

Multilingual and Monolingual Placenames in Tariana

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Tariana is the only Arawak language spoken in the linguistic area of the Vaupes River basin of Amazonia, along with a number of East Tucanoan languages. The Tariana people are thought to be the most recent arrivals in the region. The indigenous inhabitants of the area are obligatorily multilingual because of linguistic exogamy. Tariana placenames are divided into three groups: (a) names of places where Tariana have lived recently, or still live, (b) names of historical places associated with original living sites and migrations of the Tariana, and (c) names of places associated with the mythic ancestors of the Tariana. Only names in the first group enter into multilingual sets; these are calque translations involving East Tucanoan languages of the area. Tariana placenames of the other two groups are monolingual, and often have archaic linguistic traits, confirming that obligatory multilingualism among Tariana is of relatively recent origin.

1. Tariana and the Multilingual Setting of the Vaupes Region

Tariana is spoken in the linguistic area of the Vaupes River basin, in a very unusual linguistic situation of obligatory multilingualism dictated by the principles of linguistic exogamy ("Those who speak the same language with us are our brothers, and we do not marry our sisters.") Tariana is the only Arawak language spoken in the region; other languages belong to the East Tucanoan group. There is a strong inhibition against "language mixing," in terms of lexical loans. Tariana combines a few features inherited from Proto-Arawak with a strong areal influence from East Tucanoan languages; in fact Tariana and the East Tucanoan languages show almost complete structural isomorphism.

Placenames are a particularly enlightening source for ethnohistory in the context of the Amazon as a whole, and the Vaupes in particular.

According to Sapir ([1916] 1963, 436), "the analysis of place names is frequently a valuable means of ascertaining whether a people have been long settled in a particular region or not." Thus placenames as a linguistic source may help us to understand where the Tariana came from, and whether they have always been multilingual as they are now.

Below I discuss the linguistic situation in the Vaupes (§2), the cultural setting, and the ethnohistorical scenario that we can reconstruct for the area during the past four to five hundred years (§3). Then I present the principles of naming places in Tariana and the different types of placenames (§4), followed by linguistically interesting aspects of placenames (§5). Finally (§6), I offer conclusions as to what sort of evidence can be obtained from Tariana placenames.¹

2. The Linguistic Situation in the Vaupes

The population of the Vaupes region in Brazil consists of the following culturally integrated linguistic groups: (a) seven languages of the East Tucanoan family, closely related, but not mutually intelligible—Tucano, Tuyuca, Guanano-Piratapuya, Desano, Karapana, and Cubeo (Grimes 1985, 1988); (b) one North Arawak language, Tariana; and (c) three Makú languages—Dâw, Hupda, and Yuhup.² There is no proof of genetic relationship between any of these language groups (pace Greenberg 1987).

Tariana is genetically related to other North Arawak languages of the region (see map 1), such as Warekena, Bare, and especially Baniwa of Içana, though these are spoken outside the Vaupes area.³ Tariana is lexically very similar to Baniwa of Içana; but its grammatical structure is quite different because of its coexistence with East Tucanoan languages in the Vaupes. Baniwa groups frequently intermarry with members of other tribes, but there are no prohibitions on marrying somebody who speaks the same language, and there is no obligatory multilingualism among the Baniwa.

The ethnic Tariana number more than 1500 (Rodrigues 1986). There are approximately 100 adult speakers of the language scattered on the main river (Santa Rosa, Iauarete, Periquitos, and Ji-Ponta; see map 2). Traditionally, Tariana has been spoken only on the Brazilian side of the Vaupes region. East Tucanoan tribes extend further into Colombia.

In the Brazilian Vaupes Tucano is gradually gaining ground as a *lingua franca*; the majority of languages other than Tucano are endangered (see Grimes 1988; Aikhenvald 1996a).

Map 2. Tariana and East Tucanoan Languages



Settlements on the Vaupes River where Tariana is still spoken (Jusquirá, Ji-Ponta, Periquitos and Iauarete) are underlined. The arrow indicates the direction of Tariana's migration from Wapui Cachoeira 'Rapid of Wapui' (in box).

3. Cultural Setting and Historical Evidence

3.1. Social Organization. In the Vaupes basin, Tarianas and Tucanos live in several discontinuous areas along the main river and its tributaries. They display great cultural similarity and a complicated network of interrelations by marriage (Sorensen 1967; Jackson 1974; Aikhenvald 1996a). Cultural homogeneity in the Vaupes is reinforced by shared means of subsistence, food, and ways of life, as well as by shared

stories, rites, and traditional social structure, with a minimal "division of labor" between tribes (for the differences in pottery and basket-weaving techniques between Tucano and Arawak-speaking groups, see Galvão 1989, 135-93). However, every group and apparently every subtribe have their own versions of origin myths and stories, which they consider their "inheritance."

All the Vaupes tribes, with the exception of Makú, are sedentary. Descent is strictly patrilineal; tribal members identify themselves with their father's language and tribe. The main means of subsistence are slash-and-burn agriculture, hunting, and fishing. According to my field data, change of dwelling place happens about once a generation: the old home is abandoned, and the population of a longhouse moves to another location. The immediate reason for movement is said to be "sorcery" ("evil breath") of enemy shamans.

Each tribe, identifiable by its distinct language (e.g., Piratapuya, Tariana, Tucano),⁴ is divided into several subtribes, hierarchically organized depending on whether they are descendants of the first, second, or third son (etc.) of the ancestral forefather. The lower groups in the hierarchy are said to be ex-Makú (see note 2 on the traditionally low status of the Makú in Vaupes society). The role of the lower groups is to serve the members of senior subtribes, which are to be treated as elder brothers. Exogamous marriages are preferably arranged between hierarchically equivalent groups.

The Tariana originally consisted of ten hierarchically organized groups.⁵ Only the "bottom of the pile" group, called *wamialikune* 'the only/last ones' (lit. '1PL-ancient-LOC-PL') still speak their language. This article is based upon data collected from this subtribe.

Each subtribe referred to itself with a specific name for its group; it also used a generic term for the entire tribe. Such a generic term for the Tariana is *iri-ne* 'the ones of blood', which relates to the origin myth: the forefathers of the Tariana are supposed to have originated in the blood of Thunder (who is said to be the Tariana's ancestor). The members of more senior subgroups used the Tucano version of this name, *diroa* (Moreira 1994).⁶

The subtribes used different sets of sacred names; they had slightly different stories, origin myths, and versions of wars with Tucanoan tribes on the way to the Vaupes. For instance, in some parts of the

origin myth told by descendants of a senior subtribe, the Kaline (Biocca 1965; Moreira 1994), there were two Tariana forefathers, and in other parts there were three; this “inconsistency” appears to be characteristic of Tariana mythological tradition. In the version told by the *wamia-likune*, there are always two forefathers.

3.2. Historical Evidence. Neither the Tucano nor the Tariana are the autochthonous population of the Vaupes. According to Nimuendajú (1982), the original inhabitants of the Vaupes area were the Makú tribes, and East Tucanoan tribes invaded the area from the East. The Tariana are the most recent arrivals, coming to the Vaupes from tributaries of the Içana River, probably the Aiari (see map 2). This must have happened around the end of the 16th century (Koch-Grünberg 1911; Brüzzi 1977; Nimuendajú 1982).

The following hypothetical scenario can be reconstructed for the ethnolinguistic situation in the Vaupes during the past 500 years: (1) Before 1500, East Tucanoan tribes moved from the East into the Vaupes area, which was previously inhabited by Makú tribes, and East Tucanoans established dominance over the Makú. (2) Around 1600, the Tariana moved from the Aiari (thus splitting from the Baniwa of Içana) to the Vaupes region, in which Tucanoan tribes were already established; this marked the beginning of areal diffusion from East Tucanoan into Tariana. (3) Around 1750-80, the first contacts with the Portuguese took place, which started the spread of *Língua Geral* as a lingua franca. (4) Around 1900, Tucano started to gain ground as a lingua franca of the area, with some Tariana settlements beginning to use mainly Tucano (Koch-Grünberg 1911). This tendency increased with the establishment of regular Salesian missions in the Vaupes in 1925; it resulted in the growing endangerment of indigenous languages other than Tucano in the Vaupes region, as well as growing obsolescence of *Língua Geral*—now known only to older people, although traces are preserved in a few placenames.

4. Placenames as Linguistic Evidence

4.1. Three Groups of Placenames in Tariana. The types that can be distinguished are: names of places where the Tariana live or lived recently, which I call “actual” placenames (§4.2); names of historical places associated with original living sites and migrations of the Tariana, which I call “historical” placenames (§4.3); and names of places which

are associated with traditional, strictly Tariana mythic characters and the creation of the world, which I call “mythological” placenames (§4.4).⁷

These placenames differ in several important properties: whether they exist in the languages of the region, or just in Tariana;⁸ whether they are also named in *Língua Geral* or in Portuguese; and whether—if they have a name in languages other than Tariana—they are calque translations from one language to another. Finally, some but not all placenames have archaic features, and some but not all can be derived from proper names. These properties of placenames are summarized in table 1.

Table 1. Properties of Tariana Placenames

Property	“Actual” Placenames	“Historical” Placenames	“Mythological” Placenames
Multilingual	yes	rarely	no
Named in <i>Língua Geral</i> or Ptg	yes	occasionally	no
Calque Translations	yes	no	no
Derived from Proper Names	no	no	yes
Grammatical Archaisms	none	possible	possible

Some placenames refer to localities where the Tariana actually live; at the same time, these localities appear in stories about the Tariana’s migrations and in origin myths, so such names can be considered both “historical” and “mythological.” They have a number of peculiarities discussed in §4.5.

4.2. “Actual” Placenames. The names of places where Tariana live now, or lived until recently, are calques, with counterparts occurring in Tucano and other East Tucanoan languages of the Vaupes. They are also translated into *Língua Geral*, or Portuguese, and in these forms they appear on Brazilian maps. Thus they reflect not only the actual linguistic situation, characterized by multilingualism, but also recent history, in which *Língua Geral* was a lingua franca of the Vaupes. Some place-

names also have other, more recent names in Portuguese, often given by Catholic missionaries.

A useful list of “actual” placenames in Tucano, Língua Geral (LG), and Portuguese (Ptg) is given by Brüzzi (1977, 49 ff.) My consultants corrected this list and supplied Tariana equivalents. Such names also occur in biographical narratives in my corpus of Tariana texts. Examples of multilingual “actual” placenames, listed under Tariana forms, include the following, where CL = classifier and AF = affix:

- yema-phe**, Tucano *uxtika-pūrī* ‘leaf of tobacco’ (tobacco-CL.LEAF);
 LG no name; Ptg *Cigarro* (old name), *Nova Esperança* (new name).
iwi-taku, Tucano *moá-noá* ‘promontory associated with salt’ (salt-AF.promontory); LG *Juqira*; Ptg *Juqira-ponta* (old name), (hybrid with Língua Geral), *Santa Rosa* (new name).
ikuli-taku, Tucano *úhuri-pweá* ‘rapids of the turtle’ (turtle-AF.RAPIDS); LG no name; Ptg *Jabuti*.
tuili-taku, Tucano *umū-ñōá* ‘promontory associated with the japú bird’ (japú.bird-AF.island); LG no name; Ptg *Japú-ponta*.
mawa-kere, Tucano *wöhō-nāxkāro* ‘island of the arumā vine’ (arumā.vine-AF.island); LG no name; Ptg *Arumã*.

Placenames of this group contain no grammatical archaisms. A place is named after a plant which grows in the place, or its physical property: thus *yemaphe* ‘Cigarro’ is a settlement known for growing tobacco. The name *iwitaku* ‘Juqira’, recently renamed Santa Rosa, is known for a plant used in traditional extraction of salt; it is the place where most *wamialikune* live now. The name *ikulitaku* ‘Jabuti’ is known for a concentration of turtles. The place called *tuilitaku*—where Cândido, one of the oldest speakers of Tariana, was born—is known for a concentration of japú birds; and *mawakere* is known for the arumā vine, used for making roofs (both *tuilitaku* and *mawakere* are now abandoned).

4.3. “Historical” Placenames. Historical places are associated with sites where Tariana lived in the ancient times and with their migrations. These placenames appear in stories about Tariana migrations, about the subtribes, and about wars between them. Unlike “actual” placenames, “historical” placenames do not necessarily refer to places of settlements; they may refer to important sites (stones, caves, etc.)

Historical placenames are mostly monolingual in Tariana (exceptions are discussed in §4.5). They “categorize” the place with respect to its physical property, such as shape, or they refer to events which happened in certain locations. Placenames of this type do contain linguistic archaisms (see §5). Examples include the following:

mia-ka-pani ‘rapids of the ancients’, where the Tariana are said to have originated. This is the Tariana name for the Rapids of Wapui,⁹ situated on the Aiari river, a tributary of the Içana (map 2). Both the Tariana and Baniwa originated here and lived here together, according to their origin myths. From here, the Tariana migrated to the Vaupes. This placename is a historical source in itself: it shows that the Rapids of Wapui is the place of “origin” for the Tariana.

masipiru-taku ‘point of the butterfly’: Promontory on the Vaupes River which the Tariana passed on their way from the Wapui to the Vaupes. This is a small peninsula which resembles a butterfly in its form.

manaka-pina ‘valley of açai fruit’: Valley on the Vaupes River which the Tariana passed when they first arrived on the Vaupes; so named because this type of fruit grows there. It is not clear whether Tariana actually lived there, or only passed the place.

mawali-dapana ‘house of the snake’: Cave which the Tariana passed on their way from Wapui to the Vaupes. This and the following term are the names of caves thought to be inhabited by the spirits of the corresponding beings.

daru-dapana ‘house of the arara parrot’: Cave which the Tariana passed on their way from Wapui to the Vaupes.

tuili-kere ‘island of the japú bird’: Island on the Vaupes where warfare with the Guananos took place. This is named after a Tariana leader called ‘japú bird’. Tariana lived there before they had wars with the Guanano and went further up the Vaupes.

4.4. “Mythological” Placenames. These are associated with traditional, strictly Tariana, mythological characters and with the creation of the world. These names exist only in Tariana, and they often have archaic features (§5.2). Only “mythological” placenames can be derived from proper names (e.g., *kali-pani* ‘the rapids of Kali’, below). They are often associated with events which occurred in the places

named. The terms refer to rapids, caves, and stones, but almost never to settlements. Examples of “mythological” placenames include:

iniri-yawa ‘the hole of the traíra fish’ (traíra-CL.HOLE): Place where the mythic traíra fish hid the son of Kali, one of creators of the world.

kali-pani ‘the rapids of Kali’ (Kali-AFF.RAPIDS): Place on the Querari river where Kali lived.

kainiki-da ‘the stone of manioc’ (manioc-CL.ROUND): The stone on the Querari river where Kali gave manioc to the first people.

waliru-na ‘the mountain of the evil spirit’ (evil spirit-CL.VERTICAL): Mountain on the Upper Rio Negro, near São Gabriel da Cachoeira, where Kali met his last wife, the evil spirit’s daughter. The mountain resembles a sleeping woman, and is popularly known in Portuguese as *Bela Adormecida* ‘Sleeping Beauty’.

ĩnere-tapu-le ‘spirit’s dream’ (spirit-dream-POSS): Island on the Papuri River where Tariana’s forefathers dreamed about the future.

iri-pua ‘river of blood’ (blood-CL.RIVER): River where enemies ate the grandfather of the Tariana.

4.5. Placenames with Different Properties. Some placenames are related both to localities where the Tariana now live and to their historical migrations.¹⁰ Like “actual” placenames, they are multilingual; but not all the Tariana names are calque translations from other languages. Some of these names contain archaic features (§5.2). In a few cases, where the Tariana live in places associated with their historical movements, such places may have two names in Tariana—one is a calque translation, and the other is “Tariana proper.” Examples are:

puperi-pani ‘rapids of bacaba fruit’, calqued on Tucano *yu’ mú-pweá*; LG *Bacaba* (types: actual, historical); also called **yawira-kere** ‘island of acará fish’ (no LG or Tucano equivalents).

kerekere-pani ‘rapids of the sparrow’, calqued on Tucano *kaĩ-pweá* (types: actual, historical); LG *Periquitos*; also called **tupiyalinumana** ‘mouth of the lizard’ (after the shape of a bay; no LG or Tucano equivalents).

yawhipani ‘rapids of the jaguar’, calqued on Tucano *yáta-pweá*; LG *Yawarete*; Ptg. *Iauarete* (types: actual, historical, mythical).

pa-whyale-pani ‘rapids of magic breath’ (IMPERS-breath-POSS-CL.rapids), Tucano *tōpa-duri* ‘sieve-like rocks’; LG *Ipanore* (types: actual, historical). This culturally important example is the Tariana name for the famous Ipanore Rapids, where Tucano-speaking subtribes of the Tariana still live. The mythological traditions of various East Tucanoan peoples (Buchillet 1994) state they emerged from the rapids of Ipanore. But Tariana tradition is different: it relates that Ipanore was the place where all the East Tucanoan tribes came together and arrived at various agreements. Since the Tariana arrived “late,” they did not receive their portion of “magic breath,” which is believed to be the source of all kinds of sorcery, and which went mostly to Desanas. (This corresponds to the fact that the Tariana are indeed the most recent arrivals to the region.) Hence the name ‘rapids of magic breath’.

Only one of the placenames given above combines the properties of an actual, an historical, and a mythological placename. This is Tariana *yawhipani*, from *yawi* ‘jaguar’ and the archaic suffix *-hipani* ‘rapids’; (see §5). The place was named from the adventures of a mythic character *yawi-wali* ‘jaguar-like one’, who lived there and who lost a battle to the forefathers of the Tariana, called *irine*. The archaic element *hipani* ‘rapids’, preserved in Baniwa of Içana as *hipani*, *hipana* ‘rapids’, underwent the loss of its initial syllable in Tariana, and is used as a placename suffix *-pani* ‘rapids’. Nowadays Iauarete is a large mission, a sort of semi-urban center of the Tariana on the Vaupes. Unlike other historical and mythological placenames, the placename has corresponding terms in Tucano and in Língua Geral. This irregularity can be explained by the unusual status of this settlement as the center of the Tucano-speaking Tariana.

5. Linguistic Properties of Placenames

5.1. Derivation of Placenames. “Actual” and “historical” placenames are formed on common nouns, and “mythological” placenames on common nouns or proper names with derivational suffixes. These suffixes are also used as numeral and verbal classifiers, and as noun class markers (see Aikhenvald 1994), e.g., *waliru-na* ‘mountain of evil spirit’ (evil spirit-CL.VERTICAL), *kuida-kere* ‘island of Brazil nuts’

(Brazil nut-CL.ISLAND), *yema-phe* 'cigarro' (tobacco-CL.LEAF-LIKE).

Some derivational suffixes are used with placenames only, and are never employed as classifiers. One such suffix is *-ali*, as in *ādaru-ali* 'river of the parrot', *makwa-ali* 'river of the Makú'. The equivalent of this suffix in ordinary language is *-pua*, also used as a classifier meaning 'long stretch' or 'road'. Some "actual" placenames have two variants—one with *-ali* and the other with *-pua*, e.g., *awadu-ali*, *awadu-pua* 'river of awadu bird'. All rivers are referred to with *-pua*, e.g., *dīha-pua* 'this one (river)' (this-CL.STRETCH). The suffix *-ali* may also be present in such placenames as *cayali* 'Vaupes' (see note 10) and *ayali* 'Aiari' (map 2). Other derivational affixes used with placenames only are *na* 'river bed, river mouth', e.g. an "actual" placename *tewyali numa-na* 'Miriti'; and *-pani* 'rapids of' (see §5.2 on *-hipani*), e.g., the "actual" placenames *inali-pani* 'Mucura' (lit. 'rapids of the mucura rat') and *puperi-pani* 'Bacaba' ('rapids of the bacaba fruit').

5.2. Archaisms in Placenames. Archaic morphemes occur only in historical placenames, which do not have calque translations involving Tucano, and in monolingual mythological placenames. These archaic morphemes are either unproductive or non-existent in Tariana. They can be identified through comparison with other Arawak languages of the Upper Rio Negro region.

The suffix *-le* is used to mark a subclass of alienably possessed nouns in all Arawak languages (Payne 1991, 378). This morpheme is highly productive in Baniwa of Içana, Warekena, and Bare (see Aikhenvald 1995; 1996b), in which it marks possession of artifacts. In Tariana the suffix is preserved in two placenames. One is a "mythological" placename associated with the itinerary of the Tariana forefathers, *iñere-tapu-le* 'spirit's dream'; the other is *pa-whyale-pani* 'Ipanore' ('the rapids of the magic breath'), discussed in §4.5.

The suffix *-wa* 'in the quality of' is productively used as an oblique case marker and as a derivational suffix in Baniwa and Warekena (Aikhenvald 1996b). In Tariana it is used only in *kada-wa* '(to become) dark' and in the name of a mythological place where the Tariana's forefathers stopped on the way from Aiari to Iauarete, *yeda-wa* 'the river flowing downstream' (*yeda* 'downstream', in the modern language).

An archaic form of the suffix *-pani* ‘rapids of’, namely *-hipani* (preserved in this form in modern Baniwa), appears in *yawhipani* ‘rapids of the jaguar’ (see §4.5).

Mythological placenames can contain a root which is still used in the language in combination with an archaic suffix; an example is Tariana *iñe* ‘spirit’ (of poltergeist type?; also used as a pejorative name for *wamialikune*). This occurs with an archaic suffix *-le* in a number of mythological placenames, e.g., *iñe-le-kere* ‘island of the spirit’, *iñe-le-tapu-le* ‘dream of the spirit’. The same suffix *-le* is used with *mapa* ‘honey’ in the historical placename *mapa-le-kere* ‘island of honey’. This suffix is widely productive in Bare, Warekena, and Baniwa (Aikhenvald 1995, 1996b).

Historical and mythological placenames often contain archaic roots which are rarely used in the language. An example is *mia-* in *mia-ka-pani* ‘rapids of Wapui’, lit. ‘rapids of the ancient ones’ (see §4.5). In ordinary Tariana, *mia* is used as a verbal clitic meaning ‘only’ (on the derivation of verbal clitics from roots in Tariana, see Aikhenvald 1996a). It is used in the sense ‘ancient’ in a few examples in the texts told by my oldest consultant (thus *mia-kanape* ‘the ancient ones’); it is also preserved in the ethnonym *wamialikune*. The root *mia-* is used in the sense ‘dead, ancient, deceased’ in Warekena and Bare (Aikhenvald 1995; 1996b). *Mia-ka-pani* also contains an archaic thematic affix *-ka*, productive in Bare and Baniwa, but almost lost in Tariana.

Other examples of archaic words used in historical placenames are *masipiru-taku* ‘point of the butterfly’, a place that the Tariana passed before they got to the Vaupes (the equivalent in spoken Tariana is *tharo* ‘butterfly’); and *tupiyali numa-na* ‘Periquitos’, lit. ‘mouth of the river of the lizard’ (the equivalent in spoken Tariana is *hiwe* ‘lizard’).

6. Conclusions

Tariana placenames may be “actual”—the names of places where Tariana have lived until recently, or still live; or “historical”—the names of places associated with original living sites and migrations of the Tariana; or “mythological”—names of places associated with the Tariana’s mythic ancestors. Only names of the first group form part of multilingual sets; they are calque translations involving East Tucanoan languages of the area.

In the case of multilingual “actual” placenames, one can only guess their language of origin. For places with historically predominant ethnic Tariana population, the direction of calque translation was probably from Tariana into other languages. In some places the Tariana traditionally cohabited with other tribes; e.g., Bacaba used to be inhabited by Piratapuya and Tariana. It has two names—one “Tariana proper” and one with a calque translation in East Tucanoan languages; this name could have originated as Piratapuya. Iauarete, the only name which combines the properties of an “actual,” a “historical,” and a “mythological” placename, must have been calqued into East Tucanoan languages and into Língua Geral from Tariana.

“Actual” placenames reflect the contemporary multilingual situation in the Vaupes, and also the recent linguistic history: they often preserve a Língua Geral name dating back to the times when this was the lingua franca of the whole Upper Rio Negro.

The other two groups of Tariana placenames are predominantly monolingual. Some “historical” placenames have names in languages other than Tariana, but they are never calque translations from one language into another. Placenames of this group reflect Tariana history. The most striking example is *miakapani* ‘rapids of the ancients’, the Tariana name for the rapids of Wapui, said to be the place of origin of Tariana and Baniwa.

Only “historical” and “mythological” placenames have archaic linguistic traits. Only “mythological” placenames can be formed on proper names. These properties of “historical” and “mythological” placenames, unexpected in an environment of obligatory multilingualism, suggest that the Tariana came to the Vaupes from a predominantly monolingual context, and that they have adopted multilingualism fairly recently.

Notes

1. This article is based on fieldwork with six speakers of Tariana, of the variety of Santa Rosa, from the family of Brito: Cândido (the father), his sons Graciliano, Jovino, and José Luiz, his daughter Olivia, and his fraternal nephew Rafael. I have also worked with a speaker of the Periquitos variety, Eliseu Muniz. There are minor dialect differences between the varieties of Santa Rosa (also spoken in Iauarete) and that of Periquitos (also spoken in Ji-Ponta). The language is not being learned by children. Though every indigenous inhabitant of the Vaupes speaks several languages, younger people tend to speak Tucano to their children. This is a

reflection of a general tendency toward "Tucanoization" in the Brazilian Vaupes. My corpus of texts in Tariana contains about 500 pages of texts in different genres.

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2. The semi-nomadic Makú (the "untouchables" of the region) display a number of cultural divergencies from the East Tucanoans and the Tariana, such as the lack of linguistic exogamy and of agriculture. They are considered inferior by the East Tucanoans and Tariana, who call them "slaves" (Silverwood-Cope 1990; Martins 1994). They do not intermarry with either the East Tucanoans or the Tariana. Even more peripheral are the Yanomami, semi-nomadic hunters and gatherers who live in the jungle around the small tributaries of the Upper Rio Negro, and sometimes get as far west as the Vaupes region; they are not culturally integrated with other peoples of the Upper Rio Negro.

3. The naming of the Arawak language family, the genetic unity of which was first recognized by P. Gilij in 1783, has been the subject of controversy among scholars for some time. The majority of native South American scholars use the name "Arawak" (or "Aruak") to refer to a group of unquestionably related languages, but other scholars—mainly North Americans—use the term "Arawak(-an)" to refer to much more doubtful genetic unities of a higher taxonomic order, and reserve the term "Maipuran" (or "Maipurean") for the more limited grouping (Payne 1991). Here I retain the name Arawak for the family of definitely related languages, following Rodrigues (1986).

Numerous dialects of Baniwa of Içana/Kurripako, the majority of which are mutually intelligible, are spoken by three to four thousand people on the Içana River and its tributaries, on the Upper Rio Negro itself, and in the adjacent regions of Colombia and Venezuela. Warekena, a dialect of Baniwa of Guainia, is spoken by a few dozen old people on the Xie river (Aikhenvald 1966b). Bare, once the most important language of the area, is now almost extinct (Aikhenvald 1995). Other extinct Arawak languages (Amarizana, Guinau, Manao, Mandawaka, Yabaana) are shown on map 1.

4. Traditional social units important for the analysis of multilingualism in the Vaupes are the nuclear family, lineage, sib, tribe, phratry, longhouse group, linguistic group, and exogamy group (Sorensen 1972, 79). In the Brazilian Vaupes, the longhouse group has been replaced by multilingual villages, as a result of activities of Salesian missionaries since 1925. Nuclear families form a lineage, and several lineages form a patrilineal sib. A tribe is defined as a political and a

ceremonial group which consists of several sibs; it is identifiable by a distinct language.

5. The following ten subgroups are arranged in order of seniority (the etymology of some is unknown; some are named after an ancestral mythic being, and some after a totemic animal): 1, *kwenaka* (descendants of the first son; meaning unknown); 2, *ičiri-mhene* (?); 3, *kali-ne* (perhaps descendants of *kali*, the mythic hero-creator: Kali-PL); 4, *paipene* (?); 5, *kumadene* 'ducks' (people of the duck); 6, *mali-ne* 'jacú birds'; 7, *kunuli-whi* 'feather of *kunuli* bird'; 8, *phiči-kawa* 'group of agoutis'; 9, *yawyali* ('people of jaguar'?). The final subgroup, and the only dialect still spoken, is *wamialikune* 'the only/last ones'. A similar hierarchy of subtribes is given by Brüzzi (1977, 101-103). These hierarchical relations may have been different in the past. According to one of the origin stories told by the *wamialikune*, they once possessed a magical musical instrument which their elder brothers did not have, and which gave them the right to a higher status. The names of the subtribes *kali*, *kwenaka*, and *pičia* are given by Biocca (1965, 255), who gives no hierarchy.

6. As mentioned above, only the "bottom of the pile" subtribe of Tariana, *wamialikune*, preserve their language as a badge of identity, thus following the multilingual pattern traditional in the Vaupes. The nine more senior subgroups of Tariana underwent acculturation and "Tucanoization;" their main language is Tucano. This process started before the establishment of the Salesian mission in 1925; according to Koch-Grünberg (1911), the process of replacing Tariana with Tucano was already in an advanced stage by the early 1900s. This process was speeded up by Salesian missionaries, who were trying to fit the peoples of the Vaupes into a "one people, one language" norm. The Tucano-speaking Tariana still preserve some origin myths; however, everything is related in Tucano. Every traditional placename is known in a Tucano translation; when a placename has a different meaning in Tucano and in Tariana (see §§4.3, 4.5), just the Tucano name is used. The evidence of the Tucano-speaking groups is still valuable for determining differences in myths and stories between subtribes; however, it can not be completely trusted because of Tucano influence. An important work, based on *kaline* tradition (the third group in the Tariana hierarchy), is that of Moreira (1994); however, one can only rely on what is confirmed by other sources (Stradelli 1890; Biocca 1965; Amorim 1987; Brüzzi 1977; 1994). During my fieldwork, the *wamialikune* pointed out that Moreira's versions of myths, and of the itineraries of their forefathers, disagreed with their own. They refused to give further comments, saying that people like Moreira "have lost their language."

7. An additional group are placenames outside the Vaupes, borrowed from Portuguese or Spanish, such as *Bara* 'Manaus' (a name used for Manaus until this century), *São Gabriel*, and *Mitú*. These names are not considered here.

8. For the sake of simplicity, placenames are translated into Tucano only; often my consultants were hesitant about names in other East Tucanoan languages of the region.

9. *Wapui* may be a name in Língua Geral; its meaning is unknown.

10. The most problematic placename of all is that of the Vaupes River itself. A number of suggestions have been made. The name Vaupe (Uaupés) or Uape, as the name of a tribe, appears in several old lists of inhabitants of the Upper Rio Negro and Vaupes basin (Noronha in 1759, Sampaio in 1775, Ferreira in 1785; discussed by Brüzzi 1977, 20 ff.) However, no tribe with such a name is mentioned in later sources. It is still unclear whether the Uaupe were of Tucano origin, as suggested by Brüzzi, or of Arawak origin, or a mixture of both (Wright 1992, 256). The name Vaupes is not used nowadays by the indigenous population of the region, and is considered derogatory (Koch-Grünberg 1928; Casimiro Bekšta, p.c.) It bears a certain similarity to the name of a legendary Tariana chief, Buopé, who led the Tariana in their settlement on the Vaupes; however, there is insufficient evidence to support this comparison (see also Brüzzi 1977, 28-29).

The Vaupes River has names in East Tucanoan languages and in Tariana which are of different structure and origin. Tucanoan people call it *dya poxa* 'river of Makú'. This placename could be taken as evidence that the Makú were the first inhabitants of the region. (Note that there is another place, called *makwali* 'river of the Makú' in Tariana, which is a tributary of the Vaupes, close to Mitú, Colombia). The Tariana call the Vaupes *cayalı*; Arawak-speaking groups of Baniwa of Içana call it *ucayáli*. That these are related forms is corroborated by the rule for the loss of pretonic vowels in Tariana—cf. Baniwa *apa-ita* 'one' (animate), Tariana *pa-ita*; Baniwa *ačiáli*, Tariana *čiáli* 'man'. But the etymology of this name is unclear: Brüzzi (1977, 13) suggests a derivation from Baniwa or Tariana *uni* 'water' + Baniwa *kawale*, Tariana *kale* 'wind'. This is not acceptable, because a contraction *uni* > *u* is not otherwise attested; there is also no evidence for *w* > *y*. The name *cayalı* may possibly contain a suffix *-alı* used in Tariana hydronyms. The Tariana have obviously retained an older name of the Vaupes River, and have not adopted the Tucano name.

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