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A Practical Papiamentu Phonology¹

§ 1 Introduction

In the following we want to create a historical phonology of Papiamentu, which can be applied as easily as possible. For this reason we decided not to start with a phonetic or phonological transcription of the words, but to present them in their actual orthographic system: in the orthography of Aruba (*ortografia etimológico*) and in the one of Curaçao/Bonaire (*ortografia fonológiko*). The spelling, which is presented in the first place, is the one of Aruba, which is closely related to the Spanish orthography (respectively if we treat loan words from Dutch it is closely related to this spelling) and is thus more familiar for scholars of Romance studies; in cases, where the phonologically oriented spelling of Curaçao/Bonaire differs from the first one, it is given on the second place in brackets behind the abbreviation C. = Curaçao/Bonaire. Finally we shortly give the English meaning of the word and refer to its etymon. The spelling of Curaçao/Bonaire implies the actual articulation as it contains information about where to stress the words correctly, while those hints are normally absent in the spelling of Aruba.

The differences in the phonetic values – for Aruba as well as for Curaçao/Bonaire – are presented by van Putte/van Putte-de Windt 1992, 11–14; for its historical development cf. Kramer 2012. The most noticeable fact is, that on Curaçao/Bonaire we write *k* or *c* depending on the origin of a word, whereas on Aruba it is always written with *c*, and that on the first two islands a *y* stands for an *i*. The digraphs are in both orthographic versions the same: *ch* = [tʃ], *dj* = [dʒ], *sh* = [ʃ], and *zj* = [ʒ].

In some cases, where we thought it might be necessary, we added a transcription applying the International Phonetic Alphabet developed by the International Phonetic Association.

The etyma are always given in two versions – a Spanish (sp.) and a Portuguese (pg.) one – because a clear decision for one is often difficult to make due to their similarities, although the Portuguese version could be rejected in some cases on the basis of cultural and historical reasons.

¹ A German version of this contribution is to be found in Kramer 2015, 95–119. For this English revision I am obliged to my collaborator Prof. Dr. Aline Willems.