

CHINOOK: AN ILLUSTRATIVE SKETCH

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649461820

Chinook: An Illustrative Sketch by Franz Boas

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

FRANZ BOAS

**CHINOOK: AN
ILLUSTRATIVE
SKETCH**

CONTENTS

	Page
§ 1. Distribution and history.....	563
§§ 2-13. Phonetics.....	564
§ 2. Vowels.....	564
§ 3. Consonants.....	565
§ 4. Phonetic laws.....	566
§§ 5-6. Effects of accent.....	566
§ 5. Vocalic changes.....	567
§ 6. Consonantic changes.....	568
§ 7. Laws of vocalic harmony.....	569
§ 8. Consonantic assimilation.....	570
§ 9. Vocalization of consonants.....	570
§ 10. Vowel changes.....	570
§ 11. Metathesis.....	570
§ 12. Dieresis and contraction.....	571
§ 13. Weakening and strengthening of consonants.....	571
§ 14. Grammatical processes.....	571
§ 15. Ideas expressed by grammatical processes.....	572
§§ 16-56. Discussion of grammar.....	575
§§ 16-45. Syntactic words.....	575
§ 16. Structure of syntactic words.....	575
§ 17. Modal elements.....	577
§ 18. Pronominal elements.....	580
§ 19. The post-pronominal <i>g</i>	581
§ 20. The third person dual.....	583
§ 21. The third person plural.....	583
§ 22. Pronouns of the transitive verb.....	584
§ 23. Possessive pronoun.....	584
§ 24. Elements expressing the possessive relation between subject and object.....	587
§ 25. Adverbial prefixes.....	588
§ 26. Directional prefixes.....	590
§ 27. Verbal stems.....	592
§§ 28-33. Suffixes.....	593
§ 28. General remarks.....	593
§ 29. Generic suffixes.....	593
§ 30. Local suffixes.....	595
§ 31. Semi-temporal suffixes.....	595
§ 32. Temporal and semi-temporal suffixes.....	596
§ 33. Terminal suffix.....	597
§§ 34-43. The noun.....	597
§ 34. Gender.....	597
§ 35. Dual and plural.....	602
§ 36. Secondary significance of gender.....	603
§ 37. Gender of plural.....	603

	Page
§§ 16-56. Discussion of grammar—Continued.	
§§ 16-45. Syntactic words—Continued.	
§§ 34-43. The noun—Continued.	
§ 38. Plural suffixes.....	605
§ 39. Vocative.....	612
§ 40. Derivation of nouns.....	612
§ 41. Nouns and verbs derived from particles.....	616
§ 42. Compound nouns.....	617
§ 43. Substantives as qualifiers.....	617
§ 44. Demonstrative pronouns and adverbs.....	617
§ 45. Independent personal pronoun.....	626
§§ 46-52. Particles.....	627
§ 46. Attribute complements.....	627
§ 47. Adverbs.....	633
§ 48. Exhortative particles.....	635
§ 49. Interjections.....	635
§ 50. Conjunctions.....	636
§ 51. Adjectives.....	637
§ 52. Adverbs derived from intransitive verbs.....	638
§§ 53-54. Diminutive and augmentative consonantism.....	638
§ 53. Diminutive and augmentative consonantism in Wishram (by Edward Sapir).....	638
§ 54. Diminutive and augmentative consonantism in Chinook and Kathlamet.....	645
§§ 55-56. Syntax.....	646
§ 55. Syntax of Lower Chinook.....	646
§ 56. Post-positions in Wishram (by Edward Sapir).....	650
§§ 57-60. Vocabulary.....	655
§ 57. Onomatopoeic terms.....	655
§ 58. Nouns expressing adjectival and verbal ideas.....	657
§ 59. Phonetic characteristics of nominal stems.....	658
§ 60. Verbal stems.....	658
Texts.....	666

CHINOOK

By FRANZ BOAS

§ 1. DISTRIBUTION AND HISTORY

The Chinookan stock embraces a number of closely related dialects which were spoken along both banks of Columbia river from the Cascades to the sea, and some distance up the Willamette valley. The Chinook were neighbors of tribes belonging to many linguistic stocks. In Shoalwater bay and on the lower course of Columbia river, along its northern bank as far as the Cascade range, they came into contact with tribes of the coast division of the Salishan family. On the upper course of Willapa river they were contiguous to a small Athapascan tribe; farther to the east they were surrounded by Sahaptin tribes; in the Willamette valley they bordered on the Molala and Kalapuya. On the southern bank of Columbia river, opposite Cowlitz river, lived another Athapascan tribe whose neighbors they were; while south of the mouth of Columbia river they bordered on the Tillamuk, an isolated branch of the Coast Salish.

The language was spoken in two principal dialects, Upper Chinook and Lower Chinook. The former was spoken on the upper course of Columbia river, as far west as Gray's Harbor on the north bank and a little above Astoria on the south bank of the river. It was subdivided into a number of slightly different dialects. The principal representatives are Kathlamet and Clackamas which were spoken on the lower course of the Columbia river and in the Willamette valley, and Wasco and Wishram which were spoken in the region of The Dalles. The Lower Chinook includes the Clatsop dialect on the south bank of the river (from Astoria downward) and the Chinook proper of the north bank from Grays harbor down, and on Shoalwater bay. The last-named dialect is discussed here.

The name Chinook (*Tsinu'k*) is the one by which the tribe was known to their northern neighbors, the Chehalis.

The grammar of the Chinook language has been discussed by Horatio Hale,¹ Friederich Müller,² Franz Boas,³ John R. Swanton,⁴ and Edward Sapir.⁵

Unless otherwise stated, references in the following sketch refer to page and line in Franz Boas, *Chinook Texts*.

PHONETICS (§§ 2-13)

§ 2. Vowels

The phonetic system of Chinook is characterized by a superabundance of consonants and consonant-clusters combined with great variability of vowels. Since practically all our information on the Lower Chinook has been derived from one single individual, the last survivor capable of giving intelligent information, there remain many uncertainties in regard to the system of sounds. My informant was in the habit of changing the position of the lips very slightly only. There was, particularly, no strong forward movement of the lips in the vowel *u* and the semivowel *w*. This tendency has been observed in many Indian languages and was probably characteristic of all Chinook speakers. For this reason the *u* and *o* sounds are very slightly differentiated. Obscure vowels are frequent and seem to be related to all long and short vowels.

The system of vowels and semivowels may be written as follows:

Diphthong	Semi-vowel	Vowels						Semi-vowel	Diphthong
		<i>E</i>							
	<i>w</i>	<i>u</i>	<i>o</i>	<i>ô</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>ê</i> (<i>E</i>)	<i>i</i>	<i>y</i>	
<i>au</i>		<i>u</i>	<i>o</i>	(<i>ô</i>)	<i>a</i>	<i>ê</i> (<i>e</i>)	<i>i</i>		<i>ai</i>
		<i>û</i>	<i>ô</i>	<i>â</i>	<i>ā</i>	<i>ä</i>	<i>ē</i> (<i>ÿ</i>)		

While the *o* and *u* sounds are indistinct, owing to the similarity of lip-positions, the *e* and *i* sounds seemingly alternate in accordance with the character of the adjoining sounds. They assume a decided *i* tinge by contact with a following *a*, or when following an anterior palatal. There is no strong retraction of the lips, but a considerable

¹ Wilkes Expedition, *Ethnography and Philology*, 562-564. See also *Transactions of the American Ethnological Society*, n. xxiii-clxxxviii; Hale's *Indians of Northwest America and Vocabularies of North America*; with an Introduction by Albert Gallatin.

² *Grundriss der Sprachwissenschaft*, n. 254-256. Vienna, 1882.

³ Notes on the Chinook Language, *American Anthropologist*, 55-63, 1893; Chinook Texts, *Bulletin 20 of the Bureau of American Ethnology*, 1894; Kshilamet Texts, *Bulletin 26 of the Bureau of American Ethnology*, 1901; The Vocabulary of the Chinook Language, *American Anthropologist*, n. s., vi, 118-147, 1904.

⁴ Morphology of the Chinook Verb, *American Anthropologist*, n. s., ii, 199-237, 1900.

⁵ Preliminary Report on the Language and Mythology of the Upper Chinook, *American Anthropologist*, n. s., ix, 533-544; Wishram Texts, Publications of the American Ethnological Society, II, 1909.

linguo-palatal constriction. In the short vowel the *i* character is rather accentuated. In the long vowel the *e* character predominates, unless contact and contrast phenomena emphasize the *i* character. *ô* seems to occur only with *k* sounds and is probably due to an assimilation of short *a*. *â* is rare and seems to occur only in onomatopoeic words. *ê* and *ä* are also of peculiar character. *ä* seems to be always either a rhetorical broadening of *ê* (as in *ä'ka* for *ê'ka*), or an onomatopoeic element which is frequent as terminal sound in interjections. The *a* series is related to the *o* and *u* series in so far as *a* may be transformed into *o* or *u*, while *e* and *i* can never be thus transformed. We will designate the *o* and *u* sounds as *u*-series and the *e* and *i* sounds as *i*-series. The only diphthongs that occur are *au* and *ai*. Doubled vowels, unless separated by a consonantic glottal stop, do not seem to occur. Short *i* and *u* when preceding vowels have always consonantic values.

§ 3. Consonants

The consonants consist of labials, dentals, and a very full series of palatals. There are also a number of *l* sounds. I did not succeed, however, in distinguishing these satisfactorily. There is also much confusion regarding surds and sonants, not only because the sonant has greater stress than our sonant, but also on account of the occurrence of a labial sound with semiclosure of the nose and weak lip-closure, which is therefore intermediate between *b*, *m*, and *w*, with prevalent *m* character. Between vowels the sound approaches a *b*. The occurrence of *d* is also doubtful. Each stop occurs as fortis and surd.

The series of consonants may be represented as follows:

	Sonant	Surd	Fortis	Spirant	Semi-nasal	Nasal	Lateral	Semi-vowels
Glottal . . .	ʔ	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Velar . . .	(gʔ)	q	qʔ	x	—	—	—	—
Palatal . . .	g	k	kʔ	ç	—	—	—	—
Anterior palatal } (gʔ)	kʰ	kʰʔ	xʰ	—	—	—	—	—
Alveolar . . .	(dʔ)	t	tʔ	s, c	—	n	(l)	(y)
Dento-alveolar affricative	—	ts, tc	tsʔ, tcʔ	—	—	—	—	—
Labial . . .	—	p	pʔ	—	m	m	—	(w)
Lateral . . .	ʎ	ʎ	ʎʔ	ʎ, ʎ	—	—	—	—

The alveolar *s*, *c*, and the affricative *ts*, *tc*, are pronounced with open teeth. The two *m*'s are not distinguished, since the former occurs only before vowels. It is doubtful if they represent two really distinct sounds.

The glottal stop and the velar surd are closely related, the former often taking the place of the latter. An omission of a *q* after a stop transforms the latter into a fortis. I have placed *l* and *n* in the same line, on account of their frequent alternation. Since the glottal stop, velars, palatals, and anterior palatals have certain peculiarities in common, we will designate them as *k* sounds. The consonants of the anterior palatal series have a decided affricative character, which is least prominent in the fortis. The medial palatal *k* and the velar *q* appear also as affricatives. In these cases the continued sound appears so long, that I have written them as *kz* and *qx*.

The language admits of extensive consonantic clusters, and I have not been able to discover any sequence of consonants that is inadmissible except that clusters consisting of a stop followed by *m* and *n* seem to be avoided.

§ 4. Phonetic Laws

Nevertheless we find complex phonetic laws. These may be classed in nine groups:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| (1) Effects of accent. | (5) Vowel changes. |
| (2) Laws of vocalic harmony. | (6) Metathesis. |
| (3) Laws of consonantic assimilation. | (7) Dieresis. |
| (4) Vocalization of consonants. | (8) Contraction. |
| | (9) Weakening and strengthening of consonants. |

Only the first two of these laws are purely phonetic, while the others are restricted to certain grammatical forms. Groups 2-5 are changes due to contact phenomena.

Effects of Accent (§§ 5, 6)

The accent affects the character of the vowel upon which it falls and modifies consonants in so far as certain consonants or consonantic clusters are not tolerated when they precede the accent. On the whole, these changes are confined to the Lower Chinook, but they occur also in part in the western dialects of the Upper Chinook.

§ 5. Vocalic Changes

1. Vocalic changes consist in the introduction of an *ɛ* in an accented consonantic cluster which consists of a combination of stems. The *ɛ* is inserted after the accented consonantic stem. The same change occurs in Kathlamet, while it is absent in Wishram.

a-teɛ'-l-a-x he made it (*a-* aorist; *te-* he; *l-* it; *-a* directive; *-x* to do)

a-gɛ'-l-a-x she made it (*a-* aorist; *g-* she; *l-* it; *-a* directive; *-x* to do)

tɛ'-kɛmôn ashes (*t-* plural gender)

2a. Accented short *u*, when followed by *m*, *n*, or *l* which are followed by vowels, becomes *uä'*.

iä'gunat his salmon

iguä'nat salmon

iq!ulipɣunä'yu youths

iq!uä'lɣpɣ youth

2b. Accented *ɛ* and short *a*, when followed by *m*, *n*, or *l* which are followed by vowels, become *ä*. The short vowels *i* and *u*, when followed by vowels, have consonantic values and affect preceding *ɛ* and *a* in the same manner.

icä'yim grizzly-bear

icäyä'muke grizzly-bears

xä'penic giving herself in payment to shaman

pä'nic to give in payment to shaman

aqtä'witɣ he gives them to them 249.13

Accented *i* followed by an *a* or *u* vowel becomes *äy*.

atciä'x he is accustomed to make him

atcä'yax he makes him

mLopiä'Lza you will gather it

agiupä'yax she gathered him

Here belong also the terminal changes of *ē* in plural forms:

i'ck!alē clam basket

lck!alä'yuks clam baskets

öcuē'ē frog

tcuä'yuks frogs

Compare with this the following cases, where *n* and *l* belong to consonantic clusters:

nēɣɛ'ʔōkō he awoke

mɛ'nx'i a little while

In one case *ɛ* accented changes to *ä* before *ɣ*:

lLä'lɣx bird

tlälä'xuke birds

All these changes given under 2 are confined to Lower Chinook. They do not occur in Kathlamet and Wishram.