

LESSON VIII

Mini-Dialogue

Chako Kuntuks Wawa Kahkwa Chinook

"Learning to Talk Like (some) Chinooks

Siwash: Nika pos-wake-na-klatawa

Indian: I shouldn't go."

Boston: Ikta mika wawa?

White: "What (did) you say?"

Siwash: Ka-uk-pos-na-klatawa, nika

Indian: "Where I was going, I

wake-na-klatawa. Ya-wawa-klas

shouldn't go. He told them

nika pos-wake-na-klatawa

I shouldn't go."

The Jargon used in the dialogue above was a very unusual, localized form of the language recorded by Professor Melville Jacobs from Mrs. Victoria Howard of Oregon City in the early years of this century. Henry Zenk (1981) has found evidence that Indians of northern Oregon considered this form of Jargon, heavily influenced by the Lower Chinook (Proper), to be a "better" form of Jargon than that which was widely used. We should have some acquaintance with it since there is a large corpus of Chinook Jargon stories in this usage. A brief introduction to this form of Jargon is presented below, followed by a text that will give you some practice. Remember, though, that this was not general Jargon usage.

THE GRAMMAR OF VICTORIA HOWARD'S CHINOOK JARGON USAGE

The Pronouns

Although the independent Jargon pronouns which we have already learned were also used, a series of pronoun affixes was important.

<u>Pronoun</u>	<u>Independent form</u>	<u>Suffix form</u>	<u>Example</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
I	nika	na-	na-chako	'I come'
you	mika	ma-	ma-wawa	'you talk'
he, she	yaka	ya-	ya-mamook	'he/she makes'
we	nesika	ntsa-	ntsa-kow	'we tie'
you all	mesika	mtsa-	mtsa-klatawa	'you all go'
they	klaska	klas-	klas-klap	'they arrive'

Note that these have all been subject forms. There is one object suffix:

<u>Pronoun</u>	<u>Independent form</u>	<u>Suffix form</u>	<u>Example</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
them	klaska	-klas	na-elahan-klas	'I help them'
			ntsa-kow-klas	'we tie them'
			klas-kopet-klas	'they stop them'

The demonstrative pronoun is also abbreviated and used as a prefix:

this, that	okoke	uk-	uk-ya-klootchman	'that wife of his'
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Making Compound Words

There is a general order to the elements which combine to make the compound words of this type of Jargon. This can best be shown by simply providing you with several examples of such run-on words. The building blocks of these compounds are familiar to you:

pos-	"if, suppose, should"
wake-	"no, not (negative)"
alta-	"now (present)"
alki-	"later (future)"
klonas-	"maybe"
kopa-	"to"

There is one form which we have not yet encountered:

nihwa-	"let's (probably a derivative of nawitka)"
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Note how these word formatives are used in creating the following compound forms:

alta-na-lolo-klas	'I'm carrying them'
alki-ntsa-elahan-klas	'we'll help them'
wake-pos-ya-katawa	'he shouldn't go'
pos-wake-na-katawa	'I shouldn't go (note that these forms can occur in either order)'
kopa-uk-ma-chope	'to (that one) your grandfather'

A Text in Victoria Howard's Chinook-ized Jargon

The following text was collected and published by one of the most dedicated early ethnographers on the Northwest Coast, Melville Jacobs. It is part of a mythological tale which he copied in 1930, from the dictation of

the Clackamas (Upper) Chinook woman, Mrs. Victoria Howard. A few changes have been made in the transliteration to make the forms recognizable, and an interlinear translation has been provided.*

Klas-mitlait ikt-lamai pee-ya-tenas-ya-tenas. Uk-tenas-klootchman
They lived, one old lady and her grandchild. That little girl

kwonesum ya-klatawa hokometl lacamas. Kwonesum ya-chako kilapee
always went to gather camas. Always she came returned (home)

kopa-klas-house. Alta-ya-piah uk-lacamas. Alta-ya-potlatch-klas
to their house. Then she baked the camas. Then she gave them

kopa-ya-chitsh. Alta-pos-klas-muckamuck. Tomolla-weght
to her grandmother. Then they would eat. The next day also

ya-klatawa hokometl lacamas. Alta-pos-ya-chako kilapee kopa-klas-house
she went to gather camas Then when she came home to their house,

alta-pos-ya-potlatch-klas kopa-uk-ya-chitsh. Kwonesum kahkwa ya-mamook.
then she would give them to her grandmother. Always thus she did.

Alta ikt-sun uk-lamai ya-kloshe-mamook-iktaikta. Ya-mamook-baloom
Then one day that old woman was cleaning up things. She was sweeping

wake-siah kopa-klas-piah. Ya-klap uk-lacamas ya-skin. Hyas uk-skin.
not far from the fire. She found a camas (its) skin. A big skin.

New Vocabulary: lamai /lu.ma.ē/ (F) 'the old lady'
 kwonesum /kwon.sum/ (C) 'always, forever'

*This text was originally published in Melville Jacobs, "Notes on the Structure of Chinook Jargon" (1932). Franz Boas (1933) argued that other Chinook Jargon speakers did not use this form of Jargon, and that it was simply a form of the language heavily influenced by the mother tongue of Lower Chinook users of Jargon. Michael Silverstein (1972) expanded the point to suggest that the structural form of everyone's Jargon was autocratically conditioned by the structure of their own language. This does not, however, mean that everyone spoke Jargon in a significantly different way.

Ya-mamook-mitlait kopa-ya-teahwit. Kopet hyas yaka uk-skin
She put it on her leg (knee). It just fit (was big enough), that skin,

pos-ya-teahwit. Alta ya tumtum uk-lamai, "Ala! Kahkwa ya-mamook.
her leg. Then she thought that old lady, "Aha! Thus she does it.

Tenastenas ya-potlatch kopa-nika, alta yaka uk-hyashyas ya-muckamuck-klas."
Little ones she gives to me, then she the big ones eats them."

Alta wake-siah polaklie ya-chako uk-tenas-klootchman. Ya-mamook-piah.
Then almost at nightfall she came, the little girl. She made a fire.

Ya-mamook-piah uk-lacamas. Mamook-kopet-piah alta-ya-potlatch-klas
She cooked that camas. It got finished cooking, then she gave them

uk-ya-chitsh. Alta-ya-solleks. Wake-ya-tikegh muckamuck laly.
to her grandmother. Then she was angry. She did not want to eat for a long time.

Alta-klas-moosum. Chako-tomolla. Alta-weght-ya-klatawa hokometl lacamas.
Then they slept. The next day came. Then, again, she went to gather camas.

Wake-siah polaklie ya-chako. Uk-ya-chitsh ya-moosum maltini-uk-piah.
Nearly (at) dusk she came. Her grandmother was sleeping near the fire.

Ya-waum ya-opoots uk-lamai. Ya-tumtum, "klonas ya-sick na-chitsh."
She was warming her back, the old lady. She thought, "Maybe she is sick, my grandmother."

Ya-mamook-piah uk-lacamas. Alta-weght-ya-potlatch-klas kopa-uk-ya-chitsh.
She baked the camas. Then, again, she gave them to her grandmother.

Uk-lamai ya-solleks. Alta-weght-wake-tikegh muckamuck uk-lacamas.
The old lady was angry. Then, again she didn't want to eat the camas.

solleks /só.leks/ (?) 'angry'

Chako-tomolla, pee-alta-weght-ya-klatawa uk-tenas-klootchman hokometl
The next day arrived, and then, again, she went, the girl, to gather

lacamas. Alta-uk-lamai ya-klatawa kopa-stick. Ya-klap ikt hyas
camas. Then the old lady went to the woods. She found one large

goomstick. Hiyu goom uk-stick Alta ya-mamook olapitskee. Chako-klas
pine tree. Much pitch in that tree. Then she made a fire. They came out

uk-goomgoom. Chako-lolo ka-uk-goom ya-klatawa kopa-ilahee. Alta ya-wawa
that much gum. It became piled up that pitch; it went onto the ground. Now she said

kopa-uk-goom, "Alta ma-chako ekutosh. Na-tenas-na-tenas ya-potlatch kopa
to the gum, "Now you become a bad spirit. My granddaughter she gave to

nika uk-tenastenas lacamas. Alta-ya-muckamuck yaka uk-hyashyas."
me little camas. Then she ate, she (did), the big ones."

Alta ya-kilapee uk-lamai. Kloshe kahkwa.
Then she went home, the old woman. That's good (i.e. the end).