

Lesson 2:6

Core concept: many meanings of **pi**.

Such a tiny word! So many meanings!

Ask the average speaker of Chinook Jargon what the word **pi** means, and I bet they'll say "and". That's true. **Pi** does often mean "and":

O, pi kata naika tikki chako-tloosh!

oh, PI how I want become-good

"Oh, and how I want to improve!"

-- Elizabeth Wai, Chase, BC

Alta Looi yaka haiyoo mamook kopa moosmoos, pi wuht lamoto pi kosho.

now Louie he much work with cow, PI also sheep PI pig

"Right now Louie's busy working with cattle, and also sheep and pigs."

-- William Andrew, Head Lake, BC

So **pi** is a connecting word.

And...due to the Indigenous background of the Jargon, **pi** can also be used for other connecting purposes: it can also mean "or", or "but":

Haiyoo tilihum tlatawa swim kopa kreek, pi weik tlaska tl'ap (Ø).

lots.of people go swim in creek, PI not they find it

"There's lots of people swimming out in the creek, but they haven't found it (a dead body)."

-- Emile Timaskrit, Canim Lake, BC

Weet haiyoo kultus, pi tilihum kopa Enderbi, kanawei yaka tloosh.

wheat mighty ruined, PI people at Enderby, all they good

"The wheat's awful ruined, but the (Indigenous) folks at Enderby are all okay."

-- August, Enderby, BC

And...because of the Métis heritage that this language has (**pi** goes back to French-Canadian *puis*), this same word can also mean another kind of connection: "then..." / "and then..." / "that's when...":

Tl'oonas iht moon ... pi naika kopitt-mamook kopa tipso.

maybe one month... PI I finish-work on grass

"I reckon it'll be a month...then I'll be done haying."

-- Moose Dixon, Lac La Hache, BC

Poos atlki chako-skookum tlaska tumtum...pi atlki kanawei-tilihum haiyas-tikki

when eventually get-strong their heart... PI eventually all-people very-love

"Whenever their hearts get stronger...that's when everybody's going to love"

okok tanas-book.

that little-book

“that booklet.”

-- Emile Timaskrit, Canim Lake, BC

Related to this, **pi** also gets used to express the connecting idea “and so...”:

Naika mamook pit kopa maika ... pi naika tikki poos maika patlach chikamin.

I make bed for you... PI I want HYPOTHETICAL you send money

“I’ve built a bed for you...and so I want you to send some money.”

-- Etienne, Shuswap, BC

Pi naika weik kumtuks mamook-p’oo, pi naika kultus mamook-p’oo.

and I not know make-shooting, PI I no-good make-shooting

“And I’m no good at shooting, and so I did a bad job of shooting.”

-- Sam Sargent, Dog Creek Mountain, BC

(That’s a synonym for saying the more literal phrase **pi kakwa**.)

Stretch this thinking just a little farther, and now you’ll understand that **pi** can even express “before” and “until”. Let’s show examples to make this clear:

Leili yaka sik pi yaka mimaloos.

long.time she sick PI she die

“She was sick for a long time before she died.”

-- John Jackson, Lillooet, BC

Pi okok tilihum tlaska wawa poos heilo-ikta yaka kumtuks pi chako 4 oklak.

and those people they say HYPOTHETICAL no-thing she know PI come 4 o’clock

“And those folks said she supposedly was unconscious till 4 o’clock.”

-- Louis James, Spuzzum, BC

Now let’s introduce you to a bit different use of **pi**. There have been some Indigenous speakers who use **pi** even more, like to mark the start of virtually every sentence:

(A Native man described us:)

“**Pi** hayas-tloosh Boston, pi heilo kumtuks.”

PI very-good Whites, but not know

(We were all right but not very bright, or a little dumb.)

-- U.E. Fries, quoting a Colville Reservation man, WA

(That’s a lot like the speakers we’ve mentioned who start lots of questions with an extra **poos-**“HYPOTHETICAL” marker!)

One reason why **pi** means so many things in Chinook Jargon is, there just aren't very many of these "conjunction" words in this language. Seriously, aside from somebody once in a while accidentally saying English **and** when they're talking CJ, the only other conjunction is the silent "and". Remember that **Ø** from Lesson 2:3?

But be aware, there's a big difference between **pi** and silent "and". Remember, silent **Ø** only means "and" when you're connecting up 2 or more things that naturally go together, like "mother (and) father" or "bread (and) butter". We use **pi** for *everything* else!

Okay, speaking of connecting things together: Here is a good time to also mention the *explainer* words (which can answer **kata?** "how?/why?"). To tell someone that type of information, you can say either of these:

- **...(pi) kakwa...** "...(and) so..."; "...(and) that's why/how..."
(literally meaning "...(and) being like that...")
- **...(pi) kopa okok...** "...(and) because (of that)..."
(meaning literally "...(and) from that...")

The **(pi)** being in parentheses means that it's an optional word in these explainer phrases. Here are some examples where you'll see what we're talking about:

Naika mamook-mimaloos yaka, pi kakwa dleit naika k'wash.
I make-dead him (a horse), and so really I afraid
 "I killed him (a horse), and that's why I'm afraid."
 -- William Waspulawh, Canoe Creek, BC

Kopa okok, naika sik-tumtum kopa maika.
from that I hurt-heart to you
 "Because of that, I'm upset with you."
 -- Anastasie Dominic, Neskonlith, BC

Exercises 2:6

1 **Kwanisim naika tloochman yaka pi mimaloos.**
always my wife she PI die
 -- William Pierriche, Wilmer, BC

2 (Answering "Do you believe that priests are to blame?") **Pi naika tumtum kakwa.**
PI I think so
 -- Mountas, Colville Reservation, WA

3 **Poos maika wawa tloosh kakwa... pi naika mash naika tanaas kopa Kamloops skool-hous.**
if you say be.good that.way...PI I send my child to Kamloops school-house
 -- August, Enderby, BC

- 4 **Nanich, naika haiyoo mamook kopa haiyoo tanas-man pi haiyoo tanas-tloochman.**
look, I hard work with many young-man PI many young-woman
 -- Peter Cole, Barkerville, BC
- 5 **Pi kakwa, naika wawa kopa maika.**
PI KAKWA, I talk to you
 -- James, Canim Lake, BC
- 6 **Kopit naika wawa kopa maika...pi iht naika syutsum maika ilep.**
finished I talking to you... PI one.thing I tell you first
 -- August, Enderby, BC
- 7 **Naika mash iht tala pi lakit bit kopa maika.**
I send one dollar PI four dime to you
 -- John Jackson, Barkerville, BC
- 8 **Poos kopit st'iwietl, pi yaka chako outsaid.**
when finished prayer, PI "they" come outside
 -- Anonymous, BC
- 9 **Pi naika heilo sik naika tumtum kopa okok heilo mitlait iktas.**
but I not hurting my heart KOPA OKOK not having things
 -- Baptiste, Shuswap, BC
- 10 **Kopitt okok naika tl'ap-wawa, pi kopitt naika wawa.**
only this I find say, PI finished my talking
 -- William, location unknown, BC
- 11 **Naika heilo tl'ap iht kwata pi wuht iht tala.**
I not get.hold.of one quarter PI even one dollar
 -- John the policeman, Lillooet, BC
- 12 **Naika heilo kumtuks kantzih sun pi maika chako.**
I not know how.many day PI you come.here
 -- Anastasie Dominic, Neskonlith, BC

Tips for Southern speakers 2:6

Unlike the way Southern CJ is spoken, the Northern dialect doesn't have any special words for "or" (*əbə*), "but" (*bət*), or "although" (*q'əχchi*)! So you have to learn to get creative with **pi**. In this way, the Northern dialect has stayed just like the older Central dialect of the lower Columbia River, which is the shared ancestor with Southern CJ.

Another word that the North doesn't have is *q^híwa* for “because”. But as a Southern speaker, you should have no trouble understanding the Northern **pi kakwa** and **kopa okok**.

The Southern dialect doesn't really have a silent “and”. Keep your ears open for it in the North!