

Warekena in Brazil

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Abstract

In the present study we put forward the hypothesis of a migration of Warekenas from the Xié river in Brazil to the adjacent regions of Venezuela, starting as early as the beginning of the last century. Towards the beginning of the twentieth century the majority of Warekenas had moved to Venezuela, where they switched to a different language - Baniwa of Guainia. In spite of having changed their language, the Warekenas preserved their ethnic name and the story of their origins from Xié. Some of them moved back to their "proto-home" on the Xié river in early 1920s. We also point out some typological characteristics of Warekena of Xié which make it close to other Arawak languages of the Upper Rio Negro linguistic area: numeral classifiers and gender, possessive forms of nouns, reduplication, split ergativity and topic fronting phenomena. Overall, Warekena shares a number of important features with Baniwa of Içana and Baré, languages with which it had apparently been in contact for a long time. A brief analysis of its lexicon shows a number of similarities with Baré, as well as a number of loan words from Baniwa of Içana. These data demonstrate close contacts within the Upper Rio Negro linguistic area where Warekena of Xié doubtlessly belongs.

Key words: Arawakan, Rio Negro languages, Warekena, migrations, typology

Warekena en Brasil

Resumen

En este trabajo presentamos la hipótesis de una migración de warekenas desde el río Xié en Brasil hacia las regiones adyacentes de Venezuela, que habría comenzado a principios del siglo pasado. Hacia los comienzos del siglo veinte, la mayoría de los warekenas se habrían desplazado a Venezuela, donde se cambiaron a una lengua diferente: el baniva del Guainía. Pese a haber cambiado de lengua, los warekenas preservaron su nombre étnico y la historia de sus orígenes en el Xié. Algunos habrían regresado a su "proto-hogar" en el río Xié alrededor de 1920. También presentamos algunas características tipológicas que lo colocan como cercano a otras lenguas arahuacas del área lingüística del Alto Río Negro: clasificadores numerales y género, forma posesiva de los nombres, reduplicación, ergatividad escindida y fenómenos de enfrentamiento de tópico. En general, el warekena comparte un buen número de rasgos importantes con el baniva del Izana y el baré, lenguas con las que claramente había estado en contacto por largo tiempo. Un análisis breve de su léxico muestra muchas semejanzas con el baré, así como muchos préstamos del baniva del Izana. Estos datos demuestran estrechos contactos con el área lingüística del Alto Río Negro, a la cual sin duda pertenece el warekena del Xié.

Palabras claves: arahuacano, lenguas del Río Negro, warekena, migraciones, tipología.

1. LANGUAGE AND ITS SPEAKERS

Warekena belongs to the North subgroup of Arawak languages. It is spoken in nine communities on the Xié river (a tributary of Upper Rio Negro, Brazil) - Vila Nova, Campinas, Yuku, Nazaré, Kumati-cachoeira, Tonu, Umaritiwa, Tokana, Anamoim - by a few dozen people, most of them over fifty. All the speakers of Warekena are bilingual in Nheengatu (Língua Geral), and no longer use Warekena for everyday communication (in spite of its having been

their first language). Many of them also speak Spanish, Portuguese and Baniwa of Içana or Kurripako. The linguistic status of Warekena can be characterized as a typical language death situation.

Linguistically, Warekena of Xié is a dialect of Baniwa of Guainia spoken in Venezuela. Minor dialectal differences exist between different Warekena-speaking communities. Warekena of Anamoim is closer to Baniwa of Guainia than are the dialects of other communities of the Xié river. The communities upstream on the Xié river were founded by Baniwa-speaking migrants from Venezuela in the early twentieth century.

In this paper we shall try to put forward several hypothesis concerning the origin and possible migrations of the Warekenas (§2), and point out some typological characteristics of Warekena of Xié (§3).

The present study is based on the materials collected during two fieldtrips to the Upper Rio Negro region in 1991 and 1994, from speakers of three communities: Nazaré, Anamoim, Campinas¹.

2. HISTORY AND MIGRATIONS OF WAREKENAS

The Warekena language (phonologically: Waʔe:kéna) is also known by the names Arequena, Guaréquena, Utequena and Werikena. The translation of the name is "star people" (cf. *waʔi* "star" in Baniwa of Içana, Tariana; *-kena* "people" in names of clans in Baniwa of Içana from Proto-Arawak **kakin[thi]* (Payne 1991), cf. among others, Baré *khinene* "people").

1 Our acknowledgements go to all our teachers of Warekena, especially Humberto Baltazar (Nazaré) and Pedro Ângelo Tomas (Anamoim), and to the late Candelário da Silva, one of the few Baré speakers in Brazil. We are also very grateful to R.M.W. Dixon for comments and discussion. Abbreviations used throughout this paper are: ADJ - adjective; CL - classifier; EMPH - emphatic; FEM - feminine; IMPF - imperfective; MASC - masculine; PERF¹ - perfective; PL - plural; PROH - prohibitive; RED - reduplication; REFL - reflexive; REL - relative; SG - singular; TRANS - transitive.

There is strong evidence in favor of a fairly recent appearance of the present day Warekena language on the Xié river which ousted the "old", or "real" Warekena. The latter belongs to the Içana-Uaupés subgroup of North-Arawak. It is still spoken by several old people on the Xié river in Brazil and is mostly spoken in Venezuela (in the region of Guzmán Blanco) by around 338 people (González-Náñez 1970; Grimes 1984, 1988).

There is, however, a certain discord in the existing literature concerning the status, migrations and origins of the present-day Warekenas in Brazil.

Koch-Grünberg (1911:38-39) points out that the "old" Warekena used to be spoken on the rivers Içana and Xié. The first evidence of the speakers' migration to Venezuela (San Miguel, Tiriquin) and to upper Orinoco goes back to Spruce, in 1854 (see Martius (1867:619)) and Schomburgk in 1839 (see Schomburgk 1841). Warekenas had been displaced from their habitat several times since late eighteenth century (see Aikhenvald, mss), so that

"Heute findet man Uarekéna in spärlichen Resten hauptsächlich am Guainia, wo sie die Dörfer Tomo und Guzmán Blanco, das alte San Miguel de Dábipe, bewohnen, ferner neben Baré in den Ortschaften Tiriquin und am Atabapo in den Dörfern Baltazar und Corona. Man begegnet ihnen auch noch am Xié, in ihrer alten Heimat, wo aber sie bereits mit Indianern von Içana (Karítana) stark gemischt sind". [Now just a few Warekenas are found mainly on the Guainia River, where they live in the villages Tomo and Guzmán Blanco, former San Miguel de Dábipe, and also near Baré in the regions of Tiriquin and in the villages of Baltazar and Corona on Atabapo. They are also still found on the Xié river, their old homeland, where they are already strongly mixed with the Indians of Içana (Karítana)]" (Koch-Grünberg 1911:39).

It is noteworthy that Koch-Grünberg says nothing about the presence of today's Warekena - a dialect of Baniwa of Guainia - on the Xié river. This may mean that the migration of Baniwa speaking Warekenas back to Xié must have taken place later.

Nimuendaju (1982:176) says:

"Uarekena - Esta língua esta hoje quase extinta, pois os poucos sobreviventes desta tribo habitam esparsos na maioria em território venezuelano, na Guainia (Guzmán Blanco e vizinhanças) e adotaram a língua Baniwa verdadeira (i.e. Baniwa of Guainia - A.A.) dessa região ou a castelhana. No Rio Içana não existe nenhum representante e no rio Xié, sua pátria primitiva, só habita uma família vinda já da Venezuela. Uarekena é um membro próprio da família Aruak. Ela assemelha-se mais ao Carútana, mas não é um dialeto do "Baniwa do Içana" [Uarekena. - This language is now almost extinct, since the few survivors of this tribe mostly live scattered on the territory of Venezuela (Guzmán Blanco and vicinities) and took over the real Baniwa language (i.e. Baniwa of Guainia - A.A.) of the region or Spanish. There are no representatives of this tribe on the Içana river, and there is only one family which had come from Venezuela that lives on Xié, their former home. Uarekena is a typical member of Arawak family. It is similar to Carútana, but is not a dialect of "Baniwa of Içana".

Galvao (1979: 146) points out:

"Uma língua e tribo atualmente extinta é a Warikena, antigamente localizada no Xié" [The language and the tribe Warikena, formerly located on Xié, are at present extinct.]

It can be inferred from what has been said above that both Nimuendaju and Galvao are referring to the presence of speakers of "old" Warekena on Xié. No mention of modern Warekenas on Xié is made (though it is not clear which language is spoken by the only Warekena family from Venezuela mentioned by Nimuendaju).

A brief sketch of Warekena customs is given in a kind of "encyclopedia" for Salesian catholic missions, *"Pelo Rio Mar"* (1933). Warekenas are reported to live on Içana and Xié rivers, and considered completely "civilized" speakers of Nheengatu and Portuguese.

Loukotka (1968) gives Guainia river (Uaupés territory of Colombia) as the present day habitat of Warekenas, without mentioning their presence in Venezuela or in Brazil.

The location of Warekenas on Xié is also pointed out in Rodrigues (1986), Voegelin and Voegelin (1977); no mention is made as to which one of the two Warekenas is discussed.

Britzzi (1963) provides a word-list in Warekena of Xié, along with other languages of the Upper Rio Negro region. To our knowledge, this is the first mention of the present day Warekenas (and not the "old" Warekena) on Xié.

It is evident that, unfortunately, the distinction between the two languages which use the same name, Warekena, is not sufficiently followed in the existing literature (Loukotka 1968, Grimes 1984, 1988, Rodrigues 1986, Voegelin and Voegelin 1977), thus provoking a certain misunderstanding as far as the status of Warekena is concerned. Though both Baniwa of Guainia (i.e. present Warekena of Xié) and the languages of Içana-Uaupés subgroup (to which the old Warekena belongs) are members of the North Arawak branch, they are very distant from each other and far from being mutually intelligible.

Two important facts which have been confirmed during two fieldtrips should be pointed out here:

- (a) the "old" Warekena is still spoken on Xié, by few old people².
- (b) another language called Warekena is also spoken on Xié; it is also on the verge of extinction in Brazil and is a dialect of Baniwa of Guainia.

We can put forward the following hypothesis about what kind of migrations the Warekenas could have been involved in during last hundred years in the region of North West Amazon.

In accordance with the existing sources, the migration of Warekenas from the Xié river in Brazil to the adjacent regions of

2 The presence of several adults speaking the "old" Warekena on the Xié river was confirmed by Christiane Cunha de Oliveira during a recent field trip to several communities there. We are greatly indebted to her for this information.

Venezuela started as early as the beginning of the last century. Towards the beginning of the twentieth century the majority of Warekenas had moved to Venezuela, where they switched to a different language - Baniwa of Guainia. In spite of having changed their language, the Warekenas preserved their ethnic name and the story of their origins from Xié. Some of them moved back to their "proto-home" on the Xié river in early 1920s.

3. SOME TYPOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS

Warekena of Xié displays a number of interesting characteristics which make it close to other Arawak languages of the Upper Rio Negro linguistic area. Among these are: numeral classifiers and gender (§3.1), possessive forms of nouns (§3.2), reduplication (§3.3), split ergativity and topic fronting phenomena (§3.4). Some conclusions will be drawn in §3.5.

3.1. Numeral classifiers and gender

Warekena, like most other Arawak languages, has two genders, feminine and non-feminine, in cross-referencing prefixes, enclitics and independent pronouns of the third person singular. The gender opposition in singular demonstratives is maintained only in the Ananoim variety. There are no gender distinctions in plural.

TABLE 1
Cross-referencing prefixes and enclitics

	sg		pl	
	prefixes	enclitics	prefixes	enclitics
1	nu-	-na	wa-	-wi
2	pi-	-pi	ni-	-ni
3f	yu-	-yu	ni-	-ni
3nf	∅	∅	ni-	-ni

TABLE 2
Demonstratives and third person pronouns

	3rd person	sg		pl	
		near	distant	near	distant
fem	ayupaqu	eya	ayuta	naita	anita
non-fem	epaqu	eni	eta	naita	anita

The use of the same form for the 2nd and 3rd person plural is an innovation of Warekena.

The opposition of two genders is maintained in two nouns: *etene* "old man", *eryawa* "old woman". The agreement in gender with adjectives is marked with *-yawa* "feminine", \emptyset "masculine". The agreement in feminine gender, however, is optional, as shown in (1) and (2).

- (1) neyawa weduana-ji(-yawa)
 woman good-ADJ(-FEM)
- (2) enami weduana-ji
 man good-ADJ

Warekena has a system of six numeral classifiers. This system is best preserved in the variety of Anamoim. Classifiers are used only with numerals *one* and *two*. The system is based upon the following semantic characteristics: human feminine, human masculine, animals, fish, curvilinear objects, periods of time (day, night) (see Table 3).

TABLE 3
Numeral classifiers

semantics	"one"	"two"
human masculine	peya	enaba
human feminine	peya	tuwanaba
animals	pamiña	pamiñanaba
fish	pejeyaɟu	ejenaba
curvilinear objects	papuɟiaɟuni	enaba
periods of time	babuya	bunaba

Classifiers are being lost everywhere except the Anamoim variety. When the classifiers are lost, the human masculine form of the numbers *one* and *two* is used for all the nouns. The loss of classifiers in the Nazaré variety of Warekena, Nazaré, is shown in (3) and (4). In (3) the numeral classifier for period of time is used with the numeral "one". In (4) the human masculine form of the numeral "one" is used in the same context. Both examples are taken from different texts told by the same informant.

- (3) ni-fitua-hā babuya pepuji ni-napa-mia
 3pl-cut-EMPH one-CL:TIME day 3pl-stop-PERF
 "They cut(the trees) during a day, and stopped"
- (4) wa Jya-wa peya pepuji
 so stay-IMPF one:CL:MASC day
 "He stayed(there) one day"

The loss of gender and classifiers is a typical language death phenomenon. The process of the loss of gender is very much in progress in Baré (our field data). The loss of gender agreement and numeral classifiers can also be partly due to the influence of Nheengatu which is actually the most widely spoken language on Xié.

Thus, Warekena is an example of a language which combines numeral classifiers with gender opposition and gender agreement, and thus has two agreement systems the distribution of which depends on the type of NP (a situation of this kind is labeled "split agreement" in Aikhenvald, to appear).

3.2. Possessive forms of nouns

Like other North Arawak languages, Warekena has an opposition between inalienably and alienably possessed nouns. Inalienably possessed nouns constitute a reasonably small closed grammatical class, and include body parts and kinship nouns. Inalienable possession is marked with the help of possessive cross-referencing prefixes (see Table 1) without any suffixed marker, e.g.

- napi* (underlying form: *nu-api*) "my hand"
nu-fu-puami "my mother"

The majority of nouns are alienably possessed. They fall into two groups, according to the possessive marker they take and semantic oppositions that can be expressed.

Nouns belonging to the first group take possessive marker *-je*. No further grammatical distinctions are found. Most artefacts belong to this group, e.g. *biŋa* "hammock", *nu-biŋa-je* "my hammock", *yupita* "sieve", *nu-yupita-je* "my sieve".

Nouns belonging to the second group can take either possessive marker *-ne* or *-te*. These are, in fact, portmanteau morphemes which

combine a function of possessive marker with deictic reference. The suffix *-ne* is used when the object is closer to the speaker, and the suffix *-te* is used when it is at a certain distance from the speaker and is closer to the hearer. Nouns referring to plants and animals, and loan words (like *mukawa* "rifle", a loan from Nheengatu) belong here. Consider the examples below:

<i>waɣu</i> "parrot"-	<i>nu-waɣu-ne</i> "my parrot" (right here)
	<i>pi-waɣu-te</i> "your parrot" (over there)
<i>mukawa</i> "rifle"-	<i>nu-mukawa-ne</i> "my rifle" (right here)
	<i>pi-mukawa-te</i> "your rifle" (over there)

A similar phenomenon is also attested in Baniwa of Içana. In Baniwa of Içana, possessive markers *-ne* and *-te* on alienably possessed nouns correspond to the so called possessive classifiers (see Aikhenvald, to appear), i.e. subcategorization devices which characterize the type of possessive relationship, e.g.

nu-ɣinu-ni "my dog: the dog I brought up"
1sg-dog-POSS

nu-ɣinu-te "my dog: the dog I found"
1sg-dog-POSS

The semantics of possessive suffixes in Warekena may shed some light upon the semantics of noun grouping in accordance with the possessive suffixes they combine with in Arawak languages in general (see Payne 1991:378).

An interesting peculiarity of genitive constructions in Warekena is the unusual constituent order Possessed-Possessor. It is generally used in "part-whole" constructions, as shown in (5) and (6):

(5) *napitu kuɣimaɣu*
back turtle
"turtle's back"

(6) *ema ɣiani-pe*
tapir child-PL
"tapir's children"

However, when a genitive construction bears the meaning of "made out of", the inverse order Possessor-Possessed is preferred:

- (7) mawiju weni
 pineapple water
 "pineapple juice"
- (8) duwiji kawyuji
 crocodile smoked meat
 "smoked meat of crocodile"

Unlike other North-Arawak languages, Warekena has no special possessive marker used in possessive constructions. It appears to be the only North-Arawak language with the order Possessed-Possessor being the preferred one in possessive noun phrases.

The constituent order Possessed-Possessor is encountered in several compounds in Baré, e.g. *si-numa* "beard", lit. "hair of mouth". It is also encountered in Baniwa of Içana and Tariana; in these languages, however, it is linked with the category of inversion (in the sense of Givón 1994; see Aikhenvald, in prep.).

3.3. Reduplication

Another interesting characteristic of Warekena is the extensive use of partial reduplication of verbal stems. The last CV syllable of the verbal stem (a suffix or part of the root) is reduplicated, to express the plurality of the subject of an intransitive verb, or that of the direct object of a transitive verb, and/or intensity of the action. Enclitics are not involved in reduplication. The reduplicated syllable is extrametrical. Reduplication is rarely used with stative verbs. Consider the following examples:

- (9) ni-peta-mia piji umeni
 3pl-beat-PERF tail snake
 "Snakes beat their tails"
- (10) ni-peta-ta-mia pisi umeni-nawi
 3pl-beat-RED-PERF tail snake-PL
 "Many snakes beat their tails (strongly)"

- (11) ni-ema wafi
3pl-cry jaguar
"Jaguars are crying"
- (11) ni-ema-ma wafi-nawi
3pl-cry-RED jaguar-PL
"Many jaguars are crying intensely"
- (12) waba kuɟimaɟu muɟi-ta-ta ɟimapie-pe-mi ema
then turtle bite-TRANS-RED bone-PL-REST tapir
"Then the turtle gnawed the rest of the tapir's bones"

This reduplication rule is shared with Baré (our field data; López-Sanz 1972:52-53).

3.4. Split ergativity and lack of agreement

Warekena, like the majority of Arawakan languages, including Baniwa of Içana, has a split ergative pattern for the marking of grammatical relations, expressed by means of cross-referencing prefixes and enclitics. The split ergative pattern works in term of the semantics of the predicate.

Here we will explain the split ergative pattern in terms of Dixon (1994), using the following labels: A for subject of transitive verb, S for subject of intransitive verb, Sa for subject of active intransitive verb, So for subject of intransitive stative verb, O for direct object.

Warekena uses cross-referencing prefixes for marking A and Sa, and cross-referencing enclitics for marking O and So, shown in Table 1.

Verbs of the So type in Warekena can denote state, e.g. *uɟa* "to be dirty", *anuana* "to be sick", *sefe* "to be dry" or refer to natural phenomena, like *aɟiwa* "to dawn; to get up early", *sɟbuma* "to grow dark, also: spend the night". Cross-referencing enclitics are used to mark So in (13) and (14), O in (14) and (16).

- (13) aɟiwa-wi
get up early-1pl So
"Good morning" (lit. we got up early)

- (14) *yawa-na weni epaɣu-bune kutʃa-na*
 fall-1sg O rain it-because wet-1sg So
 "Rain fell on me, that is why I am wet"

If the subject is topicalized and subsequently fronted, there is no agreement between the predicate and the subject, as shown in (15), where the cross-referencing prefix of 2nd person sg is absent from the verb *-tse-* "to know", since the subject *piya* "you" is topicalized and fronted.

- (15) *yaɣiwa piya-mia-hã tse-ɟi ifaɣema-ha*
 now you-PERF-EMPH know-REL what-EMPH

pi-ma-hã nepi wa-ɟabine
 2sg-do-EMPH 3pl-with 1pl-family
 "Now it is you who knows what you will do with the family"

The same pattern of a lack of agreement for fronted subjects is characteristic of So verbs. Consequently, the split-ergative pattern of the marking of grammatical relations is restricted to non-topicalized constructions. (16) is an example of lack of agreement of a topicalized subject (*nuya* "I") with a stative predicate (*puɣapiami* "lean"):

- (16) *ya-pida pe-pia-na, nuya puɣapiami*
 NEG-2sg-PROH 2sg+eat-NEG-1sgSo I lean
 "Do not eat me, I am lean"

A non-topicalized construction with a subject-predicate agreement is illustrated in (17):

- (17) *puɣapiami-pi*
 lean-2sg
 "you are lean"

This pattern of lack of agreement triggered by subject-fronting is also found in Baniwa of Içana and Baré, and it is possibly related to the North-Arawak inverse category (see Aikhenvald, mss).

Warekena also shows S/O pivot, or syntactic ergativity (cf. Dixon (1994)). The S/O pivot is illustrated by (18) and (19). In (18), the S of the first clause is coreferential with the O of the second one, and so it is omitted from the second clause. In (19), the O of the first

clause is coreferential with the S of the second one, and also is omitted from the second clause.

(18) wa makaje-mia-ha ema wafi mutfi-ta-mia-hã
 then tired-PERF-EMPH tapir jaguar bite-TRANS-PERF-EMPH
 "Then the tapir grew tired, (and) the jaguar bit (him)"

(19) ema pauta-hã kujimaqu ijike-na-mia-wa
 tapir step-EMPH turtle bury-REFL-PERF-IMPV
 "Tapir stepped on the turtle, and it(the turtle) sank (in the mud)"
 This phenomenon is shared with Baré (see Aikhenvald 1992).

3.5. Conclusions

Overall, Warekena shares a number of important features with Baniwa of Içana and Baré, languages with which it had apparently been in contact for a long time. A brief analysis of the lexicon of Warekena of Xié shows a number of similarities with Baré, as well as a number of loan words from Baniwa of Içana. These data demonstrate close contacts within the Upper Rio Negro linguistic area where Warekena of Xié doubtlessly belongs.

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