

Indians were softened or dropped; and the *f* and *r* of the English and French, to them unpronounceable, were modified into *p* and *l*. Grammatical forms were reduced to their simplest expression, and variations in mood and tense conveyed only by adverbs or by the context. The language continued to receive additions, and assumed a more distinct and settled meaning, under the Northwest and Hudson's Bay companies, who succeeded Astor's party, as well as through the American settlers in Oregon. Its advantage was soon perceived by the Indians, and the Jargon became to some extent a means of communication between natives of different speech, as well as between them and the whites. It was even used as such between Americans and Canadians. It was at first most in vogue upon the lower Columbia and the Willamette, whence it spread to Puget Sound, and with the extension of trade, found its way far up the coast, as well as the Columbia and Fraser rivers; and there are now few tribes between the 42d and 57th parallels of latitude in which there are not to be found interpreters through its medium. Its prevalence and easy acquisition, while of vast convenience to traders and settlers, has tended greatly to hinder the acquirement of the original Indian languages; so much so, that except by a few missionaries and pioneers, hardly one of them is spoken or understood by white men in all Oregon and Washington Territory. Notwithstanding its apparent poverty in number of words, and the absence of grammatical forms, it possesses much more flexibility and power of expression than might be imagined, and really serves almost every purpose of ordinary intercourse.

The number of words constituting the Jargon proper has been variously stated. Many formerly employed have become in great measure obsolete, while others have been locally introduced. Thus, at the Dalles of the Columbia, various terms are common which would not be intelligible at Astoria or on Puget Sound. In making the following selection, I have included all those which, on reference to a number of vocabularies, I have found current at any of these places, rejecting, on the other hand, such as individuals, partially acquainted with the native languages, have employed for their own convenience. The total number falls a little short of five hundred words.

An analysis of their derivations gives the following result:

Chinook, including Clatsop	200
Chinook, having analogies with other languages..	21
Interjections common to several	8