'Klahowiam Mr Smis': Collocation and Context of Situation in the Interpretation of a Chinook Jargon Text.

Barbara P. Harris
University of Victoria

Most of the previous work on Chinook Jargon has dealt with spoken text (see for example Boas, 1883; Drechsel, 1981; Grant, 1945; Jacobs, 1932; Silverstein, 1972; Thomason, 1983). The problems involved in dealing with an original written text are quite different, because of the heavy dependance of meaning in CJ on various linguistic factors, not the least of which was the physical and social context of the utterance. Hale (1846:643) remarked of Jargon, 'A good deal is expressed in the tone of voice, the look, and the gesture of the speaker.' More recently, Drechsel (1981:99) has commented, 'Much understanding depended on the extralinguistic context, including the speaker's tone of voice, looks, gestures and other body language, as well as the particular speech situations.' The reason for this reliance on context is found in the lexicon. As Drechsel (96f.) explains, CJ had a 'parsimonious vocabulary of semantically and grammatically ambiguous, generically defined entries (core lexicon); polysemy due to their functions in different linguistic and extralinguistic contexts and/or metaphorical extension.' A glance through Shaw's (1909) dictionary is all that is needed to exemplify this statement. An early comment on the multiplicity of meanings inherent in many CJ words was made by the Rev. Herbert Beaver, Hudson's Bay Chaplain at Fort Vancouver in the late 1830's (see Jessett 1958). In a letter to Benjamin Harrison, Hudson's Bay House, London, dated March 10, 1837, Beaver complained of his inability to communicate effectively with his Indian charges:3

The word 'Cock-shot' belongs to every part of speech, and signifies everything relating to shooting, hunting, killing, fighting, striking, wounding, etc, etc, whether men or other animals. The word 'Tan-ap' signifies 'little' in its various acceptations, and everything that is little from a child to every species of young. Thus 'Tan-ap Sun', the speaker pointing to the East, means early in the morning; raising the hand a little in the same direction the day a little more advanced; pointing to the west, the evening. 'Klout-che-man' is the term used to express the whole female sex in whatever degree of relationship, whether rational or irrational.

(Jessett, 38f.)

It would be hard to find a clearer statement of the role of extralinguistic context in the interpretation of Chinook Jargon.

Not only are CJ words polysemous, they can often function as several parts of speech, and since CJ has no inflectional morphemes, function is indicated on the surface largely by word order, as the following questions illustrate:4

(1) Nika kumtuks Chinook wawa?
2 SG 'know' 'CJ' 'speech'
'Do you understand Chinook Jargon?'

(2) Nika kumtuks wawa Chinook?
2 SG 'know' 'speak' 'CJ'
'Can you speak Chinook Jargon'

In (1), wawa functions as the second element of the nominal compound Chinook wawa, whereas in (2) it completes the verb phrase kumtuks wawa.

Word order, however, is not infallible as an indicator of function, as may be seen in the ambiguous statement, yaka kumtuks wawa, which may have four possible...

1 As opposed to formal writing such as that found in the Kamloops Wawa or in translations of hymns, prayers, Bible stories, etc.

2 This dictionary is by far the most complete of those I have seen, as Shaw combined all the features of his predecessors and quoted their comments at length. For other dictionaries consulted see References.

3 The three words discussed here were later written, respectively, kokshut, tenas and kloochman although like all CJ words they have several orthographic variants.

4 All glosses are from Shaw unless otherwise indicated.
structures, two with closely related meanings.

(3) Yaka kumtuks wawa
NP Subj PredNom 'He/she [is] an orator'

(4) Yaka kumtuks wawa
NP Subj PredAj 'He/she [is] eloquent'

(5) Yaka kumtuks wawa
NP VP NP Subj Vb Obj 'He/she understands speech'

(6) Yaka kumtuks wawa
NP VP Subj Vb 'He/she knows how to talk'

The last is the most likely interpretation if the context is unknown. Lexical collocation must also be taken into account as, in common with other pidgins, CJ expands its small core lexicon by compounding and circumlocution. Thus the sentence Yaka halo kumtuks, which appears to have (and indeed could have) the structure

(7) Yaka halo kumtuks
NP NEG VP 'He/she [does] not understand'

could equally well, given the right context, be analysed

(8) Yaka halo kumtuks
NP NEG AJP 'He/she [is] unaware' or 'It[is] unintelligible'

5 Notice in examples (3) and (4) that CJ does not have a lexical form corresponding to stative be in English; miltile is often used like existential be.

6 The prime example of this is probably found in the expression mahsh lametsin kopa lemah yaka kloshe kopa smallpox, (lit.) 'Put medicine in arm it good against smallpox.'

where halo functions like the English negative prefix un-.

If all these factors -- polysemy, multifunctionality, and lexical collocation -- must be taken into account when dealing with the spoken language where (at least in the original circumstances) the extralinguistic context was clear, they become much more important when dealing with written texts. Firth (1930:174) points out, 'In written language the context is entirely verbal and referred to an assumed common background of experience.' But what happens when the 'assumed common background of experience' is missing, as is the case when one is dealing with old texts? Lyons (1977:578) says 'Problems of spatio-temporal reference arise when the participants are separated in space and time'; how much more are these problems compounded when dealing with a language like Chinook Jargon, which is so heavily dependent on an understanding of the context, both linguistic and extralinguistic.

The text referred to in the title is a letter written in the year 1881 by 'Jack' in Quileute, W.T. to 'Mr Smis' in Seattle (see Appendix I). A photocopy of this letter was given to me by a colleague, along with a first attempt at an interlinear and a free translation by an anonymous consultant. A first comparison of the interlinear and free translations with the text revealed that they did not seem to fit properly. The free translation was too free and some of the glosses in the interlinear did not agree with those accepted by most dictionaries and glossaries of CJ. As well, some of the transcription did not make sense in terms of CJ structure, but these misinterpretations were mostly attributable to difficulties with reading the text, for reasons explained below. Excited by the prospect of analysing a piece of 'real' CJ and inspired by Firth's dictum (1930:175f.) that 'to translate mere words is a vicious waste of time,' I set about the task of producing a translation that not only would be as accurate as possible but would also fit in with the historical and social context as far as it could be determined. This paper deals with my ensuing attempts to relate the apparent content of the letter to its time and place of origin, over a century ago in Washington Territory.

The first problem to be overcome was the physical condition of the letter. Although the photocopy is amazingly clear, time has wreaked its havoc, and the paper appears to be badly foxed. A few (apparently original) inkblots and fold marks add to the difficulty
of decipherment. The handwriting is an exceedingly careful copperplate, in itself easy to read. With the aid of a magnifying glass and a strong light I was able to transcribe the letter to my own satisfaction, and thus clear up a number of the puzzles posed by the first interlinear translation. For example, Jack only used capital letters at the beginnings of paragraphs (and not always then) or for proper names, so it is often difficult, reading the letter with the naked eye, to tell whether a dot is in fact a full stop or whether it is one of the many tiny marks caused by foxing over the years or by a splottery pen nib at the time of writing. And although the penmanship is generally clear, various spots and fold marks have in some places almost obliterated the writing. I am satisfied that the transcription I have provided is as accurate a one as can be achieved from the photocopy in my possession. However, I would like at some time to try either to get a look at the original, or have the copy cleaned up in order to be completely sure.

The next stage in the interpretation was to prepare a new interlinear translation. Because of the polysemy involved in the lexicon of CJ, it was necessary to do this in very general terms, and to make a small accompanying glossary of terms having more than two or three meanings for easy reference. This having been done, the actual interpretation could begin.

Although at the time my progress was more of a meander than a bee-line, I will deal with the letter here sentence by sentence.

Nika tenas wake tenas sick. This sentence presents no problems to speak of. Nika is the first person singular pronoun in all cases, and tenas means either 'small, little, few' or by extension 'child, the young of any animal' (but in the latter case the animal is always specified, e.g. 'foal' is tenas kuitan). Wake is one of the two negatives used in CJ, the other being halo; they seem to be used almost interchangeably, though Shaw (1909:6) says:

Probably properly 'wake' means no, and 'halo' all gone, but on Puget Sound 'halo' is used for no, the same as 'wake' is in Oregon and other localities. Custom uses 'halo' in some combinations and 'wake' in others, and both in some.

Jack uses halo throughout except in this first sentence and once near the end of the letter. The position of the next occurrence of tenas, preceding sick, indicates that it is functioning as an adverbial modifying sick, making a compound adjective tenas sick which could be glossed as 'ailling'. As usual in CJ, the intensive stative verb be is not represented. This sentence can thus be translated, 'My child is not ailing.'

Yaka skookum, pe nika kloochman halo tenas sick. Yaka is the third singular personal pronoun, all persons, all cases. Since no name is mentioned, we do not know whether the child is a boy or a girl, but presumably Mr Smith did, and would read 'he' or 'she' accordingly. (From internal evidence further on in the letter, it seems likely that it is in fact a boy. Skookum, commonly used as a modifier, means generally 'strong, fit tough' etc. Pe is one of the two conjunctions in CJ; it serves a co-ordinating function. Usually glossed 'and' or 'but', it sometimes seems to mean 'then' and occasionally 'or'. Nika here must be possessive, as it is followed by kloochman, always a noun. Kloochman means 'female' (see the Rev. Mr Beaver's comments above), though like tenas it is always followed by the name of the species if non-human, e.g. kloochman kuitan 'mare'. It also refers, if unmodified, to the adult female; thus 'girl' is tenas kloochman and 'filly' is tenas kloochman kuitan. Halo, as stated above, is one of the two CJ negatives, and the one that Jack commonly uses. Tenas sick has been discussed in the context of the previous sentence. This sentence could then be rendered 'He/she is fine and my wife is not ailing [either].'

Yaka skookum. A truly simple sentence. Since yaka obviously refers to kloochman in the preceding sentence, there is no gender problem. The sentence reads 'She is fine.'

Chee nika copet potlatch kopa nika tillicums. Chee is a modifier indicating recent time, and may function adverbially or adjectivally; here it is obviously an adverb as no nominal form follows. The next phrase could be ambiguous and the interpretation hangs on the full stop at the end, and on the beginning of the next sentence. Nika, 1 SG, could be 'I' or 'mine'; copet can be a verb or a modifier; potlatch can be noun or verb. Thus nika copet potlatch could be glossed either 'my only gift' or 'I stop giving'. Kopa nika tillicums does not help, as it should mean 'to my people' in either case. Kopa is the all-purpose preposition of CJ; here it has to be glossed either 'to' or 'from', and 'to' is the more likely if copet is in fact a verb.
And so it would appear, because we then come to a full stop, and the next sentence begins with an adverbial phrase. The suggested interpretation of this sentence is therefore 'Recently I stopped giving to my relatives/my friends.'

Mokst moon alta nika kwansome potlatch kopa nika tillicums. Mokst moon alta can be seen to be an adverbial phrase: mokst 'two' modifying moon 'month' followed by alta, the present tense marker also used as an adverbial meaning 'now, at the present time'. Nika here functions as subject; it cannot be possessive since potlatch is obviously the verb in this sentence, modified by kwansome. Kwansome, according to Shaw, means 'always, forever, eternal, everlasting, perpetual, unceasing'; apart from having these fairly specific meanings, it also seems to be used as a sort of continuous action marker that can often be translated by a progressive in English. Kopa nika tillicums constitutes the same phrase as in the previous sentence. Thus this sentence likely reads '[For] two months now I have been giving to my relatives/friends.'

Pe kwansome yaka hehe, kwansome yaka halo ickta mamook kopet hehe pe klokwollg. Pe and kwansome have already been discussed. The use of yaka,'3 SG, seems odd here, as the anaphoric referent is surely tillicums at the end of the preceding sentence. One has to assume that Jack used only one third person pronoun for both singular and plural, relying on the context to indicate number. Hehe means any kind of amusement, laughter, and so forth, and can also be used as a verb, as it is here. Iccta is generally considered to be the interrogative pronoun 'what', while as a plural noun it usually means 'thing'; however, Shaw (p.7) says 'occasionally the singular icktah is used, though not often' (see also footnote 7). This must be one of the occasions, as the interrogative function does not fit here, and Shaw's English-Chinook glossary (42f) gives Halo icktah for 'nothing' (although he does not list this compound under either of its component elements in the main dictionary). Mamook is the multi-purpose verb of action, often translatable simply by 'do'. Kopet, however, seems to be an adverbial meaning 'now, at the present time', and Shaw's English-Chinook glossary (42f) gives Halo icktah for 'nothing' (although he does not list this compound under either of its component elements in the main dictionary). Mamook is the multi-purpose verb of action, often translatable simply by 'do'. Kopet appears to need some knowledge of Quileute culture to be accurately interpreted. This problem was quickly solved by referring to Powell and Jensen (1976). The structure of the second part of the sentence is also unusual in that it apparently connotes the normal SV word order of CJ.

One would expect kwansome yaka mamook halo ickta kopet hehe pe klokwollg. It is difficult to render this sentence in clear grammatical English; however, I would suggest 'And they are always having fun, they work at nothing except games and Wolf dances.'

Pe nika kwansome kloshe nanitch kopa nika tillicums pe konaway siwash. The first three words have already been dealt with. Kloshe nanitch is a compound with various sorts of 'looking after' as well as admonitory connotations; nanitch by itself is a purely sensory verb of sight and (less often) sound, but when preceded by kloshe it acquires a whole host of extended meanings. It appears to need kopa preceding its object when it functions as a transitive verb; thus nika tillicums pe konaway siwash is the compound object. The sentence reads: 'But I always look after my relatives/friends and all [the] Indians.'

Kwansome nika potlatch hylu muckamuck pe halo tolo ickt bit. Potlatch must be verbal here as there is no other word in the first clause that can perform that function. Hylu signifies a quantity, ranging from simply 'more than one' to its commonest meaning, 'plenty, a lot'. Muckamuck is anything to eat or drink. In the second clause, tolo 'earn, gain' is always used verbally as far as I can tell, and ickt bit 'one dime' is clearly its object. This sentence therefore reads 'I am always providing a lot of food and do not profit one dime.'

7 Nika tillicum is always glossed 'my relatives' but in the plural the sense seems to be less clear. Tillicum is one of two words in CJ that may be pluralized, the other being icktah 'thing', which in the plural has the connotation of 'belongings'.

8 According to the Guide to the Province of British Columbia for 1877-8 (Hibben 1877), mamook hehe means 'to amuse'. However, the structure of this sentence does not easily admit this analysis although the connotation fits well.
have had an especially favorable meaning, somewhat in the sense of belonging to one's own people. I have no evidence whatsoever, but just a very strong feeling that it may refer to the village of La Push itself, located at the mouth (la bouche) of the Quillayute River, and by all accounts a kloshe lllahe indeed. Allowing for this flash of intuition, then, sentence J. in its entirety would read 'And if you come to Quileute sometime, I will look after Wesley when he comes to Quileute.'

Spose Wesley klap kopa Quileute nika konamox kopa yaka mamook tsum kopa konaway slwash. Spose could probably be interpreted here as 'when', since from the preceding two sentences (even if the historical context were not known) it seems certain that Wesley was in fact going to Quileute. Klap means 'find, arrive,' surely the latter in this context. Konamox is a blend of konaway 'all' and moxt 'two' thus 'both', but it can also be glossed 'together', which seems more likely in this case, followed as it is by the preposition kopa and the 3 SG pronoun yaka, yielding 'I together with him'. Mamook has already been discussed; tsum by itself means any kind of mark or coloration, as well as writing and various other combinations of background and pattern. The compound mamook tsum denotes various activities involved in putting marks on paper or other material; two such meanings are 'enroll' and 'enumerate'. Because of the following preposition kopa, the best gloss here seems to be 'make a list of' especially when preceded by konaway slwash 'all the Indians' -- a particularly likely occupation for a prospective schoolmaster and his native mentor. For this sentence we then have 'When Wesley arrives at Quileute he and I will make a list of all the band members.' (In terms of the sentence structure, mamook tsum kopa konaway slwash could just as well read 'write to all the band members', but it is unlikely that many of them could have read what was written to them at that time; one has the feeling that Jack was a leader and an exception in his literacy in CJ. In any case, if Wesley and Jack were right there with them, it would hardly have been necessary to write to them.)

11 The term kloshe lllahe was used in reference to an Indian village near Bedwell Harbour on Pender Island in about 1896, where it was shortened to 'the Kloshie' (Elliott, forthcoming).
Pe nika tenas sick, mok sun nika halo get up.
The first half of the sentence is ambiguous, taken by itself, and the ambiguity is structural:

(9) Nika tenas sick alta
1 SG NP Aj PRES Poss Subj PredAj Av
'My child is sick at present'

(10) Nika tenas sick alta
1 SG AjP PRES Subj PredAj Av,
'I am a little sick at present'

However, the second clause disambiguates the first: 'For two days I [did] not get up.' The whole sentence can thus be interpreted 'I am not very well just now, I didn't get out of bed for two days.'

This sentence is preceded in the original letter by a sort of equal sign as well as an overly large full stop. These marks are perfectly clear and quite obviously deliberately made, but I can offer no logical explanation as to their significance, if any. As this sentence is long and difficult to interpret, it too is better dealt with in two parts.

(1) Tenas a1ka k10nas ickt moon pe sitkum, nika klatawa kopa Queets pe Ho. Tenas here acts as an intensifier attached to the future marker a1ka; Shaw gives 'in a little while' for tenas a1ki. K10nas, he says, is 'an expression of uncertainty or doubt' and may be glossed 'might, may' (among other things). Ickt moon pe sitkum is literally 'one month and a half', hence, six weeks. The rest of this part of the sentence presents no problem (klatawa meaning loosely 'go') except that I had no idea of the location or the significance of Queets and Ho. I soon discovered (Pettitt 1950, and Powell and Jensen 1976) that Queets and Hoh are both rivers and Quileute settlements south of La Push.

(2) iskum kopa siwash lolo kopa Quileute... This analysis assumes, however, that kopa is always a preposition, when, in fact, it is not. It can also be used as an adverb of place. In speech, the difference of function would be clear: 'When thus used as an adverb, the accent is on the last syllable which is prolonged.' (Shaw, p.12). In writing, this prosodic difference cannot be realised. Lolo means not only 'carry' or 'bring' but also 'fetch'. Mamook, in this context followed by sealskin, likely has connotations of 'work'. Sentence M. may then be interpreted as 'In a little while, maybe six weeks, I will go to Queets and Hoh to get band members there to come back to Quileute to work on sealskins.'

The second page of the letter begins with the sentence Pe nika Ow Henry yaka k10she, halo tenas sick. No problems arise here, as the only new word is Ow 'younger brother', and there are no structural or contextual difficulties. The only point of grammatical interest is the use of the reinforcing or recapitulatory (Quirk et al. 1980:970) pronoun yaka after a subject nominal, a normal feature of CJ syntax. The translation is 'And my younger brother Henry [is] fine, not ailing.'

Pe nika mama yaka kloshe pe kwansome mitlight kopa nika house. The only new item in this sentence (but see footnote 5) is mitlight having a general existential meaning; it can be translated in a number of ways, e.g. 'be, stay, rest, live'. This sentence then means 'My mother is fine and still lives at my place.'

Pe John yaka kwansome k[loshe nanich kopa pe potlatch pire stick. The beginning of the sentence presents no difficulties. The original translation

13 Sealing was one of the traditional occupations of the Quileute, especially after the establishment of the fur trade in the Pacific north-west. In 1881, when this was written, as many as 8,000 sealskins were traded in a season (Pettitt, 1950).

14 Untypically, this feature does not occur when Wesley is the subject, Spose Wesley klap kopa Quileute...
assumed that the subject of potlatch in the second clause was nika, but the structure, compared to that of previous sentences would seem to indicate 'John' as the giver of the *pire stick*.

My first reaction to this compound was that 'fire stick' must equal 'gun' (the result, no doubt, of watching too many old western movies on TV), and indeed the first translator had so interpreted it. A quick search of the dictionaries and glossaries soon revealed, however, that 'gun' in CJ is either musket or kalipeen (from Fr. carbine), and that *pire stick* is in fact simply 'firewood' — which better fits the feeling of the letter, in any case. Thus, this sentence tells us, 'And John always looks after me and gives [me] firewood.'

Howeattle yaka kwansome ickt tumtum kopa nika kwansome kunamoxt kopa nika spose ickta mamook. This sentence presented problems both contextual and structural. The original transcript reads How-kwut'l yaka .. .translated as 'I can't he . .' in the interlinear version and left out of the free version altogether. The wording in the photocopy was decipherable as Howeattle, but I was then faced with another mystery man (having dismissed 'John' as a relative of Jack and Henry). Back then to Quileute history, to find that one of the Quileute chiefs appointed by the treaty of 1855 was How-yaks (Powell and Jensen) or How-yat'l (Petitt), and that Howeattle is now a Quileute surname. Assuming that Chief Howeattle was somewhere between thirty-five and fifty years old at the time of the treaty, he could easily have still been alive in 1881. The tone of the sentence also seems to imply someone who is respected and looked up to. In any case, Howeattle was of one tumtum with the writer, and here we encounter one of the most abstract names. Assuming that Chief Howeattle was somewhere between thirty-five and fifty years old at the time of the treaty, he could easily have still been alive in 1881. The tone of the sentence also seems to imply someone who is respected and looked up to. In any case, Howeattle was of one tumtum with the writer, and here we encounter one of the most abstract names. Assuming that Chief Howeattle was somewhere between thirty-five and fifty years old at the time of the treaty, he could easily have still been alive in 1881. The tone of the sentence also seems to imply someone who is respected and looked up to. In any case, Howeattle was of one tumtum with the writer, and here we encounter one of the most abstract names.

---

This lexical item is of interest on phonological grounds, as the first element is usually spelled pliah, CJ not normally containing an [r].

15 This lexical item is of interest on phonological grounds, as the first element is usually spelled pliah, CJ not normally containing an [r].

16 And in the B.C. dialect of Canadian English. This morning (8 June 1984), I heard myself saying 'It's not his tumtum,' meaning 'He doesn't deal with that sort of thing' (or more colloquially, 'That's not his bag.')

sentence reinforces the notion of Howeattle's approval of the writer's ideas: kwansome kunamoxt kopa nika 'always together with me' spose ickta mamook. The last two words are a phrase, glossed 'what's the matter?'; with spose preceding, a likely translation might be 'whatever happens'. For this sentence as a whole, then, we have 'Howeattle is always of one mind with me, always supports me no matter what happens.'

Nika tikegh spose mika potlatch kopa nika tenas delate kloshe whistle. Tikegh has a number of meanings denoting various degrees of volition; the commonest are 'like' and 'wish'. Potlatch is again a verb, as there is no other word in this clause that can function verbally. The end of the sentence presents a second case of structural ambiguity:

| (12) | Kopa nika tenas delate kloshe whistle |
| Prep  | 1  | SG  | AJ  | Av  | Aj  | NP |
| Indirect Obj | Direct Object |
| 'to my child' | 'very good whistle' |

If we assume that the child is more likely than the father to want a whistle, then (13) is the correct analysis, and the child is probably male, as in the late nineteenth century a whistle would not have been considered a very proper toy for a girl child. It is, however, entirely possible that Jack wanted a whistle for himself, but in that case, delate kloshe whistle would surely be the more likely word order. Based on that assumption, I have opted for 'I [would] like [it] if you [would] give my child a really good whistle.'

Wake kakwa mitlight kopa okoke makoke house. Wake is used for the hereafter, where it means simply 'not'. Kakwa is used for comparison, and sometimes for 'because'; it clearly has the former meaning here. Mitlight is again existential. Okoke is a demonstrative, either pronoun or determiner. Here it modifies makoke house a compound made up of makoke 'trade' and house 'building', thus a store, shop or trading post. The sentence thus reads 'Not such as are in this store.'
Klahowgam, Mr. Smith. The 'ordinary salutation at meeting or parting' (Shaw, p. 10) is klahowga, but there is very clearly an m on the end of the word in this letter. Klahowgam is glossed as 'poor, miserable, in need of help' and may have been used as a sort of honorific when addressing anyone of higher social standing (p.c. Thom Hess). However, Shaw quotes Eels as saying:

I have never been able to see any difference.

In the Willamette Valley in 1850 and afterwards we always used Klahowgam for both and I never heard Klahowga. On Puget Sound for about twenty years we have used Klahowga for both; and I have seldom heard Klahowgam.

(p.10)

I would venture to suggest that whoever taught Jack his epistolatory style used it as the closest CJ equivalent to 'Y'r humble servant.'

Kloshe mash haleuiman tsum kopa mika nika kakwa kwansome mika tillicum. Mash is the verb that generally denotes movement away from, into, or out of, and can function either transitively or in transitively. The next word, huleuiman appeared on the original interlinear translation as hahlakl glossed 'open'; in spite of a rather large blot, it was clearly identifiable under the magnifying glass as huleuiman, which must be a variant spelling of huloima 'different, strange, another.' Tsum here apparently refers to the letter itself, as it is followed by kopa mika 'to you' and a further expression of friendly sentiment, nika kakwa kwansome mika tillicum 'I am always your friend.'

It is now possible to put the whole thing together in one coherent whole, having solved all the puzzles, historical and linguistic, except one -- exactly who was 'Jack'?

The letter

Quileute, W.T. Feb. 7, 1881

Mr. Smith

My child is not sick at all. He is fine, and so is my wife. Recently I stopped giving handouts to my relatives. For two months I have been supporting them while all they did was amuse themselves, doing nothing but play games and perform Wolf dances. But I have always looked after my relatives and all the band members. I always provide lots of food and never get one dime back. I'll look after Wesley when he comes to Quileute and then if you come too I'll watch out for you and take you to the village. When Wesley comes, he and I together will make a list of all the band members. But I'm not very well at the moment. I stayed in bed for two days. In a little while, maybe six weeks, I'm going to Queets and Roh River to get some band members there to bring back to Quileute to work on seal skins.

My younger brother Henry keeps well, not ailing. My mother is well too and still staying in my house. And Howeattle is always on my side and backs me up no matter what.

I would like it if you would give my child a really good little whistle, not like the ones they have in the store here.

I remain, Mr Smith, your humble servant. I am pleased to write to you again and I am as always your friend,

Jack

References


Eels, Myron (1892). 'Aboriginal Geographic Names in the


Hibben, T. N. (1931). Chinook Jargon as Spoken by the Indians of the Pacific Coast. Victoria: T. N. Hibben and Co., Publishers. [This appears to be a late edition of an earlier work, as Shaw (q.v.) quotes a comment by Eels (1893) comparing Hibben and others to Gibbs.]


Kay, Paul, and Gillian Sankoff (1972). 'A Language-Universals Approach to Pidgins and Creoles.' In DeCamp and Hancock (q.v.):61-72.


Palmer, Joel (1847). 'Table of Words of the Chinook Jargon.' Journal of Travels over the Rocky Mountains, March of America Facsimile Series, Number 83. Ann Arbor: University Microfilms Inc. 1966:147-152.


APPENDIX I

Letter from
Jack
to
Mr Smis

NOTE: Apparent inconsistencies in spelling are not typographical errors; punctuation, capitalization, and paragraphing are as they appear in the original.

Quileute, W. T. Feb. 7, 1881

Mr Smis

Nika tenas wake tenas sick. yaka skookum. pe nika kloochman halo tenas sick. yaka skookum. chee nika copet potlatch kopa nika tillicums. most moon alta, nika kwansome potlatch kopa nika tillicums. pe kwanso[me] yaka hehe, kwansome yaka halo ickta mamook koped hehe pe klokwolly. pe nika kwansome klosho nanitch kopa nika tillicums pe konaway siwash. kwansome nika potlatch hyiu muckamuck pe halo lolo ickt bit. nika klosho nanich kopa Wesley spose yaka chaco kopa
Quileut. pe alka spose mika chako kopa Quileute nika kloshe nanich kopa mika pe lolo mika kopa kloshe illahe. spose Wesley klap kopa Quileute nika konamoxk kopa yaka mamook tsum kopa konaway siwash. pe nika tenas sick alta, most sun nika halo get up. = tenas alka klonas ickt moon pe sitkum, nika klatawa kopa Queets pe Ho, iskum kopa siwash lolo kopa Quileute mamook sealskin.

(p.2) pe nika Ow Henry yaka kloshe, halo tenas sick. pe nika mama yaka kloshe pe kwansome mitlight kopa nika house. pe John yaka kwansome koshe nanich kopa nika pe potlatch pire stick. Howeattle yaka kwansome ickt tumtum kopa nika kwansome kunamoxk kopa nika spose ickta mamook. nika tikegh spose mika potlatch kopa nika tenas delate kloshe whistle. wake kakva mitlight kopa ooke makoke house.

Klahowiam Mr Smis

Kloshe mash haleuiman tsum kopa mika nika kakwa kwansome mika tillicum.

Jack [E?]
Interlinear translation of letter from \textit{Jack} to \textit{Mr Smis}

\textbf{Note:}

1) Uppercase lexical items are listed alphabetically in attached glossary (first occurrence only is marked).
2) Starred glosses indicate general meanings.
3) Uppercase glosses indicate syntactic meanings.

\textbf{Nika TEMAS} wake tenas sick. \textbf{Yaka SKOCKUM, pe nika}
1 SG *small NEG *small sick. 3 SG *strong, CCNJ 1 SG
My child not at all sick. He (is) well, and my

\textbf{KLOOCHMAN} halo tenas sick. \textbf{yaka skookum. CHEE nika}
*female NEG *small sick. 3 SG *strong. *recent 1 SG
wife (is) not ailing. She (is) well. Recently I

\textbf{COPET} potlatch kopa nika TILLICUMS. most month,
*stop gift, give PREF 1 SG *people. Two month,
stop giving to my people. (For) two months,

\textbf{alta nika} K\textbf{WANSOME} potlatch kopa nika
PRES 1 SG *continually gift, give PREF 1 SG
now I have been giving to my

\textbf{tillicums. pe kwansome yaka hehe,}
*people. CONJ *continually 3 SG *amusement,
relatives. And always they play

\textbf{kwansome} yaka halo ickta mamook kopet
*continually 3 SG NEG thing *do *only
always they nothing do except

\textbf{hehe} pe k\textbf{LOK\\w{c}LLY. pe nika}
*amusement CONJ Wolf Dances. CONJ 1 SG
play games and Wolf Dances. And I

\textbf{kwansome} K\textbf{LOSHE MANITCH} kopa nika
*continually *good see PREF 1 SG
always look after my

\textbf{tillicums pe konaway siwash. kwansome}
*people CONJ *total Indian. *continually
relatives and all Indians. Always

\textbf{nika} potlatch h\textbf{YIU} muckamuck pe halo
I give a lot food and not
toko ick bit. nika kloshe nanitch kapa
earn one dime. I give good see PREP
get one dime. I look after

Wesley spose yaka chaco kopa Quileute.
Wesley CONDITIONAL 3 SG come PREP Quileute.
Wesley when/if he comes to Quileute.

pe ALKA spose mika chako kopa Quileute
Conj PUT CCND. 2 SG come PREP Quileute
And suppose you come to Quileute

mika kloshe nanitch kapa mika pe LOIC
1 SG good see PREP 2 SG CCNJ carry
I (will) look after you and take

mika kopa kloshe ILLAHIE. spose Wesley
2 SG PREP good land. COND. Wesley
you to pleasant place. When Wesley

klap kopa Quileute nika konamort
find, arrive PREP Quileute 1 SG all twc
arrives in Quileute I along

kopa yaka mamock TSUN kopa konaway siwash.
PREP 3 SG do mark PREP total Indian.
with him make writing about all Indians.

pe mika tenas sick alta, mort sun mika
CONJ 1 SG small sick PRES, two day 1 SG
But I ailing now, (for) two days I

hako get up. =tenas alka klonas
NEG get up. small PUT uncertain
not get up. Soon possibly

ickt soon pe sitkum, nika KLATAWA
cone month CONJ half, 1 SG go
a month and (a) half, I (will) go

kopa Queets pe Ho, ISKUM kopa siwash
PREP Queets CCNJ Ho, get ADV Indian
to Queets and Ho, get there Indians

lolo kopa Quileute mamook sealskin.
carry PREP Quileute do sealskin.
bring to Quileute work sealskin.
CONJ 1SG your younger brother Henry 3SG
And my younger brother Henry he

(is) well not ailing. And my

mother 3SG *good CONJ *continually
mother she (is) well and still

lives at my house. And John

he always locks after

PREP 1SG CONJ gift, give fire wood.
me and gives (me) firewood.

Howyattle 3SG *continuously one *heart, mind
Howyattle he always (is of) one mind

PREP 1SG *continuously all two PREP
with me always together with

PREP 1SG *like
me whatever happens. I like

WHERE GIVE potlatch kopa nika temas
if you give to my child

NEG COMPARATIVE
very good whistle. Not like

be__nike Ow Henry yaka
CONJ 1SG your younger brother Henry 3SG
And my younger brother Henry he

kloshe, hala tenas sick. pe nika
*good, NEG *tenas sick. CONJ 1SG

mama yaka kloshe pe kwansome
mother 3SG *good CONJ *continually

mitlight kopa nika house. pe John
*exist PREP 1SG house. CONJ John

yaka kwansome k[l]oshe namich
3SG *continuously *good *see

kopa nika pe potlatch pire stick.
PREP 1SG CONJ gift, give fire wood.

mitlight kopa okoke makoke house.
*exist PREP DEM. trade house.

is in this store.

Klahowiam Mr. Smith
SALUTATION Mr. Smith
Kloshe MASH haleuiman tsum kopa mike
*good *move another *mark PREP 2 SG
Good send another letter to you

nika kakwa kwansome mika tillicum-
1 SG COMP. *continually 2 SG *people.
I as always your friend.

,hi;Jack

GLCSSAFY

Alka. (Normal spelling is alki, this spelling is probably by contamination from alta. Generally used to denote future, thus can be translated as shall or will. But it can also have an adverbial function, as in the meanings Shaw gives: 'in the future, by and by, after a while, soon, presently, directly, in a little while, hold on, not so fast.'

Chee. Lately, just now, new, fresh, original, recent. Compare cheechako: just arrived > newcomer, tenderfoot.

quoton Copet. (Usually spelled kopet.) To stop, leave off, forbear, quit, submit, abdicate, abrogate, cease; enough, only, alone, simply, except.

Delate. straight, direct, without equivocation, true, correct, exact, genuine, just, plain, precise, thorough, sincere, sure, accurate, undoubted, authentic, certain, definite, erect; truly, exactly, really,
sincerely, surely, verily, definitely, very, correctly.

Illaha. Land, country; clay, earth, soil, dirt; farm, field, ranch; region, district; shire.

Iskum. To take hold of, hold, get, receive, accept, secure, catch, recover, obtain, seize.

Klatawa. To go, travel, attend, flow, migrate, start, tread, leave, begone, get out, depart.

Kloshe. A very expressive word: has 45 meanings' (Shaw, p. 11). Good, well, well enough; affable, amiable, apt, auspicious; beautiful, beloved, beneficial; convenient; efficient, elegant, even; fair, fine, fortunate, fragrant; gay, graceful; hospitable; intimate; kind; meek, mild, meekest, moral; neat; pleasant, plain, practical, pretty; right, reliable, respectable; safe, secure, still, smooth, splendid; useful, upright, untarnished, virtuous.
As a verb = to please.
Takes part in many compounds, e.g. kloshe nanitch (see below at 'nanitch'), look out, take care, guard, defend, nurse, watch (out for), provide; kloshe tumtum, love, delight, happy, favour, cordial, friendly.

Kwansum. (Often spelled kwabpesum.) Always, forever, eternal, continual, everlasting, perpetual, unceasing.

Lolo. 'Originally, to carry a child on the back. In Jargon, used in a more extended sense (Shaw, p. 14). To carry, load, bring, bear, fetch, remove, transfer,
convey, lug, pack, renew.

Mamook. To make, do, work; labor, exertion, exercise, act, action, deed, work; to enact, appoint, accomplish, manage, operate, practice, resolve, serve, use, toil; a job, task; to achieve. Shaw says (p.15), 'the one word denoting action', but see also Mah. Hale says (p.643) that it is used generally as a causative verb: 'Almost every verb and adjective may receive a new significance by prefixing the word mamuk, to make or cause.'

Mamook tsam: write, record, subscribe, mark, copy dye, engrave, enroll, enumerate (see also below at tsam.) Mah. (Often spelled mah.) To leave, turn out, throw away, sell; acquit, banish, cast, dash, desert, dispatch; drop; apply, expel, part with, remove, exterminate, extinguish, fling, forsake, get rid of, heave, hurl; lay down, omit, insert, pour, put; reject, release, relinquish, remit, send, sling, sow, spill, spend, thrust, toss, transmit.

Nanitch. To see, look, look for, seek, observe, glance, view, perceive, behold, listen, look here.

Kloshe nanitch: Look out! Take care! Be careful! To nourish, be cautious, nurse, defend, preserve, entertain, protect, foster, steady, guard, tend, take heed, supervise, watch, provide.

Skookum. Strong, able, solid, potent, powerful, vehement, tight, violent, tough; a ghost, an evil spirit or demon. (Skookum Club: name given to Democratic Club of Seattle; also name of a famous brand of cigar.) Still frequently used as a term of approval; in March 1984, I heard, 'It's a really skookum rig.'

Tenas. Small, few, little; a child, the young of any animal.

Tikegh. To want, wish, love, like; choose, pick; be about to, be ready to; ought to, must.

Tillicum. People, relations, relatives, associates, family, folks, friends, kin, kindred; band, tribe,
fellow nation; population; person.

'Applied generally. It means those who are not chiefs. It is also used to signify a tribe or band (Shaw, p.26).

Nika tillicums. 'Fels gives Nika tillicums -- my friends; my relations; so when preceded by the other pronouns... it has reference to friends or relations.' (Ibid.)

Tsum. (Also spelled tzum.) Mixed colcurs, spots or stripes, a mark or figure, writing, paint, painted, a picture.

Manook tsum: to write, print, stamp, stain, paint, dye, mark, record, copy, subscribe, indite, endorse, engrave (see also above at manook).

Tumatum. Heart, will, opinion, intellect, intention, estimate, memory, mind, plan, purpose, reason; soul, spirit, surmise, thought; to think, will, believe, know, etc.