

# “TWO SIDES OF THE SAME COIN”: YOKOHAMA PIDGIN JAPANESE AND JAPANESE PIDGIN ENGLISH\*

**Andrei A. AVRAM**

University of Bucharest, Romania  
andrei.avram@lils.unibuc.ro

## Abstract

The paper is a comparative overview of the phonology, morphology, syntax and lexicon of Yokohama Pidgin Japanese and Japanese Pidgin English, formerly spoken in Japan. Both varieties are shown to exhibit features typical of pre-pidgins, while they differ considerably in the circumstances of their emergence and the context of use.

**Keywords:** Yokohama Pidgin Japanese; Japanese Pidgin English; phonology; morphology; syntax; vocabulary; pre-pidgin

## Povzetek

Raziskava vključuje primerjalni pregled med japonskim pidžinom v Yokohami in angleško pidžinom na Japonskem pred dobrim stoletjem ter njune glasoslovne, besedotvorne, skladenjske in besediščne značilnosti. Skozi primerjavo je razvidno, da obe različici vsebujeta značilnosti, tipične za zgodnjo fazo pidžina, vendar se bistveno razlikujeta v okoliščinah njenega nastanka in okolja njune uporabe.

**Ključne besede:** japonski pidžin v Yokohami; angleški pidžin na Japonskem; glasoslovje; besedotvorje; skladnja; besedišče; zgodnja stopnja pidžina

---

\* An earlier version of this paper was presented at the 4th International Symposium on Japanese Studies “Tradition, Modernity, and Globalization in Japan”, 1-2 March 2014, Centre for Japanese Studies, Bucharest. I thank the audience for their probing questions, and, in particular, Andrej Bekeš (University of Ljubljana, Department of Asian Studies) for his insightful comments.



## 1 Introduction

Yokohama Pidgin Japanese (henceforth YPJ), also known as “Yokohama dialect”, “Yokohama Pidgin” or “Japanese ports lingo”, is a variety of pidginized Japanese, spoken in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in Yokohama and, most probably, in Kobe and Nagasaki (Lange, 1903, p. XXVIII; Chamberlain, 1904, p. 369; Daniels, 1948, pp. 805-806; Loveday, 1986, p. 28; Loveday, 1996, p. 69; Stanlaw, 2004, pp. 56-59; Inoue, 2003; Inoue, 2004, p. 116; Inoue, 2006, pp. 55-56). The users of YPJ included Japanese, Westerners (Europeans and Americans), and also a sizable number of Chinese (Stanlaw 2004, p. 57; Inoue 2004, pp. 116-117; Inoue, 2006, p. 56).

YPJ is poorly documented. The attestations are limited to a phrasebook (Atkinson, 1879), a glossary (Gills, 1886), a dictionary (Lentzner, 1892), travel accounts (Griffis, 1883; Knollys, 1887), and two magazine articles (Anonymous, 1879; Diósy 1879). Under the circumstances, it is hardly surprising that analyses of YPJ are also scarce. Its lexicon is analyzed by Daniels (1948), while Inoue (2006) looks mostly at morphosyntactic features. More comprehensive overviews are found in Avram (2013, 2014).

Japanese Pidgin English (henceforth JPE), also referred to as “Bamboo English” or “English-Japanese Pidgin”, is an extinct variety of pidginized English, formerly used by US army personnel and local Japanese after World War II (Norman, 1954; Loveday, 1986, p. 29) and later transplanted to South Korea (Algeo, 1960, p. 117; Stanlaw, 2004, p. 70; Loveday, 1986, p. 29).

There are very few textual sources for JPE. The data analyzed in the present paper are from a dialogue (Michener, 1954), cartoons (Hume, 1954; Hume and Annarino 1953a, 1953b), and a story (Webster, 1960). Short descriptions of JPE can be found in Norman (1954, 1955), Algeo (1960), Webster (1960), Goodman (1967), Duke (1972), Stanlaw (1987, 1996, 2004, 2006). A more detailed analysis is found in Avram (2016).

All examples<sup>1</sup> appear in the original orthography or system of transcription used in the sources. The sources are mentioned between brackets. Unless otherwise specified, the translations are from the sources.

The paper is organized as follows. The phonology, morphology, syntax and lexicon of YPJ and JPE are analyzed in sections 2, 3, 4, and 5, respectively. Section 6 is a discussion of the findings, with reference to various classifications of pidgin languages. Section 7 summarizes the conclusions.

---

<sup>1</sup> The following abbreviations are used in the examples: 1 = 1<sup>st</sup> person; 2 = second person; 3 = 3<sup>rd</sup> person; D = Dutch DEM = demonstrative; E = English; IMPER = imperative; INDEF = indefinite; J = Japanese; NEG = negator; O = object; PL = plural; S = subject; SG = singular; V = verb.

## 2 Phonology

### 2.1 YPJ

In spite of the inconsistencies in the transcriptions in the textual sources, it can be stated from the outset that the phonology of YPJ has characteristics typical of the Tokyo-Yokohama dialectal area.

For instance, in Japanese-derived lexical items, the etymological high vowels /i/ and /ɯ/ are not rendered in the transcription if they occur between voiceless consonants or in word-final position. These are precisely the phonological environments in which devoicing of the high vowels /i/ and /ɯ/ occurs in the Tokyo-Yokohama dialectal area<sup>2</sup>. The absence of the vowel letters <i> or <u> presumably reflects the phonetic realizations [i̥] and [ɯ̥] respectively:

- (1) a. *h'to* ‘person’ (Diósy, 1879, p. 500) < J *hito* ‘man’
- b. *nannats* ‘seven’ (Atkinson, 1879, p. 18) < J *nanatsu* ‘seven’
- c. *skoshe* ‘little’ (Atkinson, 1879, p. 18) < J *sukoshi* ‘a little’
- d. *tacksan* ‘much’ (Atkinson, 1879, p. 18) < J *takusan*

As in Tokyo-Yokohama Japanese, the alveo-palatal voiceless fricative [ç] is substituted for the Standard Japanese palatal voiceless fricative [ç]:

- (2) a. *sh'to* ‘man’ (Atkinson, 1879, p. 20) < J *hito* ‘man’
- b. *sheebatchey* ‘stove’ (Atkinson, 1879, p. 24, f.n.) < J *hibachi* ‘stove’

As shown by the use of the digraph <ng> in the sources, YPJ exhibits the nasal velar [ŋ] in word-medial position, a feature of (earlier) Tokyo Japanese<sup>3</sup>:

- (3) a. *koong-ee*<sup>4</sup> (Atkinson, 1879, p. 24) / *koongee* (Atkinson, 1879, p. 28) < *kugi* ‘nail’
- b. *tomango* (Atkinson, 1879, p. 24) < J *tamago* ‘egg’

The syllable structure of YPJ is, with a few exceptions, that of Japanese: i.e. with simple syllable margins and with the uvular /N/ as the only admissible consonant in word-final codas<sup>5</sup>. Again as in Japanese, illegitimate onsets and codas are resolved via two repair strategies – epenthesis, as in (4), or paragoge, as in (5):

- (4) a. *buranket* ‘blanket’ (Diósy, 1979, p. 500) < E *blanket*
- b. *sitésh'n* ‘railway station’ (Diósy, 1879, p. 500) < E *station*

<sup>2</sup> See e.g. Avram (2005, pp. 28-33).

<sup>3</sup> See e.g. Shibatani (1990, pp. 171-173) and Avram (2005, pp. 48-56).

<sup>4</sup> In the YPJ examples from Atkinson (1879), <ee> frequently stands for [i̥], while <oo> represents both [ɯ̥] and [ɯ:].

<sup>5</sup> See e.g. Avram (2005, p. 96).

- (5) a. *drunky* ‘drunk’ (Atkinson, 1879, p. 28) < E *drunk*  
 b. *madorosu* ‘sailor’ (Diósy, 1879, p. 501) < D *matroos* ‘sailor’

The phonology of YPJ appears to have displayed considerable inter-speaker variation. Some of these instances of variation are explicitly attributed to the different first languages of YPJ users. Consider, for example, the differences between the pronunciation of Westerners and that of the Chinese users of YPJ in the phonetic realization of [r]. According to Atkinson (1879, p. 29), “foreigners [= Westerners] as a rule rattle their “Rs” roughly, readily [...] or else ignore them altogether”, whereas “the Celestial [= Chinese] lubricates the “R””. This is illustrated by the following examples:

- (6) a. Westerner *walk-karrymasing* / *walk-kawymasing* vs.  
 Chinese *walk-kallimasing* ‘misunderstand’ (Atkinson, 1879, p. 28)  
 b. Westerner *am buy worry* vs. Chinese *am buy wolly* ‘not feeling well’  
 (Atkinson, 1879, p. 28)

There is also variation in the form of the same YPJ lexical items, as recorded in different sources:

- (7) a. *piggy* (Atkinson, 1879, p. 21) / *peke* (Diósy, 1879, p. 501) / *peggy* (Knollys, 1887, p. 312) ‘to go’  
 b. *pumgut* ‘punishment’ (Atkinson, 1879, p. 28) / *bonkotz* ‘thrashing’ (Diósy, 1879, p. 501)

Finally, the same author occasionally lists different forms of the same YPJ word:

- (8) a. *jiggy jiggy* / *jiki jiki* ‘to make haste’ (Gills, 1886, p. 113)  
 b. *maro-maró* / *maru-marú* ‘to be somewhere’ (Diósy, 1879, p. 501)  
 c. *sheebatchey* / *heebathchey*<sup>6</sup> ‘stove’ (Atkinson, 1879, p. 24, f.n.)

## 2.2 JPE

The phonology of JPE, to the extent to which it can be inferred from the available evidence, attests to the occurrence of readjustments of the syllable structure of lexical items derived etymologically from English and Japanese, respectively. Goodman (1967, p. 51), for instance, states that “in the Japanese speakers’ version [of JPE], /o/ or /u/ is normally added in final position to English words that do not end in [n, m, ŋ]”. The three nasal phonemes of English appear to have been treated as the Japanese uvular nasal /N/, the only consonant which can occur in word-final position in Japanese. This would account for the absence of paragogic vowels in such cases. Duke (1972, p. 170) writes

<sup>6</sup> In which <sh> and <h> presumably stand for [ʃ] and respectively [ç].

that American speakers also resort to paragoge, “by ending English words with either “i” or “ee”<sup>7</sup>:

- (9) a. *changee* ‘to change’ (Webster, 1960, p. 160)
- b. *ketchee* ‘to catch’ (Webster, 1960, p. 160)
- c. *speakie* ‘to speak’ (Webster, 1960, p. 161)

On the other hand, both parties involved, i.e. the Japanese and the American users of JPE, also tried to accommodate each other. According to Goodman (1967, p. 52), “English speakers [...] developed a sensitivity to Japanese syllabic structure and attempted to end all words with /u/ or /o/ in a rather arbitrary pattern”:

- (10) a. *post cardo* (Webster, 1960, p. 163)
- b. *saymo-saymo* ‘same’ (Goodman, 1967, p. 51)

Goodman (1967, p. 52) notes that “Japanese speakers [...] made the same sort of compensation by clipping of final vowels”:

- (11) *jidoš* ‘car’ (Goodman, 1967, p. 52), cf. J *jidōsha*

Inter-speaker variation is widely attested. In (12a) Japanese /N/ is phonetically realized as [n] by American speakers, while in (12b) English /r/ is phonetically realized as [r] in word-initial and it is deleted word-finally, while English /l/ is phonetically realized as [r]:

- (12) a. [itʃibaN] vs. [itʃibæn] ‘very good’ (Goodman, 1967, p. 51)
- b. [rɔ:ra:] vs. [rəʊləɾ] ‘roller’ (Goodman, 1967, p. 51)

Consider next differences in the phonetic realization of vowels:

- (13) a. [sake] vs. [sæki] ‘sake’ (Goodman, 1967, pp. 51-52)
- b. [itʃibaN] vs. [itʃibæn] ‘very good’ (Goodman, 1967, p. 51)
- c. [sʉ.ko.fi] vs. [sko.fi] (Norman, 1967, p. 44)

As can be seen, in (13a-b) American speakers use different vowels and in (13c) they do not exhibit the devoiced vowel. Similarly, in (14), Japanese speakers substitute a long vowel for the original diphthong [əʊ] and for [ə]<sup>8</sup> respectively:

- (14) [rɔ:ra:] vs. [rəʊləɾ] ‘roller’ (Goodman, 1967, p. 51)

---

<sup>7</sup> The use of the paragogic vowel [ɪ] is typical of stereotypical representations of English pidgins or creoles as well as of attempts at “speaking” in such varieties.

<sup>8</sup> In Japanese, the reflex of [-ər], spelled <er>, is long [a:], see e.g. Quackenbush & Ōso (1991: 93).

### 3 Morphology

#### 3.1 YPJ

With the exception of the negators *nigh* < J *nai* and *-en* < J *-en*, which only occurs in two verbs, YPJ does not have any inflectional morphology.

Two word-formation means are attested, compounding and affixation. Compounds frequently compensate for the absence of particular lexical items:

- (15) a. *nammai kammy* lit. 'name' + 'paper' = 'card' (Atkinson, 1879, p. 21)
- b. *niwa-tori* lit. 'garden' + 'bird' = 'rooster' (Diósy, 1879, p. 501)

A number of compounds are constructed with *mono* (< J *mono* 'thing'), as in (16), or with reflexes of J *hito* 'man', as in (17):

- (16) *shiroy mono* lit. 'white' + 'thing' = 'starch' (Atkinson, 1879, p. 24)

- (17) *selly shto* lit. 'to sell' + 'man' = 'auctioneer' (Atkinson, 1879, p. 25)

Affixation is confined to the use of the suffix *-san* (< J *-san*):

- (18) a. *babysan* 'child' (Atkinson, 1879, p. 19)
- b. *doctorsan* 'doctor' (Atkinson, 1879, p. 24)
- c. *Nankinsan* 'Chinaman' (Atkinson, 1879, p. 25)

Reduplication is not really a word-formation means. Firstly, it is neither productive nor frequent:

- (19) a. *drunky drunky* 'drunk', cf. *drunky* 'drunk' (Atkinson, 1879, p. 28)
- b. *mate-mate* 'wait a little' (Gills, 1883, p. 147), cf. *matty* 'wait' (Atkinson, 1879, p. 20)

Secondly, as shown by example (19a), there is no demonstrable difference in meaning between the reduplicated form and the simplex one. Moreover, other examples are actually quasi-reduplicated forms<sup>9</sup>:

- (20) a. *chobber chobber* 'food, sustenance' (Atkinson, 1879, p. 21)
- b. *minner minner* 'all' (Atkinson, 1879, p. 22)
- c. *sick-sick* 'crank' (Atkinson, 1879, p. 20)
- d. *so so* 'sew' (Atkinson, 1879, p. 21)

---

<sup>9</sup> Defined by Bakker (2003, p.40) as "reduplicated forms for which single forms do not exist".

## 3.2 JPE

Inflectional endings only occur sporadically in JPE as spoken by American users.

In the derivational morphology of JPE compounding is rather poorly documented. One rare example of a compound is given below:

- (21) *benjo ditch* lit. ‘toilet’ + ‘ditch’ = ‘toilet, the can’ (Goodman, 1967, p. 49)

Affixation, limited to the use of the Japanese-derived suffix *-san*, is better represented. According to Goodman: (1967, p. 54), *-san* is “a sort of suffix”, which can be attached “to any of a group of English-derived terms, like *mama*, *papa*, *boy*, *girl*, and *baby*, as both terms of reference and address”. Duke (1972, p. 170) also notes “the use of the honorific suffix *-san* after many nouns”. Consider the following examples:

- (22) a. *boy-san* ‘boy; son’ (Duke, 1972, p. 170)  
b. *godmother-san* ‘godmother’ (Webster, 1960, p. 160)  
c. *mama-san* ‘woman, lady; mother’ (Duke, 1972, p. 170)  
d. *prince-san* ‘prince’ (Webster, 1960, p. 160)

Both Goodman, 1967, p. 51) and Duke (1972, p. 170) also discuss reduplication. However, on the strength of the available evidence, JPE appears to have had quasi-reduplicated forms, with no corresponding simplex forms:

- (23) a. *chop-chop* ‘food’ (Webster, 1960, p. 163)  
b. *dame-dame* ‘bad’ (Hume, 1954, p. 95)  
c. *hubba-hubba* ‘to hurry’ (Webster, 1960, p. 164)  
d. *saymo-saymo* ‘same’ (Goodman, 1967, p. 51)

## 4 Syntax

### 4.1 YPJ

The absence of inflections and the small size of its lexicon account for the fact that YPJ words exhibit categorial multifunctionality, as illustrated by the following examples:

- (24) a. *die job* ‘strong, sound, good, able’ (Atkinson, 1879, p. 19) and ‘well (adv.)’ (Atkinson, 1879, p. 23)  
b. *jiggy jig* ‘to hasten’ (Atkinson, 1879, p. 17), ‘quickly’ (Atkinson, 1879, p. 17) and ‘fast’ (Atkinson, 1879, p. 17), ‘the nearest’ (Atkinson, 1879, p. 19)  
c. *pumgutuz* ‘punish’ (Atkinson, 1879, p. 22) and ‘punishment’ (Atkinson, 1879, p. 28)  
d. *sick-sick* ‘illness’ (Atkinson, 1879, p. 17) and ‘sick, ill’ (Atkinson, 1879, p. 28)

As is mostly the case in Japanese, plurality is inferred from the context or expressed by means of cardinal numerals or quantifiers:

- (25) *Tempo meats high kin arimas.* (Atkinson, 1879, p. 18)  
 penny three see be  
 ‘I see three pence.’

The Japanese case markers (particles and postpositions) have not been retained, as can be seen from the examples below:

- (26) a. *Dalley ∅ house arimas?* (Atkinson, 1879, p. 22)  
 who house be  
 ‘Whose house is this?’  
 b. *watarkshee boto ∅ piggy* (Atkinson, 1879, p. 21)  
 1SG boat go  
 ‘I’ve gone out in the boat.’

Only three personal pronouns are attested:

- (27) *watarkshee* 1SG  
*anatta / anatter and oh my* 2SG  
*acheera sto* 3SG

Of these, only *watarkshee* and *oh my* occur more frequently. The only demonstrative attested (just once) is *kono*:

- (28) *kono house* (Atkinson, 1879, p. 26)  
 DEM house  
 ‘this house’

Adjectives are better represented in the available sources. The only degree of comparison of adjectives attested in the corpus is the absolute superlative, formed with *num wun* preceding the adjective:

- (29) *num wun*<sup>10</sup> *your a shee* (Atkinson, 1879, p. 25)  
 exceptional good  
 ‘exceptionally nice’

The only numerals found in the corpus of YPJ are the cardinal numerals from 1 to 10 and 100.

<sup>10</sup> Etymologically derived from E *number one*, and presumably pronounced [namwan].

Rather surprisingly, YPJ has a copulative verb, *arimas* < J *arimasu*. This is attested both in equative, as in (30a), and in predicative structures, as in (30b):

- (30) a. *Tempo arimasu*. (Atkinson, 1879, p. 16)  
penny be  
'This is a penny.'
- b. *Kooroy arimasu*. (Atkinson, 1879, p. 19)  
black be  
'It is black.'

Time adverbials are used to indicate tense and aspect:

- (31) a. *Sigh oh narrow dozo bynebai moh skosh cow* (Atkinson, 1879, p. 27)  
good bye please by and by more little buy  
'Good bye, please buy [in the future] some more.'
- b. *meonitchi [...] tacksan so so arimasu* (Atkinson, 1879, p. 21)  
tomorrow a lot sew be  
'I will have plenty of work for him.'

Only one, invariant negator, *nigh* < J *nai*, is attested:

- (32) *Atsie sammy eel oh piggy nigh?* (Atkinson, 1879, p. 19)  
hot cold colour change NEG  
'Does his color change in the various seasons?'

As in Japanese, the word order of YPJ is SOV:

- (33) *Your a shee cheese eye curio high kin*. (Atkinson, 1879, p. 25)  
good small curios see  
'I wish to see some nice small curios.'

YPJ exhibits rather consistently the parameters correlated with the SOV word order. This is illustrated by the examples under (34):

- (34) a. possessor – possessee  
*oh my oh char* (Atkinson, 1879, p. 15)  
2SG tea  
'your tea'
- b. adjective – noun  
*die job sto* (Atkinson, 1879, p. 19)  
strong person  
'a strong man'

## c. demonstrative – noun

*kono house* (Atkinson, 1879, p. 26)DEM house  
'this house'

## d. numeral – noun

*Stoats sindoe skoshe matty.* (Atkinson, 1879, p. 20)one boatman a little wait  
'Let one boatman wait.'

## e. adverb – verb

*skoshe matty* (Atkinson, 1879, p. 20)a little wait  
'wait a little' [translation mine]

However, as shown below, exceptions are also attested:

## (35) a. noun – numeral

*Tempo meats high kin arimas.* (Atkinson, 1879, p. 18)penny three see be  
'I see three pence.'

## b. verb – adverb

*Oh my piggy jiggy jig* (Atkinson, 1879, p. 28)2SG get out quickly  
'Get out quickly' [translation mine]

YPJ exclusively resorts to parataxis for sentence coordination:

(36) *watarkshe oki akindo, tacksan cow* (Atkinson, 1879, p. 26)1SG big merchant a lot buy  
'I am an important merchant and I buy a lot' [translation mine]

Sentence subordination also relies on the exclusive use of parataxis, given the absence of any complementizers, conjunctions, conjunctive particles, etc.:

(37) a. *Nanny sto arimasu, watarkshee arimasen?* (Atkinson, 1879, p. 19)what person be 1SG be-NEG  
'Who called when I was out?'b. *Watarkshee am buy worry oh char parra parra* (Atkinson, 1879, p. 17)1SG ill tea boil  
'Boil me some tea because I feel ill.' [translation mine]c. *Dye die job arimasen, itchiboo sinjoe nigh.* (Atkinson, 1879, p. 28)table good be-NEG one *bu* give NEG  
'If the table is not good, I won't give you a *bu*.' [translation mine]

Generally, and as can be seen in the examples (37b) and (37c), subordinate clauses precede main clauses, as in Japanese.

## 4.2 JPE

The virtual absence of inflections and the small size of the lexicon explain the categorial multifunctionality typical of JPE lexical items. Goodman (1967, p. 53) notes “the use of many words in a variety of grammatical functions”. As stated by Duke (1972, p. 170), “grammatically, many of the words function as both nouns and verbs and sometimes as adjectives and adverbs”. Representative examples are provided below:

- (38) a. *chop-chop* ‘food’ and ‘to eat’ (Duke, 1972, p. 172)  
 b. *hayaku* ‘quickly’ and ‘to hurry up’ (Goodman, 1967, p. 53)  
 c. *okay* ‘OK’ and ‘to fix, to adjust’ (Goodman, 1967, p. 54)  
 d. *sayonara* ‘absence’ and ‘to get rid of’ (Goodman, 1967, p. 53)  
 e. *taksan* ‘much, many’, ‘very’ and ‘large’ (Duke, 1970, p. 172)

The English definite and indefinite articles have not been retained. In the JPE of American speakers, *one* may be used as an indefinite article:

- (39) **one** *prince-san* (Webster, 1960, p. 163)  
 INDEF prince  
 ‘a prince’

Nouns are occasionally marked for the plural, but only by American users of JPE.

Only three personal pronouns are attested in the corpus:

- (40) a. *I / watash* 1SG (Michener, *Sayonara*, p. 170; Goodman 1967, p. 48)  
 b. *you* 2SG (Michener, *Sayonara*, p. 170)  
 c. *we / ol watash* 1PL (Goodman, 1948, p. 48)

As seen in (40c), pre-posed *ol* (< E *all*) optionally marks plurality.

A number of adjectives occur in the available corpus of JPE. As shown by Goodman (1967, p. 48), *ichiban* (< J *ichiban*) is “used to indicate relative or absolute superlative”.

Only cardinal numerals are attested.

The verbal system of JPE is characterized by extreme simplicity. For instance, there is no overt copula (Goodman, 1967, p. 52; Stanlaw, 2006, p. 184):

- (41) a. *You*  $\emptyset$  *takusan steki* (Michener, *Sayonara*, p. 171)  
 2SG very wonderful  
 ‘You are very beautiful.’

- b. *Kid, you Ø dai jobu* (Webster, 1960, p. 164)  
 kid 2SG OK  
 ‘Kid, you’re all right.’

Also absent are auxiliary verbs. Consider the example below:

- (42) *I beauty saron Ø go*. (Michener, *Sayonara*, p. 171)  
 1SG beauty salon go  
 ‘I’m going to the beauty parlor.’

According to Goodman (1967, p. 52), “verbs from both languages [English and Japanese] were used [...] in infinitive forms or citation forms without affixes”. This general absence of verbal inflections accounts for the fact that tense and aspect distinctions could only be inferred from the context or were indicated by time adverbials (Goodman, 1967, p. 52; Stanlaw, 2006, p. 184) such as *one time* ‘once’, *kinoo* ‘yesterday’ (< J *kinō*), *ima* ‘now’ (< J *ima*), *ashita* ‘tomorrow’ (< J *ashita*), *all time* ‘always’:

- (43) *Maybe you one time gang boy* (Hume & Annarino, 1953a, p. 43)  
 maybe 2SG once gangster  
 ‘Maybe you were once a gangster.’

The only negator attested is pre-posed *no* (< E *no*):

- (44) a. **No** *can stay*. (Michener, *Sayonara*, p. 170)  
 NEG can stay  
 ‘I can’t stay.’  
 b. *all time no fit* (Webster, 1960, p. 164)  
 all time NEG fit  
 ‘[they] did not fit’

Prepositions are frequently omitted, in particular by Japanese speakers, as in (45a), and, more rarely, also by American users of JPE, as in (45b):

- (45) a. *I Ø jobu go* (Michener, *Sayonara*, p. 170)  
 1SG job go  
 ‘I must go to my job’  
 b. *Come on Ø my house* (Webster, 1960, p. 164)  
 come on my house  
 ‘Come on to my house’

Consider next word order. According to Stanlaw (2006, p. 184), “both American and Japanese speakers were somewhat indeterminate about this”. Indeed, both SVO and SOV patterns are attested, with intra-speaker variation as well, as in (46b):

- (46) a. *I takushi, get.* (Michener, *Sayonara*, p. 170)  
 1SG taxi get  
 ‘I’ll call a cab.’
- b. *You mess my hair, ne. I beauty saron go* (Michener, *Sayonara*, p. 171)  
 ‘You’ve messed up my hair. I’ll have to go to the beauty parlour.’

Sentence coordination is mostly achieved by means of parataxis (Goodman, 1967, pp. 52-53), given that coordinating conjunctions are generally not used:

- (47) *Meter-meter dai jobu. Testo-testo dammey-dammey.* (Goodman, 1967, p. 53)  
 look over OK examine bad  
 ‘It’s fine to look at the girl, but don’t try anything else.’

The following is an extremely rare example in which a Japanese-derived coordinating conjunction (*keredomo* ‘but’ < J *keredomo*) is used:

- (48) *I rike stay with you keredomo I train*  
 1SG like stay with 2SG but 1SG train  
*go honto* (Michener, *Sayonara*, p. 170)  
 go really  
 ‘I would like to stay with you, but I really have to go to the train station.’

Since complementizers and subordinating conjunctions are not used, sentence subordination is also achieved via parataxis, as in the examples below:

- (49) a. *You all time speak work-work.* (Stanlaw, 2006, p. 184)  
 2SG always speak work  
 ‘You always say you’re out working.’
- b. *Come night [...], sisters speak sayonara* (Webster, 1960, p. 164)  
 come night sisters speak good bye  
 ‘When the night [...] came, the sisters left’

## 5 Lexicon

### 5.1 YPJ

The lexicon of YPJ amounts to approximately 250 words. The inventory of these lexical items as well as their origin can be found in Daniels (1948). Therefore, this section is exclusively concerned with other features of the YPJ vocabulary (see also Avram, 2014, pp. 42-43).

A few English-derived words illustrate reanalysis of morphemic boundaries:

- (50) a. *come here* (Atkinson, 1879, p. 19) /  
*komiya* (Diósy, 1879, p. 500) /  
*kumheer* (Knollys, 1887, p. 311)  
'dog' < E *come here*!
- b. *damyuri sto* (Atkinson, 1879, p. 28) /  
*damuraisu h'to* (Diósy, 1879, p. 500) /  
*dammuraisu hito* (Griffis, 1883, p. 493)  
'sailor' < E *damn your eye(s)*, J *hito* 'man'

The following are lexical hybrids<sup>11</sup>:

- (51) a. *kireen* 'clean' (Atkinson, 1879, p. 25),  
cf. E *clean* and J *kirei*
- b. *shiroy* 'shirt' (Atkinson, 1879, p. 24),  
cf. E *shirt* and J *shiroy* 'white'

Given the small size of the YPJ lexicon, words undergo semantic extension and frequently express a rather wide range of meanings:

- (52) a. *aboorah* 'butter, oil, kerosene, pomatum, grease' (Atkinson, 1879, p. 20)
- b. *piggy* 'to remove, take away, carry off, clear [the table], get out, remove' (Atkinson, 1879, p. 17), 'change' (Atkinson, 1879, p. 19), 'push off' (Atkinson, 1879, p. 20), 'go(ne) out' (Atkinson, 1879, p. 21)

Another consequence of the small size of the vocabulary of YPJ is the occurrence of circumlocutions. Illustrative examples are provided below:

- (53) a. *coots pom pom otoko* (Atkinson, 1879, p. 20)  
shoe hammer man  
'bootmaker'
- b. *fooney high-kin serampan nigh rosoko* (Atkinson, 1879, p. 19)  
ship see break NEG candle  
'light house'

---

<sup>11</sup> Lexical items identified across languages, given their phonetic similarity (Mühlhäusler, 1997, p. 135).

Finally, also attested are synonyms derived etymologically from different source languages:

- (54) a. *am buy worry* (Atkinson, 1879, p. 17) < J *ambai* ‘condition’, *warui* ‘bad’, and *sick-sick* (Atkinson, 1879, p. 17) ‘ill’ < E *sick*
- b. *die job* (Atkinson, 1879, p. 19) < J *daijobu* ‘fine’, and *your a shee* ‘alright’ (Atkinson, p. 1879, p. 18) < J *yoroshii* ‘good’

## 5.2 JPE

The lexical contribution of English is discussed in Goodman (1967), while the lexical items and phrases derived etymologically from Japanese are discussed in Avram (2014, pp. 17-18), to which the reader is referred. The following remarks focus on other characteristics of the lexicon of JPE.

The form below is the outcome of reanalysis of morphemic boundaries:

- (55) *morskosh* ‘a while’ (Norman, 1955, p. 44) < J *mō* ‘more’ and *sukoshi* ‘a little’

Also attested are lexical hybrids:

- (56) a. *meter-meter* ‘to look over’ (Goodman, 1967, p. 51),  
cf. J *mite* ‘to see IMPER’ and E *meter*
- b. *mor* ‘more’ (Norman, 1955, p. 44),  
cf. J *mō* ‘more’ and E *more*

The small size of the JPE lexicon accounts for two striking features of the JPE vocabulary. Consider first the pervasive lexical polysemy. Goodman (1967, p. 54) mentions the “quality of semantic extensibility” of JPE words, and Stanlaw (2006, p. 184) rightly observes that “most of the vocabulary items have undergone semantic extension”. Both English- and Japanese-derived words exhibit considerable polysemy, as illustrated by the examples under (57) and (58) respectively:

- (57) a. *ketchee no fun* ‘[she] had no fun’ (Webster, 1960, p. 163)
- b. *ketchee post cardo* ‘[they] received a post card’ (Webster, 1960, p. 163)
- c. *ketchee one mouse* ‘[she] caught a mouse’ (Webster, 1960, p. 163)
- d. *ketchee beeru* ‘[he] got a beer’ (Webster, 1960, p. 163)
- (58) *shimpai-nai* ‘don’t worry; don’t bother; let’s enjoy ourselves; you’re welcome; I’ve recovered from my malady’ (Goodman, 1967, p. 54)

The extremely small size of the JPE vocabulary also explains the occurrence of circumlocutions. Consider one such example:

- (59) *speak sayonara* ‘to leave someone’ (Webster, 1960, p. 164)

One last characteristic of the JPE lexicon worth mentioning in this section is the existence of a few synonyms, one of which is from English and the other from Japanese:

- (60) a. *nice* < E 'nice' and *suteki* < J *suteki* 'nice'  
 b. *okay* < E *OK* and *dai jobu* < J *daijobu* 'all right'

## 6 Classification of YPJ and JPE

In a well-known typology Mühlhäusler (1997, pp. 5-6) identifies three types of pidgin in the so-called "pidgin-to-creole life cycle": (i) pre-pidgins<sup>12</sup>; (ii) stable pidgins; (iii) expanded pidgins<sup>13</sup>. Each of these is characterized by specific phonological, morphological, syntactic, and lexical diagnostic features. Since productive morphological reduplication is a correlate of the developmental stage (Bakker, 2003, p. 44; Bakker & Parkvall, 2006, p. 514), this diagnostic feature can be added to those suggested by Mühlhäusler (1997).

The data from YPJ and JPE discussed in sections 3 through 5 indicate that both varieties should be classified as pre-pidgins. The distribution of pre-pidgin features in YPJ and JPE is set out in Table 1 below:

**Table 1:** Pre-pidgin features of YPJ and JPE

Feature	YPJ	JPE
inter-speaker variation in phonology	+	+
minimal personal pronoun system	+	+
omission of copula (predicative, equative)	-	+
omission of tense and aspect markers	+	+
omission of adpositions	+	(+)
omission of complementizers	+	+
non-productive reduplication	+	+
categorial multifunctionality	+	+
extensive use of parataxis	+	+
small size of vocabulary	+	+
reanalysis of morphemic boundaries	+	+
lexical hybrids	+	+
lexical polysemy	+	+
circumlocutions	+	+
synonyms from different source languages	+	+

<sup>12</sup> Also called "jargons", "minimal pidgins" or "restricted pidgins".

<sup>13</sup> Bakker (2008, p. 131) suggests the alternative term "PidginCreole".

As can be seen, the overwhelming majority of the features diagnostic of the pre-pidgin stage are attested in both YPJ and JPE.

Pidgin languages are also classified on the basis of social criteria. Sebba (1997, pp. 26-33), for instance, suggests the following typology according to the social context of the language's origins: (i) military and police pidgins; (ii) seafaring and trade pidgins; (iii) plantation pidgins; (iv) mine and construction pidgins; (v) immigrants' pidgins; (vi) tourist pidgins; (vii) urban contact vernaculars. YPJ and JPE exemplify different types. YPJ emerged in several Japanese ports – Yokohama, Kobe, and Nagasaki – and it can therefore be assigned to type (ii). JPE, which emerged in various locations in Japan, in the context of contacts between the US army personnel and the local Japanese population, represents type (i).

Consider next the social situation in which pidgins are used. Bakker (1995, pp. 27-28) distinguishes the following types: (i) maritime pidgins; (ii) trade pidgins; (iii) interethnic contact languages; (iv) work force pidgins. Here again, YPJ and JPE differ in terms of the type to which they can be assigned: YPJ is a representative of type (ii), while JPE is illustrative of type (iii).

To sum up, the social contexts of the emergence and use of YPJ and JPE are different. Moreover, both varieties reflect a specific power differential, which accounts for the different lexifier language – Japanese for YPJ, but English in the case of JPE. Within the context of Japan's opening of its ports to the West after the 1850s, Japanese was the superstrate language and YPJ consequently bears its imprint. JPE, which emerged in the aftermath of World War II in American-occupied Japan, testifies to the position of English as the superstrate language.

## **7 Conclusions**

YPJ and JPE are structurally very similar and can both be assigned to the same developmental stage, i.e. that of pre-pidgin.

YPJ and JPE differ, though, in terms both of the social context in which they emerged and of that in which they were formerly used. The similarities in structure and in developmental stage are the outcome of different histories and contexts of use.

The different lexifier of YPJ and JPE respectively reflects differences in the relative power of the main contributing languages. In a sense, then, YPJ and JPE are “two sides of the same coin”, illustrative of two episodes in the history of language contacts in Japan.

## References

- Algeo, J. (1960) Korean Bamboo English. *American Speech* XXXV (2), 115-123.
- Anon. (1879) A new dialect; or, Yokohama Pidgin. *Littell's Living Age* 142 (1836), 496-500.
- Atkinson, H. (1879) *Revised and Enlarged Edition of Exercises in the Yokohama Dialect*. Yokohama.
- Avram, A.A. (2005). *Fonologia limbii japoneze contemporane*. Bucharest: Editura Universității din București.
- Avram, A. A. (2013) When East meets West: A 19<sup>th</sup> century variety of pidginized Japanese. Paper presented at the *Third International Symposium on Japanese Studies "The Quest for Modernity in Japan"*, 2–4 March 2013, Center for Japanese Studies, University of Bucharest.
- Avram, A. A. (2014). Yokohama Pidgin Japanese revisited. *Acta Linguistica Asiatica* 4 (1), 29-46.
- Avram, A. A. (2016). An extinct variety of pidginized English: Japanese Pidgin English. In M. Burada, O. Tatu & R. Sinu (eds.), *12<sup>th</sup> Conference on British and American Studies "Multidisciplinary Approaches to the Construction of Meaning"*, 6-24. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Bakker, P. (1995) Pidgins. In J. Arends, P. Muysken & N. Smith (eds.), *Pidgins and Creoles. An Introduction*, 25-39. Amsterdam / Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Bakker, P. (2003) The absence of reduplication in pidgins. In S. Kouwenberg (ed.). *Twice as Meaningful. Reduplication in Pidgins, Creoles and Other Contact Languages*, 37-46. London, Battlebridge.
- Bakker, Peter. (2008) Pidgins versus Creoles and Pidgincreoles. In S. Kouwenberg & J.V. Singler (eds.), *The Handbook of Pidgin and Creole Studies*, 130-157. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
- Bakker, P. & Parkvall, M. (2005) Reduplication in Pidgins and Creoles. In B. Hurch (ed.), *Studies in Reduplication*, 511-532. Berlin New York, Mouton de Gruyter.
- Chamberlain, B. H. (1904) *Things Japanese, Being Notes on Various Subjects Connected with Japan for the Use of Travellers and Others*. London: Murray.
- Daniels, F. J. (1948) The vocabulary of the Japanese ports lingo. *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* XII (3-4), 805-823.
- Diósy, A. (1879) Japoniana curiosissima. *Littell's Living Age* 142 (1836), 500-501.
- Duke, C. R. (1972) The Bamboo style of English. *College Composition and Communication* 21 (2), 170-172.
- Ferguson, C. A. 1971/1996. Absence of copula and the notion of simplicity: A study of normal speech, Baby Talk, Foreigner Talk and pidgins". In T. Huebner (ed.), *Charles A. Ferguson, Sociolinguistic Perspectives. Papers on Language in Society, 1959 – 1994*, 115-123. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Gills, H. A. (1886) *A Glossary of Reference on Subjects Connected with the Far East*, second edition. Hong Kong: Lane, Crawfords & Co.; Shanghai & Yokohama: Kelly & Walsh; London: Bernard Quaritch.

- Goodman, J. S. (1967) The development of a dialect of English-Japanese Pidgin. *Anthropological Linguistics* 9 (6), 43-55.
- Griffis, W. E. (1883) *The Mikado's Empire*. New York: Harper & Brothers.
- Hume, B. (1954) *Babysan's World*. Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Company.
- Hume, B. & Annarino, J. (1953a) *Babysan: A Private Look at the Japanese Occupation*. Tokyo: Kasuga Boeki K. K.
- Hume, B. & Annarino, J. (1953b) *When We Get back Home*. Tokyo: Kyoya.
- Inoue, A. (2003) *Sociolinguistic history and linguistic features of Pidginized Japanese in Yokohama*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Society for Pidgin and Creole Linguistics, January 2003, Atlanta.
- Inoue, A. (2004) Pidginized variety of Japanese in Yokohama: Can we label it a pidgin?. In K. Ikeda & J. Robideau (eds.), *Proceedings 2003. Selected Papers from the College-Wide Conference for Students in Languages, Linguistics, and Literature, University of Hawai'i, Mānoa*, 116-127. Mānoa: College of Languages, Linguistics and Literature, University of Hawai'i.
- Inoue, A. (2006) Grammatical features of Yokohama Pidgin Japanese: Common characteristics of restricted pidgins. In N. McGloin & J. Mori (eds.), *Japanese/Korean Linguistics 15*, 55-66. Stanford: CSLI Publications.
- Knollys, H. (1887) *Sketches of Life in Japan*. London: Chapman and Hall.
- Lange, R. (1903) *A Text-book of Colloquial Japanese*. Tokyo: Kyobunkan.
- Lentzner, K. (1892) *Dictionary of the Slang English of Australia and of Some Mixed Languages: With an Appendix*. Halle, Leipzig: Ehrhardt Karras.
- Loveday, L. J. 1986. *Explorations in Japanese Sociolinguistics*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Loveday, L. J. (1996) *Language Contact in Japan. A Socio-linguistic History*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Michener, J. (1954) *Sayonara*. Greenwich, CT: Fawcett.
- Mühlhäusler, P. (1997) *Pidgin and Creole Linguistics*, expanded and revised edition. London: University of Westminster Press.
- Norman, A. M. Z. (1954) Linguistic aspects of the mores of U.S. occupation and security forces in Japan. *American Speech* XXIX (3): 301-302.
- Norman, A. M. Z. (1955) Bamboo English. The Japanese influence on American speech in Japan. *American Speech* XXX (1): 44-48.
- Quackenbush, H. C. & Ōso, M. (1991) *Gairaigo no keisei to sono kyōiku*. Tokyo: Kokuritsu Kokugo Kenkyūjo.
- Sebba, M. (1997) *Contact Languages. Pidgins and Creoles*. London: Macmillan.
- Stanlaw, J. (1987) Japanese and English: Borrowing and contact. *World Englishes* 6 (2): 93-109.
- Stanlaw, J. (1996) Japanese Pidgin English. In T. McArthur (ed.), *The Oxford Companion to the English Language*, 543. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Stanlaw, J. (2004) *Japanese English Language and Culture Contact*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.

Stanlaw, J. (2006) Japanese and English. Borrowing and contact. In K. Bolton and B. B. Kachru (eds.), *World Englishes*, 179-200. New York: Routledge.

Shibatani, M. (1990) *The Languages of Japan*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Webster, G. (1960) Korean Bamboo English once more. *American Speech* 35 (4), 261-265.