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## **A grammar of Ashéninka (Ucayali-Pajonal)**

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## 5. Adjectives

As a theoretical basis for the description of adjectives, I follow Dixon (2010b:62-114) throughout this chapter. Dixon (2010b:63-64) distinguishes four basic types of the adjective class in the languages of the world:

“(a) Adjectives have similar grammatical properties to those of verbs”

“(b) Adjectives have similar properties to those of nouns”

“(c) Adjectives combine some of the grammatical properties of nouns with some of those of verbs”

“(d) Adjectives have grammatical properties different from those of nouns and from those of verbs”

Ashéninka clearly belongs to type (c). Dixon (2010b:63) describes this type by saying that adjectives “may be able to occur in an NP, then inflecting like a noun, and also as head of an intransitive predicate, the inflecting like a verb”. Many Ashéninka markers show a high degree of promiscuity in that they attach to different word classes (e.g. nouns taking verbal suffixes, see Section 4.1.6.1). Following this general practice, adjectives can be fully verbalized acting as intransitive and even transitive verbs, can be the head of an NP, take nominal enclitics, and a very small group can be inflected for gender, which is not possible in nouns.

### 5.1. Gender

The small group of adjectives that can be inflected for gender can be considered a different adjective class just based on this morphological property. However, this feature appears to be the only one that makes them different from the rest of the adjectives. The adjectives that I know to inflect with gender are just nine. There may be more, but I think that their total number is small, given that I was asking a speaker about this kind of words and he could not come up with more examples. The nine that I know are in Table 19. They are inflected with the suffixes *-ri* (masculine) and *-ro* (feminine, realized *-wo* after *a*), except *iryani-oryani*, which is inflected with the prefixes *i-* (masculine) and *o-* (feminine).

Table 19. Adjectives that inflect with gender

Masculine	Feminine	English	Masculine	Feminine	English
<i>iryani</i>	<i>oryani</i>	small	<i>mathari</i>	<i>mathawo</i>	thin
<i>antari</i>	<i>antawo</i>	big	<i>hanthari</i>	<i>hanthawo</i>	long
<i>kaméethari</i>	<i>kaméethawo</i>	good	<i>ewónkiri</i>	<i>ewónkiro</i>	midsize
<i>ewánkari</i>	<i>ewánkawo</i>	young	<i>mantsiyari</i>	<i>mantsiyawo</i>	ill
<i>antyáshipari</i>	<i>antyáshipawo</i>	old			

Since nouns do not inflect for gender, this adjective class might be included in Dixon's type (d) (see above) because gender marking is unique to these adjectives.

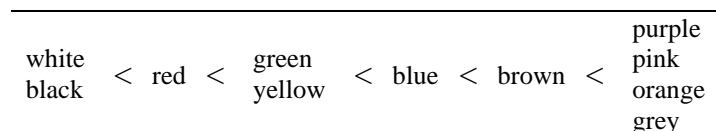
Not all Ashé-Ashá varieties have the same gender-inflected adjectives. Payne's (1980) tridialectal dictionary (Apurucayali, Pichis and Yuruá-Ucayali) shows that "catsincaari" 'cold' and "saavari" 'hot' (*katsinkaari* and *háawari* in UP Ashéninka) are inflected with gender, but I asked a speaker about these adjectives and he said that he had never heard *\*katsinkaawo* nor *\*háawawo*, which would be the feminine forms of *katsinkaari* and *háawari* if *-ri* in these words were a masculine suffix. The same happens with the colours "quitamaari" 'white' and "quityoncari" 'red' in Payne's (1980) dictionary (*kitamaari* and *kityónkari* in UP Ashéninka): the dictionary shows them inflected with gender, but my consultant said that he had never heard *\*kitamawo* nor *\*kityónkawo*, which would be their feminine counterpart. However, Payne (1980) does not inflect "cheencari" 'black' nor "quinashiri" 'green' (*chéenkari* and *kináshiri* in UP Ashéninka). The fact that two colours inflect gender and two do not is strange and might be due to a mistake. Payne's textbook (1989:302-05), based on Pichis and Alto Perené, mentions some gender-inflected adjectives and there are no colours among them.

## 5.2. Colours

When researching colour terms, I obtained different answers from different speakers. An Asháninka in the indigenous community of Sapani explicitly told me that they have five colour terms, and this totally coincides with the five colour terms that an Ashéninka told me to be the only ones that he knew: *chéenkari* 'black', *kitamaari* 'white', *kityónkari* 'red', *kitériri* 'yellow' and *kináshiri* 'green'. This colour set complies with Kay & McDaniel's (1978:614) (referring to Berlin & Kay 1969)

universal for colour sets in the languages of the world,<sup>66</sup> which says that, if a language has five colours, they are just those (see Figure 2 for the diagram of the basic colours hierarchy). However, other speakers mentioned other terms at different moments during my fieldwork. *Kamaari* was translated as ‘brown’ and ‘ash colour’ by two different speakers. Although ‘ash colour’ can be interpreted as ‘grey’, we may infer that these two different translations refer to the same colour. The same Ashéninka speaker who told me the five colour terms had told me other terms four years before: he said that *natsiyaari* is an old word that means both ‘green’ and ‘blue’, and that *enàtsiyáari* is ‘yellow’. Another Ashéninka speaker told me the aforementioned *chéenkari*, *kitamaari*, *kityónkari*, *kitériri* and *kamaari*, plus *éeriki* ‘green’ (instead of the *kináshiri* above), *kihaari* ‘blue’ and *patsitákiri* ‘orange’, of which she said that this is the colour used for the strips of the traditional *cushma*. If, to the five colours mentioned at first, we add ‘blue’, ‘brown’ and ‘orange’, we have an eight-colour set that also accords with Kay & McDaniel’s universal rule (if a language has eight colours, they are the first seven mentioned plus ‘purple’, ‘pink’, ‘orange’ or ‘grey’). What would not accord with this universal would be to consider that *kamaari* is ‘grey’ instead of ‘brown’, because the universal says that a language cannot have ‘grey’ without having ‘brown’.

Figure 2. Basic colours hierarchy according to Kay & McDaniel (1978:614)



However, some of these terms do not fulfil the definition of a basic colour term as defined by Kay & McDaniel (1978:612). This definition establishes four conditions for a colour term to be considered basic:

1. It must be monolexemic.
2. Its signification “is not included in that of any other term”.

<sup>66</sup> Berlin & Kay (1969) is a quite old work that has raised methodological objections (Kay et al. 1997:22), but, according to Kay et al. (1997:21), Berlin & Kay’s hypotheses “have been substantially confirmed by subsequent research”.

3. Its application “is not restricted to a narrow class of objects”.

4. It is “relatively salient as evident in frequent and general use”.

*Patsitákiri* ‘orange’ does not fulfil condition 3 because it seems to refer mainly to *cushma* strips. *Natsiyaari* ‘green/blue’ does not fulfil condition 4 because my consultant said that it is an old word (*palabra antigua* in Spanish), and *enàtsiyáari* ‘yellow’ is based on *natsiyaari*. The different description of *kamaari* by two different speakers (‘brown’ and ‘ash colour’) makes it difficult to comply with condition 4. *Kihaari* is an interesting word because it appeared in a natural text (the story of the cheating shaman, SCS) and the Ashéninka speaker mentioned first translated it as ‘black’. This speaker was born in 1953, and the other one who translated it as ‘blue’, in 1972. The key clue is that, when this word occurs in the SCS, it refers to genipap dust (obtained by grating the fruit). When one searches for images online with the words *genipap dust* or its Spanish translations *polvo de huito* or *polvo de jagua*, one can see which colour we are dealing with: it is a kind of blue with a tonality that goes from greyish to very dark, almost black. Knowing this, the explanation is quite straightforward: for the older speaker, this colour is a kind of black; for the younger speaker, who is more familiar with the colours in Spanish, this is blue because it is blue in Spanish. Therefore, *kihaari* does not fulfil Kay & McDaniel’s condition 2 because it is a kind of black. The fact that the younger speaker translates it into Spanish *azul* ‘blue’ means that it is possible that younger speakers identify *kihaari* with ‘blue’ and it will end up becoming the basic colour ‘blue’. This may be an interesting semantic shift in that a colour term is a kind of black and ends up being blue under the influence of another language. Actually, the split of a ‘black/blue’ category in distinct ‘black’ and ‘blue’ categories is one of the evolutionary paths posited in Kay et al. (1997:33).

Payne’s (1980) tridialectal dictionary (Pichis, Apurucayali and Yuruá-Ucayali) shows the first five: “cheencari” ‘black’, “quitamaari” ‘white’, “quityoncari” ‘red’, “quiteriri” ‘yellow’, and both “eerequi/iiriqui” and “quinashiri” for ‘green’. Regarding *kihaari* ‘blue’, the dictionary shows “quisaari” with the meaning ‘black’ –which is quite consistent with my experience described above, given that his youngest consultants must have had the age of my older consultant. For my *natsiyaari*

‘blue/green’, the dictionary shows “natsiryaari” with the meaning ‘dark green’, ‘unripe’. The meaning ‘unripe’ is a probable explanation for the aforementioned pair *natsiyaari* ‘blue/green’ and *enàtsiyáari* ‘yellow’: they probably mean ‘unripe’ and ‘ripe’, respectively. Payne’s dictionary shows no colour term *kamaari*. Kindberg’s Asháninka dictionary (1980) shows “quisari” with the meaning ‘blue’.

With all this, my conclusion is that UP Ashéninka has the first five basic colours *kitamaari* ‘white’, *chéenkari* ‘black’, *kityónkari* ‘red’, *kitéiriri* ‘yellow’ and *kináshiri/éeriki* ‘green’. Under the influence of Spanish, a basic blue colour could appear from *kihaari*, which originally is a kind of black.

### 5.3. Grammatical properties

Coming back to Dixon’s (2010b:63-64) classification of adjective classes in four types based on their grammatical properties, he says that, in languages with adjectives with grammatical properties similar to those of verbs, both word classes can function as head of an intransitive predicate; and, in languages with adjectives with grammatical properties similar to those of nouns, an adjective can occur inside an NP with a noun or just with the adjective alone, and “adjectives may take the same inflectional processes as nouns, for instance relating to gender and number”. Regarding the last statement, we saw in Section 5.1 that a few adjectives inflect for gender, but nouns do not. For the rest of the properties, Ashéninka adjectives can be the head of an intransitive and even transitive predicate and can occur within an NP with a noun or by itself. Moreover, they can be a copula complement.

These different properties are shown in (211) with different occurrences of the adjective *tenari* ‘heavy’ obtained during an elicitation session. *Tenari* is actually formed with the relative suffix *-ri*, and many adjectives are formed with this suffix. The forms with the relative suffix can lead to saying that adjectives are verb-like and their occurrence in NPs are actually relative constructions, but adjectives with the relative *-ri* share the same properties with those without this suffix, as is shown in (213).

- (211) a. **Tenari** thaato.  
 tena-ri thaato  
 heavy-REL bag  
 ‘The bag is heavy.’
- b. Payi thaato **tenari** éhatzi kaari **tenari**.  
 p-ay-i thaato tena-ri éhatzi kaari tena-ri  
 2S-take-FRS bag heavy-REL also NEG.COP heavy-REL  
 ‘Take a heavy bag and a light one.’
- c. Payi **tenari**.  
 p-ay-i tena-ri  
 2S-take-FRS heavy-REL  
 ‘Take the heavy one.’
- d. Payi thaato **ténaperotátsiri**.  
 p-ay-i thaato tena-pero-t-atsi-ri  
 2S-take-FRS bag heavy-VER-&-PTCP.IPFV-REL  
 ‘Take the bag that is very heavy.’

In (211a), *tenari* is the predicate of an intransitive sentence. In (211b), *tenari* occurs in an NP modifying the noun *thaato*, and also as the complement of the negative copula *kaari*. In (211c), *tenari* is the only member of an NP. In (211d), *tenari* takes the verbal imperfective participle suffix *-atsi*. I have no example of *tenari* as the complement of a positive copula, but this occurrence is in (212) with *ewónkiri* ‘midsize’.

- (212) **Ewónkiri** ini.  
 ewonki-ri i-ni  
 midsize-M 3M-COP.AN  
 ‘He is midsize.’

As said above, one could argue that examples (211b) and (211c) are not actually NPs, but relative constructions, so that the translations would be, instead of ‘take a heavy bag’ and ‘take the heavy one’, ‘take the bag that is heavy’ and ‘take the one that is heavy’, respectively. However, examples (213) with *antari/antawo* (m./f.), one of the few gender-inflected nouns, show that an adjective with the relative suffix as *tenari* (211) shows the same grammatical properties as one without it as *antari/antawo* (213).

- (213) a. Irowa pankotsi **antawo**.  
 i-ro=ra panko-tsi anta-ro  
 DEM-F=MED house-ALI big-F  
 ‘That house is big.’

- b. Tzimatsi nopanko **antawo**.  
 tzim-atsi no-panko anta-ro  
 EXI-PTCP.IPFV 1-house big-F  
 ‘I have a big house.’
- c. Nokoyi **antawo**.  
 no-koy-i anta-ro  
 1-want-FRS big-F  
 ‘I want the big one.’
- d. Nonampi **antáwoperotàtzi**.  
 no-nampi anta-ro-pero-t-atzi  
 1-community big-F-VER-&-PROG  
 ‘My community is very big.’

I have arranged the letters corresponding to the examples in (211) and (213)) in such a way that the same letter shows the same grammatical property in both examples. In this way, in (213a), *antawo* is the predicate of an intransitive sentence, as *tenari* in (211a). In (213b), *antawo* occurs inside an NP modifying the noun *nopanko*, the same function as the first *tenari* in (211b) –the second *tenari* in this example has a different function. In (213c), *antawo* is the only member of an NP, as *tenari* in (211c).

The fact that adjectives with and without the relative suffix *-ri* share the same grammatical properties is most clearly illustrated in (214) with *kaméethari* and *kameetha* ‘good’, an adjective that admits both forms with and without the relative *-ri*, which is rather an exception,<sup>67</sup> but the fact that *-ri* is not part of the stem is most clearly seen in (211d) with *ténaperotátsiri*, where the relative suffix *-ri* is placed after two other suffixes. This detachment of *-ri* always occurs when an adjective takes other verbal suffixes.

- (214) a. Iroka mapocha **kaméethari**.  
 i-ro=ka mapocha kameetha-ri  
 DEM-F=PROX papaya good-REL  
 ‘This papaya is good.’
- b. Iroka mapocha **kameetha**.  
 i-ro=ka mapocha kameetha  
 DEM-F=PROX papaya good  
 ‘This papaya is good.’

<sup>67</sup> The adjective *kameetha* ‘good’ is exceptional not only because the relative suffix is optional, but also because it can take gender suffixes and the adjectival suffix *-ni*, also optionally, i.e. *kameetha* admits more possibilities than any other adjective and all of them are optional.



While the examples above are from elicitation specifically dedicated to check the grammatical properties of adjectives, these properties can be observed in natural texts. In this way, (215) is an example of an adjective as head of an intransitive predicate (verb-like function); in (216), the adjective is the only member of an NP (noun-like function).

- (215) **Antawo** powane?  
 anta-ro p-owani  
 big-F 2-chacra  
 ‘Is your *chacra* big? (CMM)
- (216) Antawáetatzi owámetatziri **iryániériki**.  
 Ø-antawae-t-atzi Ø-owame-t-atzi-ri i-rya-ni-eriki  
 3F.S-work-&-PROG 3F.S-teach-&-PROG-3M.O M-small-ADJ-DIM.PL  
 ‘She’s working teaching small (children).’ (CMH)

Besides these functions, there are in my corpus two instances of adjectives being the head of a transitive predicate. They are in (217) and (218).

- (217) Eero, rowa..., **péentsikiròtziro**.  
 eero ro=ra p-eentsikiro-t-zi-ro  
 NEG.IRR F=MED 2S-slow-&-REA-3F.O  
 ‘Don’t, um..., do it slowly.’ (TSJ)
- (218) Tsikárika ikántakáakari rokíkirà **ròmahontyáantakariri**?  
 tsika=rika i-kant-aka-ak-a-ri r-oki=ki=ra  
 WH=COND 3M.S-COP-CAUS-PFV-REA-3M.O 3M-eye=LOC=MED  
 r-o-mahontya-ant-ak-a-ri-ri  
 3M.S-CAUS-dumb-RES-PFV-REA-3M.O-REL  
 ‘How would it be that he caused him to become dumb in his eyes?’ (TSJ)

The adjectives *éentsikiro* ‘slow’ and *mahontya* ‘dumb’ appear in Payne’s dictionary (1980:65). The former with several dialectically different forms with the meaning “despacio, lento” ‘slowly, slow’; the latter as “masontzi/masonto (adj. m./f.)” with the meaning “mudo/a” ‘unable to speak’. I have chosen the English translation ‘dumb’ because it means both ‘stupid’ and ‘unable to speak’, the same as in Ashéninka, so the English semantic content perfectly fits the Ashéninka one. In *péentsikiròtziro*, the meaning ‘slow’ is transitivized to mean ‘do slowly’. In *ròmahontyáantakariri*, a causative prefix triggers the transitivization with the meaning ‘make dumb’. I have not researched if these two adjectives can be used in an NP in the usual way and thus do not have properties different from other adjectives. Payne’s dictionary (1980) says that “eentsiquiro” is an adverb and “masontzi/to” an adjective. Be that as it may, there

is little reason to think that these two adjectives have special properties, rather it seems that they are a token of a common strategy by means of which an adjective becomes the head of a transitive predicate.

#### 5.4. Semantic tasks

Dixon (2010b:70-71) attributes four semantic tasks to adjectives:

“(A) Make a statement that something has a certain property”

“(B) As a specification that helps identify the referent of the head noun in an NP”

“(C) [...] a comparative construction”

“(D) [...] modify verbs”

Ashéninka performs the tasks (A), (B) and (D), but not (C). Tasks (A) and (B) can be seen in the preceding examples. In this way, task (A) is performed in examples (211a), (212), (213a), (213c), (214a), (214b) and (215); and task (B) is performed in examples (211b), (211c), (211d), (213b), (213d) and (216). Regarding task (D), an example of this use is in (219), where *kameetha* is used as an adverb.

- (219) Irika rira, ráwithàkitakìri **kameetha**.  
 i-ri=ka ri=ra r-awithaki-t-ak-i-ri kameetha  
 DEM-M=PROX M=MED 3M.S-hug-PFV-FRS-3M.O well  
 ‘So..., um..., he has hugged him well.’ (FS)

*Kameetha* ‘good, well’ is the most frequent adjective in my corpus, and it can be used in its basic form with an adjectival as well as with an adverbial (modifying a verb) function. Yet it occurs in my corpus most times with an adverbial function. An adjectival use with its basic form is in (220).

- (220) ...róoperotàki **kameetha** iyátharèkitho,  
 roo-pero-t-ak-i kameetha i-yatharékitho  
 F-VER-&-PFV-FRS good 3M-testicle  
 ‘...the fact is that his testicle was really good,’ (TSJ)

However, an adverbial meaning can also be expressed by incorporating the adjective into the verbal complex, as in (221).

- (221) Hàpokatyénkarikitanàka  
 hapok-a-t<y>enkari-ki-t-an-ak-a  
 jump-&-<AT>spread-legged-FORM-&-ABL-PFV-REA  
 ‘He jumps spread-legged.’ (FS)

As regards Dixon's task (C), Ucayali-Pajonal Ashéninka has neither a comparative nor a superlative construction. When trying to get a translation from Spanish *X es más Y que Z* 'X is more Y than Z', the usual translation was 'X is Y, Z is not Y', even to the point that, after a few tries with a speaker, he explicitly said that Ashéninka does not have an expression as Spanish *más que* 'more than'. The same happens with the superlative: when asked to translate a Spanish superlative (*X es el más Y* 'X is the most Y'), the translation is 'X is the only Y', or, for 'X is the youngest in the family', 'X is the last one'. However, there is a construction that means 'less': *ari iyoneenta*. Two examples are shown in (222): (222a) with the adjective *antawo* 'big (f.)' and (222b) with the quantifier *osheki* 'many'. This is the most similar to a comparative construction that exists in the language.

- (222) a. Satipo antawo, **ari iyoneenta** Atalaya.  
 Satipo anta-ro ari iyoneenta Atalaya  
 Satipo big-F AFF less Atalaya  
 'Satipo is big, Atalaya is less big.'
- b. Énitatsi osheki shipibo, **ari iyoneenta** ashéninka.  
 eeni-t-atsi osheki shipibo ari iyoneenta ashéninka  
 EXI-&-PTCP.IPFV many Shipibo AFF less Ashéninka<sup>68</sup>  
 'There are many Shipibos, less Ashéninkas.'

*Ari iyoneenta* is a lexicalized expression. Its origin can be guessed by glossing the word *iyoneenta* as Ø-iyoneenta (3F.S-know-ATT-REA.REFL) and considering that the multifunctional word *ari* has the meaning 'thus' here. In this way, it could be translated more or less as 'thus it knows itself to be in a low degree', i.e. 'it is known to be in a low degree', i.e. 'it is less'.

Moreover, there is a construction similar to a superlative with the demonstrative enclitics (described in Section 4.1.5.1): a demonstrative enclitic attached to an adjective means 'the ADJECTIVE one' but can also mean 'the most ADJECTIVE one'. This feature was discovered by inquiring about the adjective in (223), which refers to a *quebrada* (brook that usually dries up in the dry season).

<sup>68</sup> In this case, *ashéninka* is clearly used to refer to the ethnic group, that is why I have not segmented it as usual (a-shéninka, INCL-fellow.person, 'our fellow person').

- (223) Éehatzi oshíyawo irowa **antawétika** Chicosillo.  
 éehatzi Ø–oshiy–a–ro  
 also 3F.S–be.similar–REA–3F.O  
 i–ro=ra anta–ro–t–i=ka Chicosillo  
 DEM–F=MED big–F–&–IRR=PROX Chicosillo  
 ‘It is also similar to that bigger one, Chicosillo.’ (CMM)

After inquiring about the meaning of *antawétika*, the consultant gave me the Spanish translation *más grande* ‘bigger’, but the meaning in this sentence is just as the translation shows, i.e. the comparative does not compare this *quebrada* with another specific one, but with undetermined *quebradas*, i.e. as saying ‘bigger than many others’. After further inquiring about adjectives with demonstrative enclitics, it turned out that an adjective with a demonstrative enclitic can have a superlative meaning in that ‘the big one’ can also mean ‘the biggest one’ depending on the context. Some examples used for this elicitation are shown in (224).

- (224) a. Iroka **hanthárikà**.  
 i–ro=ka hantha–ri=ka  
 DEM–F=PROX long–REL=PROX  
 ‘The longest/long one (a stick).’
- b. Náteyatzíro iroka **oryánikà**.  
 n–atey–atzi–ro i–ro=ka o–rya–ni=ka  
 1S–take.up–PROG–3F.O DEM–F=PROX F–small–ADJ=PROX  
 ‘I’m taking the smallest/small one up.’
- c. Pámína irowa **háawarirà**.  
 p–am–i–na i–ro=ra haawa–ri=ra  
 2S–bring–IRR–1O DEM–F=MED hot–REL=MED  
 ‘Bring me the hottest/hot one.’

In the three examples in (224), the adjective’s meaning can be a superlative or just an adjective acting as the head of an NP. We should consider that an English phrase as ‘the small one’, if we have two items, means the same as ‘the smallest one’. If we have several items, ‘the small one’ might be confusing only if there are many items and many of them are smaller than others and of a similar size. However, the examples in (224) show that, in UP Ashéninka, ‘the small one’ can take on the meaning ‘the smallest one’.

## 5.5. Affixes and enclitics in adjectives

The following sections describe the affixes and enclitics that adjectives can carry. Section 5.5.1 treats nominal suffixes and enclitics that can be used in adjectives, Section 5.5.2 discusses verbal affixes and enclitics in adjectives, and sections 5.5.3, 5.5.4 and 5.5.5 are devoted to principally adjectival suffixes.

### 5.5.1. Nominal suffixes and enclitics

Adjectives can host the plural diminutive suffix *-ériki*, as was shown in (216), and also the plural enclitic *=paeni*, which can attach to the noun or the adjective in an NP (see Section 4.2). An example of *=paeni* on an adjective is in (225), where two juxtaposed NPs occur: one formed by the quantifier *máaweni* ‘all’ and a noun, the other one formed by only an adjective.

- (225) Tee, tee imátziri máaweni atzíripáeni, **antyáshipàripáeni**, roshánkahiri, waaka.  
 tee i-ma-t-zi-ri máaweni atziri=paeni  
 NEG.REA 3M.S-can-&-REA-3M.O all person=PL  
 antyashipa-ri=paeni r-oshank-ah-i-ri waaka  
 old-M=PL 3M.S-shoo-REG-FRS-3M.O cow  
 ‘No, they cannot do it to them, all the people, the elder, shoo the cows.’ (SCFF)

The diminutive *-aniki* can also attach to adjectives, as in the fully verbalized *poshini* ‘tasty’ in (226).

- (226) Kímatzíro **pòshiñáanikitàki** yatharékiho meirí.  
 kim-atzi-ro poshi-ni-aniki-t-ak-i i-yatharékiho méyiri  
 feel-PROG-3F.O tasty-ADJ-DIM-&-PFV-FRS 3M-testicle squirrel  
 ‘He’s feeling that the squirrel’s testicle is really tasty.’ (TSJ)

The locative enclitic *=ki* and the enclitic demonstratives can also attach to an adjective, as in the NPs in (227) and (228), respectively (see Section 5.4 for the superlative function of the demonstrative enclitics).

- (227) ...**owákirarikì** owaantsi,...  
 owákira-ri=ki owaani-ntsi  
 new-REL=LOC chacra-ALI  
 ‘...in the new *chacras*,...’ (SCS)
- (228) Irika **tháirika** shéripýari ikántakiri...  
 i-ri=ka thayi-ri=ka sheripyari i-kant-ak-i-ri  
 DEM-M=PROX cheating-REL=PROX shaman 3M.S-say-PFV-FRS-3M.O  
 ‘This cheating shaman says to them...’ (SCS)

### 5.5.2. Verbal affixes and enclitics

Ashéninka adjectives can take verbal affixes and enclitics in their predicative function. Dixon (2010b:77-79) says that adjectives are usually more restricted than verbs in their morphological processes. The number of verbal affixes and enclitics that adjectives can take in Ashéninka has not been the object of a thorough study, and, considering the high number of verbal suffixes, this study could fill a whole thesis. The verbal affixes and enclitics attached to adjectives in my text corpus are: reality status suffixes, the perfective *-ak*, directionals, the dubitative *=ma*, object suffixes, the relative *-ri*, the causative *o-*, the imperfective participle *-atsi*, the reinforced optative *=ita* and subject prefixes, plus the attenuative *-neent* in an elicitation. The same as with verbs, the reality status suffix is obligatory when an adjective hosts a verbal affix or enclitic, except with the relative *-ri*, which is a common occurrence in adjectives and does not require the RS suffix. The dubitative enclitic *=ma* does not require an RS suffix either, but it is an enclitic just because it can attach to very different word classes. The number of fully verbalized adjectives (taking at least an RS suffix) in my text corpus is 30, and the affixes and enclitics mentioned above number 10 (I do not count *-neent* because my example is from an elicitation). I chose at random five samples of 30 verbs in five different sequences of texts from my corpus and they yielded 16, 15, 11, 11 and 19 different affixes and enclitics. Considering that each sample is a sequence of some text and verbs tend to take similar markers in the same story or conversation, it seems that adjectives must be more restricted than verbs in the number of verbal markers that they can take.

### 5.5.3. Adjectival *-ni*, adjectivizer *-inka/-ntzinka* and class adjectivizer *-hato/-hatzi*

The suffix *-ni* is not described with an adjectival meaning in the previous Ashé-Ashá literature. The adjectival character that I posit derives from the observation of this *-ni* in adjectives in my corpus. The first observation is that, in *oryani/iryani* (f./m.) ‘small’, the sequence *-ni* is detached in the word *oryápetyanikini* (o-rya-petyani-ki-**ni**, F-small-table.like-FORM-ADJ, ‘small and table-like’, TSJ), which proves that it is not

part of the adjective root. The second observation is with *kaméetheni*, from *kameetha* ‘good, well’. The basic unsegmentable form *kameetha* can mean ‘good’ or ‘well’. A consultant said that the difference is that *kaméetheni* refers to good behaviour, so that ‘good food’ can be translated as *wanawontsi kameetha* or *wanawontsi kaméethari*, but not as *\*wanawontsi kaméetheni*. The impossibility of using *-ni* with inanimate nouns seems to point to it as an animate marker, which might relate it, at least diachronically, to the non-verbal animate copula *-ni* (see Section 6.10.3). All these data might not actually make a solid basis so as to posit the adjectival character of this *-ni*, but its detachment in *oryápetyanikini* is reminiscent of the behaviour of the relative *-ri* in other adjectives. More data may shed light on this *-ni* in adjectives and confirm or reject its character as an adjectival suffix.

Regarding *-inka/-ntzinka*, Payne’s multidialectal dictionary (1980:163) shows the suffix “-tzincari/ro” and says that it is an adjectivizer inflected with gender (*-ri/-ro*, m./f.). Mihas’ grammar of Alto Perené (2015a:426-28) describes the same suffix, also inflected with gender, but calls it “quality nominalizer”. In my corpus, this suffix occurs with the different forms *-inka* and *-tzinka* in two words: *móontzinkari* and *poñínkari* (the latter, two times). These instances are presented in (229) and (230).

- (229) Owámetakinàri owámetàntatsìri **poñínkari** hanta kirinka.  
 owame-t-ak-i-na-ri                      owame-t-ant-atsi-ri  
 teach-&-PFV-FRS-1O-REL            teach-&-OCC-PTCP.IPFV-REL  
 poñ-inka-ri                      ha=nta            kirinka  
 come.from-ADJZ-M            LOC=DIST    downriver  
 ‘The one who taught me is a teacher coming from there downriver.’ (CMH)
- (230) Móontzinkari.  
 moo-ntzinka-ri  
 hole-ADJZ-M  
 ‘It has holes.’ (CMM)

Example (230) is a good reason to consider *-ntzinka* an adjectivizer since a noun (*mootsi* ‘hole, gap’) cannot be nominalized. *Poñínkari* in (230) can be translated as ‘the one coming from’ or ‘the one who comes from’. Actually, this kind of translations is what I got from a speaker when researching this suffix, i.e. *héekinkari/héekinkawo* (m./f.) ‘the one who lives’, *iyótzinkari/iyótzinkawo* (m./f.) ‘the one who knows’, etc., always inflected with gender. The translations reflect adjectival relative clauses in Spanish or English that describe properties, so the Ashéninka word formed with *-inka*

is describing a property of the noun that it modifies; therefore, it can very well be considered an adjective. Moreover, the gender inflection helps to draw this conclusion because nouns are never inflected with gender, while a few adjectives are.

The choice between *-inka* and *-ntzinka* seems to have a phonological reason, given that the root in (229) ends in a consonant, and the root in (230), in a vowel. Payne's (1980) tridialectal dictionary (Pichis, Apurucayali and Ucayali-Yuruá) does not show examples (the suffix only appears in the suffix list at the end of his dictionary), and Mihás (2015a:428) for Alto Perené shows the examples *tsomonte-tzinkaro* 'The tree is big-bellied' (*tsomonte* 'bulge') and *sat-ant-tzinkari* 'the medic who administers injections' (*sat-* 'stick', *-ant* is Mihás' customary suffix). Thus, it seems that this suffix can have the form *-ntzinka* and can be reduced to *-inka*, while Payne's and Mihás' *-tzinka* is in between.

The class adjectivizer *-hato/-hatzi* (f./m.) has appeared once in a natural text in its feminine form (231) and in two elicited examples in the two genders of the language (232).

(231) Eero áawyanèro, aniryo: páminiro **ótsipahàto**.

eero aawi-an-i-ro aniryo  
NEG.IRR can.carry-ABL-FRS-3F.O niece.sister's.daughter.VOC.ME

p-amin-i-ro o-tsipa-hat-o  
2S-look-FRS-3F.O F-other-ADJZ.CL-F

'Niece (sister's daughter), you won't be able to carry them (fruits): look for another type.' (CCPC)

(232) a. mapi énihàto                      b. shima énihàtzi  
mapi eni-hat-o                      shima eni-hatz-i  
stone river-ADJZ.CL-F              fish river-ADJZ.CL-M  
'river stones'                          'river fish'

In (231), the morpheme *-hato* is attached to *ótsipa* '(an)other (fem.)'. The consultant was very clear with the meaning of *ótsipahàto*: 'another class'. I inquired if *hato* might be a noun, but it turned out that it could not act as an independent word. Moreover, the consultant insisted that *ótsipahàto* is a single word and not two. Later I came across the expressions in (232) while revising transcriptions from my first field trip in 2015. The meanings expressed in (232) are the same as in (231): the word that hosts *-hato/-hatzi* denotes a class or type to which the modified noun belongs. In (231), the reference is to fruits of a type different from those that the addressee is trying to



carry. In both examples in (232), the head noun precedes the adjectivized noun, and the adjectivizer property can be most clearly noticed in that *eni* ‘river’ is a noun that, with the suffix *-hato/-hatzi*, becomes adjectivized by expressing that the head noun belongs to a class (existing in rivers), and is inflected with the gender of the head noun. In this example, *-hato/-hatzi* on *eni* fulfils the same function as the English suffix *-ine* on *river* to yield the adjective *riverine*. Therefore, I consider that *-hato/-hatzi* is an adjectivizer because it derives different word classes (an indefinite pronoun in (231), nouns in (232)) and converts them into adjectives by lending them the property to modify a noun. I have added the label CLASS because this property consists in belonging to a specific class or type.

This morpheme appears to be the same as Mihas’ (2015a:428-29) *sato/satzi* in Alto Perené, which she includes in the group of “quality nominalizers”, as *-tzinkari/-tzinkaro*.

#### 5.5.4. Intensifier *-ni*

The intensifier *-ni* can attach to different word classes, namely nouns, indefinite pronouns, non-numeral quantifiers and adjectives, as far as I know, but it might also occur with another word class. It is more frequent in adjectives, where it intensifies the propriety described by the adjective, and, when used in other word classes, it also intensifies a propriety inherent to that word (e.g. the noun *eentsi* ‘child’ in (233), where the property ‘young’ is intensified). This subsection reviews its occurrences with different word classes because I think that this is the best way to show its general semantic content.

In (233)), *-ni* is attached to *eentsi* ‘child’ to intensify the very feature of being a child, adopting a function similar to a diminutive. In (234), *-ni* intensifies the meaning of the quantifier *osheki* ‘many’. In (235), *-ni* gives the indefinite pronoun *ótsipa* ‘another’ the meaning ‘yet another’. In (236), *-ni* is attached to the adjective *póshiniri* ‘tasty’ in order to intensify the property expressed by the adjective.

- (233) Haka **éentsini**, éentsika éekiro ikáematziri rótsitziti,  
 ha=ka eentsi-ni eentsi=ka  
 LOC=PROX child-INTS child=PROX  
 éekiro i-kaem-atzi-ri r-otsitzi-ti  
 goes.on 3M.S-call-PROG-3M.O 3M-dog-POSS  
 ‘The little child here, this child goes on calling his dog.’ (FS)
- (234) Oshékini!  
 osheki-ni  
 many-INTS  
 ‘(There are) a lot! (In answer to the question whether there are many animals in a place)’ (CMM)
- (235) **Ótsipani** paata tsiréniri éehatzi rowáyitéri infntakòri.  
 o-tsipa-ni paata tsiréniri  
 F-other-INTS later night  
 éehatzi r-ow-ayit-i-ri i-nintakori  
 also 3M.S-CAUS-go.down-FRS-3M.O 3M-follower  
 ‘Later, yet another night, he also makes his followers come down.’ (SCS)
- (236) Ikantzi: “Hee! **Póshinirìni**.”  
 i-kant-zi hee poshi-ni-ri-ni  
 3M.S-say-REA AFF tasty-ADJ-REL-INTS  
 ‘He says: “Yes! It is very tasty”.’ (TSJ)

Since *-ni* attaches to different word classes, I might have considered it an enclitic instead of a suffix. However, the examples above show that *-ni* is modifying the very word to which it is attached and limits its scope to the meaning expressed by its host. Therefore, the criterion that I am following, namely that a clitic should be in a middle way between an affix and a word, is not fulfilled here, given that *-ni* cannot be moved to another host of the same phrase without a change in meaning.

### 5.5.5. Ignorative *-ni*

The suffix *-ni* occurs twice in my corpus, on an adjective and on a noun. Since I discovered it while eliciting adjectives, it is included in the present section. This suffix expresses that the speaker does not know the reality expressed by its host. In (237), the speaker tastes a nut and expresses his ignorance that it is very tasty. In (238), the speaker expresses her ignorance about the existence of stony riverbanks.

- (237) Póshinirìnimà.  
 poshi–ni–ri–**ni**=ma  
 tasty–ADJ–REL–IGN=DUB  
 ‘I didn’t know that it is so tasty.’ (TSJ)
- (238) Mapipóokiperòni?  
 mapi–pooki–pero–**ni**  
 stone–COL–VER–IGN  
 ‘Are there actually stony riverbanks?’ (CMM)

This suffix appeared while researching the intensifier *-ni* on adjectives, which has the same form as the ignorative. While *-ni* on an adjective can intensify the property expressed by the adjective, *-ni* on an adjective in a question signals that the speaker is asking whether something has the property expressed by the adjective and remarks her ignorance about the answer, as in (238). An example on *-ni* in a question from an elicitation is in (239).

- (239) Pochárinì?  
 pocha–ri–ni  
 sweet–REL–IGN  
 ‘Is it sweet?’

## 5.6. Long adjectives denoting forms

A remarkable feature of Ashéninka is the existence of long adjectival words denoting very specific forms. Some instances from my text corpus are shown in the following examples.

- (240) Hàpokatyénkarikitanàka.  
 hapok–a–t<y>**enkari**–ki–t–an–ak–a  
 jump–&–<ATT>spread-legged–FORM–&–ABL–PFV–REA  
 ‘He jumps spread-legged.’ (FS)
- (241) Omaanta nashi naaka **oryápetyanikini okáachanchéeñakitzi**  
 nowatharékithe.  
 o–maanta n–ashi naaka o–rya–**petyani**–ki–ni  
 F–COEXP 1–POSS 1 F–small–table-like–FORM–ADJ  
 o–kaa–**chanceeña**–ki–t–zi–ni no–yatharékithe  
 3F.S–COP.TOT–ovoid–FORM–&–REA–ADJ 1–testicle  
 ‘However, my testicle is small and table-like, and ovoid.’ (TSJ)

- (242) Éehatzi okímita pashi éerori antawo **tyantypitzi** piyatharékithe.  
 éehatzi o-kimi-t-a p-ashi eero-ri  
 also 3F.S-resemble-&-REA 2-POSS 2-TOO  
 anta-ro **tyantypitzi** pi-yatharékithe  
 big-F full.bag.form 2-testicle  
 ‘Also yours will be similar, big and in the form of a full bag, your testicle.’  
 (TSJ)

In (240) and the second word in bold in (241), *tyenkari* ‘spread-legged’ (the form without the attenuative palatalization is *tenkari*) and *chanceeña* ‘ovoid’ are incorporated into a verb. In the first word in bold in (241), *petyani* forms a compound with *orya* ‘small’; in (242), *tyantypitzi* is a whole word. The occurrence of these morphemes inside verbs or forming compounds with other lexemes could lead to the idea of considering them classifiers, but, as example (242) shows, they are words that can occur without any other attached morpheme.

The suffix *-ki*, glossed FORM, in (240) and (241), deserves special mention. This suffix occurs in words denoting forms, hence this gloss. It could be considered part of the stem in the adjectives describing forms in (240) and (241), but it occurs in other words whose components clearly do not have the phonic sequence *-ki* in their stem, as can be seen in the word *okàamoityókitzi* in (243), which is formed by the totalitative copula *-kaa-* and the inalienable noun *-moityo* ‘navel’. Therefore, it cannot be argued here that *-ki* is part of any stem. There are more instances in my corpus where *-ki* occurs joined to known stems.

- (243) Tee, **okàamoityókitzi**.  
 tee o-kaa-moityo-ki-t-zi  
 NEG.REA 3F.S-COP.TOT-navel-FORM-&-REA  
 ‘No, it is small and round (with navel form).’ (CMM)

Thus, *-ki* appears to be used in words that describe a particular form, and, although one could think that it is a part of their stem, its use with already known words rules out this thesis.

These long forms seem to tend to have the phonemes /c/ or /tʃ/, which suggests the existence of a certain sound symbolism. An example of a word with an onomatopoeic origin is in (244).



In (245), the root *cheenka-* of the adjective *chéenkari* ‘black’ is joined to the inalienable noun *-moo*<sup>69</sup> ‘hole’, and the whole word is verbalized with verbal affixes. In (246), the adjective *petyani* ‘table-like’ is incorporated into a verbal complex with the verbal stem *-owanki-* ‘put on something’.

Another example of a combination of an adjectival and a nominal stem with verbal suffixes is in (247).

- (247) Rotékiro **ikèpatsithátaki**.  
 r-otek-i-ro                    i-kipatsi-tha-t-ak-i  
 3M.S-shake-FRS-3F.O    3M.S-dirty-clothes-&-PFV-FRS  
 ‘He shakes his dirty clothes.’ (PV)

The adjective *kipatsi* ‘dirty’ is combined with the root *-tha-*, which is part of the inalienable noun *mathantsi* ‘clothes’, and this reduction is remarkable because it is the only example in my corpus. *Kipatsi* also means ‘soil’. The meanings ‘dirty clothes’ and ‘clothes with soil’ are equivalent, so that *ikèpatsithátaki* may also be considered a verbalized combination of two nouns if *kipatsi* is considered a noun.

Expressions of properties that involve body parts can be formed by an adjective and a noun that is a body part term. Four examples are in (248).

- (248) a. Nopiryáapakotàtzi/nopiryáawakotàtzi.<sup>70</sup>  
 no-piryaa-pako-t-atzi  
 1S-dry-hand/arm-&-PROG  
 ‘My hand is dry.’
- b. Ikítamápakotatzí.  
 i-kitama-pako-t-atzi  
 3M.S-white-hand/arm-&-PROG  
 ‘My hand/arm is white.’
- c. Nochéenkaitzítàtzi.  
 no-cheenka-itzi-atzi  
 1S-black-foot-PROG  
 ‘My foot is black.’

<sup>69</sup> The form *-moro* in (245) shows that the general shift /moro/>/mo:/ took place in UP Ashéninka only when the stress is on the first /o/, which is its normal occurrence as an independent noun, but did not take place when the stress is on the second /o/, as in this compound.

<sup>70</sup> The speaker uttered both options and said that both are right.

- d. Noháawaitzítàtzi.  
 no–haawa–itzi–t–atzi  
 1S–hot–foot–&–PROG  
 ‘My foot is hot.’

In (248), the pronominal prefix is followed by the adjective, then the body part, and then the progressive suffix. Note that, in the four examples, the relative suffix is absent, while it is present in the full form of these adjectives (*piryaari* ‘dry’, *kitamaari* ‘white’, *chéenkari* ‘black’, *háawari* ‘hot’).

When I tried to find out more about the long adjectival words denoting forms described in Section 5.6, speakers produced some compounds that are not actually long words denoting forms, but are very illustrative to show how adjectives can be combined in compounds; some of them are analysed in Table 20.

Table 20. Some compounds with adjectives

Ashéninka word	Description
hantháripentháki/ hantháwopentháki (m./f.)	‘Tall’, from <i>hanthari/hanthawo</i> ‘long’ and <i>penthaki</i> , which I only know from this and the following word in this table. The speaker explained that <i>hanthari/hanthawo</i> alone is used rather for something lying.
antáwopentháki	‘Long stick’, from <i>antawo</i> ‘big’ (f.) and <i>penthaki</i> , which I only know from this and the previous word in this table.
kityónkahontóokiro	‘Red ball, red eyes’, from <i>kityonka</i> ‘red’ and <i>-hontóokiro</i> , which appears in more words with colours and with the meanings ‘pale person’ and ‘yellow lemon’.
kitérihontóokiro	‘Pale person’, from <i>kiteri</i> ‘yellow’, and <i>-hontóokiro</i> , which appears in more words with colours and with the meanings ‘red ball, red eyes’ and ‘yellow lemon’.
kitérimoróki	‘Pale and ugly’, from <i>kiteri</i> ‘yellow’, <i>moro</i> ‘hole, gap’, and <i>ki</i> can be interpreted as a morpheme indicating form (glossed FORM in this thesis).
oryátyonkìni	‘Thin stick’. <i>Orya</i> is the stem for ‘small’, and <i>-ni</i> may be its detached adjectival suffix. According to Lev Michael (p.c. 2022), in other Campan languages, <i>-tyonki</i> is a classifier for slender cylindrical objects of a certain size and comes from <i>*-tonki</i> ‘bone’.
kamérohagákiri	‘Round and hollow tube’. <i>Kamero</i> means ‘round’, and the rest is unknown to me.
kaméronákiri	‘Round’ (a tree). <i>Kamero</i> means ‘round’, and the rest is unknown to me.

### 5.8. Coordination of adjectives

Like nouns, two or more adjectives can be coordinated with *éhatzi* ‘also’. Examples with two and three adjectives are in (249) and (250), respectively.

(249) *Miritsi kitamaari éhatzi pochari.*

miri-tsi kitamaa-ri éhatzi pocha-ri  
 drink-ALI white-REL also sweet-REL  
 ‘A white and sweet drink.’

(250) *Pankotsi antawo éhatzi kitamaari éhatzi antyáshipawotàki.*

panko-tsi anta-ro éhatzi kitamaa-ri éhatzi antyáshipa-ro-t-ak-i  
 house-AL big-F also white-REL also old-F-&-PFV-FRS  
 ‘A big, white and old house.’



