

Tovar, Antonio
Semántica y Etimología en el Guaraní.

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Recenseado por Aryon Dall'Igna Rodrigues

Professor Antonio Tovar, an able Spanish linguist of Salamanca who is well known for his studies of Iberian languages, has now turned his attention to Guaraní. Another study was published in 1950 (*Ensayo de Caracterización de la Lengua Guaraní*. Mendoza: *Annales del Instituto de Lingüística* 4. 114-126) and he is now preparing a scientific grammar of Guaraní. It is good for South America, where there are so few well prepared linguists, that a scholar of Tovar's ability applies his knowledge of general linguistics and Indo-European languages to the study of American Indian idioms.

In the article under review Tovar discusses some semantic phenomena and suggests some etymologies. He deals mainly with modern Guaraní (examples collected from Muniagurria's *El Guaraní*, Buenos Aires, 1947, and Guasch's *El Idioma Guaraní*, Buenos Aires, 1948), but he frequently refers to Old Guaraní (quoting Montoya's works, first published in 1639) in order to clarify the modern forms. In this review my only aim is to comment on the examples and analyses presented by Tovar, and to show that a comparison not only with Old Guaraní but also with Old Tupí is often necessary to explain modern Guaraní forms.

Analyzing modern Guaraní *piãpé* *finger nail* and *pisapé* *toe nail* (p. 43)¹, Tovar concludes *pĩ* means not only *foot* but also *hand*. In this case he did not consult Old Guaraní, which has *pwapé* *finger nail* and *pisapé* *toe nail* (Old

1. I use Tovar's notation of phonemes instead of that customarily used in IJAL.

Tupí *poapé* ~ *pwapé* and *pīsapé*) and OG *pwá* *finger* and *pīsá* *toe* (OT *poá* ~ *pwá* and *pīsá*). *poá* ~ *pwá* is evidently related to *pó* *hand*, and *pīsá* to *pī* *foot*. Modern Guaraní *piapé* *finger nail* is certainly the result of an analogical influence of *pīsapé* on OG *pwapé*. This analogical influence was made easier by the phonetic change undergone by *pwá* *finger*, which in both OG and MG became *kwá* (*pw* > *kw* is a normal shift in Guaraní: *pweráb* > *kwerá* *to get well, to heal*, *pwán* > *kwá* *to pass, to run*, *apwá* > *akwá* *upper lip*, etc.) and lost its resemblance to *pwapé* *finger nail*.

From comparison of OG and OT *pwapé* *finger nail*, *pīsapé* *toe nail* with *pwá* *finger* and *pīsá* *toe*, respectively, we may isolate a morpheme *pé* *nail*, which is not to be confused, as Tovar does, with Guaraní *pé* *angled*. The difference between these two morphemes is very clear in OT: *nail* is *pé* as seen in the forms cited above, while *angled* is *pém* (nominal aspect *péma*; cf OT *itápéma* = OG *itápé* *angled stone*). The loss of the last consonant and the nasalization of the preceding vowel caused Guaraní *pém* *angled* to fall together with *pé* *nail*.

tuyuyú *stork* is analyzed (p. 44) as a compound of *tuyú* *clay* and *yú* *coming*. Here is another case of convergence determined by phonetic change, which is cleared up by Old Tupí. OT *clay* is *tuyúk* and *coming* is *yúr* ~ *úr* (final consonants are normally lost in MG). A compound of these stems in OT would be **tuyúkúra*, but no such compound of a subject and intransitive verb occurs in this language. On the other hand, *stork* in OT is *tuyuyú* as in Guaraní, and it is certainly unrelated to either *tuyúk* or *yúr* ~ *úr*.

Tovar considers *aykó* *I am* (p. 45) as the verbalization of the demonstrative *kó* *this*, to be translated as (*I-it-[am]*) *this*, and similarly considers *aimé* *I am* to be based on an alternant of the morpheme *pe* *in*. In regard to the second verb, cp. OT *ain* *I am sitting* + *-bé*, intensive = *áimbé* ~ *áimé* *I am sitting, I am, I exist*, and *aykó* *I am* + *-bé*, intensive = *aykóbé* *I am, I live*; *aimé* has no relation with the locative morpheme *-pe* ~ *-me* (called a 'preposition' by Tovar). The first verb, *aykó* *I am*, is simply the stem *ikó* ~ *ekó* *to be* preceded by the first person morpheme *a-*.

mbohapi *three* is presented (p.46) as a causative of (a)*hapí* *to burn*. This lacks semantic evidence. Morphology also shows that it is not correct. Indeed the causative morpheme *mbo-* ~ *mo-* is not prefixed to a transitive verb such as (a)*hapí* (stem *apí*) but only to intransitive verbs. Comparison with OT also shows that *mbohapi* has nothing to do with (a)*hapí*. *Three* in OT in *mosapír*, corresponding to OG *mbohapi*; *mo-* (OG *mo-* ~ *mbo-*) is a prefix occurring in all OT numerals: *moyepé* (OG *moñepé*) *one*, (*mokóy*) (OG *mokóy* *two*, *mosapír* (OG *mbohapi*) *three*, *moñerundík* *four*. It is clear, therefore, that the stem of *mosapír* *three* is *sapír* (which is not found isolated) while *to burn* in OT is expressed by the stem *apí* (1st sing. *asapír* = OG, MG *ahapí*). Baptista

Caetano² has explained OG mbohapyr *three* as a causative of apyr *point*; this etymology is also unacceptable, for it does not justify the phoneme -h- (OT -s-); the causative of apyr is mboapyr *to begin* (Montoya, Tesoro 51v).

gwasú *deer* is identified (Tovar, p. 48) with gwasú *large*, but OT sigwasú *deer* seems to indicate that the Guaraní word for *deer* may be the result of an apheresis. In Old Tupí, as in Guaraní, gwasú *large* is not properly an adjective as Tovar supposes, but an alternant of the augmentative suffix occurring after stems ending in vowels.

Tovar considers (p.49) (t)ayĩ (*his*) son and (t)ayĩ (*mistakenly written* (t)ayĩ) (*his*) daughter as metaphors derived from tayĩ (*mistakenly written* tayĩ) *seed, testicle*. There is here a metaphor, but it is not the one meant by Tovar. The Old Tupí forms tayĩ (*stem ayĩ*) *his son*, tayĩ (*stem ayĩ*) *his daughter*, and tayĩ (*stem ayĩ*) *seed, grain, testicle* clearly show that the stem of the third word cannot be confused with the stems of the other two. The metaphor I have noted is evidenced by OT tayĩ, MG tayĩ *his semen = his son*. The meaning *testicle* added to the stem ayĩ (nominal aspect tayĩ) *seed, grain* is due to the compound apyá-ayĩ (nominal aspect tapyá-ayĩ) *testicle grains*.

The examples examined above show that Old Tupí forms frequently elucidate those of Guaraní, particularly because Old Tupí is in many instances phonemically more archaic than Guaraní. Notwithstanding the criticisms made here, Tovar's article is a very interesting contribution to the study of Guaraní etymology and semantics, and contains many good interpretations of Guaraní forms and meanings.

2. Baptista Caetano de Almeida Nogueira. Vocabulario das Palavras Guaranís Usadas pelo Traductor da "Conquista Espiritual" do Padre A. Ruiz de Montoya. Rio de Janeiro: *Annaes da Bibliotheca Nacional do Rio de Janeiro* 7.248, 1880.