



Ingapi Rimangapa Samuichi

Speaking the Quechua of Colombia

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Rather than introduce new grammar principles, this chapter will focus on material that you have already learned through a dialog set in a cultural context that you have already learned about. We will begin with enough vocabulary to get through the dialogs. Try to work out the details in each dialog and be prepared to answer the questions at the end of each section.

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As in Kanchis Wachu, this chapter will review material that you have already learned through dialogues set in a cultural context you have already learned about. We will begin with some vocabulary to get you through the dialogs. Try to work out the details in each dialog and be prepared to answer the questions at the end of each section, and to make up some of your own.

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This text is our attempt at creating a language-learning textbook for the Inga dialect of Quechua. Dictionaries and pedagogical grammars for this dialect exist, but here provide practical language instruction within its cultural milieu. While no method can replace an actual visit to the Sibundoy Valley, we hope that the book provides an orientation to Inga language and culture.

Most lessons contain the following features:

- **Bullet Points:** Each lesson has a listing of the grammatical and cultural points featured in that lesson.
- **Rimaj (Words):** We provide a vocabulary list together with definitions for each lesson. We sometimes divide the list by parts of speech or function within the language.
- **Rimasunchi (Let's Talk):** You will find a dialog that makes use of the vocabulary words. Try to read it aloud and understand it based on what you know. We provide a translation for each dialog for you to be able to understand the finer points.
- **Grammar points with examples:** Each lesson contains grammar points to help you understand the structure of the language. While we want to explain these points to you, we don't want you to have to learn formal linguistic terms for the points being discussed. Instead, we want you to have a working knowledge of the language.
- **Maukaiachii! (Let's use it!):** We follow many of the grammar points with exercises for you to apply what you have just learned. Be sure to attempt them at home as well as in class. We have used mostly construction exercises, i.e., exercises in which you must build a sentence in Inga based on its English version. Do not rush to answer, but reason these exercises out based on what you have just learned. Understanding the logic of the answer is key to your understanding and speaking Quechua.
- **Cultural Reading:** In conjunction with the vocabulary and dialog, we provide paragraphs that address the cultural theme of the lesson. Initially these readings are in English. Later, these readings employ code-switching, replacing some English words with Quechua words that you know. As you progress, the readings themselves will appear in Quechua. We hope these readings give you a better understanding of what life is like in the Andes.

Additional features that the book contains:

- **Review Lessons:** After every five or six lessons, the text provides review lessons. You will see new exercises and readings designed to reinforce what you have already learned.
- **Glossary:** All of the vocabulary used in the lessons is gathered in a glossary at the back of the book. Each entry will include the definition and the lesson in which it was introduced. Occasionally more information, such as part of speech or origin from the Spanish, is also included.
- **Summary of Meaning and Order of Endings:** Since Quechua depends upon endings (suffixes) to accomplish much of its grammatical work, the number of endings and the order in which they are added can be confusing. We have included a summary of these endings together with a chart showing their customary order.
- **Appendix of Spelling and Variations in Other Dialects of Quechua:**
- Throughout the book, we concentrate on the Inga dialect. Inga provides a good basis for learning other versions of Quechua. In this appendix, we offer alternate spellings that you may see in other major Quechua dialects and the distinguishing marks of these dialects.

While we have designed this text to stand on its own in terms of explanations, the pronunciation, verbal interaction, and native intuition of an indigenous speaker is something we cannot provide. You will need to depend on your teacher for such things, if you sincerely wish to learn the language. In this regard, we hope to provide some recordings soon for you to practice with at home. Like many educational materials, this text is a work-in-progress, and we welcome suggestions from those who use it.

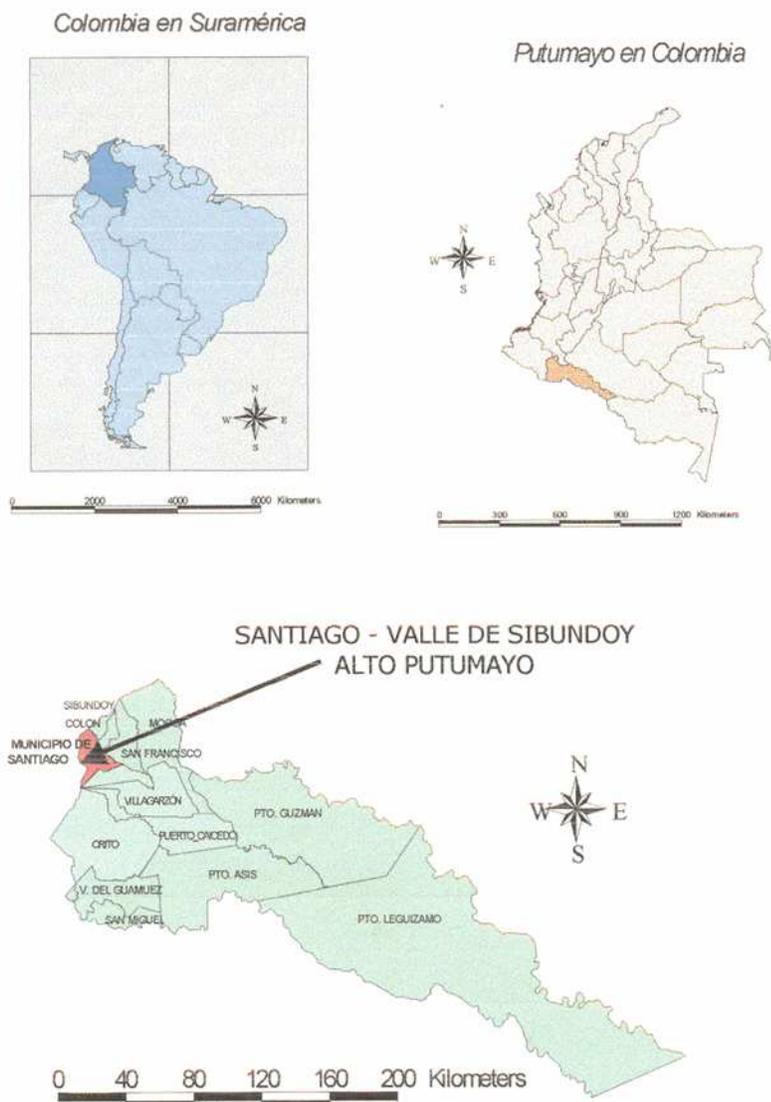


Inga in the Quechua Family of Dialects

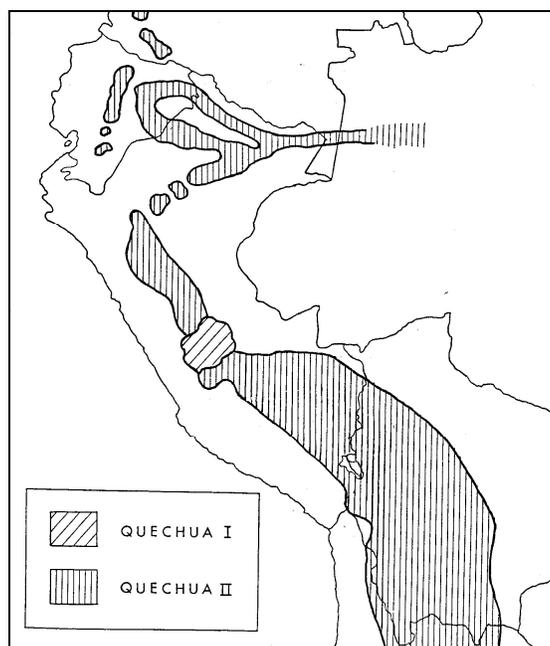
One of the main language families of South America is variously known as Quechua, Quichua, Inga, or *Runa Simi* – the speech of humans. There are 10-15 million speakers of Quechua today, residing in all six of the Andean republics. Inga is the name given to the Quechua spoken in the southwestern corner of Colombia and neighboring regions of Ecuador, in both highland and adjacent lowland, down-river areas. The Sibundoy Valley in the state of Putumayo is the primary highland Quechua zone in Colombia, and home to two closely related Inga sub-dialects, those of Santiago and San Andrés. It is the Inga of Santiago that will be the focus of this language-instruction program.

As you might suspect, the term “Inga” is derived from “Inca,” suggesting the historical connections between Colombia’s Inga and the language spoken at the heart of the Inca Empire in Cuzco, Peru, and carried by the Incas north and south along the Andean cordillera, west to the Pacific Coast, and east into the foothills of the Andes and the tropical forests and jungles beyond. Theories abound concerning the origins of Quechua-speaking communities in Colombia, and there are probably multiple explanations for their presence in these lands. The Santiagueños (people of Santiago)

believe they are descendents of settlers moved from the core of the Inca Empire to populate this buffer zone at the northern fringe of Incan influence. The people of San Andrés appear to be more recent arrivals, most likely ascending into the Sibundoy Valley from the lowlands to the east during early Spanish colonial times. Some of today’s Inga speakers may descend from local populations that previously spoke dialects of Quillasinga, now represented by Kamsá in the Sibundoy Valley, who switched to Inga at some point in time. We know that Spanish missionaries used Quechua as a lingua franca in the first phase of Spanish colonization in the Andes and adjacent lowlands. Additionally, as we see even in current times, Quechua may spread in the context of expanding markets and trade relations among indigenous populations.



The Quechua language family can be thought of as a chain of dialects extending from the northern reaches of Argentina and Chile, through the Andean republics of Bolivia, Peru, and Ecuador, where it is recognized as a second official language (along with Spanish), into southern Colombia where Inga is found today. There are two major groups of Quechua dialects, one confined to central Peru (known by scholars as Quechua I or Quechua B), the other disseminated widely over the broad expanse of the Quechua-speaking world (known as Quechua II or Quechua A).



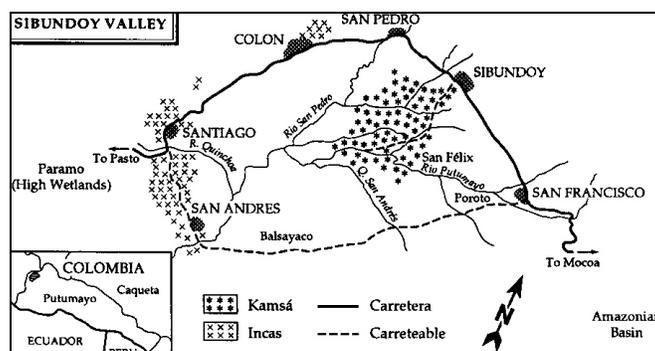
Inga is one of the many dialects of this latter group. Most scholars believe that Quechua originated somewhere in the Peruvian Andes, perhaps in areas where Aymara was also spoken, and in the southern portion of the Quechua A range, a good many features are shared between these two language families. But attempts to establish a genetic relationship between Quechua and Aymara have been unconvincing. It seems, instead, that Quechua is a language isolate, not closely related to any other language stock or family.

Inga belongs to the northern branch of Quechua that includes languages spoken in northern Peru, historically along the coast of Ecuador, and contemporaneously throughout the Ecuadorian highlands and the adjacent eastern lowlands. Across the many dialects of Quechua A, we can observe a basic consistency in the lexicon, many common grammatical forms and processes, and some constancy in phonologies,

especially in vowel systems. These persistent elements create a perception, within the world of Quechua A, that we are dealing with one language in many different reflexes, and this perception even extends backwards into time as we consult ethnohistorical documents preserved from the early period of Spanish contact. This means that by learning to speak and write the Inga dialect of Santiago, you are simultaneously gaining access to the Quichua of Ecuador and the Quechua of northern Peru, Cuzco, Cochabamba in Bolivia, and even the Quechua spoken in northern Argentina.

Naturally, we can identify specific features that distinguish regional dialects from one another, features that in some cases undermine the prospects of mutual intelligibility. The Quechua of Cochabamba, for example, due to its proximity to Aymara dialects, has assimilated some phonological features – word-initial glottal stops and aspirants – that are absent from the Ecuadorian and Colombian dialects. In much of Ecuador, /s/ becomes /sh/; in Otavalo, additionally, a good many conjugations have fallen away, making the language less synthetic than many other Quechua dialects. Across the range of Quechua A, a process of morpheme migration has resulted in shifting roles and shapes for key verbal suffixes carrying so much of the semantic burden in an agglutinating language. Within Quechua A, Inga is a fairly conservative dialect, preserving some morphological elements, for example, subject-object markers in verbs, that have fallen out of nearby Quechua dialects such as the Quechua in Imbabura communities of northern Ecuador.

There are several Inga sub-dialects distributed down-river from the Sibundoy Valley along the Putumayo and other tributaries to the great Amazon River that originates to the east of the Andes cordillera and works its way across the entire South American continent to empty into the Atlantic in eastern Brazil. In these jungle settings, Inga speakers reside in towns and villages connected by waterways, and they are interspersed with communities speaking a number of different South American languages, including Kamsá, Huitoto, Siona, Kofán, and others. This upper Amazon region is remarkably diverse in terms of the languages spoken by its inhabitants, who otherwise tend to share a similar mode of subsistence in this harsh jungle environment.



Resources for further reading:

Victor Daniel Bonilla, *Servants of God or Masters of Men?: The Story of a Capuchin Mission in Amazonia*. Penguin Books, 1972.

Peter Cole, *Imbabura Quechua*. London: Croom Helm Descriptive Grammars, 1985.

Stephan Levinsohn, Antonio Mafla Bilbao, and Domingo Tandioy Chasoy, *Diccionario Inga-Espanol, Español-Inga*. Editorial Townsend, 1978.

John McDowell, *Sayings of the Ancestors: The Spiritual Life of the Sibundoy Indians*. University Press of Kentucky, 1989.

Gary Parker, "Comparative Quechua phonology and grammar," *Working Papers in Linguistics*, Department of Linguistics, University of Hawaii, (1969).

Francisco Tandioy, *Muscuycuna I tapiacuna: suenos y agueros en Inga y castellano*. Musu Runacuna, 1987.

Classification, Definition and Order of Suffixes

Noun Endings:

- kuna: pluralizer
- ma: preposition, “to, towards, for”
- manda: preposition, “from, of, near to”
- pa: indicates possession or purpose (“for”)
- pi: preposition, “in”
- sina: comparative, “like”
- ta: direct/indirect object marker, also used with adverbs
- wa: preposition, “with,” nominal conjunction

Verb Endings:

- chi: signifies permission or help to another to complete an action
- chu: indirect imperative, an action that should be done
- i: imperative, also infinitive marker, a command
- jpi: used to create subordinate clause based on the attached verb. Note that the main and subordinate clause have different subjects.
- ku/naku (pl): progressive tense marker, the action is presently going on
- kuna: pluralizer, must agree with subject
- mu: indicates the action occurs in the direction of the speaker, “here”
- ni/ngi: present tense marker, I/you singular
- pua: benefactive, an action done for someone on my behalf
- ri: reflexive, the action is being done by, to, for, or upon the actor himself
- rka/rsha: past tense marker, the action has already occurred
- ska: indicates a past tense action have been completed by someone, used to create clauses like “who” or “which,” narrative time

-spa: used to create subordinate clauses based on the attached verb, “while...” Note that the subject in both the main and subordinate clause are the same. (10)

-wa: pronominal, “to/from me”

Either:

-chu: negation, “no, not”

-ka: cojoiner, secondary emphatic marker, indicates change of subject, “and”

-mi: primary emphatic marker of the focal point of sentence, implies direct knowledge

-pasi: “also, as well”

-si: primary emphatic marker, reportative, implies indirect knowledge, “they say”

Derivational Endings:

-diru/-dur: agent marker, converts verb into person who does or place where it is done, “-er/-or”

-j: agent marker, converts verb into person who does it, “-er/-or”