

# **Studies on the trans-cultural manifestations in *Arte da Lingoa de Iapam* (1604)**

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Granted Joam Rodriguez wrote *Arte* (1604) under the overwhelming influence of the Latin grammar of Manuel Alvares (Amakusa: 1594). However we must not ignore the fact that Rodriguez was much more pragmatic than commonly assumed. He utilized several analytical ideas which were not seen in the Latin grammar of Alvares.

In my presentation I wish to raise two salient examples of that.

( i ) In the *Arte* (1604) the biggest deviation from Latin grammar was its inclusion of Japanese adjective into the sub-categories of neutral verb. In doing so, Rodrigues resorted to three sub-categories of neutral verbs (active, passive and absolute), and substituted passive neutral verb for “adjective-verb” in Japanese. Although Rodrigues claimed that the three sub-categories were taken from Nebrija’s grammar (*Arte*1604:69), this sort of divisions in neutral verb was neither seen in Nebrija’s, nor in Alvares’ Latin grammar books. In fact this was only common in Priscian/medieval Latin grammar books. It came to my attention that Rodrigues possibly copied the following gloss in the margin of Nebrija’s *Introductiones Latinae*. It was necessary for Rodrigues’ to have this definition of neutral verb in order to facilitate Japanese “adjective-verb”.

verba neutral significatia actione exigunt ante se nominatium pro psona agente, vel faciente, vt ego seruio; quae vero passionem illa, aut idiopathia l. passionem innata, exigunt ante se nominatium pro persona patienti, vt ego vapulo, ego frigeo. post se vero cu omnibus obliquis potest construi, aut absolutum est (Nebrija. *Introductiones Latinae* 1558:FO.LXI)

( ii ) In the *Arte* (1604) Rodrigues extensively used the morphological divisions of root and termination when discussing Japanese word form. For example, he argued that Japanese verb “aguru” (to lift) has the root “ague” and suffix “-ru” to indicate present tense (*Arte*1604:7). However this type of root/suffix analysis is not seen either in Alvares’ or other contemporary Latin grammar books. They did not go below the word in morphemic analysis.

I suggest that the Jesuits came to know this innovation from the Franciscan grammarians in the New Spain (Olmos 1547, Gilberti 1558, Molina 1571, Lagunas 1574).

It is well known that the Jesuits were at feud with the Franciscans in Japan. However at the earlier stage of Franciscan presence in Japan (1593-96) the Spanish Jesuits were so sympathetic towards their compatriots that they even offered to help them learn Japanese by supplying grammar books and dictionary. It is easy to imagine that they exchanged ideas about the pioneering language studies around the world. At such a meeting the Jesuits could have learnt the similarities of Japanese and the languages in New Spain (Nahuatl and Tarascan).