they are not pronounced when they appear at the end of a word. They are pronounced as final /p/, /t/, and /k/. The sound that is significant in Zamboanga Chavacano is the glottal stop. This is derived from Filipino and other native Philippine languages. It is not present in the Spanish language. Chavacano language of Zamboanga is a complete language with its own characteristics and essence that is different from other native languages in the Philippines. This contradicts the view of others that Zamboanga's Chavacano is not a language.

Keywords: Zamboanga Chavacano language, Phonology, Segmental Phonemes, and Suprasegmental Phonemes. |

Introduction

Each language has its own sounds, just like the Chavacano language, which also has a specific pattern of arrangement to express thoughts and feelings. Speaking is the primary means of encoding language, and sounds in speech are used to convey emotions.

The Zamboangueños can freely express their thoughts and experiences using their native language- Chavacano, despite the fact that the city of Zamboanga has various existing languages in use. Nevertheless, this has not hindered the continued use of Chavacano as the first language of the Zamboangueños.

The study of a language's grammar is important, just like in the Chavacano language. The sole aim of this study is to establish a systematic structure for the Chavacano language that can be used as a reference for those teaching **Mother Tongue**. According to Jose Laderas Santos, a delegate of the Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino (KWF), the use of **Mother Tongue Based Multi-Lingual Education (MTB-MLE)** as a medium of instruction will help students understand what is being taught to them using their native language. He stated, "The use of regional languages in teaching will greatly help students understand and internalize what they have learned."

In this regard, it is also important to understand that all languages have grammar. Part of linguistic study is the phonological system of a specific language, derived from the word phone, that means voice/sound, and logos, which means word or speech. While phonetics refers to the physical production and perception of speech, phonology pertains to the function of language.

A crucial part of phonology is the study of sounds that are clearly contrasted with other sounds. Aside from studying phonemes, phonology also examines the structure of syllables, stress, and intonation. The addition of eight (8) letters to the Filipino Alphabet has also provided additional sounds represented by these letters. The sound /c/ is different from /k/, /c/ from /s/, /f/ from /p/, /v/ from /b/, /j/ from /g/, /q/ from /k/, /x/ from /s/, /z/ from /s/, and /ñ/ (enye) has its own sound. Like the Chavacano language, it consists of two phonemes: segmental phonemes and suprasegmental phonemes. Segmental phonemes include vowels, consonants, diphthongs, and consonant clusters. Meanwhile, suprasegmental features include the stress and tone or intonation. These characteristics are present in the Chavacano language of Zamboanga. It is right and just to focus on identifying phonology as part of the grammatical structure of the Chavacano language. The aforementioned statements motivated the researcher to conduct a study regarding the grammar of the Chavacano language in the city of Zamboanga.

It can also be observed that the primary objective of phonetics is to recognize and describe the sounds in a particular language or languages in general. Since, sound in speeches are used to convey information, these sounds can be viewed in three perspectives. First, in articulatory phonetics, this study the physical mechanism of sound production, in simple terms, how the speaker produces the sounds. Second, in acoustic phonetics, which studies the transmission of sounds as waves that carry sounds, and third is in perceptual phonetics, where it examines how the listener understands and recognizes the sounds. At this point, these three perspectives are typically discussed in a complete discussion about phonetics, but in an introductory text on language and linguistics like this, only the articulatory phonetics of the Chavacano language will be focused on.

There are three parts to the study of articulatory phonetics. First, it looks at the articulation or production of sounds or how they are formed in the mouth and throat. Second, it discussed the description of these sounds, mentioned above that in the pronunciation of any sounds of one's own language, it involves the tongue and the lips aside from the air or breath expelled from the mouth or nose. Third, the sounds are classified according to their characteristics.

Santiago (1979) stated that language is important in human life; it is not an exaggeration if it is given long period of time and thorough study by those who specialize in language. Furthermore, Fromkin, Rodman and Hymes (2010) added that every speaker of a particular language should have sufficient knowledge regarding its grammar. According to them, if linguists aim to describe the language, they will clarify the grammatical rules of the language that exists in the minds of speakers. This was also agreed by Constantino (1965), which includes the general characteristics of language such as the sounds of letters, pronunciation and formation of words, as well as the connection of words within statements in any situation or occasion.

In Holm's study (1990), the spread of pidgin language from one generation to a new generation forms a creole that is a fully developed language. It already has a grammatical structure, rich vocabulary, and undergoes regularization in sound. It already has native speakers, and that is the Chavacano language.

A supporting study by Riego de Dios (1976) on **Philippine Creole Spanish** (PSO) across four dialects - Cotabato Chavacano (CT), Cavite Chavacano (CV), Ternate Chavacano (TR), and Zamboanga Chavacano (ZC) shows that there are differences in phonology and vocabulary based on the origin of the dialects: Filipino and Spanish. The different languages of CT, CV, and ZC have a final /-o/ in words, while TR uses /-u/. In CT, CV, ZC, the word for surname *(appellido)* is pronounced /apellidoh/, while in TR it is /appeliduh/.

Changes in language is inevitable due to external influences. For instance, in Zamboanga's Chavacano, there is a significant percentage of language change despite the fact that the city of Zamboanga is composed of various languages existing throughout the city. Because of this, it is important for the people of Zamboanga to understand that there is no basis for the claim that changes in any part of grammar are corruption; rather, it helps in the expansion of the Chavacano language.

Phonology is the scientific study of sounds. A speaker's knowledge of phonology helps in creating articulate conversations or identifying meaningful and non-meaningful sounds used in their language. It also studies the correct pronunciation of sounds known as phonemes. In phonology, factors such as (a) source of energy or force, (b) articulator or moving object, and (c) resonator or sound chamber are expected to be considered. Intonation is important in expressing the meaning intended by the speaker, so in the study of phonology, not only the pronunciation of words is considered, but also the stresses and tones of pronunciation are given attention.

Cantillo et al. (2015) mentioned that the articulation of sounds in the pronunciation of parts of the speech organ can serve as resonators or sound chambers. These include the mouth, throat, and nasal cavity. Meanwhile, the articulator or moving object provides acoustic characteristics of sound through various shapes and positions of the tongue, with the lips also included as articulators. The points of articulation are

parts of the speech apparatus; the upper lip, upper teeth, and parts of the mouth are some of the important articulation points that assist the articulators in sound production. In simple terms, this discusses the phonology of sounds occurring in a language, including the rules for their sequence; the syllabification of words and the processes occurring in phonemes due to adjacent phonemes.

The creation of sound forms the words used in a language. Recognizing and understanding the phonemes of the language to be taught is an important step in learning and comprehending it. Each phoneme has its own right way of pronunciation and articulation. The manner of pronunciation describes how a sound is created by explaining where the air needed to produce the sound passes through. The manners of pronunciation include **stops** that may be with or without sounds, **fricatives** that are without sound, nasals that are with sounds, **laterals** that are with sound, **trills** that are with sound, and diphthongs that are also with sound. Meanwhile, the articulation point indicates where the specific component of the speech organ occurs in the creation of sound.

Paz et al. (2003) described that the points of articulation of the lips. tongue, velum and glottis can be positioned in various ways, including modifying or shaping the outgoing air to produce different types of sounds: **(a) oral and nasal sounds**, Oral sounds are produced when the outgoing air flows only through the mouth. Meanwhile, nasal sounds result when the air flows through the nasal cavity with the velum lowered, allowing air to exit through the nose. **(b) Stops**: these are pronounced with a temporary but complete blockage of airflow in the mouth when producing stops (sometimes called as plosives), and the lips block the air before it is released, hence they are also called bilabial stops**. (c) Fricatives:** air is passed through a narrow passage but continuous to flow. Due to the very narrow airflow, friction occurs, making the air hiss. These are also called spirants. **(d) Affricates**: affricates are produced with the blockage of air at the beginning like stops, followed immediately by its release like fricatives. **(e) Liquids:** these are classified as continuants, but the obstruction of airflow in the mouth is not enough to create friction like fricatives. There are two types of liquids: (a) laterals and (b) various types of /r/. In laterals, the sound is produced by raising the tip of the tongue to a dental or alveolar position while the sides of the tongue are lowered, allowing air to flow out. The various types of /r/, like the Lateral typically have voiced sound /r/, but there are voiceless ones too. There are different types of /r/ in languages around the world, such as **tap, retroflex, trill, and uvular.** In producing the tap [r], the tip of the tongue quickly taps the back of the teeth or alveolar ridge, the point of articulation is language-specific. The retroflex [r] is produced by curling the tip of the tongue backward so that its underside touches the alveolar ridge. The uvular is produced by raising the back of the tongue against the alveolar ridge. Meanwhile, the alveolar trill is produced by vibrating the tip of the tongue against the alveolar ridge. (f) Glides: these are pronounced like vowels with almost no obstruction in the airflow in the mouth; however, like consonants they are not syllabic. Typically, there is a preceding or following vowel and the tongue quickly glides toward or away from the adjacent vowel.

Gleason (1993) further noted that the traditional classification of speech is based on three primary variables. First, the chest, **(larynx)**, which is familiar with the term **dichotomy** between the with sound and without sound. Second, the mouth or larynx, which refers to the point of articulation and third, the manner off articulation, which is the type of sound produced or the sound modified by the mechanisms of the mouth or larynx. The aforementioned points are important because for a person to speak, the speech mechanisms must come together, allowing for interactions and the creation of sounds that convey meaning in words.

The readings and studies mentioned above are closely related as they provide a good idea in identifying the phonology of the Chavacano language. They also connect to the current study as it examines the phonology of languages in the Philippines, such as the Chavacano of Zamboanga.

The primary basis of the study is the theory of **descriptive grammar** (1964), which considers the grammar or set of rules of a language based on how it is used by speakers. This theory analyzes the principles and patterns behind the use of formation of words, phrases, clauses and sentences.

This study is also anchored in Chomsky's **transformation generative grammar** (TG) (1965). In linguistics, it encompasses all levels of language, including sounds, morphology, syntax or sentence and phrase transformation. Thus, there was a time when the analysis of language structure was not separated from other parts of syntax.

Chomsky's (1965) concept of **grammar** was expanded to create a pairing between the semantics-interpretation of a sentence and its phonetic interpretation (Simpson, 1979). There is a system that connects the meanings must be represented so that the syntactic structure connecting them can be also described. This simply means, there is a natural relationship among phonological, morphological and syntactic elements in a language with grammar, such as Chavacano. Therefore, this theory serves as a basis for understanding and identifying the grammatical structure of the Chavacano Language of Zamboanga.

This study is also based on the **distinctive feature approach,** where the analysis of the sounds of a language is done by presenting their unique characteristics. This theory is primarily propagated by Ladefoged (1971). In analyzing the sounds of a language, the **distinctive-feature approach** recognizes certain characteristics of these sounds. The relationship of one sound to other sounds is the main coordination of this theory. The **distinctive feature approach** of any language shows the contrast of these characteristics in phonology. The structure of the syllable is also relevant because each language has unique structures, and its components become important in the analysis.

The study is also grounded in **Pedagogical Grammar Theory** because, according to Carter (2008), it aims to present the grammar of a language in a way that can be adapted to students or those learning a particular language. This is also a grammar theory that analyzes and describes the grammar of a language to serve as a basis for teaching and learning a language. On the other hand, Hudson's (2004) theory about **Linguistic Theory** states that using the students' first language or mother tongue in teaching, from kindergarten to third grade in elementary school, makes it easier for students to learn. It is essential to teach children using their first language because they already have prior knowledge and a deep understanding of their language and culture. One of the existing languages used in teaching for the easy learning of students is under the MTB-MLE program of DepEd.

The mentioned theories serve as the basis for the study of phonology, which is part of the grammar and structure of the Chavacano language. The identification and description of the phonology of the Chavacano language are also considered to meet the needs of the newly implemented **Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education or MTB-MLE** of K to 12, which is included in RA 10533 or the **Enhanced Basic Education Curriculum**. This also serves as an appropriate basis for developing teaching materials for the first language subject and for other subjects where the first language is the medium of instruction.

As part of the conducted study, below is the outline of the study that aims to identify and describe the phonology of the Chavacano language.
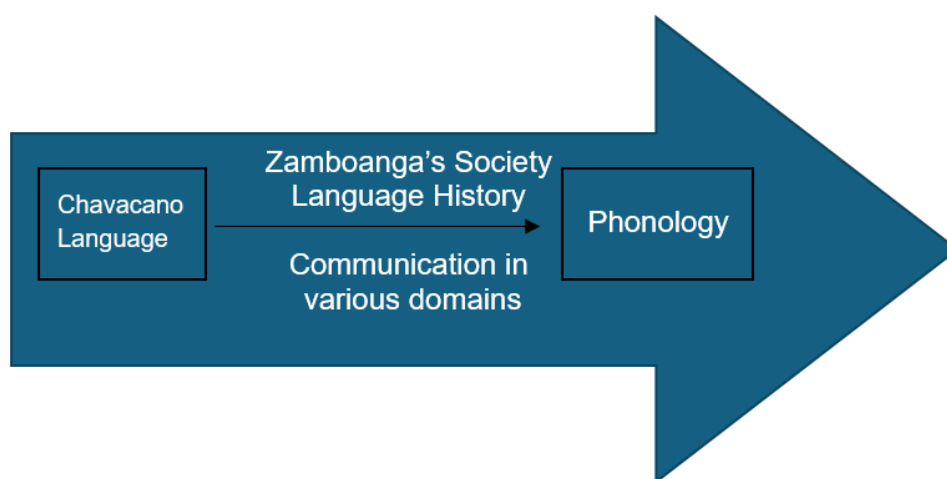
The large arrow represents the society of Zamboanga. Part of this society is its language, Chavacano Language of Zamboanga. This language is used in communication in various situations such as at home, in school, in church, at the bus terminal, in the market, in internet cafés, and in malls. There is a significant linguistic history that has occurred in this language, and it has unique phonemes that are discussed in phonology.

Methodology

This study is a descriptive linguistic and indigenous approach in identifying and describing the phonology, which is part of grammatical structure of the Zamboanga Chavacano language. The study was conducted in Zamboanga City where the respondents who belong to seven (7) domains, reside, as well as the validators except for Dr. Teresita P. Semorlan, who currently resides in Iligan City but studies the Chavacano language of the city of Zamboanga.

Purposive sampling was used to select the respondents for this study. The research was conducted in Zamboanga City where the data collected were from actual conversations of native Zamboangueños, whose first language is Chavacano, within seven (7) domains: home, school, church, bus terminal. market, internet café, and mall. There was no specific number of participants per domain. Only those who were part of the conversation in a particular domain became the participants.

To collect data, the researcher was accompanied by a native Zamboangueño to ensure that the conversations in each domain were conducted in Chavacano language. Before collecting the data, the seven (7) domains were individually observed by the researcher to confirm that the respondents were speaking the Chavacano language. Once it was confirmed, the researcher began recording the conversation of the participants in each domain. The recording lasted for 10 minutes or more. The participants in the conversation ranged in age from fifteen to sixty-two years old. There were no specific numbers of participants per domain, as only those who were involved in the conversation were considered as participants in each domain.

The recorded conversation was conducted within a 7-kilometer radius of the city proper of Zamboanga City, excluding distant barangays. The instrument for this study consisted of the actual conversations of Chavacano speakers of Zamboanga City, recorded from the respondents in the seven (7) domains.

After collecting the data from the seven domains, the recorded data were prepared for transcription. To ensure the accuracy of the collected data, the researcher had the transcription done by a native Zamboangueño who is proficient in both the Chavacano and Filipino language and is also a Filipino language teacher specializing in Filipino Grammar.

The transcription was based on the pronunciation of the words spoken in the conversations. The researcher used the book by Paz et al. (2003) as guide to describe the phonological sounds of the phonemes of the Chavacano language of Zamboanga based on the manner and point of articulation. In transcribing the words, the phonology of the Filipino language was used as a basis, as most of the phonemes, except for a few, were similar between Filipino and Chavacano language of Zamboanga.

For this study of phonology, the researcher listened to the pronunciation of the recorded words from the seven (7) domains. The base words for phonology were written down for transcription based on the Filipino language to show the correct pronunciation of the words in Chavacano language of Zamboanga. The symbols used in the study are as follows: /ŋ/ for the sound represented by the letter "ng", the digraph /ts/ for /ch/, /ly/ for /ll/, and /ny/ for /ñ/. The /ʔ/ symbol was used for the two glottal stops. All recorded conversations of the participants were transcribed phonetically for phonological analysis. The data were also validated through triangulation by conducting interviews and asking the validators about the correct pronunciation of the words in Chavacano language in Zamboanga.

A Descriptive approach was used in analyzing the data. The primary theory used in this study was descriptive grammar, which considers grammar or set of rules of a language based on how it is used by speakers. Chomsky (1965) Transformation Generative Grammar (TG) also supported the analysis, particularly in studying the language sounds, morphology, syntax, and sentence and phrase structure of language from other parts of syntax.

The Sociolinguistic theory, which posits that the relationship between people in society and the language they use is based on a specific society they belonged to, was also applied. This refers to the Chavacano language, the first mother tongue of the Zamboangueños in Zamboanga City. Additionally, Hudson's (2004) Linguistic Theory, which states that teaching students in their first language or mother tongues facilitates easier learning, proved effective. Pedagogical grammar theory also served as a basis for this study. According to Carter (2008), this theory aims to present the grammar of a language in a way that is suitable for learners or students of a particular language. It is a grammatical theory that examines and describes the grammar of a language to be used as a basis for teaching and learning a specific language.

Summary and Discussions of Study Results

The speaker's knowledge of phonology plays a significant role in forming coherent conversations or in distinguishing between meaningful and non-meaningful sounds used in their language.

To better understand this study, it is essential to know and comprehend the phonemes of the Chavacano language of Zamboanga. Through the manner and point of articulation, the pronunciation of the phonemes can be determined. This is an important tool that must be considered as a guide to properly execute the correct pronunciation, as well as the method and context in which sounds are articulated.

This study presents the different types of phonemes in the Chavacano language in Zamboanga City, including the segmental phonemes, which consists of vowels and consonants, diphthongs, clusters, minimal pairs, and the suprasegmental phonemes, which encompass stress, tone or intonation, and the pauses or breaks in Chavacano words.

Phonemes

All languages are composed of spoken sounds. The combination of these sounds forms words, which in turn create sentences that convey messages when heard. The smallest unit of a meaningful sound is called a phoneme. Every language has its own unique sounds used to form words. Like other languages, the Chavacano language of Zamboanga is also composed of various phonemes. In this section, the phonemes are categorized into two: segmental phonemes and suprasegmental phonemes.

In presenting the Chavacano words of Zamboanga, the spelling of the words follows the original form. Therefore, words of Spanish origin are spelled according to Chavacano alphabet. Words borrowed from other languages are spelled according to their respective alphabets. Loanwords from English follow the English alphabet, while native Filipino words, such as those from Tagalog, Bisaya, Tausug, and other indigenous languages have become part of Chavacano, are spelled according to the Filipino alphabet. The same applies to other borrowed words.

The vowels in Chavacano language are /a/, /e/, /i/, /o/, and /u/. its semi-vowels are /w/ and /y/. the consonants include /b/, /k/, /d/, /g/, /h/, /l/, /m/, /n/, /p/, /r/, /s/, /t/, and /ʔ/. The last one is the glottal stop sound, which is not represented by a letter. The Chavacano language of Zamboanga also contains digraphs. Similar to Filipino, the digraph /ŋ/ is present and can be heard in this language. Words containing

this digraph are borrowed from indigenous languages. The digraphs /ts/, /ly/, and /ny/ are also significant and they are derived from Spanish words.

Segmental Phonemes

Segmental phonemes refer to a set of meaningful sounds that have the ability to alter the meaning of a word. This section, discusses the units of a meaningful sounds that forms words in the Chavacano language of Zamboanga. The Chavacano language possesses sounds where each phoneme represents a specific meaningful sound corresponding to each letter. A sound is considered meaningful because it can change the meaning of a word, either by replacing or removing the phoneme attached to a word.

For example, the meaning of a word in Chavacano language of Zamboanga changes if the phonemes /g/ or /k/ are replaced with another phoneme. Take the word "*gordo*" (pronounced as /gor:do/), which means "*fat*" and "*korto*" (pronounced as /kor:to/), which means "*short*". These words lose their meaning if the phonemes /g/ and /k/ are removed. Therefore, the phonemes /g/ and /k/ are meaningful sounds because they alter the meaning of a word. These meaningful words are referred to as segmental phonemes in the Chavacano language of Zamboanga.

Vowel Phonemes

The Chavacano language has five vowels: *a, e, i, o,* and *u*. each of these sounds is meaningful because the meaning of a word can be changed or be lost if a phoneme is replaced with another phoneme or if a phoneme is removed from the word. These five vowels are distinct phonemes.

Vowel phonemes are easily noticeable and distinguishable, whether spoken or heard. These phonemes are pronounced without any obstruction to the outward flow of air, which is essential in speech. The pronunciation of syllables is resonant, and the sounds are clearly heard. Every syllable in the Chavacano language contains a vowel.

Below is a chart of vowels in Chavacano language of Zamboanga. It illustrates the position of the tongue and which part of the tongue is used in pronouncing each vowel.

Table 1. Chart of Vowels in the Chavacano Language

Position of Tongue	Part of the Tongue			
		Front	**Center**	**Back**
	High	i		u
	Mid	e		o
	Low		a	

The phoneme /a/ is pronounced with the center of tongue in a low position. The tongue is closer to the bottom of the mouth, and this phoneme can be described as moving downward and central. When pronounced, not only does the tongue lower, but the jaw also drops. The /a/ phoneme in Chavacano language in Zamboanga sounds exactly the same as in Filipino words like /batà/, /a:ral/, /asa:wa/, and /liga:ya/.

The phoneme /e/ is pronounced with the front part of the tongue raised, positioned in the middle. Meanwhile, the /i/ phoneme is pronounced with the front of the tongue lifted, and its position is higher up in the mouth.

On the other hand, the phoneme /o/ is pronounced by raising the back of the tongue to the middle, and the lips form a rounded shape. The /u/ phoneme is pronounced by raising the back part of the tongue in an upward position, and the lips form a rounded but narrower shape compared to the /o/ sound.

The /u/ phoneme is pronounced by raising the back of the tongue in an upward position, and the lips form a rounded shape that is narrower than the /o/ phoneme. The phonemes /a/, /e/, /i/, /o/, and /u/ can appear at the beginning, middle, or end of a word's syllables.

Table 2. Vowel Phonemes in the Chavacano Language

Phonemes	Phonetic Environment		
	First	**Middle**	**Last**
a	**a**ño /a:nyo/ (taon)	emb**a**rca/em:barka/ (sumakay)	abuy**a** /abuya/ (lumitaw)
	apwera /apwe:ra/ (sa labas)	estr**a**ña /es:tranya/ (nagulat	busc**a** /buska/ hanapin
e	**e**staba /esta:ba/ galing	cal**e**nta /kalenta/ (initin)	hac**e** /ase/ (gumawa)
	escuela /eskwe:la/	conv**e**rsa/kombersa/	aprend**e**/a:prende/

Phonemes	Phonetic Environment		
	First	**Middle**	**Last**
	(paaralan)	(magsalita)	(matuto)
i	*i*cha /itsa/ (ilagay)	tr*i*ste/tris:te/ (malungkot)	all*i* /alyi/ (diyan)
	*i*pa /i:pa/ (balat ng butil ng palay)	olv*i*da /olbida/ (kalimutan)	sufr*i* / supri/ (magdusa)
o	*o*jos /o:hoss/ (mata)	sup*o*rta /suporta/ (ulo)	alt*o* /alto/ (mataas/matangkad)
	*o*le /ole/ (amuyin)	pal*o*ma /palo:ma/ (kalapati)	tod*o* /todo/ (lahat)
u	*u*sa /usa/ (gamitin)	ay*u*da /ayuda/ (tulungan)	dur*u* /du:ru/ (matigas)
	*u*mal /umal/ (hindi maganda	preg*u*nta /pregunta/ (tanong)	suci*u* /su:syu/ (dumi)

The meaning of a word changes when the phoneme /a/ is replaced by another phoneme in a word. For instance, the word *casa* pronounced /ka:sa/ means *house*. When the phoneme /a/ and the syllable /ka/ is substituted by /o/, it becomes *cosa/ko:sa/*. What does this mean? The words *año*, *apwera*, *omenta*, *abuya*, and *busca* lose or have no essence in Chavacano Language when the last /a/ of this word is removed. There are no such words like *añ*, *apwer*, *oment*, *abuy*, and *busc*.

The phoneme /e/ is a crucial sound in Chavacano language. It can also be found in the first, middle, or last syllable of the words. For instance, the meaning of the word *presente* changes when the final /e/ of the last syllable is replaced by the phoneme /a/. it becomes *presenta* which means *to present*. The words *presente*, *semeja*, *implementa*, *conversa*, and *derecho* no longer have meaning when the phoneme /e/ of the second syllable is removed. The same goes when we remove the /e/ from the last syllable.

The phoneme /i/ is a significant sound in the Chavacano language. It can be seen in the first, middle, and last syllable of the word. Note the examples; the phoneme /i/ is crucial in the Chavacano language because when it is replaced by another phoneme, the meaning of the said word will also change. For instance, the word /pi:**sa**/ only means "to step". When /i/ will change into /e/, this will turn into /pesa/ that means to *weigh*.

The phoneme /o/ is a distinct phoneme in the Chavacano language. It can be found in the first, middle, and last syllables of a word, as shown in the following examples. The /o/ sound is meaningful in Chavacano because if it is replaced by another phoneme in a word, the meaning of that word changes. For example, the word *ocho* means "*eight*," but if the /o/ in the first syllable is replaced with /a/, it becomes *acha*, which means "*axe*." The phoneme is significant because removing it from the word alters its meaning. Another example is the word *pálo:ma*, if the phoneme /o/ is removed, it becomes *palma*, which means "*palm*".

The sound /u/ is also a segmental phoneme in Chavacano. It can be seen in the first, middle, and last syllables of the words. The phoneme /u/ is significant in Chavacano language. Consider the word *usá*, which means "*to use*." Its meaning changes if the first syllable is replaced with the phoneme /a/ to *asá*, which means "*to grill*."

Based on the words presented, it has been identified that the vowel phonemes in Chavacano language of Zamboanga are important in forming words. This language has five vowel phonemes: /a/, /e/, /i/, /o/, and /u/. these phonemes can appear in the first, middle or last of any Chavacano words. If any vowel in a word is replaced by another vowel, the meaning changes or the word may lose its meaning. Indeed, these phonemes are vital in the Chavacano language of Zamboanga as they provide clear meanings to the words they use to convey or deliver.

Diphthongs

Diphthongs are pronounced as vowels with almost no obstruction to the flow of air through the mouth. It usually has a preceding or following vowel. In producing this sound, the tongue slides quickly toward or away from the adjacent vowel. It's called a glide.

Like in Chavacano language of Zamboanga it has two vowels, it is the /y/ like the word *hierva* /yer:ba/ which means "*grass*", the word *mientras* /myen:tras/ that means "*while*". The second vowel is the phoneme /w/ similar to the word *uido* /uwi:do/ that means "*hearing*", the same with the word *cuanto* /kwan:to/ whose meaning is "*how many*" or "*how much*". The phonetic transcription symbols of the Filipino language were used in this study. Here are some examples of words with vowel phonemes /y/ and /w/ in the Chavacano language of Zamboanga.

Examples of Diphthongs /y/:

	Chavacano words	Meaning
hierna /yer:na/	daughter-in-law
hielo /yelo/	ice
yawat /yawat/	persevered
baila/ bayla	dance
mayor/ mayor/	elder
calayat /kala:yat/	messy
butuy /bu:tuy/	bumps
tisoy /tisoy/	Mestizo (people with a mix of Spanish and Filipino ancestry)
diutay /dyu:tay/	little

Examples of Diphthongs /w/:

Chavacano words	Meaning
waras /waras/	go wild
ahora / aw:ra/	now
cuando /kwan:do/	when
fuerte /pwer:te/	strong
cuidao /kwi:daw/	to be careful
purpiao /purpyaw/	stubborn
gulpiao /gulpyaw/	badly beaten

In essence that the Zamboanga Chavacano vowel /y/ is usually found in the first, middle and last part of the word or syllable, meanwhile, the vowel phoneme /w/ only stops the words with the /w/ sound in before the word and this word is derived from another native language. Usually found only in the middle and last syllable of the word. It will be seen in the vowel words of the Chavacano language, the /y/ is combined with *ia* and the /w/ is combined with *ua* in which these words are from the Spanish language.

It is true that the Zamboanga Chavacano language is rich in lexicon which has been influenced by various indigenous languages as well as foreign languages. This only means that the said language is very much alive, constantly being used in the communication of Zamboangueños in the city of Zamboanga.

Diphthongs Phoneme

It is true that the Zamboanga Chavacano language is rich in terms of lexicon which has been influenced not just by foreign languages but with various indigenous languages as well. It just means that this language is very much alive, by constantly used in the communication of Zamboangueños in the city of Zamboanga.

There are two types of diphthongs in the Zamboanga Chavacano language, the first is the so-called **arising diphthongs**. It is a mixture of vowels and consonants in one syllable. The vowel in the syllable comes before it. The second type of diphthong is the **falling diphthongs**. The vowel comes before the vowel of the first syllable. Look at examples of diphthongs in the Zamboanga Chavacano language.

Table 3. Arising Diphthongs

Diphthongs /y/ and /w/	Arising Diphtongs		
	Chavacano	Pronunciation	Meaning
ya	*viaje*	*/bya:he/*	trip
	limpia	*/limpya/*	to clean
ye	*hierba*	*/yer:ba/*	herbal
	pies	*/pyes*	foot
yi	*alli*	*/a:lyi/*	there
	sambulli	*/sambu:lyi/*	to dive
yo	*cambio*	*/kam:byo/*	change
	mayor	*/mayor/*	elder
yu	*guyud*	*/gu:yut/*	dragged
	bucayu	*/buka:yu/*	Sweetened coconut
wa	*agua*	*/a:gwa/*	water
	cuando	*/kwan:do/*	when
we	*puede*	*/pwe:de/*	can
	bueno	*/bwe:no/*	good
wi	*cuida*	*/kwida/*	take care
	cuidao	*/kwidaw/*	to be careful

It is evident in the examples presented that arising diphthongs of the Zamboanga Chavacano language are /ya/, /ye/, /yi/, /yo/, /yu/. /wa/, /we/, /wi/. These diphthongs are combinations of vowels in one syllable. The consonants /y/ and /w/ come before vowels. Like the word *viaje /bya:he/* means *trip* and *agua /a:gwa/* that means *water*, it is a real native word of the Chavacano language. These have been used in Chavacano language of Zamboanga.

Table 4. Falling Diphthongs

Diphthongs /y/ and /w/	Falling Diphtongs		
	Chavacano	**Pronunciation**	**Meaning**
ay	*pal**ay***	/palay/	Rice (unhusked)
	*hal**ay***	/halay/	To hang
	*sig**ay***	/sigay/	Seashell
ey	*l**ey***	/ley/	Law
	reina	/r**ey**:na/	Queen
	peine	/p**ey**:ne/	Comb
oy	*tis**oy***	/tisoy/	A person of mixed race, especially one of mixed European and Filipino ancestry
	*chic**oy***	/tsi:koy/	Ground sticky rice
	*h**oy***	/hoy/	Call word
uy	*but**uy***	/bu:tuy/	Bumps
	*ag**uy***	/aguy/	Ouch
	*bug**uy***	/buguy/	Troublemaker
aw	*causa*	/k**aw**:sa/	Reason
	salao	/sa:l**aw**/	Salty
	cansao	/kans**aw**/	Tired

The falling diphthongs are /ay/, /ey/, /oy/, /uy/, and /aw/. The vowel precedes the consonants /y/ and /w/. It was discovered in this study that the examples of words with diphthongs are words mostly from Spanish and a few are words from indigenous words such as /halay/, /tsikoy/, /bu:tuy/ and /buguy/.

In the data collected no arising diphthongs /wo/ and /wu/ were found. Batzarov (2000) stated that the Spanish language has a diphthong /wo/ like the example word *antiguo* / / which means in the old days. The falling diphthongs /iy/, and /iw/ were also not found in the data collected. It is not found in Spanish words but can be found in other indigenous languages such as Bisaya, Tausug and Tagalog. Just like the word /pak:siw/, the Zamboangueños pronounce it /paksyú/ because there is no diphthong /iw/ in the Chavacano language of Zamboanga. despite the pronunciation, it has become part of the Zamboanga Chavacano lexicon. The diphthongs of the Zamboanga Chavacano language are real, where it differs from other native languages in having the upward diphthongs, /ya/, /ye/, /yi/, /yo/, /yu/, /wa/, /we/, /wi/ and descending diphthongs /ay/, /ey/, /oy/, /uy/, and /aw/ in the Chavacano language. These diphthongs have been part of the lexicon in the Chavacano language, based on the history of the Chavacano language of Zamboanga that although it is called Spanish creole there are other languages that have influenced this language, just like Bisaya, Tagalog, Subanen and many others.

Conclusion

Zamboanga Chavacano is a complete language with its own characteristics and essence. Contrary to the view of others that Zamboanga Chavacano is not a language. In the analysis of the segmental phonemes and suprasegmental phonemes of this language there are phonemes based from the Spanish language but it is also noticeable that some segmental and suprasegmental phonemes are very similar to the Filipino language and other indigenous languages in the Philippines. The phonemes of the Zamboanga Chavacano language are the result and description of the relationship of the Zamboangueños with the Spaniards and other indigenous Filipinos with different languages across the country. Zamboanga Chavacano is a living language, that is being used in communication by the Zamboangueño people in the city of Zamboanga.

Recommendation

The native Zamboangueños have a unique first language that is a blend of foreign Spanish and numerous native Filipino languages, from pidgin to creole. This is the Chavacano language, the first language of the Zamboangueño people in the city of Zamboanga. This language has the characteristics of a language, and it

has the characteristic of phonemes, that leads to the significance of using it so that it remains a living language.

It is noticeable that in the paper, the pronunciation of Zamboanga Chavacano is different in some phonemes according to its letter or spelling. Learning about it is essential. To further analyze the segmental phonemes that may be phonemic but for this current study, they are considered phonetic sounds.

The nature of the current grammatical structure in the Chavacano language can be used as a basis for teaching and learning any language. The developed grammar will serve as a means for analyzing and expanding the Chavacano language. Therefore, this study will be helpful in the currently implemented education policy of the MTB-MLE of K to 12 from kindergarten to grade 3 of elementary school.

The study of the Chavacano language is important to be introduced throughout the Philippines and even across the world so that other experts/linguists can identify it and study it as well.

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