

GENETIC RELATIONSHIP WITHIN THE RAMARÁMA FAMILY OF THE TUPÍ STOCK (BRAZIL)

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1. Introduction

In a seminal paper published in 1964, Rodrigues established the genetic relationship of one of the biggest groups of related languages in South America, the Tupí stock. Two other classifications, one by Tovar & Tovar (1984) and another by Loukotka (1968), also encompass genetic relationships among the Tupían languages, but not with the same degree of accuracy as the classification by Rodrigues¹.

According to Rodrigues' analysis, the Tupí stock consists of 7 different families of languages, 1) Arikém, 2) Jurúna, 3) Mondé, 4) Puruborá, 5) Ramaráma, 6) Tuparí, and 7) Tupí-Guaraní. The most important change since the publication of his article, is the recognition that Mawé (Sateré), Awetí, and Mundurukú are not part of the Tupí-Guaraní family. These languages are distinct from the languages of the other families, and are distinct among themselves. They form families on their own² (cf. Rodrigues 1980, 1985 and 1986). With the incorporation of this modification, the Tupí stock is presently classified as having ten families of languages; those seven initially recognized and described above plus: 8) Mawé (Sateré), 9) Awetí, and 10) Mundurukú. One of the questions left open in Rodrigues' analysis of the Tupí stock regarded the internal classification of the Ramaráma family. Although Ramaráma is (certainly) a distinct family within the stock, it is not certain how many different languages it contains.

In this paper I try to fill in this blank. I will attempt to establish the relationship of the languages listed as belonging to the Ramaráma family. To do so, I will look at several wordlists published by ethnologists in the beginning and the middle of the 20th century (the same ones on which Rodrigues based his classification of the Ramaráma family) and examine the degrees of similarity among them, taking one of these languages, Karo, as the point of reference for comparison.

This paper is structured as follows. In the next section I will present the wordlists and give the overall details of each one of them. In the seven following sections I will present the patterns found in each of the wordlists, one wordlist per section. I will then discuss these patterns in as much detail as possible and present the preliminary results of my analysis in the last section.

¹ The scope of Tovar & Tovar's and Loukotka's works was broader, and dealt with the classification of *all* South American Indian languages. For this reason, they might have reached a less precise classification in comparison with Rodrigues'.

² The Mawé and Awetí families are furthermore classified as single-language families (of which Mawé – or Sateré – and Awetí are the only representants), just like the Puruborá family, of which the Puruborá language is the only member.

2. Overview of the lists

Seven wordlists were published which contain data of languages which belong to the Ramaráma family. The authors of the lists, as well as the names they used for the languages, are presented in table 1 below (in alphabetical order by language):

	LANGUAGE	AUTHOR	YEAR OF PUBLICATION
1.	<i>Arara (Karo)</i>	Vitor Hugo	1959
2.	<i>Ntogapíd</i>	Nimuendaju	1925
3.	<i>Ntogapíd</i>	Nimuendaju	1955
4.	<i>Ramaráma</i>	Horta Barbosa	1945
5.	<i>Urukú</i>	Schultz	1955
6.	<i>Urumí</i>	Lévi-Strauss	1950
7.	<i>Urumí</i>	Rondon	1948

Table 1. Languages of the Ramaráma family

The wordlists vary dramatically in size. The longest list, provided by Schultz, contains 369 words, while the shortest, provided by Horta Barbosa, contains only 13 words.

The lists also vary in the degree of detailed and systematicity of the transcriptions. Some authors, for example, did make use of special symbols and were more or less consistent throughout the transcriptions. Others just made use of the Portuguese alphabet and did not bother with special marks for special sounds (they usually approximate the sound they heard to the Portuguese orthography). In all of the cases, nevertheless, it was possible to recognize patterns in the transcriptions used and to make some generalizations about them. The methodology used to establish these patterns and generalizations was to compare all words of the wordlists with the corresponding words in Karo, the (supposedly) last surviving language of the family and the language I have been studying since 1987. In this way, Karo was taken as the point of reference (or standard of comparison) to determine the degrees of similarity among the wordlists.

In establishing the degree of resemblance (or difference) between the words in the wordlists and the words in Karo, three general patterns were found. First, in all of the lists I found words that were easily recognized as corresponding to Karo words, although they have a different orthographic spelling. The percentage of these words ranged from 55% in Rondon's Urumí wordlist to 94% in Nimuendaju's 1955 Ntogapíd wordlist³. Second, for some of the items in the wordlists I did not know the corresponding ones in Karo, which made it impossible to establish any comparison. When I have collected more data on Karo, I will be able to define the degree of similarity of these words with their equivalents in Karo. The percentage of unknown words ranged from 9% in Nimuendaju's 1925 list to 27% in Rondon's list. Finally, a small amount of words in the

³ I have included under the category of 'corresponding words' the words which either varied slightly in form (e.g. by means of the use of a different classifier after the noun) or clearly meant something else (e.g. in one of the lists the word for 'wife' was given the meaning of 'husband').

lists did not seem to correspond to possible words in Karo (this could be due to errors in the transcriptions). The percentages for this group of words varied from 1.4% in Lévi-Strauss' Urumí list to 18% in Vitor Hugo's Arara.

Before going to the details of each wordlist, I provide, below, the phonetic and phonological segments of Karo, following the IPA system, in order to facilitate the understanding of the comparison between the words in the lists and the words in Karo.

The consonantal and vocalic phonetic segments of Karo are:

	<i>bilabial</i>	<i>alveolar</i>	<i>palatal</i>	<i>velar</i>	<i>glottal</i>
<i>stop</i>	p p: pʷ b	t t: tʷ	c c:	k k: kʷ g	ʔ
<i>nasal</i>	m mb bm	n nd dn		ŋ ŋg gŋ	
<i>flap</i>		r ɾ			
<i>fricative</i>	β		ç	ɣ	h
<i>approximant</i>	w w̃		y ÿ		

Table 2. Phonetic consonants of Karo

	<i>anterior</i>	<i>central</i>	<i>posterior</i>
<i>close</i>	i ĩ	ɨ	u
<i>mid-close</i>	e ě	ə ǝ	o õ
<i>mid-open</i>	ɛ		ɔ
<i>open</i>		a	

Table 3. Phonetic vowels of Karo

The phonological consonantal and vocalic segments of Karo are as follows:

	<i>bilabial</i>	<i>alveolar</i>	<i>palatal</i>	<i>velar</i>	<i>glottal</i>
<i>stop</i>	p b	t r	c	k g	ʔ
<i>nasal</i>	m	n		ŋ	
<i>fricative</i>					h
<i>approximant</i>	w		y		

Table 4. Phonological consonants of Karo

	<i>anterior</i>	<i>central</i>	<i>posterior</i>
<i>close</i>	i ĩ	ɨ	u
<i>mid-close</i>	e ě	ə ǝ	o õ
<i>open</i>		a ǎ	

Table 5. Phonological vowels of Karo

In the next seven sections I present the specific patterns which concern each of the wordlists, following the order given in table 1.

3. Arara wordlist: Vitor Hugo

Although our first wordlist is attributed to Vitor Hugo, a catholic priest, he did not collect it personally, but someone called Raimundo Barros did. The list consists of 166 words of a language named Arara (=Karo). Notwithstanding the fact that the name used to label the language is identical to the reference language name in the present paper, the percentage of matching words with Karo was only 56% (or 93 words), one of the lowest of all lists. Of 43 of the remaining words (26%) I lack corresponding entries in my vocabulary of Karo. 30 (or 18%) of the words do not correspond semantically to their Karo equivalents. In Barros' transcription, few diacritics were used, and the orthography was mostly based on Portuguese spelling. The consistent patterns found in his transcription are given below⁴.

ARARA	KARO	PORTUGUESE	ENGLISH
u iuá	w [/iwa/]	banana	banana
l curual	w [kəɾəwaw]; /korowaw/	uru	bird (sp.)
∅ curual	w [kəɾəwaw]; /korowaw/	uru	bird (sp.)
i naiô	y [nayó]; /nayó/	abelha (sp.)	bee (sp.)
j iajáá	y [/iyaya ʔaʔ/]	testa	forehead
∅ iajáá	y [/iyaya ʔaʔ/]	testa	forehead
e tá-equito	y [taykitʔ]; /taykit/	bigode	moustache
nh inhogonho	ỹ [iỹogõỹom]; /iyogõyom/	barba	beard
th uóathi	c [/wəwə cíʔ/]	abanador	fanner
ch oichore	c [owicəri]; /owicori/	estou com fome	I am hungry
t nanpti	c [nəm cíʔ]; /nəm cíʔ/	leite (do seio)	(breast) milk
j ijapó	c [icap:ə]; /icapə/	pênis	penis
∅ pôropôro	pʔ [poropʔ poropʔ]; /porop porop/	urubu (sp.)	vulture (sp.)
∅ mopí	kʔ [mop:ikʔ]; /mopik/	nambu ⁵	bird (sp.)
e ua-me	∅ [wãm]; /wãm/	nambu (sp.)	bird (sp.)
o tá-equito	∅ [taykitʔ]; /taykit/	não	no
c icudn	k: [ik:udn]; /ikun/	intestinos	intestines
qu tá-equito	k [taykitʔ]; /taykit/	não	no
óa uóathi	ə [/wəwə cíʔ/]	abanador	fanner
î mopî	î [mop:ikʔ]; /mopik/	nambu (sp.)	bird (sp.)
û tapû	î [takʔ pîʔ]; /tak pîʔ/	corda (do arco)	rope (of a bow)
ú ichampú	î [icəpʔ pîʔ]; /icəp pîʔ/	perna ⁶	leg

⁴ In the presentation of the patterns of each of the wordlists, the symbols used by each author are given first, in the first column, followed by a relevant example taken from the wordlist. In the second column the corresponding Karo symbol (sound) is given, followed by the corresponding Karo example, transcribed in phonetic (within brackets) and phonological (within bars) forms. In the third and fourth columns, the respective Portuguese and English translations of the words are given.

⁵ Barro's translation of the word is 'andorinha'; English: 'swallow'. The Karo form refers to nambu 'Tinamou bird'.

⁶ Vitor Hugo's translation of the word is 'membros'; English: 'members'.

4. *Ntogapíd* wordlist: *Nimuendaju* (1925)

Curt Nimuendaju, a German ethnographer, was one of the greatest contributors to the anthropological as well as the linguistic knowledge presently available of a large number of Brazilian Indian groups. He published two wordlists of a language called Ntogapíd⁷.

The wordlist published in 1925 contains 66 words, 57 of which (or 86.4%) correspond to Karo words, 6 (9.1%) are words for which I do not know the Karo equivalent, and 3 (4.5%) are words that somehow do not correspond to Karo words. This wordlist was collected with 2 children (living?) in the house of the Inspector of Indians of Manaus, in the city of Manaus, very far away from their place of origin, in July of 1922⁸.

Interestingly, Nimuendaju mentions in his article (p. 145) that, by looking at photographs taken from an archive of the place where these two children originally came from, it could be possible to establish some (genetic) relationship between these Indians (the Ntogapíd) and the Urumí, who live in a nearby area. Furthermore, based on the wordlist published earlier by Horta Barbosa, Nimuendaju recognizes a linguistic relationship between Ntogapíd and Horta Barbosa's Ramaráma. This was the earliest attempt at genetic grouping among the Ramaráma family.

In the transcription of the 66 words, Nimuendaju does not make extensive use of special symbols. The patterns that allow us to recognize phonetic similarities between Karo and Ntogapíd are given below:

NTOGAPÍD	KARO	PORTUGUESE	ENGLISH
b ma ib	p ⁷ [ma ⁷ ip ⁷]; /ma ⁷ ip/	árvore, pau	tree, stick
d čad	t ⁷ [cat ⁷]; /cat/	lenha	firewood
s sěgo	c [cego]; /cego/	macaco	monkey
č čigã	c [cigã]; /cigã/	osso	bone
ë pibë	ε [pibe ⁷]; /pibe ⁷ /	pé	foot
ë maë	ě [/ma ⁷ ě/]	panela	pan
∅ maé	? [/ma ⁷ ě/]	panela	pan
u yakúbten	õ [yakõp ⁷ tebm]; /yakõptem/	quente	hot
ũ čũabë	ó [cõabe ⁷]; /cõabe ⁷ /	flecha	arrow

5. *Ntogapíd* wordlist: *Nimuendaju* (1955)

In his article published in 1955, Nimuendaju provides a list of 67 words, collected from a Ntogapíd Indian in Manaus, in July of 1927. This list differs slightly from the previous (1925) list in size (it has one word more) and in the orthographic conventions. However, only a small number of words are shared with the previous list.

⁷ Ntogapíd, Nimuendaju supposed, was the autodenomination of the Indians at that time. It is possible to recognize, in this word, some morphemes that could correspond to Karo morphemes/words: 'ntoga' probably refers to {i⁷tə ŋa}, which means 'ourselves, us', while 'píd' could possibly refer to {pət}, which means 'many, lots of'.

⁸ I present, in Appendix I, a map with the location of all the 'languages' of the wordlists, as described by their collectors.

Although one would have expected further discussion of, and additional evidence for his 1925 hypothesis of a possible genetic relationship between Ntogaḗid, Ramaráma and Urumí, Nimuendaju only gives another list of Ntogaḗid words.

Of the 67 words of this list, 63 (94%) are words that correspond to Karo words, whereas 4 (6%) do not. The sounds of Karo that match the patterns found in Nimuendaju's transcription are given below:

NTOGAḖID	KARO	PORTUGUESE	ENGLISH
b načab	p ⁷ [naʔcap ⁷]; /naʔcap/	cabelo	hair
d načod	t ⁷ [naʔcɔt ⁷]; /naʔcot/	miolo ⁹	brain
ny inyāĩ	ŷ [iŷãĩ]; /iyãĩ/	dente	tooth
ĩ inyāĩ	ŷ [iŷãĩ]; /iyãĩ/	dente	tooth
b^m píb ^m ẽ	b [pibeʔ]; /pibeʔ/	pé	foot
ẽ pẽwid	e [pewit ⁷]; /pewit/	mel ¹⁰	honey
u nyume	õ [iŷõm]; /iyõm/	pai	father
a mapāĩ	ə [/maʔpəy/]	mulher	woman
∅ kaá	ʔ [/kaʔaʔa/]	casa	house
i pāb ^m i	i [pãbíʔ]; /pãbíʔ/	braço	arm

6. Ramaráma wordlist: Horta Barbosa

Nicolau Bueno Horta Barbosa was the Chief Engineer of the “Comissão de Linhas Telegráficas Estratégicas de Mato-Grosso ao Amazonas” (Commission of Strategic Telegraphic Wires from Mato-Grosso to Amazonas). This Commission was in charge of expanding the western frontiers of Brazil and was somehow linked to the Serviço de Proteção aos Índios (the Indians' Protection Service, SPI), now replaced by Fundação Nacional do Índio (the Bureau of Indian Affairs, FUNAI). Along different parts of the route, several exploration trips were undertaken, during which Indians were contacted and eventually relocated in reservations. Whenever possible, members of the Commission collected wordlists from the Indians and included them in their reports, which were later published by the Ministry of Agriculture. Although the members of the Commission were specialized, to various degrees, in several scientific disciplines, none of them had special training in Linguistics.

The wordlist provided by Horta Barbosa is the shortest of all lists. It consists of 13 words of a language he considers to be Ramaráma, collected from an Indian called José. All words, except {uáia-há}, translated as ‘pumpkin’, recognizable as {wáya gáʔ} which in Karo means ‘spoon’, correspond to Karo words. Horta Barbosa did not use any special conventions in his transcription. The following patterns were found:

⁹ Nimuendaju's translation is ‘cabeça’; English: ‘head’.

¹⁰ Nimuendaju's translation is ‘abelha’; English: ‘bee’.

RAMARÁMA	KARO	PORTUGUESE	ENGLISH
tch canantchiá-uap t tianá	c [kanə caʔwapʔ]; /kanā caʔwap/ c [cádn nə]; /cán nā/	(coisa) sol fogo	(thing) sun fire
∅ macô-cá ∅ pética	pʔ [makópʔ káʔ]; /makóp káʔ/ kʔ [petikʔ káʔ]; /petik káʔ/	lâmparina, luz batata	light potato
c macô-cá	kʔ [makópʔ káʔ]; /makóp káʔ/	lâmparina, luz	light
iü itiü	i [ic:i]; /ici/	água	water
u iuá	w [/iwa/]	banana	banana

7. Urukú wordlist: Schultz

Harald Schultz was another German ethnographer who has worked extensively with Brazilian Indian languages. Schultz made use of a dozen special diacritics in his transcriptions of Urukú (and Digüt). The main occurring patterns, or correspondences of symbols, are presented below:

URUKÚ	KARO	PORTUGUESE	ENGLISH
v väyo; väiyō	w [wayo]; /wayo/	jacaré	alligator
b hačab	pʔ [aʔcapʔ]; /aʔcap/	cabelo dele ¹¹	his hair
d yomíd	tʔ [yomítʔ]; /yomít/	madeira do arco	wood of the bow
g mög	kʔ [mökʔ]; /mök/	algodão	cotton
k píkét; píkéd	c: [pic:ētʔ]; /picēt/	besouro (sp.)	bug (sp.)
đ hīpđäyōi	c [ipʔ cahyoʔ]; /ip cahyoʔ/	peixe-cachorro ¹²	fish (sp.)
č hi načap	c [inaʔcapʔ]; /inaʔcap/	cabelo	hair
ž motžúm	c: [moc:öm]; /mocöm/	camarão	shrimp
ch/š chīgāmó ; šīgāmó	c [cigamō]; /cigamo/	estrela	star
y yarōkanyavab	c [carok:āya bapʔ]; /carokāya pap/	areia	sand
ny yarōkanyavab	ỹ [carok:āya bapʔ]; /carokāya pap/	areia	sand
ü tágüb	i [/tágip/]	arco	bow
i ičī	i [/ic:i/]	água	water
ú motžúm	ō [moc:öm]; /mocöm/	camarão	shrimp
o pobo	o [pōβo]; /pobo/	coruja	owl
ű măgűpí	o [/magoʔpi/]	carrapato	tick
∅ hačab	ʔ [aʔcapʔ]; /aʔcap/	cabelo dele	his hair
ʼ maʔpeʔip	ʔ [maʔpe ʔipʔ]; /maʔpe ʔip/	cabaça ¹³	gourd
- ká-ā-ā	ʔ [/kaʔa ʔaʔ/]	casa	house

¹¹ Schultz' translation is 'arrancar (cabelos dum porco)'; English: 'pull a pig's hair out'.

¹² Schultz' translation is 'boto'; English: 'river dolphin'.

¹³ Schultz' translation is 'cesto raso'; English: 'flat basket'.

His wordlist consists of 369 words (the longest of the wordlists treated in this paper) of a language called Urukú. 297 (80.5%) of these words are identical to their Karo equivalents, for 47 (12.7%) I have not yet established an equivalent in Karo, and 25 (6.8%) do not correspond to Karo words. Schultz also describes the lifestyle and a little of the history of the Urukú Indians. He compares them with a neighboring group, the Digüt (or Gavião ‘Hawk’), providing also a wordlist for this group. No mention is made of the person with whom the wordlists were collected, nor the date of recording.

8. Urumí wordlist: Lévi-Strauss

When the anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss came to Brazil in 1935 to teach at São Paulo University, he had the opportunity to go on a few field expeditions and collect wordlists, material items, folktales and cultural data from distinct groups. One of them were the Urumí.

In his article about the Urumí, Lévi-Strauss provides a list of 145 words (collected with 5 Indians living on the Seringal de Piratini, in November 1938) and also presents a sketch of the morphological structure of Urumí. Although he mentions Nimuendaju's 1925 hypothesis, that Ramaráma, Urumí and Ntogatid are members of the same group of languages, Lévi-Strauss himself does not take a stand.

Of the 145 words in his list, 124 (85.5%) actually correspond to Karo words, 19 (13.1%) represent words of which I have not yet recorded an equivalent in Karo, and 2 are words that do not seem to correspond in meaning to Karo words. Lévi-Strauss made extensive use of special symbols to represent the sounds of Karo, and the correspondence patterns found in his transcription are given below.

URUMÍ	KARO	PORTUGUESE	ENGLISH
ŝ i-naŝap	c [inaʔcap ^ʔ]; /inaʔcap/	cabelo	hair
ĉ ĉogá	c [/cagá/]	olho	eye
ž žigamôŋka	c [cigamɔ]; /cigamo/	estrela	star
ú itú	ĩ [it:ĩ]; /iti/	veado	deer
iú ičiú	ĩ [ic:i]; /ici/	água	water
ý ý	ĩ [/i/]	genipapo	genipa
u uená	w [wɛdn ʔaʔ]; /wen ʔaʔ/	lua	moon
û úám	w̃ [w̃ɔm]; /wãm/	nambu (sp.)	bird (sp.)
i iamó	y [yambɔ]; /yamo/	batata	potato
î îogó	y [yɔgɔ]; /yogo/	poraquê	electric eel
e anãŋgote	∅ [anãŋgɔt ^ʔ]; /anãŋot/	vento	wind
ó kuretó	∅ [korét ^ʔ]; /korét/	jacutinga	bird (sp.)
ng anãŋgote	ŋ [anãŋgɔt ^ʔ]; /anãŋot/	vento	wind
o mapoĩa	ə [/maʔpəy/]	mulher	woman
ni ĉuniũŋ	ỹ [coỹð]; /coyð/	unha	nail
ŋ napŋɛŋ	ỹ [nãỹa]; /nãya/	milho	corn
ŵ + ŋ i-ŝigãŋ	ŵ [/icigã]	osso	bone

9. *Urumí wordlist: Rondon*

Colonel Cândido Mariano da Silva Rondon was the head of the Commission of Telegraphic Wires from Mato-Grosso to Amazonas, of which Horta Barbosa was a member. Rondon was also the founder and the first president of the Serviço de Proteção aos Índios (Indian Protection Service), now replaced by FUNAI (National Foundation of the Indian).

Although an ethnographer (João Barbosa de Faria) was part of the Commission, Rondon collected the wordlist from the Urumí Indians himself, in April of 1913. The list comprises 105 words, of which 58 (55.2%) correspond to Karo words, 29 (27.6%) are words of which I do not have the equivalent in Karo, and 18 (17.2%) are words that do not correspond to Karo words.

Rondon only exceptionally uses special symbols in his transcription of Urumí, and his orthographic conventions are based on Portuguese spelling. The patterns found in his transcriptions are given below.

URUMÍ	KARO	PORTUGUESE	ENGLISH
g gikiêgá	c [cik:ía gá?]; /cikía ká?/	calcanhar	heel
ch ichônhôgá	c [icoỹô gá?]; /icoyô ká?/	unha ¹⁴	nail
j ijapinhame	c [icapĩyãm]; /icapĩyãm/	pestanas	eyelash
nh iôgonho	ỹ [iyogôỹôm]; /iyogôyom/	bigode	moustache
ü icahpü	î [icãp' pí?]; /icãp pí?/	perna ¹⁵	leg
v ivipébü	β [iβipe bí?]; /ibipe pí?/	lábio	lip
e inajápe	∅ [ina?cap?]; /ina?cap/	cabelo	hair
c inacá	k: [inak:á?]; /inaká?/	cabeça	head
ô ichônhôgá	o [icoỹô gá?]; /icoyô ká?/	unha	nail
ô ichônhôgá	õ [icoỹõ gá?]; /icoyô ká?/	unha	nail
o iôgonho	o/õ [iyogôỹôm]; /iyogôyom/	bigode	moustache
o chôpocá	ə [cop:ət' ká?]; /copət ká?/	pauzinho do furo do lábio superior	little stick worn in the upper lip

10. *Comparison of the lists: preliminary results*

When we compare the wordlists presented above, two things become clear:

- 1) there is a (very) high percentage of words which show an exact match with their equivalents in Karo, and
- 2) the differences in transcription do not seem to represent (historical) sound changes, but just differences in orthography.

Considering these facts it is possible to postulate, at least preliminarily, that the languages, which are represented differently in the wordlists, are, in fact, the same language (or at least dialects of the same language), Karo.

¹⁴ Rondon's translation is 'dedo'; English: 'finger'.

¹⁵ Rondon's translation is 'barriga da perna'; English: 'calf (leg)'.

In order to prove this hypothesis, future research will be necessary with regard to two of the patterns found in the wordlists.

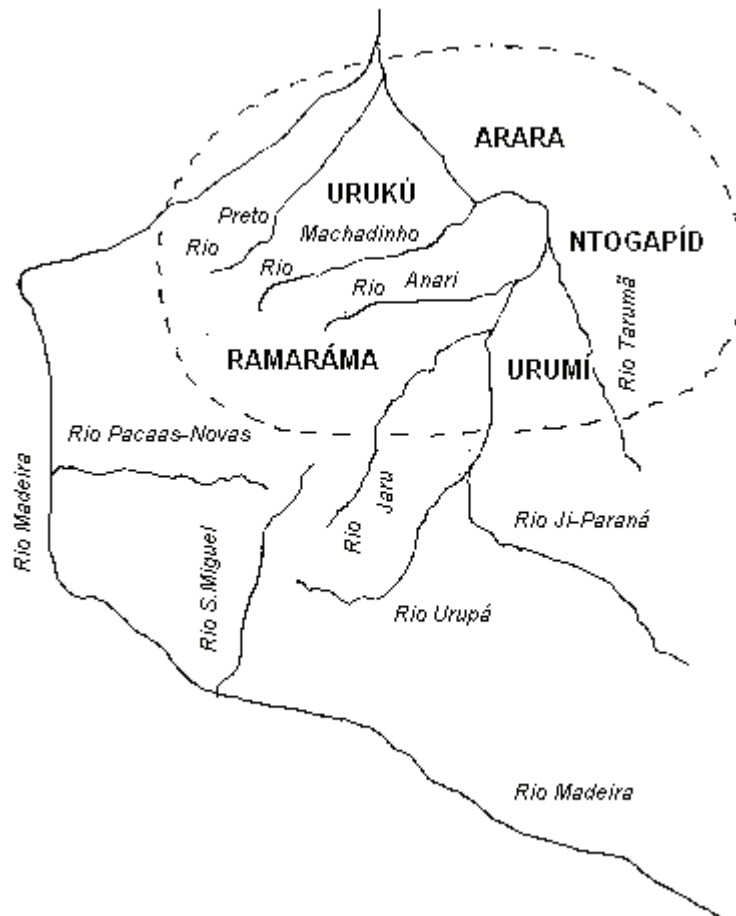
First, it will be necessary to collect with the Karo community all words of which I lack an equivalent in Karo. In spite of the fact that the amount of these words is relatively small, it will be important to collect and analyze them in order to check the degree in which they correspond to the ones in the wordlists.

Second, concerning the words which do not correspond to words in Karo, it will be necessary to verify the reasons why this correspondence is not found. My hypothesis is that the presence of such words is due either to transcription errors (there was no tape recorder at that time) or to a misunderstanding of the meaning of the collected words on the part of the collector¹⁶. In order to prove or refute this hypothesis it will be necessary to check with the community which possible meaning(s) the words in question could have.

As a final remark it is worth mentioning that if it actually turns out that Karo is the only language of the Ramaráma family, it will not be the only instance within the Tupí stock. Three other languages, Awetí, Puruborá and Sateré (Mawé), also do not have any sister language(s), and each of them form a family on its own. As a result, the Tupí stock should be reclassified as having 4 families of languages which are composed of single language members: Awetí, Puruborá, Sateré (Mawé) and, now, Ramaráma.

¹⁶ It is not uncommon in the situation of collecting words, especially in a context of poor biligualism, for the collector to register a meaning, different from (possibly similar to) the one expected.

Appendix



Geographic region occupied by the Arara, Ntogapíd, Ramaráma, Urukú e Urumi Indians.

References

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