QUANTIFICATION IN THE RUSSIAN-CHINESE PIDGIN
КВАΝΤΗΙΦΗΙΑΚΙΚΑ Β ΡΥΣΣΚΟ-ΚΙΤΕΛΙΣΚΟ ΠΙΔΧΙΙΝΕ

Elena Perekhvalskaya
St. Petersburg State University

(International Symposium on Deictic Systems and Quantification in Languages Spoken in Europe and
North and Central Asia. Udmurt State University, Ізеvsk, Russia, May 22025, 2001 // Pirkko Suihkonen,

This article discusses ways of expressing quantification in the Russian-Chinese pidgin. The process of
grammaticalization of lexical quantifiers which took place while the pidgin expanding is shown. Types of
variation in the Russian-Chinese pidgin are discussed.

Russian-based pidgins usually do not acquire as much attention as pidgins and creoles formed on the
basis of English, French, Spanish and other European languages. Lexifier languages of the majority of known
pidgins and creoles are typologically similar, so focusing on the study of European-based pidgins alone often
gives a wrong perspective. That is why the study of “other-based” pidgins seems very important for the Pidgin
and Creole linguistics in general.

В статье обсуждаются способы выражения кванитативных значений в русско-китайском
пиджине, показывается процесс грамматикализации лексических кванторов, наблюдающийся в ходе
расширения пиджина. Также рассматриваются типы вариативности в русско-китайском пиджине.

Пиджинам, в основе которых лежит русский язык, обычно не уделяется такого внимания, как
пиджинам и креольским языкам, образованным на базе английского, французского и других европейских
языков. Языки-лексификаторы большинства известных пиджинов и креольских языков типологически
схожи, поэтому исследование пиджинов, образованных только на базе европейских языков во многих
случаях может привести к ложным представлениям. По этой причине исследование пиджинов с «иной
основой» представляется очень важным для контактолингвистики в целом.

1. RUSSIAN-BASED PIDGINS

Russian based Pidgins are supposed to have been numerous. They
had to emerge in the process of Russian contacts with peoples of Caucasus, Siberia, Urals and Central Asia.
Most of these pidgins are extinct and were never registered. Only some of them were recorded, and then mostly
in the form of quotations of native speech in fiction and in different types of memoirs or travel notes. These
fragments with very few exceptions are short and not linguistically adequate. While it is usually possible to
identify them as fragments of a Russian-based Pidgin, it is impossible to make any further conclusions about
their peculiarities (Kozinsky, 1974).
Representative enough data exist only for several languages of this type. Usually the existing fragments are grouped as belonging to the three Russian-based Pidgins (Golovko, 1994, Stern, 2002, 11-27) that have enough material to become objects of linguistic analysis. These are:

1. Russenorsk (RN), the language of barter trade between Russians and Norwegians in the Barents Sea area;
2. Russian-Chinese Pidgin (RChP), originally a trade language of the city of Kyahta, the center of trade on the Russian-Chinese border. It was also called Kyachta or Maimachin language;
3. Govorka (Gv), Russian-based pidgin of the Taimyr peninsula.

It is worth mentioning that the total amount of recordings of Russian-Norwegian pidgin is smaller than the number of materials on RChP. Nevertheless, Russenorsk is studied much better. Its lexicon, grammar and sociolinguistic history are relatively well analyzed. It happened, in my opinion, mainly because the Russenorsk texts are rather homogenous, so the degree of variation between different Russenorsk recordings is much less than between different recordings of RChP as it will be shown further.

Strictly speaking, the variation between different fragments of RChP is enough to consider each one of them a separate idiom and not a variant of the same language. Many of these fragments differ in between to no lesser extent than any of them with Govorka, which is considered a separate pidgin mainly on ethno-territorial bases (Helimsky, 2000, Stern, forthcoming).

In other words, what we know about the RChP is a collection of texts recorded at different times and in different regions from speakers of different ethnic backgrounds. Besides that, they are recorded with different levels of accuracy. So the material available is very scarce if we take into account that this language existed for a period of more than two centuries in a huge territory ranging from Manchuria to Vladivostok, including parts of Mongolia and the territory of the lower Amur-river. One must also consider that it was a means of communication for thousands of people with various native languages. Being such a wide-spread and long existing idiom, RChP is very badly documented.

2. FRAGMENTS OF RUSSIAN-CHINESE PIDGIN The existing evidence of RChP covers a period of 140 years. There is a number of “fragments” (recordings in the form of small texts, example dialogs, single interviews or just separate phrases combined with a short linguistic description) which are usually supposed to belong to the same language, the Russian-Chinese Pidgin. I found eight such “fragments” or “sources”, three of which are my personal recordings: one was made together with Fatima Eloeva (Far East Pidgin, 1985) and the other two together with V. Belikov (Kukan and Tazy Ethnolect, 1991). Each of the sources has its own peculiarities. Here are their main characteristics; the sources are given in the temporary order:

1. CHEREPANOV (Ch) 1853. The first linguistic description of the RChP. It contains two typical dialogs between Chinese sellers and Russian customers. It also gives a short survey of the RChP grammar. The article reflects the situation of the 1840s or the “Kyachta stage” of the RChP development. It is characterized by a high level of standardization, as Chinese merchants specially studied RChP using dictionaries and phrase-books. This variety is characterized by a considerable amount of Mongolian loans both in lexicon and in
grammar. Another feature, uncharacteristic for other varieties, is the use of the preposition za, that marks the subject of the sentence. The Ch-variety should be classified as an expanded and highly standardized pidgin.

2. SCHUHARDT (Sh) 1884. This is a short note on the “Maimachin dialect”, containing several phrase examples of the RChP. The same variety as in (Ch) is described.

3. VRUBEL (Vr) 1931. It is a description of the Chinese ethnolect of the RChP. It contains examples of the RChP variety used by Chinese living in Vladivostok during the 1920s.

4. JABŁONSKA (Ja) 1957. It presents a description of RChP as spoken along the Eastern-Chinese Railroad (constructed in 1903) and in the city of Kharbin. Jablonska interviewed RChP speakers of Polish origin who used to work with the railroad and who had left China in the late 1940s. This variety was still spoken in 1945 and probably for some time thereafter. (Ja) discusses European and Chinese ethnolects, their phonetic and lexical peculiarities.

5. SPRINTSIN (Sp) 1964. The article is the analysis of the RChP data, obtained in the 1920s and 1930s in the Vladivostok area and in Manchuria. It is mainly dedicated to the Chinese ethnolect of the RChP. It contains phrase examples and a short linguistic analysis of the pidgin used.

6. FAR-EAST PIDGIN (FEP) 1985. A text (30 minutes) recorded in the settlement of Krasnyj Yar (Primorsky area, Russia) from a Udihe native speaker named Zakpani Kanchuga, a female, born in 1913. This speaker had been married to a Chinese person. She lived inside a Chinese community in the Bikin-river area and, probably, used a basilect form of the RChP (Udihe ethnolect). In the last decades she was exposed mainly to standard Russian speech. Zakpani’s language is a typical example of a post-pidgin continuum variety and should be classified as a mixture of basilect and mesolect forms.

7. KUKAN VARIETY (K1 and K2) 1991. Two interviews (90 minutes) recorded in the settlement of Kukan (Amurskaya area, Russia). This variety was at that time a home language of a family consisting of a Chinese-speaking grandfather, Li Yuangchin born in 1911, his Russian-speaking son, born in 1953 and two grandsons. The only language in common was the RChP. K1 presents the grandfather’s variety (Chinese ethnolect) which clearly is a basilect with many mesolect features. The son’s speech (K2) is a mesolect variety reproduced with Russian phonetics (Russian ethnolect). Both variants show a rather significant variation of forms.

8. TAZY VARIETY (TV) 1991. An interview (about 40 minutes) recorded in the settlement of Mikhailovka (Primorsky kray) from a Tazy woman, Valentina Utaisin, born in 1910. She was a native Chinese dialect speaker (Tazy are a Chinese-speaking ethnic minority in the Russian Far East, they are offshoots of the Ussuri Nanais.) Her speech may be characterized as a mesolect with many acrolect features.

The aim of reconstructing the “ideal” Russian-Chinese Pidgin can be obtained only by the study and comparison of data of all the sources listed above. It seems insufficient just to consider every form which is impossible in standard Russian to be a Pidgin form. It is necessary to record and compare all variants, pointing out peculiarities of every individual speaker, if at all possible.

The above procedure was applied to all Pidgin forms to be analyzed. This method allows to deal with such variable and variegated material as data on the RChP. It also makes it possible to observe the RChP dynamics. It was applied to the study of quantification in the RChP.
3. QUANTIFICATION IN PRONOUNS Generally, RChP has the following classes of words: noun, verb, copula, pronoun, modal verb, adverb, postposition. As it is typical for languages of this kind, the overt expression of quantification is not obligatory. All lexemes of the basilect form in the RChP except for pronouns have the single absolute form which does not express grammatical meaning of number. Personal/possessive pronouns are the only type of words overtly bearing quantitative meaning.

The majority of works on Russian-based Pidgin state that the RChP borrowed Russian possessive pronouns moja"mine" and tvoja"thine" in the form of Nominative Feminine, which were used both as invariable personal and possessive pronouns. The following table shows the real situation (The more frequent form goes before the slash. The less frequent one is after the slash):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 Sg.</th>
<th>2 Sg.</th>
<th>3.Sg.</th>
<th>1.Pl.</th>
<th>2. Pl.</th>
<th>3. Pl.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ch maja</td>
<td>tibi/tvaja</td>
<td>jevo</td>
<td>nasha</td>
<td>vasha</td>
<td>jevo</td>
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<td>Sch moja</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vr maja/wo</td>
<td>tibe/ni</td>
<td>wo myn'</td>
<td>ni myn'</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ja maja</td>
<td>tvaja/tibi</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Spr maja</td>
<td>tibe</td>
<td>ivo</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEP ja/mine</td>
<td>ty/tibe</td>
<td>jiwo</td>
<td>nasa</td>
<td>wasa</td>
<td>ihin'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K1 maja/ja/a</td>
<td>tube/ty</td>
<td>ivo</td>
<td>nasa</td>
<td>vasa</td>
<td>ivo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K2 maja/ja</td>
<td>tube/ty</td>
<td>ivo/ana</td>
<td>nasha</td>
<td>vasha</td>
<td>ivo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TE ja</td>
<td>ty</td>
<td>ana</td>
<td>my</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Apparently, the reality does not correspond to the simplified opinion about the RChP system of pronouns. Probably, the original forms were really moja and tvoja. This fact is reflected in the Russian folk saying moja tvoja ponimaj "I understand you (lit. My thy understand)" but already in the middle of the 19th century, the form of the 2 Sg. tvoja is found in variation with tibi. The latter form was based on the stem of the Russian pronoun ty 'you' in indirect cases, cf. Gen. tebya [t’ib’α], Dat. tebe [t’ib’e], Acc. tebya [t’ib’α]. Later the same process affected the form of the 1 Sg. maja ‘I, my’ , that was substituted by mine (FEP) probably by the analogy with the 2nd Sg (cf. the corresponding form menya in Govorka). Vrubel's data reflect the Chinese ethnolect of the RChP so they contain forms borrowed from Chinese (1.Sg. wo and 2.Sg. ni), which did not appear in other sources.

Personal/possessive pronouns expressed quantitative meaning at least in the 1 and 2 Pers.. nasa/nasha 'we, our' and vasha/vasa 'you, your Pl.' go back to feminine forms of Russian possessives and seem to be common for all variants. As for the 3.Pl., it does not differ from the 3 Person Sg. with the exception of FEP that has the separate form of the 3. Pl. ihin’ based on the Russian non-standard colloquial form ihnij ‘their’ (Standard Russian ih).

Beginning with FEP, acrolect forms start to appear. Generally, all texts may be divided into old ones (Ch., Sch, Vr, Ja, Spr) and modern ones (FEP, K1 and K2, TE). The old texts belong to a much longer period of time, but they reflect the situation when the RChP was an alive means of communication. All texts, dialogs and phrases were recorded from people who used this language constantly. Data obtained in the 1980s and 1990s are recordings of individual “rememberers”, aged people who have been communicating exclusively with
speakers of standard Russian for several decades. The situation with the Kukan variety may seem an exception as the RChP was the home language of a family. Still, it was the only family in the entire settlement which spoke this language, while the rest (about 1000 people) spoke Russian. Therefore, in this case, it is also impossible to speak about any pidgin-speaking community.

Forms presented in TE differ from the rest of RChP sources strikingly. Other “modern” pidgin varieties (FEP, K1 and K2) show a variation of forms, they use both basilect and acrolect ones. Unlikely, the Tazy ethnolect uses acrolect forms of personal pronouns only, basilect forms are not registered here. At the same time, TE shows other pidgin features which make it possible to classify this idiom as a depidginized variety that still preserves many pidgin features.

4. QUANTIFICATION IN NOUNS Noun in the RChP does not express information about the number of objects if it may be specified by the context:

(1) My prieha-l kareisa fanza (TE)
We come-Past Korean house
"We moved into Korean houses"

This is a story of several Tazy families moving to an abandoned Korean village, so the context presupposes that there were many houses. Here the RChP lexeme fanza corresponds to the Russian plural form.

An expressive example is the use of the word “l’udi” ‘person, persons’ (it goes back to the Russian suppletive plural ljudi “people, persons”). In the RChP it may have singular, plural or collective plural meaning:

(2) Talakana muzhika ise tama zhivi. L’udi s’uda ivo, gavali-la (K1)
Talakana man still there live Person here 3pers say-Past
“Talakana’s husband is still alive. A man came here and said [so]”

Here the context points out that l’udi refers to only one person.

(3) Knizhka hochi delaj eta l’udi (K2)
Book want make this person
"These people want to write a book"

In (3) “l’udi” refers to us, two linguists who were recording the interview. The son was explaining to his father the aim of our visit.

(4) L’udi znai-la kada ivo tam zaharani-la, tam blizko zhivi
person know-PAST when 3PERS there bury-PAST there near live

ivo syna (K1)
3PERS son
“People knew where he/she/they were buried, her/his/their son [may] live near by”

The story is about the prohibition to make graves in China. Here the lexeme l’udi has a meaning of a collective indefinite plural.

Analyzing examples from older sources, it is often impossible to tell what the exact meaning of the specific lexeme is, as the wider context sometimes is not given, cf.:

(5) Solenca nietu-la, dozika iu, soledatka liesa paso-la (Ja)
Sun there is no-PAST rain is soldier forest go-PAST
"[Though] there was no sun and it rained soldiers went to the forest"

In (5) soledatka “soldier” may have equally Singular or Plural meaning, but A. Jablonska translates it as Plural “soldiers”, probably, on the basis of a wider context.

5. LEXICAL WAYS TO EXPRESS QUANTITATIVE MEANINGS It was shown that overtly RChP lexemes do not bear any quantitative meaning. If it is necessary, singularity can be expressed by means of the quantifier adin “one” (from Russian odin “one”)

(5) Za tibi odina dena pohodi netu, za moja soli povesu budu (Ch)
SUBJ you one day come NEG SUBJ I sun hang FUT
“[If] you did not come one day, tomorrow I would hang myself”

(6) Adin sontsa sest’ rubli zalabodaj (Vr)
One son six rubles earn
“[I] earned six rubles in one day”

(8) Adin l’udi delaj kushi ne-mogu (Vr)
One person make eat impossible
“One person can not earn enough to support family”

The precise number may be expressed by the corresponding numeral:

(8) Tvaja tri sontsa kupi jest (Sch)
You three sun buy PERF
“You have bought it three days ago”

(9) Maja ju iga ì unai lianga synka (Ja)
I have one girl two son
“I have one daughter and two sons”
Two mother was father

"[My] father had two wives"

It is interesting to note that expressions with the quantifier *one* as well as with numerals are rather rare, and almost all the examples deal with the calculation of days or money.

6. BIFUNCTIONAL WAYS TO EXPRESS QUANTIFICATION Imprecise plurality can be expressed by adverbial quantifiers *nogo* "many, a lot of" (Russian *mnogo*) and *syo/se/isyo/ise* "all" (Russian *vse/vsjo*). Apparently, the adverbial quantifier *syo* was in the process of grammaticalization. E.Helimskiy considers *syo/se* to be a plural marker in Govorka:

“Russian Plural forms may appear sometimes in post-pidgin continuum forms, but not in the baselect of Govorka, in which the Plural meaning is expressed by the prepositional particle *mnogo* (mnogo, mogo, nogo) or by the pospositive particle *se* (from Russian *vse*). The second type is very characteristic for Govorka (diaringa *se* “all the boys, boys”; *kazku se* “all the tales, tales”) and, probably, should be considered an analytical plural marker. Several forms, that differ from the absolute, are present only in the compound cliché expressions. They were borrowed by Govorka (or brought into the post-pidgin continuum) from the Russian language as an entity, cf. *dva rublja* “two roubles”, *shest’ chasov* “six hours”… (Helimsky, 2000, 385).

This also seems to be correct for RChP varieties and especially for the Kukan variety. It is necessary to note that these markers are not obligatory. They appear to avoid the situation of misunderstanding. Cf. in the Kukan variety:

(11) Kakoj gadu-la ja ni-znej, ise ukalainza suda
Which year-PAST I NEG-know all Ukrainian here

prisho-la <…> Ukalainza votka ni-vypi. Eta simejny ise ivo,
come-PAST Ukrainian vodka NEG-drink this with family all 3Pers

tol’ka dz’an’a paluchi-la – magazina, kakoj madijula esi
just money get-PAST shop which tissue is

– ise kupi. (K1)
all buy

“I do not remember in what year, Ukrainians came here. Ukrainians do not drink. All of them were people with families. Upon receiving money, they immediately used to go to the shop. They used to buy all cloths available in the shop”.
In (11) the speaker points out that not one Ukrainian person but many Ukrainians came (*ise ukalainza*), and all of them were people with families (*simejny ise ivo*). But the first *ise* is a true plural marker while in the second case it keeps its primary lexical meaning “all”. This lexical meaning is the only one in the third case (*ise kupi*). So, the word *ise* is a typical bifunctional word, which has lexical and pure grammatical meaning at the same time: it may be used both as a grammatical marker and as a word with lexical meaning. The existence of bifunctional words is very characteristic for pidgins and creoles, being typical for the Chinese language as well as. Thus, the appearance of such words in the RChP may be explained both by the influence of Chinese and by the general regularities of pidgin development.

It is worth mentioning that in the Chinese language, plurality is expressed by a grammatical marker *xio*, its lexical meaning is “several”. So here we have a clear case of double etymology. This situation is rather common in contact languages: a particular marker is selected among several possible ones in a lexifier language because it coincides in form with a certain marker of a contacting language. Thus, RChP *se/sio* has a clear double etymology and can be deduced from Chinese *xie* ‘several’ and from Russian *vse* ‘all’ simultaneously.

See more examples of *ise/se* usage in the Kukan variety:

(12) /About Japanese writing system/:
*ise kitaïsa buke, kitaïsa buke ise, a gavali ni mozeno, pishi adinaka* (K1)
All Chinese letter Chinese letter all but speak NEG possible write alike.
“Chinese letters [they use], all letters are Chinese, but it is impossible to speak, [though] the script is the same”

(13) *Tiper’ eta ibenka ise, zensiny ise krasivy, krasivy ivo ibenka* (K1)
Now this Japanese all woman all beautiful beautiful 3pers Japanese
“Nowadays all Japanese, Japanese women are beautiful, they are beautiful, Japanese”

The lexeme *nogo* also seem to undergo the process of grammaticalization though to a lesser extent. Cf.:

(14) *Zhivotny nogo deda, i sobol’ i chego, i miasa*
Beast many grandfather and sable and something and meat

*siorem’ ohotai zimoi* (FEP)
all the time hunt winter
"[My] husband was always hunting in winter, [hunting] animals, sable and other similar creatures, for meat"

(15) *Tam lesa is’o, takoj lesa nogo* (K1)
There forest all such forest many
“There were forests, a lot of forests”

(It should be noted that in the RChP the word ‘lesa “forest” has the stress on the first syllable and does not have a quantitative meaning).
7. QUANTIFICATION IN THE VERB It seems that in the primary basilect form of the RChP verbs expressed neither quantitative meaning nor tense, voice or aspect; see the following examples:

tibe ni-nada kupi” (Spr)
Mother say 2Pers.Sing at all bad Other time
2Pers.Sing. NEG-necessary buy
“Mother said: “You are extremely stupid. Next time you should not go shopping”.

(17) Ivo ne umej ohotaj, toko ogorod sadi. Ja ne
3Pers.Sing NEG can hunt only garden plant I Pers.Sing NEG
‘hochi kitaiza zhivi (FEP)
want Chinese live
“He could not hunt, he was only planting his kitchen-garden. I did not want to live with a Chinese”

(18) Ziml’a ran’she syo sadi, magazina ni-kupi nicho, a
Earth before all plant shop NEG-buy nothing but
schasa toka kartoshka sadi” (TE)
now only potatoes plant
“In the old days everything was grown in the ground; nothing was bought in the shop, but nowadays only potatoes are planted”.

As examples show, the usage of the absolute verb form, which bears no grammatical meanings is one of the most stable pidgin features. It is characteristic even for the depiginized Tazy ethnolect variant.

At the same time the verb system of the RChP shows the tendency of becoming more complex. Already in Cherepanov’s texts, the verb had two forms: general and perfective. The latter was expressed by a postpositive marker –la, which goes back to the Russian ending –la (Past tense, Fem.) and the Chinese perfect marker –la. This marker expresses the perfective action, while the imperfective meaning is expressed by the general verb form. Cf.:

(19) Ja kitaiza dava-la men’a ihin’... men’a adin, popa-la
1Sing Chinese give-PERF 1Sing 3Plur 1Sing one get-PERF
ja, papa net, mama net, plakaj ja (FEP)
1Sing father no mother no cry 1Sing
“They gave me to a Chinese man. I got [there] without father and mother. I was crying”

(20) A eta zhen’shen’ kushaj horosho. Zhen’shen’ ivo iskej ivo,
”This ginseng is very good for you. It is necessary to collect it wild. The planted one is of no use”

The perfective form with –la as well as the general verb form do not express quantitative meanings.

(21) Pochemu japonsa sta-l, kak eto? (K2)
Why Japanese become-PERF how this
“From where did the Japanese come? How did it happen? ”

(22) Hets’u kuritsa jajtsy kupi-la, butylka opuskaj-la (Spr)
Hets’u chicken egg buy-PERF bottle put down-PERF
“Hets’u bought chicken eggs and put [them] into the bottle ”.

(23) Sam gorod posho-l ivo, dal’oo ujeha-l ihin’ (FEP)
Himself city go-PERF 3Sing far ride-PERF 3Plur
“They themselves went away to the city; they went far away ”.

It is necessary to note that recordings in the 1980s and 1990s contain the whole variety of different verb forms. Some of them express quantitative meaning, cf.:

(24) Vajna urem’a byla, nichivo ni-dastan-ish, a my po sopka-m
War in time was nothing NEG-get-2Sg and we on mountain-DAT
hodi-m, nash-li, da-li sojuza po muka, po krupa (TE)
go-1PL find-PAST.PL give-PAST.PL Soyuz on flour on grain
“At the time of war there were no products [to buy]. We walked along mountains picking up [wild plants] and sold them to Integralsoyuz (an official trading organization) in exchange for flour and grain ”.

It would be erroneous to conclude on the basis of such forms that in the second part of the XX century the RChP verb system acquired new forms including those expressing quantitative meanings, because these forms appear in free variation with absolute unchangeable forms. This situation was described for Jamaican creole (DeCamp, 1961) and may be considered typical for cases of decreolization or depidginization, when pidgin speakers often communicate with speakers of the lexifier language. Cf. another example from the same interview as (24):

(25) <Are there any Tazy left in Taduha?>
Tama sasema netu-la, se suda, tritsa doma. Stary uzhe
There at all no-PAST all here thirty house old already

netu-la pomer-la ja, tam escho odin mushynna, Lan” (TE)
no-PERF die-PERF 1Sg there more one man Lan
“There are no [Tazy] left at all. All came here, thirty families. There are no old people any more. If I
die, there would be only one [old] man [named] Lan “.

The speaker twice used the basilect Past form of negative copula netu-la “there was no” (cf. Present
form of the negative copula: netu ‘there is no’). So in her speech both basilect and acrolect forms are found,
though her idiom should be defined as rather depidginized as a whole.

8. CONCLUSIONS Having analyzed various data on Russian-Chinese pidgin, it is possible to conclude
that the basilect form of this contact language did not have an overt expression of quantitative meaning with the
exception of personal/possessive pronouns. At the same time, it is possible to suppose that the quantifier se/syo
was in the process of grammaticalization thus turning into a bifunctional word.

So, one may suppose that the Russian-Chinese pidgin was expanding, using its own resources for
expressing necessary meanings. The fact that this pidgin was expanding signals that at some point the Russian-
Chinese pidgin was used not as just a trade language but also in wider communicative contexts and was turning
into an expanded pidgin.

This process was stopped in the 1930s. The Chinese were deported from the Russian territory, and
local aboriginal people remained the only speakers of this language. From the 1930s onwards, standard Russian
became the only school language in the Russian Far East; the system of boarding schools resulted in a swift
language shift with the local minorities. In several decades their languages as well as the Russian-Chinese
pidgin yielded before the dominant Russian. Consequently, only the older people remember these languages.
Still, the local variant of Russian retains definite post-pidgin features.

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