Lesson 2: Expressing Ideas of Being

<INSERT IMAGE 2.1 *chunda muyu* ‘peach palm fruit’>

The Verb *ana* ‘to be’

The Quichua verb is mostly regular. Verbs are conjugated by suffixing the person/tense morphemes to the root. The verb *ana* ‘to be’ is an important verb to know as its use is widespread for describing not only essential, permanent qualities that someone might want to claim, such as one’s name or kinship status (‘I am Rosa’ or ‘I am Fausto’s sister’), but also for describing ascribed or temporary behaviors as well as habitual qualities (‘He is an eater of meat’, or ‘She is a hard worker’).

The root of the infinitive *ana* is just one sound: *a*-, and the infinitive suffix is –*na*, which basically means ‘to \_\_\_\_\_.’ The person/ tense suffixes then replace the infinitive suffix –*na*. For the present tense, the suffixes are:

First person singular ‘I’: –*ni*

Second person singular ‘you’: –*ngi*

Third person singular ‘he, she, it’: –*n*

First person plural ‘we’: –*nchi*

Second person plural ‘you-all’: –*ngichi*

Third person plural ‘they’: –*nawn* (PQ)/ –*nun* (NQ)

Personal Pronouns

Each present tense form of *ana* ‘to be’ occurs below with its pronoun.

*Ñuka a-ni* ‘I am’

*Kan a-ngi* ‘you are’

*Pay a-n* ‘he, she, it is’

*Ñukanchi a-nchi* ‘we are’

*Kanguna a-ngichi* ‘You-all are’

*Payguna a-na᷇wn/a-nu᷇n* ‘They are’ (PQ/NQ, respectively)

Note that stress is a bit irregular for the third person plural forms, shifting to the final, rather than to the penultimate syllable. The final syllable is marked with an accent to indicate its stressed status.

Practice 1

Conjugate the following verbs out loud, using the correct pronouns for each verb:

*tarabana* ‘to work’

*istudiana* ‘to study’

*mikuna* ‘to eat’

*tiyana* ‘to dwell, hang out (of people) be located, be available (of objects, resources)’

*muskuna* ‘to dream’

*kawsana* ‘to live’

*yanuna* ‘to cook’

*killkana* ‘to write’

*rimana* ‘to speak’

*waytana* ‘to swim’

*purina* ‘to walk, trek, or travel’

*puñuna* ‘to sleep’

Tips for Using Pronouns and Verbs

Although it is good practice to conjugate verb forms with their appropriate pronouns, it is important to remember that for Quichua, pronouns are not required when functioning as the subjects of sentences. Quichua is a Subject-Object-Verb language in principle, but subjects are often left out altogether, leaving listeners to infer the identity of a subject from context.

Another important consideration has to do with the way present tense is used. It is often used in a present perfect sense to indicate action that is complete as of the moment of speaking. For example, I may ask in English ‘Did you eat?’ A normal response would either be ‘Yes I ate (past tense)’ or ‘Yes, I’ve eaten’ (present perfect). In Quichua there is a present perfect construction which will be learned in a later chapter, but the present tense is often used to express this meaning as well:

*Ñuka mikuni* ‘I have eaten’ or simply:

*Mikuni* ‘I have eaten’

Practice 2

Use your new knowledge of verbs in the following conversational model, where the first speaker asks a second speaker about a third person or persons, leaving out the pronoun.

*Example:*

*Mikunchu?* ‘Has he/she eaten?’

*Nda/ari mikunmi.* ‘Yeah/yes. He/she has eaten.’

1.*puñuna* ‘to sleep’

2.*waytana* ‘to swim’

3. *muskuna* ‘to dream’

4. *tarabana* ‘to work’

5. *rimana* ‘to speak’

Practice 3

Now go back to the same list of verbs (*puñuna, waytana, muskuna, tarabana, rimana*), and practice the same question/answer sequence using either of the third person plural (’we’) forms.

*Example:*

Pastaza Quichua

*Mikuna᷇wnchu?* ‘Have they eaten?’

*Nda, mikuna᷇wnmi.* ‘Yeah, they’ve eaten.’

Upper Napo Quichua

*Mikunu᷇nchu?* ‘Have they eaten?’

*Ari, mikunu᷇nmi.* ‘Yes, they’ve eaten.’

Practice 4

Now go back to the same list of verbs (*puñuna, waytana, muskuna, tarabana, rimana*), and practice the same question/answer sequence using the second person (‘you-all’) and first person plural (‘we’) forms:

*Example:*

*Mikungichi᷇chu?* ‘Have you-all eaten?’

*Nda/ari, mikunchi᷇mi.* ‘Yes, we’ve eaten.

Written Exercise 1

Complete the following sentences with the appropriate pronoun.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ *ani*

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ *mikun*

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ *purinun*

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ *llakinchi*

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ *rimanchi*

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ *killkangi*

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ *angi*

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ *rikunchi*

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ *puñungichi*

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ *waytangi*

Practice 5

Construct questions with each of the following combinations of verbs and adverbs in any person/number that you have just learned, based on the situation described for each example. Attach the question suffix –*chu* to the adverb for each sentence.

*Example:*

*ukta* ‘fast’/*rina* ‘to go’ (to a group of people):

*Uktachu ringichi?* ‘Do you-all go fast?’

1. *Alimanda* ‘slowly’/*purina* ‘to walk, trek, travel’ (to a person who has just had ankle surgery)

2. *ukta* ‘fast’/*yanuna* ‘to cook’ (about a group of women)

3. *alilla* ‘well’/*shamuna* ‘to come’ (to your neighbor)

4. *wayra shina* ‘very fast, lit ‘like the wind’/*kallpana* ‘to run’ (about yourself)

5. *sindzhita* ‘strongly’/*awana* ‘to make pottery’ (to a group of pottery-makers)

6. *chunlla* ‘quietly/*tiyarina* ‘to sit’ (about a group of children)

7. *waka waka* ‘crying and crying’/*puñuna* ‘sleep’ (about a baby)

8. *alilla* ‘well’/*rimana* ‘to speak’ (to someone who has just told you something surprising)

9. *sindzhita* ‘strongly’/*kallpana* ‘to run’ (about a group of adolescents)

10. *ukta* ‘fast’/*waytana* ‘to swim’ (to your sister)

Written Exercise 2

Fill in the blanks for each of the following short sentences, using the correct present tense form of the verb in parentheses, which correctly translates the English into Quichua.

1. *Payguna aychata* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (*munana*).’They want meat.’

2. *Ñuka bagrita* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (*hapina*) ‘I catch a catfish.’

3. *Kanguna lagartota* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (*kasana*). ‘You-all hunt a caiman.’

4. *Pay charapata* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (*rikuna*). ‘He/she sees a turtle.’

<INSERT IMAGE 2.2 *charapa* ‘turtle’>

5. *Kan alillami* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (*kawsana*). ‘You live well.’

6. *Wawa chunlla* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (*puñuna*). ‘The baby sleeps quietly.’

7. *Ukta* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (*tarbana*)! ‘You work quickly.’

8. *Payguna wasiichu* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (*awana*)? ‘Do they make pottery in the house?’

9. *Kanguna alillachu* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (*muskuna*)? ‘Do you-all dream well?’

10. *Ñuka hachi kayutui* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (*puñuna*). ‘My uncle sleeps in a bed.’

11. *Ñukanchi lomochata* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (*apamuna*). ‘We bring a *lomocha.*’ (large edible rodent)

12. *Ñukanchi apayaya wasita* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (*wasina*). ‘Our grandfather makes a house.’

13*. Ñukanchi* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (*puñuna*) *wasi ukui*. ‘We sleep inside the house.’

14. *Payguna hatun chagrata* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (*chagrana*). ‘They make a big *chagra.*’ (agricultural field)

15. *Ñukanchi* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ *(mingana) domingo pundzha*. ‘We have a *minga* (work party) on Sunday day.’

16. *Payguna wayra shinachu* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (*istudyana*). ‘Do they study fast (literally: like the wind)?’

17. *Kanguna runa* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (*ana*). ‘You-all are *runa*.’ (people, members of the Quichua-speaking community)

18*. Ñuka saksakta* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (*mikuna*). ‘I eat until completely full.’

 19. *Sindzhitachu* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ *(purina*)? ‘Do you walk fast?’

20. *Sacha wagratachu* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (*kasana*)? ‘Do you-all hunt tapirs?’

Culture Focus: Forest Resources: *chunda muyu*

The first image of this lesson, a photo of peach palm fruit, called *chunda muyu* and classified as *Bactris gasipae*, has historically been an important source of nutrition for indigenous Amazonians. It is boiled and eaten, or boiled and fermented into a mild beer. The wood from its tree is valued for its strength and it has been used for weapons such as spears.

Transcription Exercise 1: The Historical Present

Go to the following link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X5Z97bfn6LM>

Listen as the speaker (0:27-0:33) describes preparations for a traditional peach palm fruit festival that she heard reports about from her father. The following verbs are used: *pallagrina* ‘to go and harvest,’ *yanuna* ‘to cut firewood,’ *warkuna* ‘to hang.’ Although the speaker is describing events from long ago, she uses present tense forms of verbs in an historical present sense. The nouns *chunda* ‘peach palm fruit’ and *ashanga* ‘basket’ are also used, as well as an evidential suffix –*shi* (to be discussed in Lesson 6), and a locative suffix –*i* (to be discussed in Lesson 12). Write as accurately as possible, the three sentences you hear her say:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Note whether any of them has an explicit subject pronoun.