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Filing: An Aid in the Analysis of Kaiwá Clause Structure
by Loraine Bridgeman

Various practical procedures for implementing language analysis have been used. Few analysts have shared their methods with a larger constituency than their immediate acquaintances, however. The purpose of this paper is to show the aid and advantage of a filing system in the analysis of Kaiwá (Guarani) clause structure.

A somewhat modified tagememic approach was used in the analysis of Kaiwá grammatical structure. Three different operational methods were employed as aids to the analysis.

The first method was implemented by the use of a grammatically oriented lexical file (3x5 slips) following Nida (Morphology, Ann Arbor, 1948.) Syntactic constructions were filed according to the verbal constituent as suggested by Longacre (Syntax Procedures, Summer Institute of Linguistics, University of Oklahoma, 1958, mimeographed.) The size of slips used, 3x5, was impractical and the method of orientation in the file proved to be, for the time being, unsatisfactory.

The second method used was that of charts roughly following Longacre. Charts were set up according to the most expanded form of a given etic clause type, and manifestations of the type were listed. Analysis of the charts revealed several optional clause level tagmemes. From the charts, lists of formulae were assembled. Additional data was checked for new formulaic possibilities. Since several of the formulae were similar, modifications were made and they were united into one linearly expanded formula.

As new data was analyzed, it became increasingly apparent that the formulae derived from the charts were not reflecting the prominent patterns of actualization. For example, formulae implied a possibility of six clause level tagmemes in an intransitive clause. Recorded texts showed the statistically more frequent number to be three. When a text of thirty-six clauses revealed thirty-three different clause patterns, the task of charting and sorting was obviously unwieldy.

The third and most satisfactory method made use of 5x8 file slips as suggested by Crawford (lectures, Summer Institute of Linguistics, North Dakota, 1960.) The form used for each slip is described on p. 48 of this volume. Each clause pattern was filed on a separate slip, hence there were no slips with optional clause level tagmemes. Each slip had only one clause filed on it, so that there was a maximum of flexibility.

Slips were grouped first by the number of clause level tagmemes represented in the clause pattern. Later, each group was re-arranged to reflect similarities in types of clause level tagmemes in occurrence. (Here the verbal constituent was important in determining the Predicate tagmeme.) Further re-arrangements of the smaller groups were based on the order of the occurrence of the clause level tagmemes.

Using this method, a week-end study of the intransitive clause types in several recorded texts revealed that non-contrastive ordering of clause level tagmemes could be described in terms of a) one obligatory Predicate tagmeme and eight optional clause level tagmemes, b) the occurrence of certain optional clause level tagmemes, and c) the number of clause level tagmemes in co-occurrence. Though the general etic impression had been that there was much variability in order, the study showed that in clauses with more than one optional clause level tagmeme, usually less than fifty per cent of the potentially permitted sequences actually occur in the data.

There were five advantages to the use of the filing system.

- 1) A maximum flexibility for re-arranging data was possible.
- 2) Analytical time was greatly reduced.
- 3) The language structure determined the arrangement of the file and was, therefore, reflected in it.
- 4) Only existent clause patterns were implied.
- 5) Restrictions and limitations in the possible orders of clause level tagmemes were apparent.