

Glossed Text

See p. 172 in:

van der Voort, Hein. 2013. Eskimo Pidgin. In: Michaelis, Susanne Maria & Maurer, Philippe & Haspelmath, Martin & Huber, Magnus (eds.) *The Survey of Pidgin and Creole Languages, Vol. III: Contact Languages Based on Languages from Africa, Asia, Australia, and the Americas*, 166-173. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Unfortunately, Stefánsson's article does not contain coherent Pidgin text. In fact, there are no real texts available in any Eskimo Pidgin at all. There is only one single document of an Eskimo Pidgin in which a more or less coherent sequence of Eskimo Pidgin utterances is found. It concerns a paragraph in the travel journal of a German surgeon, Johann Michael Meyer (1767), who travelled on the Hamburg whaler King Salomon to Davis Strait and Greenland in 1764. The purpose of this journey was whaling and trading with the Inuit. Meyer's journal contains a word list and sentences that represent 18th century West Greenlandic Pidgin. Roughly 18% of the lexical elements (including *kæne* 'woman!') originate from other languages than Eskimo (especially Germanic) and the syntax shows both Eskimo and European traits. The following text originates from Meyer (1767: 106-107) and was analysed in van der Voort (1996b: 172-175, 194, 209-211). It is a dialogue between a Greenlander (G) and the ship's commander (C), proposing to trade. The original spelling and segmentation were maintained.

- 1 (G) *Ohma* *Kynoka?*
you.there captain
You there! Where is the commander?

- 2 (C) *Watje*
wait.a.little
Wait a little!

- 3 (G) *Ohma* *kniblit?*
you.there who.you
You there! Who are you? What is your name?

- 4 (C) *Kinoka Konig Salomon*
 captain King Salomon
 The commander of the ship called the King
 Salomon.
- 5 (G) *Kynoka Konig Salomon ajongelak ishigaget*
 captain King Salomon it.is.good I.saw.you
 Are you the commander of the ship the King
 Salomon? That is good, I have seen you before.
- 6 (G) *Kynoka handlabasche Kakkamia Bosamia ajongelak*
 captain trade.I.you foxskin sealskin it.is.good
 Does the captain want to trade? These foxskins
 and sealskins are nice.
- besingele*
 see
 Have a look!
- 7 (C) *App Handla-basche besingele Kakkamia Bosamia*
 yes trade.I.you see fox.skin seal.skin
 I want to trade with you. Show me your foxskins
 and sealskins!
- 8 (G) *Kiak Kinoka snipa*
 kayak captain lower.it/sloop
 Launch the sloop (so that we can come aboard)!
- 9 (G) *Besingele Kakamia Bosamia ajongelak*
 see fox.skin seal.skin it.is.good
 See our foxskins and sealskins, they are beautiful.

This text shows a number of traits that are also encountered in Stefánsson's material and that are characteristic for Eskimo Pidgins. The majority of the lexical elements are from West Greenlandic Kalaallisut, but the (verbal) root *handla-* 'trade' is clearly of Germanic origin. Also the word *besingele* 'see' and *Kynoka* 'captain' may be Germanic. The word *snipa* is listed in Meyer (1767: 163) with the translation 'sloop', with which sense the form can be easily related to Germanic. The sentence contexts in which it occurs, however, make a verbal interpretation more likely, in which case Greenlandic *singippaa* 'He lowers it into the water.' would be a more probable origin. Note also the absence of morphology. The morphological elements that can be recognized are clearly fossilized, such as the ending *-basche*, which resembles several possible transitive person and mood inflections in Greenlandic. Also the possessive inflections in *Kakamia* and *Bosamia* and the transitive inflection in *snipa* 'lowers it into water' must be regarded as fossilized. The interpretation of the utterances seems to be rather dependent on the context. The syntax is difficult to establish but it may be variable. Depending on the interpretation of the utterances, the order in attributive possession may be Possessum-Possessor (4 and 5) and Possessor-Possessum (8). The possessive constructions in *Kakamia* and *Bosamia* (6 and 7) should probably be regarded as fossilised, similar to other Eskimo Pidgins (van der Voort 1997: 379-381). The order of the verb and arguments (5 to 9) does not appear to be predominantly OV, unlike the Herschel Island Trade Jargon.

In spite of certain similarities, both the Pidgin variety and the quality of Meyer's document differ strongly from Stefánsson's, and the reader should therefore be warned that this text section does not represent the same language as the one discussed in other parts of this chapter. It is nevertheless justifiable to reproduce this rare text here, since it represents the other extreme end of the Eskimo Pidgin continuum in several ways. Geographically, West Greenlandic Pidgin represents the southeasternmost variety of Eskimo Pidgin, whereas the Herschel Island Trade Jargon was spoken far away to the northwest. Historically, the West Greenlandic document is from an early contact period, whereas the Herschel Island document represents a relatively late period. Culturally, the West Greenlandic Pidgin represents the northern Atlantic tradition of Eskimo interethnic contact, whereas the Herschel Island Trade Jargon represents the northern Pacific tradition.