



Rhode Island College

M.Ed. In TESL Program Language Group Specific Informational Reports

Produced by Graduate Students in the M.Ed. In TESL Program
In the Feinstein School of Education and Human Development

Language Group: Quechua
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Language Report: Quechua

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Snapshot of Quechua: Where is it spoken?

- *Quechua* is the language & *Quichua* are the people
 - The Quichua are one of the largest indigenous populations in the world.
- 8+ million Quechua speakers in South America
- *Quechua* is a *family* of 40+ related languages based around the Andes Mountains

(UNHCR, 2012)

(Rosenfelder)

(SIL International, 2010)



Snapshot of Quechua: Who Speaks It?



Quechua family living in the mountains (Quilotoa, Ecuador).

- Quechua is spoken by the indigenous populations of Ecuador, Peru & Bolivia
- The Quichua are a colorful, rugged, mountain people.
- Quechua is a *family* of 40+ related languages
 - A family of languages (not *dialects* nor *varieties*)
 - Not all Quechua languages are similar - some differ immensely

(Heggarty, 2006)

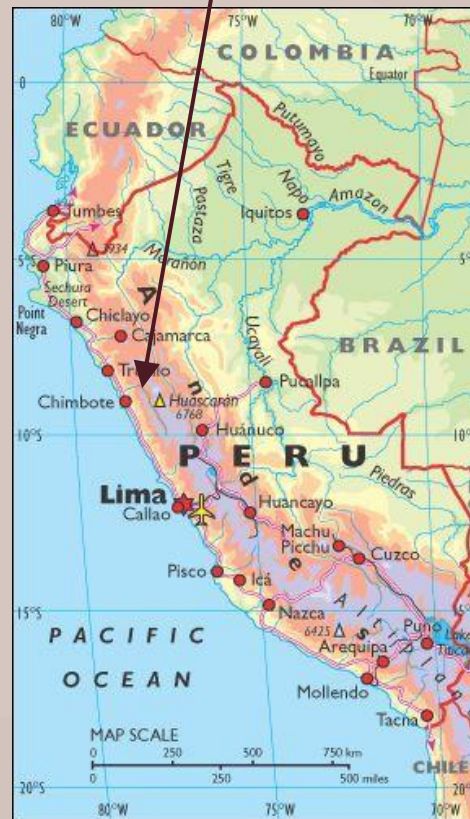
Dancing in typical, brightly colored clothing during the "Mama Negra" Quichua celebration & parade (Latacunga, Ecuador). Photos taken by author.



Snapshot of Quechua: History

- Quechua's origins began +/- 2000 years ago in Ancash, Peru (1000 years before The Incas)

(Heggarty, 2006)



Over the centuries, Quechua changed & evolved:

Geographic expansion -

- The Andes Mountains
- north to Ecuador & south east to Bolivia

Today, Quechua in Ecuador and Bolivia differ so greatly that indigenous from the 2 countries would struggle to communicate.

(Heggarty, 2006)

Snapshot of Quechua: History



- Eventually, Quechua migrated south through Bolivia to northern Argentina.
 - In 1998, a northern Argentine city required that street signs be written in Quechua & Spanish.
(UNHCE, 2012)
- Today, 1/4 of the Peruvian population speaks Quechua.
 - 1/3 of Quechua speakers speak no Spanish.
(Heggarty, 2006)
- It is important to remember that of all the different varieties of Quechua spoken, none are better nor worse than another. They are all equal descendants of Original Quechua, and they are all just *different*.
(Heggarty, 2006)

Snapshot of Quechua: The Alphabet

Historically - The Inca used *quipu* to send messages.



theabysmal.wordpress.com

- The number, shape of the knots & the string color reminded messengers of the message.

(www.Machupiccu-inca.com)

Today - The Quechua Alphabet looks like this:

p	t	ch	k	q	p'	t'	ch'	k'	q'	ph	th	chh	kh	qh
[p]	[t]	[tʃ]	[k]	[q]	[pʰ]	[tʰ]	[tʃʰ]	[kʰ]	[qʰ]	[pʰh]	[tʰh]	[tʃʰh]	[kʰh]	[qʰh]
s	sh	h	m	n	j	l	ll	r	w	y	ñ	a	i	u
[s]	[ʃ]	[h]	[m]	[n]	[x]	[l]	[ʎ]	[r]	[w]	[j]	[ɲ]	[æ]	[ɪ]	[u]

- Quechua was first printed in 1560. (Ager, 2008-2012)

Language Characteristics of Quechua: Grammar

Quechua words can almost always be easily divided into *morphemes* or *suffixes*

- smaller, meaningful, word parts
- more details on Quechua suffixes:
www.clacs.illinois.edu

For Example

wasikunata

wasikunata

root word plural accusativity (Rosenfelder)

Watch a Quechua video <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aLoxUvZAixg>



Language Characteristics of Quechua: Possible ELL Errors

Spelling

Quechua

- Quechua is notorious for spelling the same word numerous ways

English

- Quichua ELLs may struggle with the "official" spelling of English words.

(Heggarty, 2006)

Word Order

Quechua

- word order is flexible in Quechua
- verbs typically go at the end of a sentence

English

- Quichua ELLs may have difficulty with the S-V-O word order since word order is more strict in English.

(Rosenfelder)



Language Characteristics of Quechua: Possible ELL Errors

Verbs

Quechua

- all verbs in Quechua are regular
- there are *no* irregular verbs

English

- Quichua ELLs may have a difficult time understanding the numerous irregular verbs in English

(Rosenfelder)

Nouns

Quechua

- nouns & verbs are loosely interchanged
- no articles ("a", "an", "the", etc) in Quechua

English

- They may also have difficulty understanding the difference between nouns & verbs.
- Quichua ELLs may have difficulty remembering to use articles

(Rosenfelder)



Language Characteristics of Quechua: Loan Words

Today, English uses some Quecha words:

- *cocoa* a seed from which cocoa powder comes
- *condor* Andean vulture
- *Inca* pre-Spanish culture in Peru
- *jerky* dried meat
- *lima* the bean
- *quinoa* a grain, similar to rice, yet distinct
- *gaucho* a poor person, a cowboy
- *pampa* large, treeless plains
- *puma* large, south american cat
- *llama* Andean relative of the camel
- *vicuna* Andean, deer-like relative of a deer

(KryssTal, 2012)

(Rosenfelder)

Communication Styles of Quichua

Family & Community

- Quichua place a great emphasis on community, family loyalty & cohesion

Body Language

- Ecuador Quichua may be shy about offering a firm handshake during greetings and avoid eye contact
- Peruvian Quichua may be firm and direct

Perception of The Quichua by Outsiders

- Peruvians & Ecuadorians can be very racist
 - *indio* is used as an insult.
- Often Quichua are described as lazy, criminal, stupid
 - in reality, they lead extremely laborious lives

(Flaitz, 2006)



Communication Styles of Quichua

Classroom Communication

- In general, Quichua encourage risk-taking but Peruvian-Ecuadorian-Bolivian education might not
 - in the classroom, Quichua students may be nervous, reserved or unwilling to participate
 - involvement in programs that support their self esteem and self assurance would be beneficial
- Many Quichua reject their own language being used in the classroom
 - Many would rather their children spoke Spanish rather than their native language.

(Flaitz, 2006)

(UNHCR, 2012)



Resources

Books

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Resources

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Images

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