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**The Grammar of Moluche in Thomas Falkner's
A Description of Patagonia (1774)***

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Since the 1970s academic revival of interest in the history of linguistic ideas, early missionary grammars of native American languages have received growing scholarly consideration. In 1969 V.E. Hanzeli still called the linguistic discovery of the New World one of the major areas of pre-19th-century linguistics 'that remain to be scrutinized' (1969:14). At the second International Conference of the History of the Language Sciences (ICHoLS 1981) the linguistics of native American languages was one of the novelties (Auroux 1984:XIV). Since then an increasing number of studies have re-evaluated missionary works of the colonial period within the grammatical and cultural context in which they were composed.¹

Missionaries (Dominicans, Franciscans, Jesuits) engaged in describing the language rules of their Indian converts mainly for practical purposes: they sent home manuscript grammars to initiate new fellow missionaries. Even more important than grammar writing was the production of vocabularies and dictionaries, and the translation of religious texts into the Indian languages to provide the natives access to Christian culture. This translation also had the intention of 'improving' the languages, by elaborating a suitable Christian vocabulary.

Many studies of missionary accounts underline the Latin bias that characterizes their grammatical description. This framework is hardly surprising, since also the first grammars of European vernaculars, which were published in the 16th century, concluded that those languages had a grammatical system, only by comparing the Latin rules with the modern equivalents. The 'parts of speech' or word classes of Greek and Latin – traditionally noun, pronoun, article (Greek), verb, participle, adverb, conjunction, preposition, and interjection (Latin) – were held to be the ideal linguistic representations of logical categories. If they could not be distinguished in the 'new' Indian languages, those languages were qualified structurally confused and less developed. The idea that Latin word classes and categories were, in fact, language universals and that any difference between Latin and another language was a deviation on the latter's part was due to the classical idea that language was a straightforward reflection of the logical functions of the human mind. As there was one (divine) truth the human mind could encompass, so there was one ideal grammar.

Still, there are examples that go beyond the perspective of traditional grammar and show, as E. Hovdhaugen concludes in an article on the 17th-century grammar of Peruvian Yunga (Mochica) by Fernando de la Carrera (1644), 'that man's ability to think independently about linguistic matter and analyse linguistic problems may be more important than generally assumed' (Hovdhaugen 1992:121).²

The discussion of Moluche, published as the final part of Thomas Falkner's general account of 'Patagonia' and its inhabitants (1774), is an example of this.

Thomas Falkner (1707-1784) was born in Manchester as the son of an apothecary. After studying as a surgeon, he was sent out on board the *Assiento*, a slave ship belonging to the South Sea Corporation. He sailed to the Guinea Coast around 1731, and from there to Buenos Aires, where he fell dangerously ill. He renounced Protestantism and was received into the Society of Jesus in May 1732, and continued to exercise his ministry among the Indians with success. He spent thirty-eight years as a missionary in South America, first in Chaco, Paraguay, and Tucuman, the Pampas, and from 1740 among the native tribes between Rio de la Plata and Magellan's Strait. On the expulsion of the Jesuits in 1767 he was deported, came back to England and died at Plowden Hall, Shropshire, on January 30th 1784.³

The Moluches, whose language is described, 'are known among the Spaniards by the name of Aucaes and Araucanos' (1774:96). They call themselves Moluche 'after the word molun, to wage war; and moluche signifies a warrior' (1774:96). Falkner situates them as follows: 'They are dispersed over the country both on the east and west sides of the Cordillera of Chili, from the confines of Peru to the Straits of Magellan, and may be divided into the different nations of Picunches, Pehuenches, and Huilliches' (1774:96). The tribes to the east of the Moluches are called Puelche, 'or Eastern people' (1774:96).

The first three chapters of Falkner's book describe the country's geography and produce. After an account of the inhabitants, and the religion, government and customs of the Moluches and Puelches in chapters IV and V, the final Chapter VI (1774:132-144) gives 'An Account of the Language of the Inhabitants of these Countries'. The text mentions two 'variants' of the Moluche language: that of the 'Huilliches' (1774:135,136,139), and 'Picunches' (1774:136).⁴

Modern studies classify Moluche as a subgroup of the Mapuche or Araucanian language, spoken in Chile and Argentina, which is part of the Penutian language family⁵. The Mapuches refer to their native language as 'Mapudungu' or 'Mapudungun'. Subgroups besides Moluche are, i.a., Lafquenches, Pehuenches, Huilliches, Picunches, and Puelches.⁶ Today Mapudungun and Huilliche are still spoken in Chile and Argentina.⁷

Falkner's twelve-page account of Moluche includes a grammatical analysis (1774:132-140), a list of 'numeral words' and adverbs (1774:141), a translation of the Sign of the Cross, the beginning of the Lord's Prayer and the Creed (1774:142-143) – 'intermixed with a few Spanish words, where the Indian idiom is insufficient' (1774:143) – and a short vocabulary of eighty-seven words (1774:144)⁸. The grammar is built on a classical pattern of comparison, but does analyse the flexibility of the verb morphology, and compares its richness to that of Greek.

I will first (1.) present the word paradigms of Falkner's discussion that fit the Latinate grammatical pattern, and next (2.) deal with the language-specific

morphology for which classical structures could not be adduced in his text. His discussion confirms some of the features of the Mapudungu verbal paradigm, which have remained fairly unchanged over nearly 400 years (see Contreras 1989, Salas 1991:173), since the first record of the language in the grammar of the Jesuit Luis de Valdivia (1606)⁹. Surprisingly, Falkner does not refer to Valdivia anywhere in his text. Instead, his account is allegedly based on recollection of his own language practice.¹⁰ To include some comparative reference to Valdivia, I will refer to Salas 1991, which lists Valdivia's verbal paradigms. As I was unable to consult the original work myself this comparison remains incomplete.

1. To give what he calls a 'notion of this language' (1774:143) Falkner's discussion is modelled on the classical Platonic/Aristotelian distinction between two main parts of speech: NOUN (including noun substantive, noun adjective, and pronoun), and VERB (including the participle as one of the verbal moods). Prepositions and adverbs are distinguished, but only in terms of their function as infixes in polysynthetic structures (infra, 1774:140).

In the category of substantive NOUNS Falkner distinguishes the classical 'accidents' – a term used in Latin grammar (Quintilian) to refer to the changes to which words are subject, in accordance with the relations they express –: declension ('declination' 1774:132), case, gender, and number. Unlike in Latin and Greek Moluche substantives have only one declension, and all have the 'common' gender of the classical languages, i.e. are optionally masculine or feminine. Falkner distinguishes the six cases of Latin (nominative, genitive, dative, accusative, vocative, and ablative), of which nominative and vocative are not marked morphologically, genitive is expressed by the suffix ni and dative, accusative, and ablative share the 'suffix or postposition' (1774:132) mo. The accusative can also be expressed by placing the form engu after the base form. There is no distinction between singular and plural case. The relevance of distinguishing three cases which are morphologically identical (dative, accusative, ablative) is not questioned, although mo is identified with the Latin prepositions 'in, contra, cum, per, ob, propter, intra' (1774:141). In discussing number Falkner isolates the forms pu and eng'n¹¹, which are both used to express the plural, the one put before the substantive, the other after it. The dual number of Latin and Greek does not exist as a morphological category in nouns. An example paradigm is given for huentu, 'man' (1774:133):

	singular		plural	
N.	Huentu,	the man	Pu huentu, or huentu eng'n,	the men
G.	Huentuni,	of the man, &c.	'and so on, as in the singular'	
D.	Huentumo,			
A.	Huentumo,			
V.	Huentu,			
A.	Huentumo,			
	or Huentu engu			

Adjectives are put before substantives and have no morphological endings for case or number, e.g. (1774:133):

Cume	good,
Cume huentu	a good man,
Cume huentu eng'n	good men.

Pronouns have all three numbers. The suffix iu forms the dual number, and in the plural, which are contracted with the final vowel of the base form (1774:133):

singular		dual		plural
Inche,	I	Inchiu,	we two	Inchin, we many
Eimi,	thou	Eimu,	you two	Eim'n, you many
Veï,	he			
T'va, or	this			
T'vachi				
Velli,	that			
Inei,	whom			

Two reflexive pronouns are mentioned: quisu, 'he alone or himself', and inche quisu, 'I myself'. Possessive pronouns are ni, the 'sign of the genitive' (133), for 'mine', mi, 'thine', and 'n, 'his'.

The Moluche VERB is presented by reference to Latin verbal conjugation and its typical categories or 'accidents' (number, mood, person, tense and voice). Aspect is not mentioned separately, though included in the tense paradigms. Three finite moods – indicative, subjunctive, and imperative – and two infinite moods – infinitive, and participle – are discussed. The two main verb types are the substantive verb gen (root ge), 'or, as it is pronounced' (1774:133) 'ngen (to be), and adjective verbs, i.e. all the others (1774:137). Those are further subdivided according to traditional grammar into 'active' verbs, expressing 'doing', 'passive' verbs, expressing 'suffering', and neuter or essential verbs, expressing 'being' (1774:140).

Verbs have only one conjugation, and are never irregular or defective. The finite verb suffix inflection expresses number (singular, dual, plural), mood (indicative, subjunctive)¹² and person (three) (1774:135-136). The following suffix clusters are isolated for the indicative and subjunctive present, which recur in the conjugation of 'all the other tenses' (1774:136)¹³:

	<i>Indicative</i>		
	singular	dual	plural
1.	n	iu	in
2.	imi	imui	im'n
3.	y	ingu	ing'n

Subjunctive

	singular	dual	plural
1.	li	liu	liin
2.	limi	limu	lim'n
3.	liy	lingu	ling'n

Both indicative and subjunctive have 'as many tenses as in the Greek tongue' (1774:134) – present, imperfect, perfect, preterperfect, first aorist, second aorist, first future, and second future. Valdivia (Salas 1991:167) mentions the present, imperfect, first future (imperfect future), first mixed tense (future-in-the-past), perfect, pluperfect, second future (perfect future), second mixed tense (perfect-future-in-the-past). As he focusses on the minimal verbal paradigm, Salas (1991) does not mention any tense markers from Valdivia. The 'particles' (1774:134) of tense that can be isolated from Falkner's account are:

<i>Present</i>	(none)
<i>Imperfect</i>	bu
<i>Perfect</i>	yee
<i>Preterperfect</i>	yeebu
<i>First aorist</i>	abu
<i>Second aorist</i>	yeabu
<i>First future</i>	a
<i>Second future</i>	yea

The tenses are formed by 'interposing' these markers (1774:134) between the stem and the finite suffixes (1774:134-135). This gives the following paradigms for the verb elun (root elu), 'to give', in the first person singular indicative and subjunctive:

	<i>Indicative</i>	<i>Subjunctive</i>
<i>Present</i>	Elun	Eluli
<i>Imperfect</i>	Elubun	Elubuli
<i>Perfect</i>	Eluyeen	Eluyeeli ¹⁴
<i>Preterperfect</i>	Eluyeebun	Eluyeebuli
<i>First aorist</i>	Eluabun	Eluabuli
<i>Second aorist</i>	Eluyeabun	Eluyeabuli
<i>First future</i>	Eluan	Eluali
<i>Second future</i>	Eluean	Elueali

The passive voice is formed by adding the verb substantive ('n)ge, 'to be', directly to the stem (1774:137). The verb ('n)ge follows the normal inflection of the language. In Valdivia this form is one variant of 'impersonal voice' (Salas 1991:169), involving undetermined agent and determined patient. Falkner gives the following examples:

	<i>Indicative</i>		<i>Subjunctive</i>
<i>Present</i>	Elugen,	'I have given' ¹⁵	Elugeli, 'I can be given'
<i>Imperfect</i>	Elugebun,	'I was given'	

<i>Perfect</i>	Elungeuyeeli,	'I may have been given'
<i>Second future</i>	Elungeali, &c.	'I shall have been given'

Besides the indicative, and subjunctive, the finite imperative – now described as 'volitive' mood (Contreras & Santullano 1989:39) –, and the non-finite infinitive and participle mood are mentioned. On the imperative Falkner is very scanty, stating only that it frequently coincides with 'the future of the indicative' (1774:135) – i.e., marked by a –, sometimes in the third person. Valdivia describes all the imperative's finite suffixes for the three persons and numbers, which according to him, however, are only used in the present tense (chapter III, f.13; Salas 1991:169).

The infinitive is formed on the basis of the first person of the indicative of any of the tenses. Falkner's additional remark that the 'genitive of the primitive person' or 'a possessive pronoun' (1774:136) is put before the inflected verb 'to signify the person that acts or suffers' remains rather obscure, since ni elun is translated as 'I to give', ni elubun as 'thou to give' and ni eluvin as 'he to give', while mi and n are the respective second and third person possessive pronouns. No parallels in Valdivia could be checked in this case.

There are two participles, an active one ending in lu and a passive one marked by the suffix el. The second is mentioned in Valdivia (Salas 1991:171). Both are formed from the first person of the indicative, and conjugated with all tense infixes, but without carrying markers for person and number. This makes for (1774:136-137):

	<i>Active</i>		<i>Passive</i>	
<i>Present</i>	Elulu,	'the person giving'	Eluel,	'the thing given'
<i>Imperfect</i>	Elubulu,	'he that did give'	Elubuel,	'the thing that was given'
<i>Perfect</i>	Eluyelu,	'he that has given'	Eluyeel,	'the thing that has been given'
<i>First future</i>	Elualu,	'he that will give'	Elual,	'the thing that will be given'
<i>First aorist</i>	Eluabulu,	'he that was to give'	&c.	

2. Besides this classical pattern of paradigms, Falkner's description takes into account verbal forms that have no parallel in Latin and Greek. Although like many of his predecessors or contemporaries he considers polysemy a linguistic 'impropriety' (1774:139), and refers to, e.g., the 'equivocation in their tongue which is found especially in the prepositions; where one having many significations, the meaning is oftentimes very much confused' (1774:139), Falkner does give a morphological analysis of some of the typical inflectional structures of the language.¹⁶

He observes the productive derivation of verbs 'from any part of speech' (1774:133), either by adding the finite verbal suffixes to the stem, or by adding the inflected substantive verb 'nge. For example (1774:134)¹⁷:

Ata,	'evil' or 'bad'
Atan or Atangen	'to be bad'
Atal'n or Atalcan ¹⁸	'to corrupt' or 'make bad'

Apart from derivation, Falkner observes the 'mode' of 'compounding verbs, altering their significations' (1774:140). He roughly puts several changes of meaning together, viz. 'making affirmatives negatives, neuters actives, and of signifying and expressing how and in what manner the thing is done, by the interposition of prepositions, adverbs, adjectives, &c' (ibid.). As such, he analyses a number of polysynthetic units, as (1774:140):

Pevemgelavin,	'I saw him not on this manner' 'Pen signifies <i>to see</i> ; pevin is <i>I saw him</i> ; vemge, <i>on this manner</i> ; and la is the negative.'
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and, (1774:135):

Chasimota iloavinquin,	'Let me eat it with salt' 'Now iloavin is the first future, with the particle vi interposed, to signify <i>it</i> . I do not know whether quin is anything more than a particle of ornament; as in the word chasimota; where the concluding syllable ta is useless, but for the sake of sound; as chasimo, without any addition, is the ablative case of chasi, <i>salt</i> .'
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More importantly, besides the traditional categories of number, mood, tense, person and voice, Falkner analyses another, optional, verbal property, viz. 'that of transition: whereby they signify, as well the person that acts, as him on whom the action passes, by the interposition or addition of certain determinate particles to express it' (1774:137). From the description given, this phenomenon implies that in verbs expressing an action involving two or more referents, one portmanteau morpheme is added to the verbal stem, which marks both the agent and the patient. According to Falkner Moluche shares this feature with the language 'of Peru' (Quechua) (1774:137), in which these forms occur 'in greater number' (1774:137). The property is absent in the languages 'of the Puelches, of the Chaco, or the Guaranies' (1774:137).

Falkner singles out six different types of transition, which formed part of a larger set he says he does not remember completely (1774:137). The first three types are realized by 'particles' which are contracted with the finite suffixes, varying according to mood and to number of the patient. In the fourth type the morphemes of transition vary according to number and mood and are added to the inflected verbal forms. The fifth and sixth type are expressed in affixes placed between stem and finite suffixes (1774:138-140). The following sets can be deduced from Falkner's account:

transition morphemes

- | | | |
|----|---|---|
| | | (I=indicative, S=subjunctive) |
| 1. | 'From me to thee or you' | ei/y (I), el (S) |
| 2. | 'From you to me' | en (I) |
| 3. | 'From him to me' | mo (I & S) |
| 4. | 'From him to thee' | eneu (I,sg.), eymu mo (I,dual), eim'n mo (I,pl.);
mo (S) |
| 5. | 'From me or you to him' | vi (I & S) |
| 6. | 'the mutual', i.e. 'when it is
reciprocal on both sides' | huu, or, 'as it is pronounced' wu (I & S) |

contraction of transition morphemes and finite suffixes

	<i>Indicative</i>			<i>Subjunctive</i>		
	singular	dual	plural	singular	dual	plural
1.	eymi	eymu	eim'n	elmi	elmu	elm'n
2.	en	eiu	ein	<i>no subjunctive forms mentioned</i>		
3.	mon	moiu	moin	moli	milyu	moliin
4.	<i>no contraction paradigms mentioned</i>					
5.	<i>no contraction paradigms mentioned</i>					
6.	<i>no contraction paradigms mentioned</i>					

Examples are given for the verb elu, such as:

1. Elueymu 'I give to you two'
2. Eluen 'You give to me'
3. Elumoin 'He gives to us many'
4. Eluneu 'He gives to thee'
5. Eluviyu 'We or you two give to him'
/vimu
6. Ayuwimi 'Thou lovest thyself'

Forms of 'transition' and their meaning have been discussed by modern studies in terms of 'focal' and 'satellite person' by Salas (1978), in terms of 'suffixes of interaction' for modern Huilliche by Contreras & Santullano (1989:59-60), and in terms of topic inflection in Mapudungun verbs, reflecting a person-oriented hierarchy of discourse participants by Grimes (1985)¹⁹.

3. Falkner introduced his description of 'Moluche' by saying that the language is 'the most polished, and the most generally understood' (1774:132) of all the languages of the Chilean tribes he knew, and 'more copious and elegant, than could have been expected from an uncivilized people' (1774:132.). This hints at the disturbing discovery of 'regular' structures in Amerindian languages for 18th-century European man. Travellers' and missionaries' accounts were used as 'evidence' in 18th-century studies of human nature and the development of society, to show that the general course in the history of civilization was from 'rudeness' to 'refinement'. Indian tribes taught Europeans about their own cultural

pre-history, and so Indian languages should likewise. Therefore, it was hard to explain that languages which showed 'art' in terms of regular forms of inflection had been formed by their 'primitive' speakers. One way out is expressed in the Scottish judge Lord Monboddo's extensive work on the origin and development of language – which includes Falkner among its references –, viz. to assume that 'some time or other' (1774:549) these peoples were 'connected with some more civilized nation, from whom they have learned to speak' (1774:549). Eventually, the influx of increasingly accurate formal descriptions of exotic languages – one of which this paper hopes to have given the credit it deserves – would prepare the scene for the beginning of anthropological linguistics in the 19th century.

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* I was able to read a copy of this work while doing research on descriptions of Amerindian languages in the colonial period at the John Carter Brown Library (Providence, Rhode Island) in spring 1995. It is with great pleasure that I express my thanks to Norman Fiering, Director of the Library, and the members of the Fellowship Committee for granting me a JCB Research Fellowship, which made my research stay possible. I also thank the staff of the library for their kind assistance and hospitality.

¹ See, e.g., the analyses in Auroux & Queixalos (1984), Cowan (1984), Dinneen (1990), Guice (1984), Hovdhaugen (1992), Salmon (1992).

² In October 12-14, 1995, an international colloquium on the study of Amerindian languages in the colonial period (*La descripción de las lenguas amerindas en la época colonial*) was held at the 'Ibero-amerikanisches Institut' in Berlin, where the overall conclusion of the papers

was that 'many missionary linguists approached the analysis with an open mind and tried various approaches' (Hovdhaugen 1996:131).

See The Dictionary of National Biography, vol.I:1033, Oxford University Press (1975).

Falkner's work is described in Field (1873:126).

Voegelin & Voegelin (1977:287).

See Croese 1985.

Grimes (1985:141) refers to population estimates of between 200,000 and 500,000, based on a dialect study of Mapuche by Robert A. Croese (1980. Estudio dialectológico del mapuche. Estudios Filológicos de la Universidad Austral de Chile 15:7-38). The International Encyclopedia of Linguistics (ed. by William Bright. 1992 New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press) lists 440,000 speakers reported in 1982, with around 400,000 in Chile between the Itata and Toltén rivers, and 40,000 or more in Argentina (1992,vol.1:102).

A non-alphabetical list of nouns, verbs, and adjectives, including a variety of words for, e.g., parts of the body, family members, plants, animals, etc.

Arte y Gramatica general de la Lengva que corre en todo el Reyno de Chile, con un Vocabulario y Confessonario (...). En Lima por Francisco del Canto. Año 1606.

'A considerable absence from these countries has rendered the recollection very difficult; however, I shall give the best account of it I am able, to satisfy the curious and inquisitive' (1774:132).

This paper will not give a systematic comment on Falkner's orthography. To do so, indications of, e.g., nasal vowels and glottal stops, in other missionary grammars should first be examined, which I have not yet been able to look into.

Valdivia (chapter III, ff.13-14, in Salas 1991:167) also distinguishes an optative meaning, which is expressed by the 'mixed' tenses of the indicative, by the imperative, or some tenses of the subjunctive.

Valdivia (chapter III, f.12,14, in Salas 1991:168-169) distinguishes the following suffixes – Salas does not specify whether the orthography is his or Valdivia's:

Indicative

	singular	dual	plural
1.	n	yu	iñ
2.	ymi	ymu	ymn
3.	y	yġu	yġn

Subjunctive

	singular	dual	plural
1.	li	lyu	liñ
2.	lmi	lmu	lmn
3.	le	l(ee)ġu	l(ee)ġn

Falkner mentions the variants 'eluvín' (perfect indicative) and 'eluvili' (perfect subjunctive) for Huilliche (1774:135).

The translation should have been 'I am given'.

Falkner's originality as a relatively unbiased observer becomes clear when compared with the contemporary grammatical description of Galibi by S.-P. de La Salle de l'Étang (1765). This work states that the Galibi language is 'necessarily poor' in expressing verbal distinctions of tense, mood, and aspect, because of the speakers' 'limited' way of life: 'Une autre preuve de la richesse d'une Langue, se tire & de l'abondance des tours de phrases, & de la quantité de moyens d'exprimer les temps, les modes ou les manieres de signifier d'une façon déterminée ou indéfinie. Il sera aisé de démontrer que cette preuve manque à la Langue des Galibis. (...) Il paroît assez démontré que leur Langue n'est pas abondante; il seroit aussi facile de prouver qu'elle ne peut pas l'être. Il suffiroit de jeter un coup d'oeil sur leur genre de vie, sur leurs

moœurs, sur leurs occupations, sur le peu de connoissances qu'ils ont ou qu'ils peuvent avoir' (1765:xiv).

¹⁷ Instances of derivation are also given in the vocabulary following the grammar (1774:144), e.g., 'Chinu, a knife, a sword. Chingoscun, to wound. Chingosquen, to be wounded.' This example shows that there other affixes involved than the ones mentioned by Falkner in his grammatical account.

¹⁸ The markers l and lca are not accounted for. See also note 14.

¹⁹ Compare, e.g., Grimes's example (18) (1985:150):

'pe-a-E-n

see-future-PARTICIPANT=MINIMAL-indicative=speaker=singular

you will see me'.

This is an example of Falkner's second transition. It shows that Falkner isolated the 'e' correctly, but that he mistook the finite suffix 'n' for part of the transition morpheme.