Tkop Man Wawa[1]

Settler Use of Chinook Jargon in the Post-Decline Period

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[1] **Translation: tkop man wawa: white man talk.**

Abstract

Chinook Jargon is a pidgin dialect that emerged in the Pacific Northwest as a distinct composition of 54 parent languages in the 1830s through long decades of trading, intermarriage, and negotiations. The expansion of the pidgin was predicated on settler-Indigenous contact in its myriad forms, though contemporary accounts indicate that Chinook Jargon was centered around the region's immensely profitable fur trade. As settlement, and thus settler-Indigenous contact intensified, various mass arrivals in search of gold made the pidgin a necessary tool for settlers and Indigenous residents of the Pacific Northwest. At its height, Chinook Jargon was spoken by hundreds of thousands of people as a second language throughout Oregon, Washington, British Columbia, and Southeast Alaska. As industrialization and the consolidation of nation-states followed periods of early settlement, negotiation and contact with Indigenous peoples became less necessary for settlers. By the early 1900s, the pidgin entered into a precipitous decline, largely falling out of use by the 1920s when industrial economies, residential schools, and settler populations had emerged as dominant forces in the linguistic environment. After this decline, clades within settler society continued to find significance in "talking Jargon." By attaching themselves to Chinook Jargon, settlers sought to claim the connections to Indigeneity and the authenticity associated with a "dead" contact pidgin. This conscious identity construction raises important questions about how a "dead" pidgin persisted among settlers for decades and was eventually fundamentally transformed by them.

The literature dealing with Chinook Jargon is unfortunately very limited, particularly in view of the dramatic impact that the pidgin had on defining interactions in regional history. Despite the limited library of information, the published works on Chinook Jargon are excellent and salient, providing an efficient core base that scholars can work from. In the case of this thesis, they provide the historical and linguistic background necessary for detailed inquiries beyond their original scope. Perhaps the most important text on Chinook Jargon, is George Lang's *Making Wawa,* a highly detailed early history of the beginnings of the pidgin. From its origins in early nineteenth century trading interactions, Lang reconstructs how Chinook Jargon was formed in "hothouse" communities, traveled along trade networks, and developed into a unique and recognizable dialect.[2] With regard to the focus of this thesis, Lang highlights settler usage of the pidgin as occurring in reference to profitable trade relations, an "auxiliary tool" of communication.[3] Henry Zenk and Tony A. Johnson's *A Northwest Language of Contact, Diplomacy, and Identity* focuses largely on the Grande Ronde Tribal Confederation and how it became a Chinook Wawa speaking community. References to settler usage are minimal, but the example of Grand Ronde as a linguistically insular fluent community provides useful boundaries for highlighting the distinct differences between settler and Indigenous persistent usage. John Lutz's *Makúk* is a history of contact economies and therefore finds itself consistently engaging with Chinook Jargon as it existed historically. Most significantly to this project, Lutz discusses how settler-Indigenous contact defined and informed labor relations, highlighting certain labor environments in the post-decline era as contact spaces. While Lutz does not directly reference post-decline settler usage, he does highlight the vitality of Chinook Jargon to pre-decline interactions and thus

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[2] George Lang, *Making Wawa: The Genesis of Chinook Jargon* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2008), 85-100.
[3] Lang, *Making Wawa*, 21.

informs on the characteristics and values settlers assigned to the pidgin.[4] Emma Lowman's

"Mamook Kom'tax Chinuk Pipa/Learning to Write Chinook Jargon" is a detailed

exploration of LeJeune's Chinook Pipa writing system. Rather than highlighting Chinook

Pipa or Chinook Jargon generally as an inevitable tool of colonial domination, Lowman

points to organic literacy growth in Indigenous communities. She identifies Chinook Pipa as

a tool for these communities rather than one that existed exclusively for the conversion

efforts of Catholic missionaries. By understanding Chinook Jargon in Lowman's framing of

the pidgin as a non-displacing linguistic entity, we can also understand how it was

transformed by post-decline settler society.[5]

  Yet the existing historical scholarship does not deal directly with settler usage of

Chinook Jargon in a post decline context. This gap in scholarship is itself revealing,

highlighting the unspoken assumption that settler interaction with Chinook Jargon either

mirrored that of Indigenous peoples or did not exist outside of settler-Indigenous interactions.

Vitally, these texts provide the basis for defining this usage in the first place, creating an

understanding that challenges certain settler constructions of the dialect. Published in 1998, *A*

Voice Great Within Us, by Charles Lillard and Terry Glavin, is a general history of Chinook

Jargon mixed with political and poetic commentary on the nature of the language and its

decline. A unique text, its historical conclusions on the pidgin are standard, but the personal

convictions and artistic instincts of the authors are deeply informative. Highlighting the

meaning, importance, and history of settler use of Chinook Jargon, Lillard and Glavin discuss

the pidgin under the title of "our" language.[6] Dealing directly with settler perspectives, *A*

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[4] John S. Lutz, *Makúk: A New History of Aboriginal-White Relations* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2008).
[5] Emma Battell Lowman, "Mamook Kom'tax Chinuk Pipa/Learning to Write Chinook Jargon: Indigenous Peoples and Literacy Strategies in the South Central Interior of British Columbia in the Late Nineteenth Century," *Historical Studies In Education* 29, no. 1 (2017): 77–98.
[6] Charles Lillard and Terry Glavin, *A Voice Great Within Us* (Vancouver BC: New Star Books, 1998), 9, 22-36.

Voice Great Within Us is useful both as a historical text and as a unique example of settler arguments that lay claim to Chinook Jargon. By framing the pidgin as belonging to settlers by virtue of their habitation of the region, only comprehensible to those in and from British Columbia, the authors construct it as a linguistic indicator of authenticity. By framing the loss of this language as a lamentable lapse in settler traditions and a break in settler connections to Indigeneity, *A Voice Great Within Us* cuts to the quick of settler claims to Indigeneity through language. Glavin's appeals to a language bill and the inaccessible nature of Chinook Jargon to people not "from here", is particularly exemplary. Written at the end of the twentieth century, *A Voice Great Within Us* is the culmination of decades of settler interaction with Chinook Jargon as a cultural identifier. The standing assumption in *A Voice Great Within Us* is that Chinook Jargon has always been an authentic piece of regional settler identity, that it is an innate but forgotten piece of an Indigenous settler past. Conversely, this thesis contends that Chinook Jargon was constructed in the post-decline period as a tool for settler legitimacy. This rests on the historical reality that the decline of Chinook Jargon was tied to the disappearance of contact environments and therefore represented a decline in the efficacy of the pidgin in the settler world. The Chinook Jargon used by settlers post-decline was not a language for the sake of communication, but for cultural identification. As an identifier, Chinook Jargon allowed settlers to assert authenticity and, most importantly, to create a close association with Indigeneity. This effortful employment of a "vanished" settler-Indigenous pidgin to justify and reinforce settler understandings of identity and land rights is an instructive linguistic example of how language can be used to support narratives of significance. The transformation of Chinook Jargon from a ubiquitous second language to an expression of settler exclusivity and land rights is one that warrants explanation and

exploration.

Seeking to designate the post-decline use of a pidgin dialect as a cultural identifier will require a mutual understanding of historical periods and terms. After this understanding is established, this thesis will pursue an intensive review of historical evidence to explore post-decline usage. This analysis will include a detailed exploration of how this historical reality has informed modern constructions of Chinook Jargon. This will necessitate a detailed interrogation of *A Voice Great Within Us* and related works and arguments.

I - Historical Background And Key Definitions

Chinook Jargon is a pidgin dialect composed of some 54 parent languages that was first recorded in the Pacific Northwest during the early contact period.[7] The five major parent languages are French, English, Nuu-chah-nulth, Chinook and Chehalis. The name Chinook Jargon reflects the earliest lexicon, much of which was derived from Lower Chinook. This resulted in the general misunderstanding that the pidgin Chinook Jargon was in fact a pared down version of Lower Chinook, lending it its present name.[8] There is no precise moment that marks the emergence of Chinook Jargon. It emerged over time as cross-cultural understandings developed. Settler references to predecessor trade dialects date as far back as 1792 when John Hoskins, on board the *Columbia Rediviva,* recorded the employment of broken Nuu-chah-nulth for trading purposes in the wider region.[9] As trade expanded in the 1830s, the collection of phrases known as Chinook Jargon became an expressive dialect.[10] Dialects have emerged across the world in comparable conditions; Michif, Lucheux Jargon and Souriquois, similarly developed as a result of emergent barter economies in settler-Indigenous contexts. Profitable

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[7] Lang, *Making Wawa,* 3.
[8] Lang, *Making Wawa,* 41-42.
[9] Lang, *Making Wawa,* 37.
[10] Lang, *Making Wawa,* 124.

intercultural communication was the crux of the fur trade, and Chinook Jargon proved to be a key tool for traders seeking closer ties. Métis fur traders working for the Hudson's Bay Company entered into mixed marriages, in part to secure good trading relations and personal safety.[11] Intermarriage resulted in extensive linguistic contact throughout the fur trading communities. Company men were well-practiced linguists in their own right and readily applied their talents as polyglots to the new trading environment. This practice of region-wide intermarriage developed and expanded the dialect to include new languages and polities, rendering it a ubiquitous tool for contact in the region in the ensuing decades. This occurred largely through the influence of communities such as Fort Vancouver, where mixed families created a linguistic "hothouse" for the development of Chinook Jargon.[12] The pidgin became so significant to settler-Indigenous relations that Governor James Douglas of the Hudson's Bay Company used it in his public meetings with Indigenous leaders.[13]

By the time gold was discovered in the Fraser Canyon area in 1858, Chinook Jargon had become central to settler-Indigenous communication in the region. The language was taken up by arriving gold miners, many of whom did not speak English. They benefited from the simplification of Indigenous words through the pidgin, allowing them to engage in efficient communication.[14] As they moved inland, the miner's encounters with Indigenous peoples carried Chinook Jargon along with them. These encounters were often initiated with the universal application of Chinook Jargon, thus compelling interior groups to learn it.[15] The sinews of trade and thus profit were, at the time of the gold rush, reliant on Indigenous peoples throughout the region. A single common tongue between the dozens of languages that populated gold-rush

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[11] Lang, *Making Wawa*, 5, 87.
[12] Lang, *Making Wawa*, 85-100.
[13] "Indian School," *British Colonist* (Victoria, BC), December 25, 1860, 3.
[14] Lang, *Making Wawa*, 37; Henry Zenk and Tony A Johnson, "A Northwest Language of Contact, Diplomacy, and Identity," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 111, no.4 (2010): 445-7.
[15] Lang, *Making Wawa*, 140.

British Columbia proved invaluable. This prompted a proliferation of dictionaries throughout the period. These early scholarly reckonings from regional linguists often included words not seen in any other records. The most prominent of these is George Gibbs' 1863 work *A Dictionary of the Chinook Jargon, or Trade Language of Oregon*. Gibbs was a prolific polyglot and regional observer, and his dictionary provides a revealing picture of the limited settler understanding of the bounds of Chinook Jargon.[16]

Use of Chinook Jargon continued to expand with contact, as the pidgin proved itself consistently valuable while English fluency among Indigenous peoples remained relatively low. Settler speakers often lacked fluency or the ability to pronounce certain words, and communication could be stilted. Decades after the gold rush period had ended, Jean-Marie LeJeune, an oblate who spoke twenty Indigenous languages fluently, created a writing system for the pidgin. In 1890, his Duployan shorthand-based written language, "Chinook Pipa," spread throughout multiple interior Indigenous communities.[17] Designed to be learned rapidly, LeJeune's shorthand is considered by modern scholars to be a marker of advanced fluency in Chinook Jargon.[18] Printing the "Kamloops Wawa" for several years and writing numerous letters in his "Chinook Pipa" shorthand, LeJuene's communication with Indigenous parishes represented a new paradigm of communication. The many surviving letters exchanged in this relationship allow for a unique insight into Indigenous literary dialogues outside of English-language communication. Referencing local occurrences, daily lives and economic circumstances, these letters demonstrate how Chinook Pipa introduced new modes of written expression among parishes. The period in which LeJeune was codifying his shorthand coincided

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[16] George Gibbs, *A Dictionary of the Chinook Jargon, or, Trade Language of Oregon* (New York: Cramoisy Press, 1863).

[17] Lowman, "Mamook Kom'tax Chinuk Pipa," 77-98; Jean-Marie LeJeune, "Kamloops Wawa," *Kamloops Wawa* (Kamloops, BC), Roman Catholic Diocese of Kamloops, January 1, 1895.

[18] The writer has engaged with the teaching materials for writing the shorthand in a classroom setting and LeJeune's observations that the shorthand can be adequately learned in the space of a few hours are indeed true.

with a period of high recorded usage, wherein the pidgin maintained its place in the contact environment into the later years of the nineteenth century.[19] In this interim post gold rush period, mass immigration and industrialization were in their early stages and thus were yet to rock the linguistic foundation. As these forces expanded, dependence on trading relationships, verbally arranged labor agreements, and early contact economic models left the pidgin in a position that was implicitly recognized by settlers as temporary.

A utilitarian second language for all but a few settlers, Chinook Jargon was abandoned as the regional lingua franca in favor of English as conditions shifted. In order to define settler speakership in a post-decline period, this thesis must first trace the decline itself, combining historical inquiry and data in order to create a formal timeline. The data was collected by tracking the yearly usage of two widely used Chinook Jargon terms, "siwash" and "klootchman," in the *British Colonist* paper from 1858-1958.[20] These terms were selected because they were widespread in this period and responded well to the scanning technology used to collate the data. The *British Colonist* was used because it was in print for the entire period, 1858-1958, and routinely collected articles from smaller regional papers. The data from this survey is visible in Figure 1 in the appendix and should be understood as a supporting statement to the historical evidence.

The decline of Chinook Jargon occurred through the convergence of several historical factors: namely, the mass arrival of English speakers by railway, industrialization, the consolidation of the settler state, and the expansion of residential schools. An innate facet of the settler state, the mass importation of white settlers was planned from the outset of settlement. This effort was possible only through extensive mobilization of labor and capital, culminating in

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[19] Dave Robertson, *Kamloops Chinuk Wawa, Chinuk pipa, and the vitality of pidgins*, UVic Space Institutional Repository, 2011, 12-14.
[20] **Translation: siwash: Indigenous,** "**klootchman: Indigenous woman. *do the translations need to be bolded?**

the arrival of the railroad in the late nineteenth century. This produced exponential population

growth across the region. In British Columbia, the population doubled from 49,459 in 1881 to

98,173 by 1891; a decade later it nearly doubled again, reaching 178,657 by 1901.[21] This

extreme spike in population was almost entirely composed of English-speaking immigrants, the

culmination of a government campaign to establish an "Anglo-Saxon" colony.[22] Washington

State experienced similar growth, expanding from a population of 75,116 in 1880 to 357,252 in

1890, almost tripling to 1,141,990 by 1910.[23] These distinct periods of mass immigration,

facilitated by railway connections, fostered an environment in which the English-speaking

population now exceeded the Indigenous one.

Shifts in population that produced rapid linguistic change and provided the labor base for

an industrialized economy occurred simultaneously with adverse programs that formally targeted

Indigenous languages. The most prominent and direct of these efforts manifested in the

expansion of the physical and policy infrastructure supporting residential schools. In British

Columbia, the 1894 Indian Agent powers expansion and a 1910 funding increase allowed these

institutions to increase the reach and intensity of efforts to force the English language on

Indigenous children.[24] From 1889-1904, within the period of mass white immigration, 14 of the

18 residential schools in British Columbia were constructed, and attendance numbers

dramatically increased.[25] In the United States, the Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative saw

the establishment of 15 schools in Washington State and nine in Oregon.[26] By the early 1900s, 42

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[21] Thomas. A. Lascelles, *Roman Catholic Indian Residential Schools in British Columbia* (Vancouver: Oblates of Mary Immaculate, 1990), 93.
[22] "The London Times And The Railway," *Daily British Colonist* (Victoria, BC). April 21, 1877, 2.
[23] United States Census Bureau, *Population, Reports By State, Population-Washington*, 1913, 970.
[24] Aimee Craft and Phil Fontaine, *A Knock on the Door: The Essential History of Residential Schools from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2016), 19, 33, 51.
[25] James Redford, "Attendance at Indian Residential Schools in British Columbia, 1890-1920," *BC Studies* 44, no.12 (1979): 47.
[26] Bryan Newland, *Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative Investigative Report*, Department Of The Interior, 2022, 82-84.

schools had been established in the region, each accommodating student populations in the hundreds; later, certain schools accommodated over 1,000 students.[27] Simultaneously, the consolidation of the settler state eliminated contact environments. The 1905 Indian Act amendment permitted the removal of any reserve within a town, which accelerated the disappearance of contact spaces.[28] Six years later, in 1911, the Oliver Act passed, authorizing municipal expropriation of reserve land. In Victoria, changes like these accommodated the removal of the Songhees reserve from its location in the inner harbour.[29] As the English-speaking settler populations increased, the residential school system expanded, and the settler state grew, Chinook Jargon – a language dependent on contact – began its rapid decline.

This historical reality is represented in Fig. 1, wherein the period of decline is shown to encompass 1900-1915: by 1920, usage was negligible. By this point, the frontier had closed, fur and gold resources had been exhausted, and industrialized logging, farming, mining, and fishing superseded trading relationships reliant on a common language.[30] This project will thus define the post-decline period as encompassing the rapid period of decline and the years afterward, 1900-1920 and onwards. The "modern" era referred to in this project begins in the 1960s. This distinction is made because this period occurred several decades after the death of settlers who had lived in the early contact communities of the Pacific Northwest. After the death of this generation, the pidgin existed in a state temporally distant from the contact environments that proliferated it and thus was more readily disconnected from its historical reality.

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[27] Redford, *Attendance at Indian Residential Schools*, 47.

[28] Margaret Conrad and Alvin Finkel, *History of the Canadian Peoples, 1867 - Present* (Toronto: Pearson Longman, 2006), 60.

[29] Renisa Mawani," Legal geographies of Aboriginal segregation in British Columbia: The making and unmaking of the Songhees reserve, 1850–1911*," in Isolation: Places and Practices of Exclusion* (Taylor & Francis, 2011), 163-180.

[30] Jakob Svorkdal, "The Decline of Chinook Jargon in BC" (conference presentation at Chinook Lulu, October 2023).

This decline did not occur everywhere, particularly not in Indigenous communities isolated by geography and by design. The Grand Ronde Tribal Confederation is the most well-studied instance of this phenomenon. Located in coastal Oregon, it is at present the largest persistent speakership community in the world. The Confederation was formed as a result of the concentration of several tribes into the central Yamhill Valley by the US government to clear land for white settlement and prevent further "Indian difficulties."[31] The act of forcing together 27 tribes without a language in common necessitated the use of Chinook Jargon in the Grand Ronde "Chinook Wawa" as a primary language of communication. Over the following decades, Chinook Jargon became a cultural identifier in the Confederation. In this context, the pidgin emerged as a direct challenge to the aggressive efforts by settler society to force Indigenous peoples to speak English. Elders in the Grand Ronde "preferred (Chinook Wawa) to English [...] memories of past injustice remained sharp."[32] Under these conditions, the Confederation became the center of fluent speakership in the Pacific Northwest. Elders who died in the 1990s were part of a series of generations exclusive to the Grande Ronde that had learned Chinook Wawa as a first language. Only in this context can Chinook Wawa be referred to as a creole. The fluency observed in these generations is not found elsewhere in the region and represents an exclusive example of Chinook Jargon speakership cultivated in a self-contained Indigenous community.[33] This project, which focuses on settler usage, will not cover the Grand Ronde in detail, however it is worth highlighting as a historical and modern speakership hub. The Grand Ronde Confederation existed as a post-decline fluent community because it was a concentrated Indigenous population using the language generationally, in explicit opposition to English

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[31] Zenk and Johnson, *A Northwest Language*, 457-458.
[32] Zenk and Johnson, *A Northwest Language*, 459-460.
[33] Zenk and Johnson, *A Northwest Language*, 459-460.

introduction efforts. In the context of assessing settler speakership, the conditions for fluency outlined above are important precepts to consider.

When discussing settler speakership, this thesis will make frequent reference to the "pioneer identity," a broad concept that has manifested across North American settler communities. For the purposes of this analysis, the pioneer identity should be understood to include the values of individualism, hardiness, wisdom, and connection to the land associated with earlier settlers. Most importantly for settler culture, this identity confers an advanced right to the land. Pioneers were early arrivals and thus were granted a more authentic claim to habitation over newcomers. Those included in the pioneer identity were almost entirely white English speakers, with very few non-white settlers granted the same innate right to the land.

Constructed some decades after pioneers had settled and "newcomers" began to arrive, pioneer identity evolved over time to fit the needs of settler society. Most "true" pioneers were dead by the 1940s, at which point the identity had become a cornerstone of Pacific Northwest settler culture. The consistent maintenance of this identity worked to assuage settler anxieties about their unstable culture and lack of right to the land. As each generation of newcomers arrived, the previous generation, which attached itself to the pioneer identity, implied that the new generation were invasive. This system of exclusion became par for the course in the Pacific Northwest as settlers looked to the land and the recent past to give them legitimacy against both Indigenous land claims and "foreign invaders."[34] This focus on the "order of arrival" was vital to white settler exclusivity. For example, Chinese people in British Columbia were frequently depicted as latecomers to be expelled, despite arriving with, rather than after, white settlement. This practice bolstered the authority and legitimacy of white settlers over so-called late arrivals.

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[34] Timothy J. Stanley, *Contesting White Supremacy: School Segregation, Anti-Racism, and the Making of Chinese Canadians* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2011), 64.

Thus, racial presumptions about arrival amplified the invention of Indigeneity for white settlers, who pictured themselves as natural residents of the colonized Pacific Northwest. In order to uphold a white settler state, the construction of the white settlers within it as Indigenous, or at least more so than non-white settlers, was essential.[35] In short, the pioneer identity in the Pacific Northwest associated the values of individualism, hardiness, and wisdom with white long-term habitation in the region. At first restricted to early arrivals, the pioneer identity extended over time to fit the needs of the new settler society. As the twentieth century progressed, pioneer identity shifted from outward expressions of whiteness and order of arrival and connected itself to the natural environment and claims to authenticity. The ephemeral pioneer identity instituted itself as a cultural pillar throughout the settler Pacific Northwest, informing societal organization and behaviors. In the case of this research project, it proved vital to the manifestations of identity through language.

More formal designations of pioneer status differed from the more distant, romantic connection outlined above. Although processes were not uniform, the practice of designating community members as "pioneers" in an official capacity was common across the Pacific Northwest. In many communities, this took the form of an actual "pioneer medallion," which was awarded to those who had been born in the area and lived there for over 35-50 years, making significant contributions to the community.[36] In this context, references to non-white residents as pioneers appear. For example, at his death in 1935, Tom Long, owner of the Long Hing Logging Company, was designated a "Pioneer Nanaimo Chinese" due to his long residence in the city.[37] These designations were rarely granted to non-white persons, highlighting the fact that even in

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[35] Mariana Valverde, *The Age of Light, Soap, and Water: Moral Reform in English Canada, 1885-1925* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2019), 106, 110.

[36] British Columbia Pioneer Society, *Constitution, by-Laws and Rules of Order of the British Columbia Pioneer Society: Organized April 28, 1871*, The Society, 1874; Robert Hilliar Hiscocks, *Pioneer Medallion Form,* Item GR-1489.25.2.43, Royal BC Museum, 1966.

[37] "Late Tom Long, City Chinese, Laid To Rest," *Nanaimo Free Press* (Nanaimo, BC), January 8, 1935, 4.

the broad confines of long-term residency, the pioneer status was designed to be provided to white people. In fact, the case highlighted here is one of very few in the local area, whereas any elderly white person who died typically received the label "pioneer."[38] The deaths of these pioneers were announced in the paper, and their graves were specially marked. By the late 1940s, the last of the region's designated pioneers had passed away.[39]

Chinook Jargon emerged in the early 1830s, proliferated and expanded throughout the rest of the century, and declined into the early twentieth century. Throughout this period, settlers who had previously used the language as a necessary tool for dialogue with Indigenous peoples quickly abandoned it when it was no longer needed. Defining the often ephemeral concepts of settler identities produced by this historical reality begins the process of interrogating the complicated and layered realities of cultural self-identification through language.

II- Identifying and Surveying Post-Decline Settler Speakership

In order to determine how Chinook Jargon existed in a post-decline context among settlers, this project has used written records, interviews and external reports. As a language that was, and remains, a part of settler identity building, Chinook Jargon usage raises questions that are inherently political. No comprehensive survey to organize the available evidence existed, and a review of that kind had to be conducted to answer the questions put forward. I conducted this necessary review using dozens of regional newspapers, highlighting articles that included recorded spoken use and articles that used Chinook Jargon itself to communicate. Likewise, larger pieces of textual evidence like dictionaries, songbooks, and memoirs produced by settlers in the region were reviewed and assessed for fluency. Audio interviews and transcripts containing isolated phrases of Chinook Jargon were reviewed in their totality. Historical efforts

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[38] "Nanaimo Pioneer Called By Death," *The Daily Colonist* (Victoria, BC), March 7, 1928, 5.
[39] Mrs. Sarah L Byrd interview by Sarah B. Wrenn, *Pioneer Life*, Oregon, 1939, Manuscript/Mixed Material, 6.

to organize Chinook Jargon usage are an ideal starting point for directly addressing how the pidgin functioned within settler self-identification. A 1939 Federal Writers Project effort proved to be a highly relevant example of the assigning and claiming of identities inherent to settler uses of the pidgin. Seeking out elders in local communities for posterity, the Federal Writers Project recorded Sarah L. Byrd of Portland, Oregon, speaking about Chinook Jargon. Byrd recalls, "I us'd to talk Jargon like a Siwash," meaning she used to speak Chinook Jargon as fluently as an Indigenous person. Byrd, with a group of women, would converse exclusively in jargon, and she recalls a specific personal conversation with one of them. At 96 years old, Byrd's recollection is quite vivid and revealing, and her references to a larger group of speakers are likewise informative. Her ability to speak fluent jargon, by her own reckoning, grants her an association with Indigeneity – "like a Siwash" – and places her in an exclusive group of speakers. Her inclusion in the Federal Writers Project under the "pioneer" designation demonstrates the position of the white jargon-talking elderly as oral history repositories.[40]

A 1948 *Vancouver Province* article highlights a similar connection. In it, the author remarked on responses to a call for translations, that "the old Chinook Jargon isn't as dead as I thought it was." He also highlighted the fluency of his responders, remarking that they had little trouble with translations and likely did not use a dictionary, recognized then as it is now as a marker of fluency. The nine respondents gave an excellent general accounting of persistent settler use in British Columbia. Sawmill foremen, RCMP officers, judges, and Methodist ministers all recalled the language.[41] In this article, the speakers are highlighted as people with contact pasts and connections to a pioneer identity. In discussing the "old-timers," Chinook Jargon speaker W.J O'Neill recalled:

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[40] Mrs. Sarah L. Byrd*, Pioneer Life*, 4.
[41] John Graham, "I Get A Hymn, Too," *Vancouver Province* (Vancouver, BC), August 6, 1948, 17.

The daddy of surviving Chinook talkers…is Judge Lester Mulvaney of Burns Lake. He can put the inventor to shame when he gets going. But Chinook talkers are few and far between now; and only a few of the really old Indians know it.[42]

A translation from a man who claimed to be British Columbia's "oldest living Native Son," and another respondent's reference to persistence among pioneer clubs, further this connection. The unnamed respondent echoes the "Native Son's" assertion: "You can attend any meeting of the Pioneers' Association and find a dozen who can, and do, exchange pleasantries in the jargon."[43] Notably, the persistence outlined in this comment moreso addresses slang use of Chinook Jargon words in Pacific Northwestern English. This form of recollection, the short phrases and greetings of the congregations of older settlers, represents Chinook Jargon as an identifier, not a language of communication. This relationship is highlighted in a quotation of a Similkameen Pioneer Banquet; the pioneers talk jargon, but their particulars are replaced by a (!**), an indicator that the listener did not know how to properly record what was being said.[44] The representation of Chinook Jargon as an identifier is at its most salient in this instance; identified by (!**), it is understood as a code. To the recorder, the words are not significant or are incomprehensible; the outside observer is focused on Chinook Jargon as an entity. Similarly, late after the decline of the pidgin, a 1952 article in the *Victoria Colonist* highlighted the Chinook Jargon spoken by sea captain T.E. Morrison, who learned it as a child in a Prince Rupert store. The paper framed his use of the pidgin as "Dutch" to the readers.[45]

When examining settler usage post-decline, there is a marked difference between used rather than spoken Chinook Jargon. This project highlights "used" Chinook Jargon to refer to the

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[42] John Graham, "Crock For Translator," *Vancouver Province* (Vancouver, BC), August 6, 1948, 17.

[43] John Graham, "Street Corners," *Vancouver Province* (Vancouver, BC), August 6, 1948, 17.

[44] "Premium On Good Stories As Old Timers Gather In Similkameen," *Princeton Star* (Princeton, BC), August 24, 1933, 1-3; Dave Robertson, *1933: Premium On Good Stories As Old Timers Gather In Similkameen*, Chinook Jargon, August 29, 2023.

[45] "Pair Shoot Breeze in Chinook Lingo," *Victoria Colonist* (Victoria, BC), March 29, 1952, 5.

settlers employing isolated phrases or single words, sometimes entire paragraphs of non-fluent or anglicized jargon. This can be found in invitations, recalled stories, local flavor or folk songs. In these uses, the demonstrated Chinook Jargon did not indicate a fluent speaker, but rather a recitation for posterity. These usage examples often contain heavily anglicized Chinook Jargon-based pejoratives and make grammatical and spelling errors. This phenomenon is exemplified in a 1951 printing of the folk song "Klooches Sika Klatawa," attributed to a "tillicum."[46] This written recording contained several words that are in the Chinook Jargon lexicon, but is replete with errors and anglicized terms demonstrating a lack of fluency.[47] Most notably, the use of the pejorative Chinook Jargon-derived slur, the distinctly settler turn of phrase "klooches," indicates a non-fluent, heavily anglicized version of the pidgin. In a similar vein, a 1953 Seattle University newspaper article made extensive use of Chinook Jargon to describe an outing. Notably referring to the outing as a "Siwash Social" or "Indian Social," the paper provides a full, untranslated account of a celebration on Bainbridge Island. The club's usage of the language in full but grammatically confused sentences, and the labeling of club members as "Siwashes" – a pejorative at this time – indicates the exclusive nature of the language and the Indigeneity it carried.[48] In these cases, settlers were using a language they did not speak or at least no longer spoke as a novelty connected with pioneer history and interaction with Indigenous peoples. By associating themselves with Indigenous peoples through language, settlers using Chinook Jargon inferred that they had been in the Pacific Northwest during the bygone contact period and were therefore more legitimate residents.

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[46] **Translation: tillicum: person or good relation.**
[47] "Klooches Sika Klatawa," *Vancouver Daily Province* (Vancouver, BC)*,* August 2, 1951, 19.
[48] "Siwash Social*," Seattle University Spectator* (Seattle, WA), February 26, 1953, 2; Dave Robertson, *1953: Siwash Social At Seattle U,* Chinook Jargon, May 28, 2020.

Settlers with an awareness of Chinook Jargon who inserted a "cultus," "tillicums," "tyee," or "hyas tlush" into their writing and speech did so to lend their statements an air of authenticity, true pioneer talk, "Indian language."[49] One pertinent example of this form of Chinook Jargon is Laura-Bell Downey-Barlett's *Chinook-English Songs*. Producing a Chinook Jargon dictionary and working at length with the language to produce a songbook, Downey-Barlett had some capacity with the pidgin.[50] Yet, her songbook was largely nonsensical with respect to the Chinook Jargon songs she translated. She directly translated well-known English songs into Chinook Jargon, rendering them for consumption as a novelty rather than for comprehension. Preeminent linguist Dave Robertson highlights her writing as an example of "bad jargon."[51] Particularly useful for this investigation, the act of direct translation, likely from a dictionary, is a hallmark of non-fluency. To highlight this, I have provided a translation of her version of "America." in which incorrectly spelled Chinook Jargon words have been highlighted:

My country 'tis of thes, Sweet land of liberty,

Of thee I sing: Land where my fathers died,

Land of the pilgrims' pride;

From every mountain side,

Let freedom ring

Nika illahee, kah-kwa mika, ,

T'see illahee, wake e-li-te,

Kah-kwa. mika, nika **shunta.**

Illahee, kah nika papa **mamoloos**,

[49] **Translation: cultus: worthless, tyee: chief, hyas tlush: very good.**
[50] Laura Bell Downey-Bartlett, *Chinook-English Songs* (Portland, Oregon: Kubli-Miller Co., 1914), 1-4.
[51] Dave Robertson, *Songs Of LBDB (Part 2: America),* Chinook Jargon, March 9, 2020.

Illahee **klosh tellicum** chaco;

Kee-Kwilla konaway **lemoti**,

Mamook wake e-li-te tin-tin.

Direct translation:

My land, of you

Sweet land, no slaves

Of you I sing

Land, where my father died

Land, good people came to

Under every mountain

Make no slaves music.

While there are no formal right or wrong Chinook Jargon spellings, there are unique diversions from spelling that, in addition to impeding understanding, represent non-fluency, dictionary reliance and anglicization. This is what has been highlighted here: errors that underscore Bartlett's work as Chinook Jargon for people who recognized the sound of the language and little else. The purpose of the 1914 songbook was not to be comprehensible, but to produce Chinook-esque songs for English speakers. In the foreword, Downey-Bartlett tellingly produced an image of the language centered on settlers, dedicating the book to pioneers, the "men and women who suffered extreme hardships, surrounded by forests which were infested with savage Indians [...] who felled trees, builded (sic.) homes and made possible the wonderful

development of this great Northwest; to the remaining few […] this little book is respectfully

dedicated," a reflection on frontier life characteristic of the late year of 1914.[52]

The actual content is not significant to the intended audience in these cases: there are

spelling and grammar errors and longer phrases translated into confused statements. Removed

from contact environments by generations and acting more on foggy memories of a language,

these uses of Chinook Jargon were not intended for communication.Yet, the act of using the

language itself, even heavily altered, is crucial. This is key to Chinook Jargon as a marker of

post-decline settler identity. The act of using the language is immediately identifiable to other

long-term residents of the Pacific Northwest, while the exact words used are less significant. A

pertinent example of how outside observers fostered this connection occurs in a 1936 article

from the *Spokane Chronicle*, "Heap Little Chap - Nowitka Skookum." This article described a

settler child having been taught Chinook Jargon by his father Judge Billy Campbell, a unique

case of a settler child learning the language through a parent.[53] Engaging in an exaggerated

impression of faux-Indigenous speech, the article title demonstrated that the *Spokane Chronicle*

engaged with Chinook Jargon as an "Indian language." In this case the use of the language by a

settler is perceived by observers as something that associates him directly with popular

stereotypes of Indigenous peoples. This is particularly crucial to the post-decline period: as the

language became a fading memory, its cultural malleability increased. Over time, and

particularly as collective contact memories became more distant, simplistic connections to

Indigeneity like the one indicated here became the near-ubiquitous representation.

Accurately recalled memories of Chinook Jargon appear more readily in audio examples,

which are rare in a preponderance of written records. Decades after the decline of the language,

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[52] Downey-Bartlett, *Chinook-English Songs*, 1.
[53] "Heap Little Chap - Nowitka Skookum,"*Spokane Chronicle* (Spokane, WA), March 14, 1936, 29.

in a 1963 interview Robert Hiscocks of Victoria recalled several relevant phrases, including and

"mokst bit" "ikta maika mitlite Mary?"[54] While short, each recollection informs on the linguistic

environment in the past and 1963 present of the pidgin.[55] The first example occurred sometime

around Hiscock's childhood in James Bay in the late nineteenth century, likely in the heyday of

Chinook Jargon in Victoria. This heyday refers to a period of high usage in the late nineteenth

century, largely contingent on the presence of the Songhees reserve.[56] I am familiar with the

pidgin and have a limited speaking ability; Hiscock's pronunciation is coherent, and he

accurately evokes a vivid interaction in the language which, in the context of written records

almost universally demonstrating nonfluency, is worth mentioning. His secondary recollection of

the phrase "mokst bit" among Chinese buyers and Indigenous fishmongers in the inner harbor in

1905 is a highly relevant piece of jargon from his early adulthood in a contact environment.

Recalling the Chinese buyers negotiating salmon for two bits, Hiscocks translates it on the fly for

the interviewer as he recalls it. He is by no means fluent, but he does have the ability to actively

translate the language more than 50 years later. This is the crux of post-decline settler use of the

jargon, recalled to express an idea– in this case, a scene in the inner harbor– rather than being

used for communication. Settlers who had used it did not forget the language entirely; they used

it when asked by historians or interested parties. This cannot be identified as actual persistent

post-decline speakership. This interview makes it clear that Chinook Jargon existed as a

ubiquitous second language only when useful. The vast majority of settlers who recalled the

language post-decline had lost their speaking ability. Conversely, an interview with Annie York,

a distinguished Nlaka'pamux oral historian and elder, is a good example of the significantly

greater fluency that Indigenous people possessed in the post-decline period. York recounts the

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[54] **Translation: ikta maika mitlite Mary?: where are you from Mary? (context dependent), mokst bit: two bits.**
[55] Imbert Orchard, *Robert Hiscocks interview,* Item T1315:0001, Royal BC Museum, January 17, 1963.
[56] See Fig. 1.

Lord's prayer in Chinook Jargon, recorded by the interviewer as "the Indian language," and discusses reading a "Chinook book," the "history of the BC Indian."[57] Throughout the interview, her facility with the language remains, and it is clear that Annie York can still "talk Chinook." Skwxwú7mesh Chief Andy Paull was another highly fluent Indigenous Chinook Jargon speaker in the context of the late 1940s. Paull's long, well-constructed Christmas message demonstrates this fluency quite effectively, as he uses both Chinook Jargon and words from other Indigenous languages like Sto:lo.[58] Chinook Jargon persisted in Indigenous communities for decades after it had supposedly vanished, but settlers generally dismissed it as "the Indian language" or confused it with other dialects. Thus, it was not addressed as a persistent mode of communication among Indigenous speakers.

Fluency and the ability to apply Chinook Jargon in a relevant and cohesive manner was a skill that, although rare, was not unheard of in settler populations. In both pre- and post-decline contexts, Chinook Jargon has been highlighted for its use in courts across the Pacific Northwest. Due to the lack of settler fluency in the many Indigenous languages across the region, Chinook Jargon became the de facto language of interpretation for Indigenous people in court.[59] Thus, it became a necessary skill for judges, who achieved an understanding of the language beyond casual or slang use. Judges had advanced recollection of conversational Chinook Jargon after it fell out of widespread use. In 1912, Magistrate Edmonds' understanding of the dialect was highlighted in a New Westminster paper, still considered key to his profession and contact existence.[60] Extensive persistence is evident through the decades and across the region; at a 1918 Oregon pioneer meeting, Judge Fred Wilson's name appears alongside Chinook Jargon phrases.

[57] Imbert Orchard, *Annie York and Arthur Urquhart interview*, Canadian Plains Research Centre, Indian History Film Project, Tape IH-BC.71, University of Regina, 1977.
[58] Dave Robertson, 1948*: Skwxwú7mesh Chief Andy Paull's Xmas Message In Chinook, Chinook Jargon, December 25, 2022.
[59] Lutz, *Makúk*, xi.
[60] "Magistrate Edmonds Cumtux Chinook Wawa," *Daily World* (Vancouver, BC), August 15, 1912, 1.

Judge Murphy of Similkameen is recorded recalling Chinook Jargon in 1933, late in the timeline

of Chinook Jargon persistence.[61] Arriving in Victoria in 1884, at the peak of local usage, Jurist

Frederic William Howay, likewise of New Westminster, published a detailed history of Chinook

Jargon in 1943.[62] This enduring understanding of Chinook Jargon persisted in other wings of the

judiciary, namely with Indian Agents. Indian Agents found Chinook Jargon necessary beyond the

point of decline, engaging with a legal system that used the language for interpretation and

engaging with communities that used a plurality of languages. Edwin Eels is an excellent

example of the connection between legal systems and the language. Both a lawyer and a US

Indian Agent, he retained such an excellent command of Chinook Jargon that he considered it

one of his "two native tongues," giving a fluent speech to the Washington Pioneers Association

in 1905.[63] This level of fluency among settlers is extraordinarily rare and appears to be limited to

former judges and Indian agents, who would have decades of full conversational experience.

Since the early arrival of missionaries in the 1830s, Chinook Jargon held a uniquely

persistent place in Pacific Northwestern Christianity. Historically, the pidgin had been a liturgical

and missionary language within the conversion efforts of the various denominations across the

Pacific Northwest. Since the 1830s, the Catholic Church had a particularly significant role in the

history of the proliferation and development of the language by promoting fluency in the pidgin.

Chinook Jargon hymns formed a particularly memorable and resonant legacy of the pidgin into

the 1900s and are recorded as remembered among both settler and Indigenous residents.[64]

Focused on "fruitful evangelism," Methodist churches were especially concerned with

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[61] "Premium On Good Stories As Old Timers Gather In Similkameen," *Princeton Star* (Princeton, BC), August 24, 1933, 1-3;"Oregon Pioneers In Annual State Reunion," *Salem Daily Capital Journal* (Salem, OR), May 27, 1918, 2.
[62] F.W. Howay, "Origin of the Chinook Jargon on the North West Coast," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 44, no. 1 (1943): 27–55.
[63] Thomas Prosch, *Transactions of the Washington Pioneer Association for the years 1905 to 1910: with sketch of the organization in 1883, reorganization in 1895, and bylaws now in force,* Washington Pioneer Association, Allen County Public Library, 1910, 53-54.
[64] John Graham, "I Get A Hymn, Too," *Vancouver Province* (Vancouver, BC), August 6, 1948, 17.

ministering to Chinese and Indigenous communities in the Pacific Northwest, and proved

capable of bridging the linguistic gap for missionary work.[65] In a 1913 article, the *Bella Coola*

Courier highlighted the presence of relatively fluent Methodists in a post-decline world. The

Reverend W.H. Gibson's use of Chinook Jargon within the community is limited, but nonetheless

indicative of a contact environment, particularly with his use of the distinctly non-settler phrase,

"skookum house," meaning jail. While somewhat uncertain on elements of the dialect, the article

demonstrates that Chinook Jargon fluency was still necessary for settler members of the church

like Gibson, who ministered in a contact space.[66] The article also noted the enduring role of the

pidgin among pioneers, explaining that "most of the white residents, all of the pioneer settlers,

talk fluently the clicking, hissing tongue of the native sons and daughters'(sic) thus making

possible real intercourse and understanding."[67] Similarly, in 1948, the Methodist J.W. Hall

recalled the Chinook Jargon used by that denomination, which granted him a persistent

command of the pidgin.[68] These are remarkable examples of post-decline settler fluency, the

result of the dedicated linguistic doctrines of the Methodist church.

Rather than engaging in contact-informed usage, exclusionary organizations employed

the language as an insular code for decades and became romantically attached to what it

represented. Pioneer societies and masonic organizations across the Pacific Northwest used

Chinook Jargon as an exclusive code rather than an actual spoken language, especially into the

mid 1900s. The Native Sons and Daughters, a nativist organization, are perhaps the most salient

example of this practice. Comparable in politics to the Orange Order or the Klu Klux Klan, the

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[65] Jason Redden, "Boil Them Hearts: The Role of Methodist Revivalist Piety in Indigenous Conversion and Evangelization in Late Nineteenth-Century Coastal British Columbia," *Studies in Religion* 46, no. 1 (2017): 62.

[66] "Empire Day Celebrations -Witnessed By Large Crowd, "*The Bella Coola Courier* (Bella Coola, BC)*, May 31, 1913,1-3.

[67]"Empire Day Celebrations -Witnessed By Large Crowd, "*The Bella Coola Courier* (Bella Coola, BC)*, May 31, 1913,1.

[68] John Graham, "I Get A Hymn, Too," *Vancouver Province* (Vancouver, BC), August 6, 1948, 17.

Native Sons and Daughters engaged in secretive meetings and racist politics. Their racist vitriol

was concentrated on Asian immigrants, however they carried an impression of Indigenous

peoples in line with the "noble savage" characterization.[69] Established in 1898, the Native Sons

"extolled public service as a legacy of the province's pioneers," entrenching themselves as an

Anglo-Saxon public service organization. Employing the "mythic version of British Columbia's

past" was a means for promoting imagined Anglo-Saxon Indigeneity in British Columbia.[70]

Members made frequent use of Chinook Jargon at their meetings, making pains to record it in

coded public announcements regarding their activities. As a rule, Chinook Jargon was recorded

in simple, three- or four-word phrases at most. In the context of the Native Sons and Daughters,

usage was a ceremonial marker of the ever-important pioneer identity to which the nativist

organization was so fervently attached. Most often using phrases like "kloshe wawa," "tlush

muckamuck," and "hi'yu tillicums," they conferred meeting events and times.[71] These "secret"

invitations explicitly mimicked the practices of surrounding pioneer organizations. In this

context, the pidgin served as a more widely known version of the masonic cipher. In 1923, the

Native Sons shortly considered the publication of their own Chinook Jargon dictionary, feeling a

kind of responsibility for the language, imagining themselves as caretakers of a fading contact

legacy.[72] Another fraternal order that engaged with Chinook Jargon words and phrases was the

"Improved Order of Red Men." An organization present across the United States, the Improved

Order was modeled on "the great Iroquois Confederacy," and based itself on the broad basis of

"customs and terminology of Native Americans."[73] Engaging in both settler adoption of

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[69] Forest D. Pass, *The Wondrous Story and Traditions of the Country*, *BC Studies* 151, no. 10 (2006):17-21.

[70] Pass, *The Wondrous Story and Traditions of the Country*, 3–5.

[71] "Native Sons And Daughters Entertain Their Friends and Listen To Speeches In The Chinook Jargon," *Salem Daily Journal* (Salem, OR), December 11, 1900, 2; **Translation: kloshe wawa: good talk,tlush muckamuck: good food, hiyu tillicums: many people/friends.**

[72] "Native Sons of B.C. Would Preserve Chinook," *Vancouver Province* (Vancouver, BC), Mar 29, 1923.

[73] Improved Order Of Red Men, *Who Are The Red Men?* http://www.redmen.org/redmen/info/.

Indigenous aesthetics for identity building and monolithic depictions of Indigenous peoples, the

Improved Order consistently wore "red face" during public events. This practice was often

cogent with the use of Chinook Jargon words or phrases, both the paint and the dialect tools

being used to mythologize and impersonate Indigeneity. In 1902, an article announcing a

gathering of the Improved Order used stunted and heavily anglicized Chinook Jargon, standing

the word "medlight" in for "mitlite."[74] In 1910, they referred to their secretive meetings as "close

wawa," an anglicization and conversion of "tlush wawa."[75] The Arctic Club in Seattle mirrored

these practices, indicating that the blending of "red face" pageantry and settler-Indigenous pidgin

usage in the Pacific Northwest was far from an isolated phenomenon. In the context of Chinook

Jargon usage by Pacific Northwestern masonic and fraternal orders in the early twentieth century,

it is important to highlight the societal significance of masonic orders in this period. Highly

influential and reserved for privileged members of society, the widespread fraternal and masonic

employment of Chinook Jargon as a tool of exclusion highlights its status and associated

Indigeneity in the post-decline environment.

Less ensconced in nativist politics, pioneer societies were organizations which were

established across the Pacific Northwest among early arrivals. Pioneer societies restricted

membership to persons who had lived a sufficient time locally, usually 50 years, or arrived

before a certain date. The Oregon Pioneer Association welcomed "those who settled within said

Territory prior to the first day of January 1853."[76] The Washington association was more open,

allowing "any citizen of the state of Washington with a pioneer ancestor who arrived in the area

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[74] **Translation: mitlite: to stand or to live.**

[75] "Red Men Greet Their Big Chiefs," *Medford Mail Tribune* (Medford, OR)*,* February 6, 1910, 13, 2; "OKOK HIAS KLOSH TILICUM HIU MEDLIGHT COPA ILIHI," *North Yakima Herald*, July 1, 1902, 4.

[76] Oregon Pioneer Association, *Constitution of the Oregon Pioneer Association*, 1874, 4.

prior to November 11, 1889."[77] Regardless of the conditions for entry, the purpose of these

groups was to represent and organize those who considered themselves a distinct class of settler.

Holding annual meetings and organizing business, making political appeals and academic

presentations, pioneer societies were multifaceted. These societies could be very informal,

especially later on when the line between some older residents getting together and a pioneer

society meeting was unclear. Their nature as organizing bodies for a distinct social class

eventually shifted to become old-timers' clubs, and by the time Chinook Jargon had all but faded

from widespread use, most had disappeared entirely. Not surprisingly, the pioneer identity that

was so compelling to settlers in the Pacific Northwest lived on in the historical societies which

followed soon after the death of most "true pioneers."[78]

　　　　Across the Pacific Northwest, pioneer societies and their members made speeches in

Chinook Jargon, used it in greetings and invitations, and held it as a language that served as a

self-identifier. At the 1916 Oregon Pioneer Associations annual meeting and "hi-yu

muck-a-muck," Chinook Jargon songs were sung to "bring back the Indian days."[79] At these

meetings, the pidgin was a marker of contact. For those who could understand the songs, it was a

reminder of a shared pioneering past.[80] Two years later, a 1918 article on the Oregon Pioneer

Association's annual meeting likewise listed Chinook songs and used Chinook Jargon to describe

some of the events.[81] The phrases in use to describe the meeting are typical; "klosche

muck-a-muck" and "hi-yu wawa, hi-yu he-he."[82] Notably, both meetings were held in

[77] Thomas Wickham Prosch, *Transactions of the Washington Pioneer Association for the years 1905 to 1910: with sketch of the organization in 1883, reorganization in 1895, and bylaws now in force*, Washington Pioneer Association, 1910, 5.

[78] K. J. Trayner, *Historical origins and collective memory in British Columbia's community-based museums, 1925-1975*, University of Victoria, 2003, 10, 53-63.

[79] Translation: hiyu muckamuck: lots of food.

[80] "Annual Reunion Of Oregon Pioneers," *Salem Daily Capital Journal* (Salem, OR), May 31, 1916, 6.

[81] "Oregon Pioneers In Annual State Reunion," *Salem Daily Capital Journal* (Salem, OR), May 27, 1918, 2.

[82] Translation: klosche muckamuck: good food, hiyu wawa, hiyu hehe: lots of talking, lots of laughing.

conjunction with "Indian War" veterans meetings, indicating that nostalgic sentiments for the pioneering past and conflict with Indigenous peoples went hand in hand. Harkening back to the early settlement period at a time when the region was experiencing dramatic industrialization, these meetings also centered on traditional skills and local engagement.

It is notable that in this assessment of post-decline settler usage, female figures have not featured prominently. While certain positions that facilitated post-decline usage, such as Indian Agents, were exclusive to men, settler women also existed in the contact spaces necessary for persistent speakership. It is likely that there is a recording gap regarding women's use of the language and that the few examples presented here represent the tip of the iceberg. While men's speeches, meetings, perspectives, and personal histories were readily recorded, especially in the context of pioneer men acting as community memory repositories, women received less attention. By the 1930s, efforts like the Federal Writers Project served to expand available historical perspectives, by which time remaining speakers had become scarce. While details on the lives of working women in the early 1900s are limited, there is evidence of Indigenous cannery workers using Chinook Jargon. One resonant piece of jargon, religious hymns, were sung by the Indigenous women working in British Columbia's canneries up to the 1920s.[83] Non-Indigenous women, largely Punjabi, Chinese, and Japanese workers in the cannery, would have been exposed to the dialect and had daily contact with Indigenous women, thus existing in a contact space. This does not necessarily assign speakership or even usage to non-Indigenous female cannery workers in the period; rather, it is an example of how Chinook Jargon persisted in seldom observed populations. A captioned photo of Marya Moses from the Seattle Maritime Archives indicates the role that Chinook Jargon played in maintaining fluency in non-Indigenous

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[83] Pollough Pogue, "In A Cannery," *Vancouver Province* (Vancouver, BC)*,* March 23, 1920, 6.

languages, "her grandparents spoke the Chinook Jargon, and Moses grew up speaking the ancient

Coast Salish language, Lushootseed."[84]

This survey identifies the paradigms of post-decline usage and formally outlines where in

settler society the dialect persisted. As discussed in reference to the decline of the pidgin,

Chinook Jargon flowed along the veins of contact, and in settler society, contact was most

frequently defined along the lines of profit and labor. Generally, nonfluent recollected usage

centered around those who considered themselves to be pioneers, typically manifested as

recalled short phrases, greetings, and anglicized slang terms. Similar usage manifested in

fraternal societies and exclusionary organizations in imitation of the insular usage practiced by

pioneers. In terms of employment, rural store owners, lumber industry foremen, RCMP officers,

and mariners demonstrated comprehension of short phrases and slang terms. In terms of fluent

speakership, contact-based professions, judges, Indian agents, and Methodist ministers

demonstrated advanced usage even into the later decades of the 1930s and 1940s. As contact

informed speakers passed away, the middle of the century represented a period removed from the

historical linguistic realities of the dialect.

III - Persistence In The Modern Era

By the mid-twentieth century, Chinook Jargon persisted as an inherent arm of the

manufacture of regional settler identity. As the pioneer populations died and their claim to

authentic stewardship over the language faded, the pidgin shifted to accommodate the needs of

settler society. Conversely, settler attachment to the pidgin highlights consistent realities of

settler societies, where anxieties about authenticity and occupation of Indigenous lands prompted

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[84] Stuart B. Hertz, *Marya Moses on beach, July 5, 1962*, Seattle Post-Intelligencer, Museum Of History And Industry, 1962.

attachment to historical dialects. Thus, Chinook Jargon persisted as an identifier along the lines

of earlier post decline manifestations, but nevertheless transformed to fit new settler

self-identification efforts.

Nard Jones, a Seattle writer and poet, provides an excellent demonstration of Chinook

Jargon as an identifier in the modern era, both for those claiming identity and those observing it.

In his 1976 book *Seattle*, Jones recorded an interview with members of Seattle's Arctic Club, an

organization for wealthy Klondike gold-rush veterans. Frequent users of "redface" makeup,

members of the Arctic Club engaged with faux-Indigenous traditions to promote development

and tourism in Seattle. The early incarnations of the Arctic Club appear in a 1912 photo of their

parade float; five businessmen dressed in "redface" sitting on an iconic relic of the "old west," a

Wells-Fargo coach, preparing for the "Golden potlatch" parade.[85] Given this example, we can

examine the post-decline uses outlined by Nard Jones. In *Seattle*, Jones recalled an interview,

likely occurring when he collected stories for his *Puget Sound Profiles* in the 1960s, wherein a

member of the Arctic Club used Chinook Jargon.

> I remember sitting in the office of a former "Gold Rusher" as he answered the telephone.
> "Kloshe," he said. "Arctic Club, twelve o'clock. Alki, tillikum." He replaced the receiver
> and turned to me as if he had not been speaking in code.

Jones went on to describe these "gold-rushers" as part of a "hardy-breed" of old-timers,

true frontiersmen.[86] In this account, the use of Chinook Jargon as an identifier among members

of an already exclusive club is clear. The language used was simple, interpersonal, and, vitally,

not understood by outsiders. By marking the use of Chinook Jargon as a "code," Jones played the

part of a "cheechako," highlighting the "old breed" status of the pidgin.[87] Jones' reckoning of

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[85] Museum of History and Industry, *Arctic Club parade float, Seattle, 1912*, 2010.
[86] Nard Jones, *Seattle* (New York: Garden City, 1976), 95-97.
[87] Translation: cheechako: newcomer.

Chinook Jargon in casual usage goes well beyond the typical half-dozen slang terms that authors typically highlight. Born in 1904 in Seattle and living in rural Weston, Oregon until 1927, Jones likely had some genuine contact with the pidgin.[88] His exploration of a wide breadth of terms in use by Seattle's "hardy breed" indicates some form of more developed settler understanding of the dialect. By the 1960s, historical reckonings had begun to emerge in the post-decline and now post-pioneer period, facilitating the familiarity explored in *Seattle*. Jones' account highlights how historical distance, academic processing, and artistic reckonings transformed the meaning of Chinook Jargon into the modern era.

In his own words, Nard Jones was an "unregenerate– a Salmon Eater, an Apple Knocker, a Rain Worshiper, a Sagebrusher, and a Whistle Punk from the Big Woods. In brief, a Pacific Northwester."[89] Jones' employment of logger slang for his self-identification as a Pacific Northwester is an ideal example of the modern pioneer identity and its attachment to the natural environment. In his own eyes and words, Jones was a true resident of the region, uncorrupted by the modern and unnatural. His use of logger slang and Chinook Jargon as markers of regional authenticity highlights settler uses of dialect in the manufacture of identity in the modern era.

The discussion of "logger jargon" is a relevant issue within this practice. In isolated, rural working communities that frequently engaged in labor disputes, logging communities developed insular and bizarre slang. Documented through Federal Writers Project initiatives in the 1930s, logger jargon represents a unique piece of Pacific Northwestern dialect, some of which persists into modern regional speech.[90] Recorded throughout multiple dictionaries of logger slang, Chinook Jargon terms appear to have been in consistent, correct use throughout logging

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[88] Nard Jones, *Evergreen Land - A Portrait Of The State Of Washington* (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1947), 236.

[89] Jones, *Evergreen Land*, 1.

[90] Dave Robertson*,1930: Williams, "Logger-Talk,"* Chinook Jargon, March 22, 2022; Dave Robertson, *1930: Chinook In Oregon Loggers' Lingo*, Chinook Jargon, June 17, 2021.

communities across the region. Other scattered terms, —"potlach," "skookum," "tillicum," and "klooch" — a discriminatory English term derived from Chinook Jargon – appear frequently.[91] This is occasionally identified as Chinook Jargon usage beyond typical regional slang. Likewise, these terms are often misattributed or not cited when they appear in dictionaries, creating the impression that they are unique to logger jargon lexicons. Unfortunately, there is a distinct lack of primary or secondary source information on Chinook Jargon usage in logging camps, making the nature of these terms inclusion somewhat unclear. Chinook Jargon linguist Dave Robertson records having heard recollections via linguist Jay Powell of fluency among loggers on the Olympic Peninsula in the 1960s, but likewise has found negligible information outside of that regarding unique usage.[92] Despite the distinct lack of evidence, Charles Lillard, writing in the 1990s, dedicated a chapter of his collaborative Chinook Jargon history book *A Voice Great Within Us* to logger talk, a digression that deals little with Chinook Jargon, seeking to link camp talk with the pidgin. In this chapter, Lillard states that "the cook shack and the mulligan mixer have been the site of much west-talk." There is no doubt that this is true.[93] Yet, understanding that Lillard's "west talk" encompasses Chinook Jargon terms and that his writing and lectures lend unique, above-average usage to loggers is vital to understanding the claim within this statement.[94] In his "West Talk" lecture in 1976, Lillard directly conflated Chinook Jargon and logger slang, attributing them to the same communities and as entities that exist under the same linguistic umbrella.

In the absence of primary source evidence of unique usage, the idea of above average, unique, or persistent usage will be assessed in terms of historical context, historical linguistics,

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[91] Works Progress Administration, *Oregon oddities and items of interest - Series 2, no.5 - Loggers' Jargon* (Portland, Oregon: Federal Writers Project, 1936); Crown Zellerbach Corporation, *Logger's Lingo* (West Linn, Oregon: Crown Zellerbach, 1965). **Translation: potlatch: to give, skookum: strong, "klooch": slur for Indigenous women.**
[92] Robertson, *1930: Chinook In Oregon Loggers' Lingo*, Chinook Jargon, June 17, 2021.
[93] Lillard, *A Voice Great Within Us*, 111.
[94] Lillard, *West talk: Chinook and slang elements - AAAB3834*, RBCM Archives, 1976.

written record, and relevant identity politics. Extant source materials highlight the Chinook

Jargon referenced as advanced usage within logger jargon or "west talk" as actually occurring

within Pacific Northwestern English more generally. There is no evidence of unique, cultivated,

or otherwise notably prolific use of Chinook Jargon in these communities. Nonetheless, what

Lillard and the FWP identify and highlight is inclusion of Chinook Jargon derived Pacific

Northwestern slang words inside the unique lexicons presented by dictionaries.

Perhaps most importantly, the timeline and historical environment necessary for Chinook

Jargon speakership do not align with regional logging history. By the time Pacific Northwestern

logging had become a large-scale operation, British Columbia becoming Canada's top producer

by the late 1920s, Chinook Jargon had already experienced a dramatic decline.[95] Usage only

decreased in the following years, declining to near negligibility as logging industries expanded.

As iterated previously, industrial expansion reduced rather than facilitated contact. Thus, the

industrialized logging context in which the slang appears existed in a post-decline environment,

adopting the pieces of Chinook Jargon that had embedded themselves in the region rather than

interacting with the pidgin as a spoken language.

Further, the linguistic environment in which Chinook Jargon flourished was not

observable in industrialized logging communities. Within this environment there was a distinct

lack of Indigenous labor, a key component necessary for the usage of settler-Indigenous pidgin

dialects. This is not to say that the labor pool was uniformly white: mills, timber sites and lumber

yards employed many Chinese, Japanese, and East Indian workers.[96] Chinook Jargon speakership

is predicated on settler-Indigenous contact, and the labor demographics of the Pacific

Northwest's mills and crews do not represent this contact. Modern reflections on the labor

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[95] Rick Rajala," The Evolution Of West Coast Logging," *Legion Magazine*, November 1, 1997.
[96] Myrtle Bergren, *Tough timber: the loggers of B.C.--their story* (Vancouver: Elgin, 1979), 31, 113-121, 208.

environment in the early 1900s support these conclusions. Historian John Lutz highlights low

rates of Indigenous employment in formal industries, especially logging, wherein Indigenous

people were typically only hired after white labor pools were exhausted.[97] This racially selective

hiring process reduced settler-Indigenous contact; what little contact did occur happened in a

distinct hierarchy where English was dominant. Even when Indigenous employment in logging

industries expanded during the World War II with labor shortages driving the logging industry to

forgo racialized hiring precepts, the practice of employing Indigenous laborers ended with the

war. Thus, absent English-speaking laborers did not come into contact with the temporary

Indigenous labor body, and the logging labor pool remained a non-contact space.[98]

An examination of logger jargon itself highlights the unlikely spontaneous inclusion of

the pidgin. Used by forestry communities, particularly those heavily involved in the Industrial

Workers of the World and International Woodworkers of America, logger jargon was a marker of

regional identity and political leanings. Constructed to exclude bosses and stool pigeons, logger

jargon was almost entirely focused on the discussion of the working environment, paying

particular attention to labor relations. Within the lexicon, the majority of terms are reserved for

covertly discussing worker-boss relations and the labor done in logging camps.[99] Moreover, there

is no evidence in lexicons that Chinook Jargon was ever used among settler loggers beyond slang

terms derived from Pacific Northwestern English. The extant jargon slang terms represent loans

from local dialects rather than a contemporary contact environment. This is evident in the

lexicon produced by the FWP; the terms in use are Chinook Jargon as anglicized slang rather

than original inclusions.[100] Further, several of these terms are, as highlighted in other settler uses,

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[97] Lutz, *Makúk*, 154-155.
[98] Lutz, *Makúk*, 104.
[99] Crown Zellerbach Corporation, *Logger's Lingo,* 1-10.
[100] Crown Zellerbach Corporation, *Logger's Lingo,*8; Works Progress Administration, *Oregon oddities and items of interest*, 1.

slurs for Indigenous peoples derived from Chinook Jargon and anglicized. From these cases, we are drawn to the conclusion that these terms entered the lexicon already synthesized into slang.

Here we see the convergent purposes of the uses of both slang groups. Logging communities engaged in the creation of highly exclusive idiolects. Thus, Chinook Jargon slang, itself a marker of exclusivity among settlers, was readily included into logger jargon and its atmosphere of exceptionality. In seeking to survey post-decline speakership, this project necessarily deals with claims to speakership, which inform on the post-decline status of the language. The claim to jargon talking in logging communities, which in truth appear to have used regional slang in keeping with local dialect, is worthy of remark.[101]

Why, then, throughout the modern era, is there a suggestion of uniquely prolific loggers' use of the dialect? In the case of the prolific "jargon talkers" in logging camps, the claims to pioneer ethics are consistent with the identity constructed by the laboring communities. Viewed as a sphere of employment where real Pacific Northwesters, real bushmen, the "whistle punk from the big woods" worked, logging is attached to the modern pioneer identity. The veneration of extraction industry professionals, who brave the woods to bring down the lumber necessary for the growth of cities, goes hand in hand with settler veneration of pioneers, who braved "virgin forests" to settle the Northwest. The logging industry and loggers, engaging in labor disputes and physically dangerous work, were venerated across the board. Labor institutions, governments, and communities across the region engaged with loggers as pillars of the rural Pacific Northwestern community. Statues, murals, and community museums across the region recall loggers and the logging industry. The presence of community museums in this phenomenon is particularly relevant; organized by local heritage societies and furnished by area

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[101]Dave Robertson, *1930: Chinook In Oregon Loggers' Lingo*, Chinook Jargon, June 17, 2021.

artifact donations, these institutions twin the legacies of pioneers and loggers.[102] Thus, the mythic

concept of the intrepid logger is knitted into the pioneer identity directly associated with Chinook

Jargon usage, furthering its existence as a marker of exclusivity.

The ephemeral notion of the Jargon-talking backwoods logger, a woodsman so

enculturated to the Pacific Northwest that he speaks "the Indian language," became the bones for

the modern identity constructed around Chinook Jargon. Charles "Red" Lillard was the key

figure in this transition of identity that began in the 1970s. This represents a period when the

identity associated with the pidgin was in a highly malleable state. Lillard, raised in Alaska to a

fishing family, spent his time working in logging camps in British Columbia and writing poetry

about the Pacific Northwest. Born in 1944, decades after Chinook Jargon had receded in British

Columbia, Lillard had a deep interest in the language. In 1971, he published his first poetry book

out of Surrey-based Sono Nis Press, *Cultus Coulee*, his first published use of Chinook Jargon.[103]

Cultus Coulee, meaning to wander or stroll, is Lillard's debut poetry collection; the namesake

poem is the only one that features the language:

The north in me crumbles

As I bury the sandhill crane's dance

The slash stand there;

Long gutted vowels

Filling with fireweed.

Our nights on a slope of spring.

Today the sun will shine

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[102]S.P. Nelson, *Camp Six: The Tacoma Logging Museum*, Forest History, 1966, 9, no. 4, 24–27.
[103] Charles Lillard, *Cultus Coule,* (Surrey: Sono Nis Press, 1971), 25.

And we'll remember it.

At this gangway's mouth

Cultus Coulee:

Coasting again.

Seagulls waiting for the rain.

Coasting

In "Cultus Coulee," Lillard focuses on the natural world, using the Chinook Jargon language to evoke a link between speakership and experience with the nature of the Pacific Northwest. This is a significant artistic choice: by underlining the phrase "cultus coulee," in the context of a poem extolling the natural world, Lillard evokes authenticity through connection to an Indigenous dialect. By using Chinook Jargon, Lillard is asserting that he has a connection to a natural or even Indigenous past and present, and understands the "ole'man" talk because he is a genuine "Pacific Northwester." The use of this phrase purposefully leaves non-speakers out. They miss a crucial part of his description, thus missing out on his understanding of the natural world. They are presented to themselves as newcomers. Lillard's other poetry is likewise entirely consumed with the particulars of life in the more remote and natural regions of British Columbia. In these works, the connection between the natural environment and settler identity lays the groundwork for the growth of the new settler understanding of Chinook Jargon.[104]

Lillard highlights this trend in a 1976 talk at the University of Victoria entitled "West Talk: Chinook Slang and Elements." During his presentation Lillard depicted Chinook Jargon as much "west talk" as any other article of slang derived from logging communities. Within this understanding, Lillard mixed terms such as "tin pants" with genuine articles of Chinook Jargon

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[104] Lillard, *Cultus Coulee*, 1-31.

like "chuck," combining logger jargon and the historical pidgin.[105] Lillard thus linked long-term

habitation in the Pacific Northwest and the development of slang within that locale to frontier

and contact identities. Throughout the lecture, Lillard highlighted his experience in "the bush"

and in rural fishing communities. He specifically covered the unique modes of speech that

identify "genuine west coasters," people whom Lillard directly links with Chinook Jargon. By

linking Chinook Jargon to "west talk," he confers authenticity and seeks to construct an

Indigenous-adjacent voice for his fishermen and loggers. By including Chinook Jargon words in

the category of "west talk slang," Lillard unconsciously infers that "west talk" is a marker of true

habitation.[106]

Decades later, Lillard would collaborate with journalist Terry Glavin on a history of

Chinook Jargon. Published in 1998, their *A Voice Great Within Us* claims a unique settler identity

through language. In the foreword, Chinook Jargon is phrased as "our language" that was taken

from "us." Glavin declares the distinct potential for a language bill, seeking to link the pidgin

directly to a uniquely British Columbian cultural identity.[107] At first glance, this takes a different

form than the efforts to access a pioneer identity, but at its core, it is still an attempt to invent

Indigeneity for settlers through asserting Chinook Jargon usage. Declaring Chinook Jargon the

"rain language" and making repeated poetic references to the natural environment of the Pacific

Northwest, the authors assign naturalistic values to the language.[108] There is nothing innately

"natural" about Chinook Jargon: the pidgin does not evoke in particular rain, fog, or old growth

forests. This is an isolated description of the language, with previous descriptions identifying a

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[105] Lillard, "West Talk: Chinook Slang And Elements", 1976; **Translation: chuck: water.**
[106] This should not be read as a critique? of the speaker, his works are effective, if outdated, historical reflections and the artistic uses of the language are not being criticized, rather this a reflection on how modern settler reckonings with the language are connected to the preceding decades of identity construction.
[107] Lillard, and Glavin, *A Voice*, 7-15.
[108] Lillard, and Terry Glavin, *A Voice,* 17.

"hiss," "clack," "clatter," a pidgin talked "like slinging quoits."[109] This depiction of the language

as innately natural is arguably based on the appropriation of Indigenous belief systems that

emerged in the latter half of the twentieth century. Settler media in this period contained

depictions of Indigenous people that placed their religious beliefs, ethics, and culture as a

monolithic connection to nature, often expressed by "hippies" and their analogs as a "mother

earth" philosophy.[110] This idea that "Indians" were fundamentally connected to nature is being

extended to the pidgin by virtue of these imaginings. The inherent linking of settler land claims

to use of the natural environment is a key idea in settler identity building, and heavily informed

the Indigenous monolith appropriated by hippies and their analogs. Notably, comprehensive

secondary sources do not make any steps to discuss the language as inherently natural. Lillard

and Glavin are making an original and emergent claim, that Chinook Jargon is a language that

evokes the natural environment of the Pacific Northwest. This claim is highly reminiscent of the

mobilization of "American nature and its promise of cultural identity" for settler constructions

of self.[111] While Lillard and Glavin certainly are not celebrating the "men who conquered the

west," the naturalistic elements of the pioneer identity are still very much present.[112] Glavin

furthers this connection in the foreword, declaring that poetry based around Pacific Northwestern

nature is "utterly foreign to anyone not from here, or not aware of here" - very clearly linking a

connection with nature to "true" habitation of the region. Again, the effort to connect Chinook

Jargon to natural poetics emerges; "it was near to impossible to communicate these things east of

the mountains. It was about this place, and it was something that involved rain, sawmills,

language, canneries, time and isolation."[113] In this excerpt, the topic of the book and therefore,

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[109] *Washington Standard* (Olympia, WA), June 2, 1911, 3.
[110] Phillip Joseph Deloria, *Playing Indian* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 166-170.
[111] Robin G. Schulze, "Harriet Monroe's Pioneer Modernism: Nature, National Identity, and Poetry, A Magazine of Verse," *Legacy* 21, no. 1 (2004):50, 51.
[112] Schulze, *Harriet Monroe's Pioneer Modernism,* 50, 51.
[113] Lillard and Glavin, *A Voice,* 9.

Chinook Jargon itself is made inaccessible to people outside of a defined natural area, an explicit plea to exclusivity through language. Readers will only truly understand the language and its history if they are from the region. One particular passage from *A Voice Great Within Us* stands out in this context of constructing Indigeneity for settlers: "In Indian residential schools, children were beaten for speaking their own languages; in the frontier public schools, white children were castigated for speaking Chinook."[114] In a few short phrases, Glavin likens the treatment of white students speaking Chinook Jargon to that of Indigenous children in residential schools. He likewise highlights Chinook Jargon as the white version of "their own languages." This construction of the pidgin as exclusive and as a symbol of Indigeneity is consistent in the post-decline decades and can be seen here as late as 1998.

This is part of an identifiable trend within North American settler identity building, wherein the "frontier experience and American political and social character" are directly linked to produce exclusivity.[115] In *A Voice Great Within Us*, this takes the form of a romanticized contact past and a foggy version of Pacific Northwestern history. Glavin engages in near-alternative history, claiming that English became British Columbia's official language by "accident."[116] Heavily understating the long, conscious process behind this, Glavin invents a past where the language of pioneers and fur traders was destined to be the language spoken in British Columbia.

This invented past represents Chinook Jargon serving settler self-identification into the recent modern period. Formalized into a historical text, *A Voice Great Within Us* and its conclusions are expressions of settler anxieties about history in a colonized space. Claiming Chinook Jargon as "our" language, a would-be official dialect of British Columbia, assigning

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[114] Lillard and Glavin, "Foreword," *A Voice Great Within Us*, 39.
[115] Schulze, "Harriet Monroe's Pioneer Modernism," 56.
[116] Lillard and Glavin, "Foreword," *A Voice Great Within Us*," 36.

naturalistic qualities to the pidgin and its use, *A Voice Great Within Us* is an effort to formalize the relationships outlined throughout this thesis. The text openly seeks to access the Indigeneity and perceived authenticity of Chinook Jargon for modern settler populations in British Columbia. Explicitly seeking to ensure future generations do not "forget" the dialect, this text highlights how Chinook Jargon persists as a key tool in the creation of cultural legitimacy in the settler Pacific Northwest.

Conclusions And Futures

In more recent decades, Chinook Jargon has, among settlers, settled into a reduced version of the slang previously ubiquitous across the region. While dimmer, so to speak, this persistence encourages further reflection on the continuous use of the pidgin to maintain settler identity. The persistence of Chinook Jargon into Pacific Northwestern slang is a distinct marker of the widespread nature of its use as a signifier throughout the twentieth century. The slang elements of Chinook Jargon that persist to the present have come to possess a blurry legacy for many in the region. In fact, the most recognizable pieces of Chinook Jargon are often recognized, as they were by "cheechako" settlers, as "the Indian language" and discounted as such.[117] Thus, the vanishing of Chinook Jargon is exaggerated since there is little to no recognition of its contribution to modern local English. Settlers are content to discount a word with an unfamiliar structure as of Indigenous origin and, therefore, not worth investigating further. The high school or small business that uses the word "tyee" is likely vaguely aware that it is an Indigenous word, but does not engage with the pidgin as it exists. Dotted all over the Pacific Northwest, these institutions use this Chinook Jargon term as a way to sell or manifest Indigeneity. In a unique example, the Nanaimo school, formerly named Coal Tyee, changed its name to Syuẃén'ct in a

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[117] Lutz, *Makúk* x,xi, 42.

move to reconcile with an Indigenous past, present, and future. Particularly relevant to this project, neither the *Nanaimo Bulletin*, Chek News, nor the *Times Colonist* reported what language "tyee" stems from, providing translations but no record that Chinook Jargon is in use.[118] These modern interactions with the pidgin demonstrate how it has become disconnected from its historical reality through settler interaction and how use as a signifier has altered meanings over the centuries.

At present, research on Chinook Jargon is limited relative to the pidgin's impact on regional history. Yet the existing field of scholarship is excellent and provides the basis for further study. There is a notable gap in scholarship relating to settler use of Chinook Jargon in the post-decline period. Likewise, no formal scholarship establishes the decline of Chinook Jargon, despite it being implicitly understood in modern scholarship. These gaps are highlighted by the assertions made in the 1998 history of the pidgin, *A Voice Great Within Us,* wherein Chinook Jargon is framed as "our" language. This thesis fills both scholarship gaps, seeking to make an original and necessary contribution to the corpus dealing with Chinook Jargon.

In order to properly reconcile with settler speakership in the post-decline period, this thesis formally established the decline of the pidgin based on collected data and analysis of historical factors. This process established the post-decline period as 1900-1960, ending decades after the last pioneers had died. Likewise, it was necessary to define the pioneer identity in the context of settler identity construction. The core of this thesis dealt with organizing and interrogating the evidence relating to post-decline settler speakership. This effort allowed this thesis to present a series of salient conclusions related to post-decline settler speakership, and by

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[118] 'Karl Yu, "Nanaimo school makes name change official in spirit of truth and reconciliation," *Nanaimo News Herald* (Nanaimo, BC), October 6, 2022; Carla Wilson, "Nanaimo's Coal Tyee Elementary gets a new Indigenous name," *Times Colonist* (Victoria, BC), July 17, 2022; Ethan Morneau, "Nanaimo's Coal Tyee Elementary renamed in an act of reconciliation," *Chek News* (Victoria, BC), July 18, 2022.

analyzing the evidence in dozens of regional newspapers, interviews, primary and secondary

source materials, this thesis firmly concluded that post-decline settlers used Chinook Jargon as a

language for identification, not communication. This conclusion was based on extensive

evidence of the widespread use of non-fluent, anglicized Chinook Jargon, which largely

manifested as slang usage and short recalled phrases. This usage was largely contingent on

settlers attached to the pioneer identity or in some way to a contact existence. This slang usage,

often no more than a sentence, typically manifested as a public assertion of a pioneer identity and

as a claim to Indigeneity. In a post-decline context, the only settlers who manifested usage

beyond typical slang manifestations were judges, Indian agents, and Methodist ministers, who

cultivated advanced usage due to their persistent contact with Indigenous peoples. The

slang-based, contact-independent usage that persisted in the post-decline period existed as a clear

manifestation of settler claims of exclusivity and Indigeneity through language. After the deaths

of the last contact-informed users in the mid 1900s, Chinook Jargon experienced further

disconnection from its historical reality. For settlers in the modern era seeking a connection to a

bygone age and environment through a historical dialect, Chinook Jargon was an ideal tool.[119]

This search for connection produced the unique claim, largely through Charles Lillard's "west

talk" theory, that logging communities had a unique claim to usage, an idea this thesis challenged

as a product of settler identification through language. The ideas discussed in this context are

most resonant in *A Voice Great Within Us*, which makes several claims regarding the settler

relationship to Chinook Jargon. The appeals to Chinook Jargon being an Indigenous settler

pidgin, "our" language that we "forgot," manifest in several ways, ultimately seeking to frame

the pidgin as an exclusive marker of authenticity and habitation among settler users. This marker

of authenticity and faint idea of Indigeneity connect to the colloquial terms which have persisted

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[119] Lillard and Glavin, *A Voice Great Within Us*, 7-15.

into our present. As of writing this, settler institutions continue to harken back to the linguistic traditions established by pioneers, using what remains of the dialect in collective memory to communicate a form of legitimacy. Overall, this project concludes that in an industrialized post-decline context, Chinook Jargon was not spoken or used to communicate, but was used by settlers as a signifier of status and habitation. Over the decades, the Pacific Northwest used an Indigenous pidgin to communicate their connection to a pioneer identity and, more broadly, to grant themselves a form of Indigeneity. Although the resonance has faded and techniques and meanings have changed over the decades, Chinook Jargon has remained a balm to Pacific Northwestern settler anxieties about authenticity and culture.

In the context of studying the settler past and present in the region, language is a fruitful area of study in deciphering how identity has been constructed. Language is an innate part of cultural interaction and exists as an expression of extant conditions. In the case of settler societies in the Pacific Northwest, language exists as a manifestation of economic power, exclusivity and claims to habitation. This thesis sought to use language as a model for understanding how settler society constructed its self-image and why this occurred. This thesis seeks to inform directly on the source material and present an instructive conclusion that interrogates the intricacies of language as an expression of values and identity. Language is a constant in human communication, and studies of language are consistently valuable for building an understanding of the past and present, an understanding that is particularly relevant in the colonial now.

Appendix

Use of the terms "Siwash" and "Klootchman" by the British Colonist paper, 1858-1958

Fig 1.

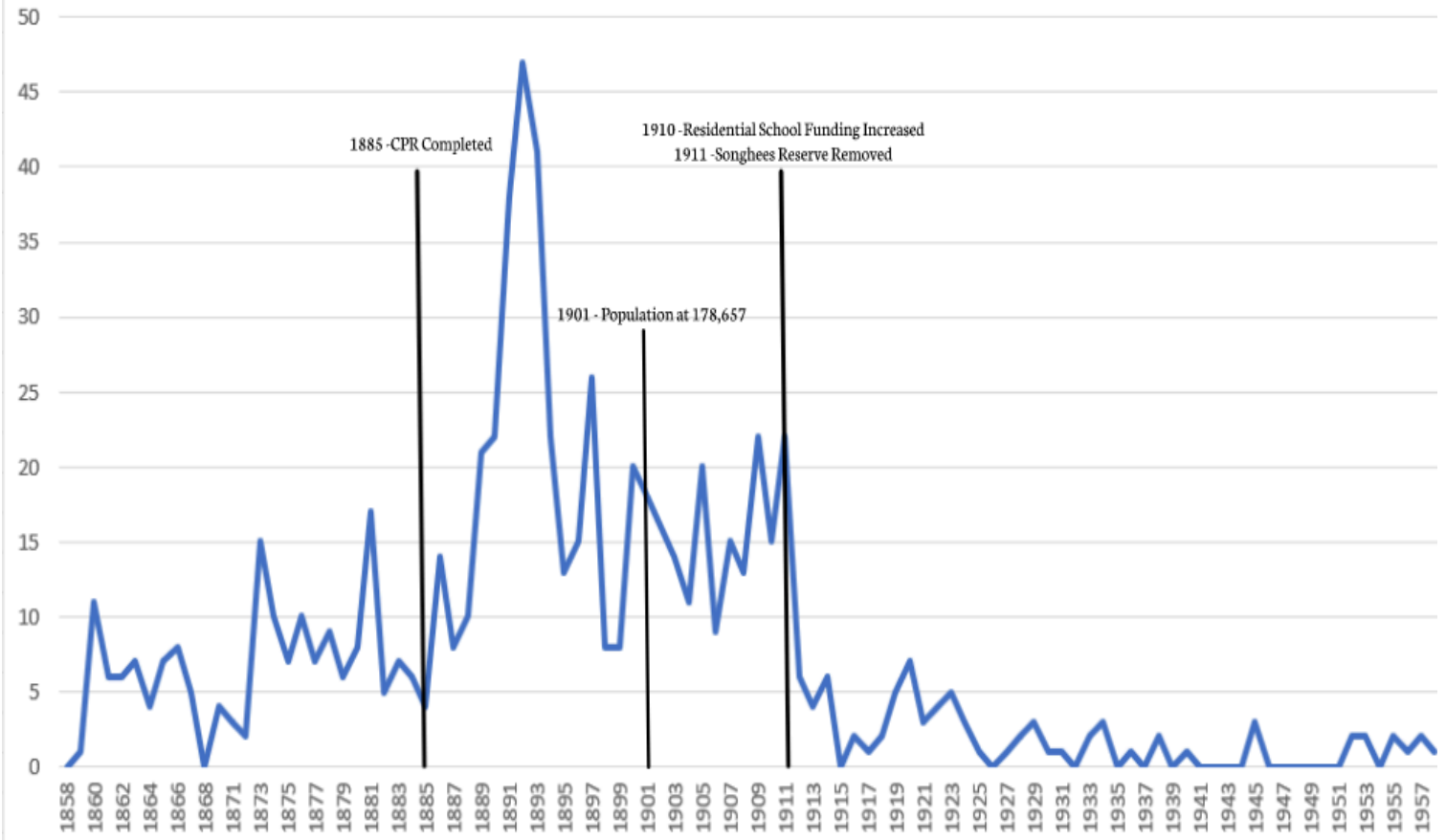## Bibliography

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