

Anatomical Terms in Venezuelan Ameridians E'ñepa Language

Términos Anatómicos en la Lengua Amerindia Venezolana E'ñepa

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ABSTRACT

Since less than 5000 persons speak the E'ñepa language, it is rare known. Consequently, even a basic knowledge of 113 anatomical terms assembled in this research still with a rough pronunciation of the terms can be useful for communicating with the E'ñepa. The sole purpose of this search was to gather anatomical terms for use in communicating with the E'ñepa.

Keywords: anatomical terms, E'ñepa language, Venezuelan Amerindians.

RESUMEN

Dado que menos de 5.000 personas hablan la lengua E'ñepa, ésta es poco conocida. Por lo tanto, incluso un conocimiento básico de 113 términos anatómicos reunidos en esta investigación aún con una pronunciación aproximada de los términos puede ser útil para comunicarse con los E'ñepa. El único propósito de esta investigación fue reunir términos anatómicos para utilizarlos en la comunicación con los E'ñepa.

Palabras clave: términos anatómicos; lenguaje E'ñepa; amerindios venezolanos.

Introduction

Venezuelan Amerindians E'ñepa are approximately 4500 to 5000 persons: according to the latest reliable count, carried out in 2011 (Censo Venezuela 2011), there were 4,668 E'ñepa and they occupy the northwestern tip of the Guianese shield in Venezuela, in an area called the Cedeño district of Bolivar State. There are also E'ñepa populations in clusters further south, near the border of the state of Amazonas (Henley 1982).

The E'ñepa people are one of the 32 Amerindian tribes who live in Venezuela. They can be roughly located between the cartographical co-ordinates: 5 to 8 degrees North and 65 to 67 grades West. The territory of some 20.000 Km² looks roughly like a triangle between the middle and upper reaches of certain right-bank tributaries (Suapure, Manapire, Chavirapa, Cuchivero, Guaniamo) of the middle Orinoco river (Figure 1).

Figure 1.
E'ñepa's territory maps.



The natural environment of E'ñepa territory consists of three distinct natural resource zones, namely, savanna, river courses and jungle. The E'ñepa settle on the edge of the savanna, ideally in a pocket of jungle and a river that they exploit

to meet their subsistence needs rather than in the savanna proper. They generally settle at the foot of a rocky formation where the savanna and jungle meet, close to a supply of water (Dummont 1976, Mattei-Muller 1988).

The E'ñepa territory, varies from undulating savannas less than 100 meters above sea level to the jungle-covered mountains, in most parts of over 1,000 meters. It is warm throughout the year, but there is a marked difference in precipitation between the rainy season (from May to November) and the dry season (from December to April). The tribe lives in a large communal dwelling known as a *churuatta* that is often flanked by one or several workshop-huts. In such settlements, the number of inhabitants can vary from less than twenty to about sixty individuals. Usually, settlements are separated from one another by no less than 1,5 km. (Mattei-Muller 1988). Currently most of settlement hardly have any dirt roads and these are no more than half a day's walk from a *criollo* dwelling. The E'ñepa have a mixed subsistence economy based on slash-and-burn, cultivation, along with fishing, hunting, craftsmanship for commerce and gathering. As far as the E'ñepa are concerned, their history began when “the first people emerged from a mountain at the headwaters of the Cuchivero river” (Corradini 2002) but, although the first Spanish settlers arrived in the middle Orinoco region in the seventeenth century, in the ethnographic literature, the first reference to a group named the Panare (E'ñepa) was made by Agustín Codazzi in his *Geografía* published in 1841. Although it is apparent that the E'ñepa, or Panare, existed, albeit uncharacterized, as an Amerindian group prior to 1840's, the no extended research on them was done until the work of Jean-Paul Dumont in the period of 1965 to 1970 (Salzmann 1970). The aim of this undertaking was to gather anatomical E'ñepa terms with a view to facilitating improved communication and relationships with the E'ñepa.

Material and methods

The E'ñepa language belongs to the Carib linguistic group but also exhibit certain lexical peculiarities that suggest possible influence at some stage by an unidentified non-Carib language (Henley 1988). Nearly all E'ñepa women are monolingual in their own language although most E'ñepa men are bilingual in Spanish but most of them not in written form. The E'ñepa language is unusual in having the object–verb–agent as one of its main word orders, the other being the more common verb–agent–object. It also displays the typologically “uncommon” property of an ergative–absolute alignment in the present tense and a nominative–accusative alignment in the past tense (Henley 1988, Mattei-Muller 1994, Tosantos 2006). In their own language, “E'ñepa” means in their own language “person”: non-E'ñepa people are called *tato* (Mattei-Muller 1994).

“E'ñepa” is the self-designation, but “Panare” is the most common name in the literature (see references) and probably derives from the word for “friend” in the languages of neighboring Amerindian groups in Venezuela (Corradini 2002).

The E'ñepa are notably averse to loud noise in general and they speak little and very softly. Despite more than two centuries of contact with the outside world, the E'ñepa have retained their language and distinctive social and cultural traditions to a remarkable degree. Nevertheless, there is an obvious preference to maintain the E'ñepa heritage in an atmosphere of increasing trade between the tribe and neighboring *criollos*. A written form of the E'ñepa language emerged finally only in the seventies of twentieth century.

The author decided to conduct this research and for the preparation of this article consulted PubMed, Scopus, Scielo, Cochrane and Medline

database to thorough research and review over scientific literature using the keywords: E'ñepa, anatomical terms, E'ñepa language and then author decided to include 10 articles or books which match with the main objective of this research which is to do a review about anatomical terms in Venezuelan Amerindians E'ñepa language. The period of research articles runs from February 09, 2018 to November 04, 2020.

The data for this research were obtained mainly from Mattei-Muller's dictionary Tosantos vocabulary and author's paper, a brief glossary Spanish-E'ñepa (Romero-Reverón 1999). as well in another author's research mainly focused on the foot morphology of some Venezuelan Amerindian groups (Romero-Reverón, Torres 1996).

Results

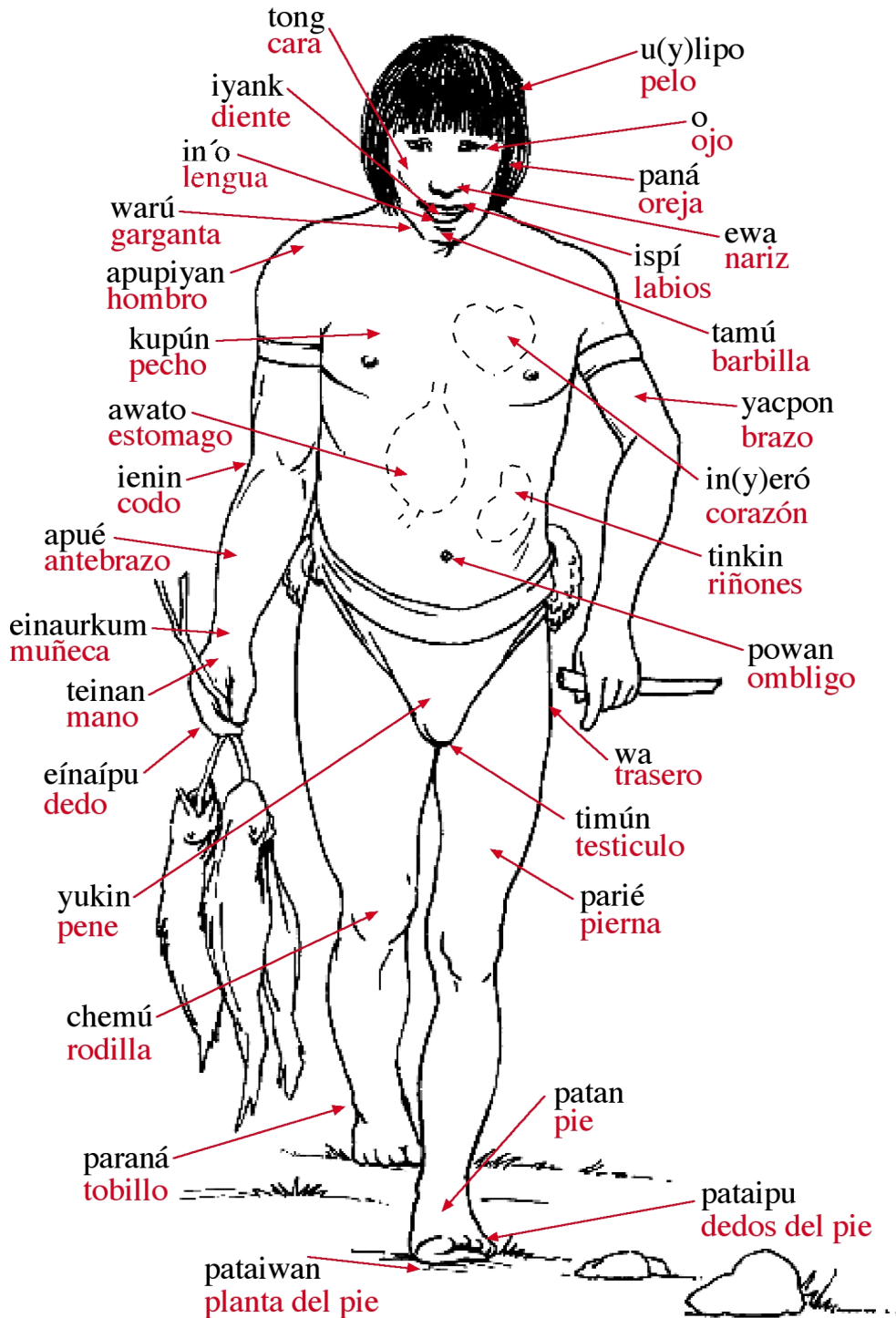
The E'ñepa are categorized as being a semi-nomadic people and their normal dress barely covers half of their bodies (figure 2). The height of the E'ñepa men runs from 1,60 mt. to 1,75 mt. approximately (figure 3), the women are a little shorter. The musculature of both sexes is very well developed though, in some case a few E'ñepa women become obese but fat E'ñepa males are rare. The skin color of the E'ñepa is a light orange though most of the body surface is quite darkened by sun and use of *Annatto* (the seeds of the *achiote tree Bixa orellana*) as sunscreen, and insect repellent.

Figure 2.
Photograph of a E'ñepa Family



Figure 3.

Schematic image of an E'ñepa man with the body parts identified in Spanish and E'ñepa language



The 113 terms assembled in this research are shown below in alphabetic order column by column in Spanish - E'ñepa – English (Table 1). In a simplified manner the E'ñepa's written form is pronounced very similarly to the one pronounced in Spanish but not necessarily exact.

Table 1.
E'ñepa's anatomical terms.

Spanish	E'ñepa	English
1. Abdomen	pache'	Abdomen
2. Absceso	awo	Abscess
3. Aliento	tachityo	Breath
4. Ampolla	oroota	Blister
5. Ano	warakapin	anus.
6. Articulación	ooranto	joint
7. Axila	Ajita	Armpit
8. Bazo	munu	Spleen
9. Bíceps	apëpiyan	Biceps
10. Bilis	tinkeñchukun	Bile
11. Boca	nta	mouth
12. Brazo	apë	arm.
13. Cabeza	u'	Head
14. Cadera	a'mata	Hip
15. Ceja	ochiipo'	Eyebrow
16. Cerebro	u' yaar	Brain
17. Cicatriz	choori yutsëesa'	Scar
18. Clavícula	kupu yëjpë	Clavicle
19. Cartilago tiroides	apo' kukurun	thyroid cartilage
20. Codo	pirinchinto	Elbow
21. Colon	muruk'aeto	Colon
22. Columna	e'ya'chëjpëto	spine
23. Corazón	awaato	heart
24. Costilla	oroëtyo	rib
25. Cóccix	wa'yëjpë	Coccyx
26. Cráneo	u' pujpë	skull
27. Cuello	pimĩ	neck
28. Cuerpo	aretyo	body
29. Dedo (de la mano)	eña ipun	Finger
30. Dedo (del pie)	pata ipun	Toe
31. Dentadura	yëto	Teeth
32. Diente	ëto	Tooth
33. Diente incisivo	yëpëtun	Incisor tooth
34. Encéfalo	u'këkachejpë	Encephalus

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Spanish	E'ñepa	English
35. Encía	ëtayapo	Gum
36. Espalda	pae	Back
37. Esófago	che	Esophagus
38. Escapula	matayëjpë	Scapula
39. Esperma	wëjchan	Sperm
40. Esqueleto	ëjpëto	Skeleton
41. Esternón	kupu yëjpë	Esternum
42. Estómago	awaato	Stomach
43. Extremidad	pëtun	Limb
44. Falange	eña	Phalanx
45. Faringe	waaruniche	Pharynx
46. Fémur	pare yëjpë	Femur
47. Feto	pijkwë'san	Fetus
48. Giba	ponmu'ran	Hump
49. Glándula	ya' pon	Gland
50. Gluteo	wa'yo	Gluteus
51. hígado	inkeñtyo	Liver
52. Hombro	mata	Shoulder
53. Hueso	ëjpëto	Bone
54. Ingle	warëma	Groin
55. Intestino	yupache' rewaeto	Intestine
56. Labio	ijpi	Lip
57. Lagrima	oyaskun	Tear
58. Lengua	Iño	Tongue
59. Linfa	iyasukun	Lymph
60. Mandíbula	peetya yëjpë	jaw
61. Mano	Eña	hand
62. Mejilla	peetya	Cheek
63. Membrana	pijpë	Membrane
64. Meñique(dedo minimo)	eñamaare	minimum finger
65. Miembro superior	apë	upper limb
66. Miembro inferior	pe'	lower limb
67. Muela	yë'ya	Tooth molar
68. Muñeca	Eña orëkun	Wrist
69. Muslo	pe'tyo	Thigh
70. Nervio	awane'	Nerve
71. Nuca (region cervical posterior)	pimĩ	Hindhead (posterior cervical region)
72. Nudillo	ooraanto	Knuckle
73. Oído	pana	Ear
74. Ojos	o	eyes

Spanish	E'ñepa	English
75. Ombligo	poowa	umbilicus
76. Oreja	pana	Ear
77. Palma de la mano	eña	Palm of the hand
78. Pantorrilla	Pare	Calf
79. Párpado	opijpë	Eyelid
80. Patella o rótula	che'mu yëjpë	patella or kneecap
81. Pelo	iipojto	Hair
82. Pene	yukën	penis
83. Pestaña	ochiipo'	eyelash
84. Pezón	ma'-matin	nipple
85. Pie	pata	foot
86. Piel	pijpë	skin
87. Pierna	ëjpëto	leg
88. Placenta	pijpompë	placenta
89. Pulmón	awaason	lung
90. Región	pata	Región
91. Riñón	e'yajtapë mën	Kidney
92. Rodilla	che'mu	knee
93. Saliva	tarichununto	Salive
94. Sangre	mechu''	Blood
95. Seno	Ma'	Breast
96. Talón	pata yimun	Heel
97. Tendón	mijto	tendon
98. Testículos	yimun	Testicles
99. Tobillo	para'mu	Ankle
100. Tórax	kupu yajtan	Chest
101. Tráquea	kukurunto	Trachea
102. Uña	tyo	Nail
103. Uretra	wëjchajtan	Urethra
104. Útero	pi'che	Uterus
105. Vagina	ari	Vagina
106. Vejiga	sujche	Bladder
107. Vello del pubis en el hombre	u' iipo'	Man's pubic hair
108. Vello del pubis en la mujer	winkï sïrsiipo'	Women's pubic hair
109. Vello (pelo)	iipojto	Hair
110. Vena	awañejto	vein
111. Vértebra	ëjpëto	vertebra
112. Vesícula	tinkeñchukunye	gallblader
113. Vulva	ari	vulva

Discussion

The Amerindians E'ñepa generally settle at the foot of a rocky formation where the savanna and jungle meet, close to a supply of water in a territory of some 20.000 Km² in the middle and upper reaches of certain south-bank tributaries of the Orinoco river in the northwestern tip of the Guianese shield in Venezuela.

The E'ñepa have maintained their characteristic social, cultural traditions and language to a notable degree despite increasing contact with the outside world. The E'ñepa language falls within the Caribbean language family and there was no written form of it until the seventies of the twentieth century. The present search for anatomical terms in the E'ñepa language could well be of use for enhancing communication with them. Since less than 5000 persons speak the E'ñepa language, it is rare known. Consequently, even a basic knowledge of 113 anatomical terms assembled in this research still with a rough pronunciation of the terms can be useful for communicating with the E'ñepa.

Conclusion

While there is an understandable preference to maintain the E'ñepa heritage in an environment of increasing contact with neighboring criollos, In line with this approach, the data obtained could be useful in research into the health and social aspects of life among E'ñepa groups.

This research does not pretend to cover E'ñepa linguistics or anthropological search, any development on these aspects remains beyond the scope of this research so, for this particular matter, the author suggests the Mattei-Muller, Hen-

ley, Corradini and Tosantos references below. The sole purpose of this search was to assemble anatomical terms for use in communicating with the E'ñepa.

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