A Study of Kyowa-go in Manchukuo

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**Dedication**

To Professor Millward and Professor Manning, for their unwavering guidance and mentorship throughout this journey, I am eternally grateful.

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Introduction

Imagine a vibrant tapestry created from the intertwining threads of two distinct cultures, their unique languages merging amidst the fluctuations of power, influence, and heritage. This tapestry represents the multifaceted history of Manchuria, a region that has experienced its geographical and political boundaries evolve over time. At the heart of this tapestry lies a singular manifestation of Chinese-Japanese interactions: kyowa-go, the harmony language. As China and Japan sought control over this strategically significant territory, a linguistic phenomenon emerged, providing a glimpse into the deep-rooted and intricate relationship between these two nations.

Starting from the late 19th century, Manchuria has experienced major changes, such as the Russian invasion, the Russo-Japanese War, the Japanese invasion, and finally, its partial return to China. Due to its long and complex history, it would be extremely difficult to cover the complete picture of Manchurian history, even only focusing on the contemporary era. In this essay, I will specialize in the Chinese-Japanese interactions in the region, starting from the Russo-Japanese War to the postwar period after the Japanese surrender, by offering a new and unique perspective on the examination of this period of history—linguistics. When Japanese imperialism began to influence China, the cultural interaction between the two countries led to some cultural assimilation between the respective societies, including their languages. This interaction of languages gradually leads to the formation of the pidgin language kyowa-go. By unraveling the intricacies of this pidgin language, I seek to illuminate the remarkable story of Manchuria and the enduring impact of these linguistic encounters.
Background

On 5 September 1905, a peace treaty between Russia and Japan was signed in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, with the mediation of President Theodore Roosevelt. With the signing of this treaty, Russia lost all of South Manchuria and the railway from Port Author to Changchun. On the other hand, Japan was able to regain the territory it had originally won in the war of 1894-5 and some other territories in Asia. Russia’s defeat signified a dramatic change in the power balance in Asia, allowing Japan’s recognition as the first modern country in Asia that could take on a Western power. After the Russo-Japanese War, Russia and Japan quickly divided their spheres of influence in the former Qing Empire and China. Even though it is a common perception that Japanese invasion and colonization began with the Mukden Incident on September 18th, 1895, and the subsequent establishment of Manchukuo, Japan had already displaced the Qing as Korea's protector in 1895, and its “partial occupation” of China started immediately after the Russo-Japanese War. After replacing Russian control in the southern part of the Liaodong peninsula, Japan maintained its administration of the area from 1905 to 1945.

One of the most significant outcomes of the Japanese occupation of this area lies in its development of the South Manchuria Railway (SMR) and the SMR Company. The SMR served as the major tool to assist in the eventual Japanese occupation of Manchuria. The SMR was centered on two main lines: the first stretching about 700 km from Dairen (Dalian 大连) to Changchun 长春, and the second about 260 km from Mukden (Fengtian, modern Shenyang 沈阳) to Andong (Dandong 丹东). Due to the high efficiency and wide coverage of the SMR, it became known as the “most lucrative railroad colony in history.” In the 1920s, the Japanese

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2 Gamsa, Manchuria, 50.
3 Gamsa, Manchuria, 63.
4 Gamsa, Manchuria, 63.
5 Gamsa, Manchuria, 64.
implemented the “industrial Manchuria” program, exploiting the tremendous economic potential of local natural resources, including soybeans and coal. The SMR was the major instrument allowing efficient extraction of goods from Manchuria to the Japanese homeland, generating significant revenue for the Japanese economy.\(^6\) Besides its apparent economic purposes, the SMR also established its own research department, concentrating on the studies of social-scientific, agricultural, and economic conditions of Manchuria, as well as countries across Asia.\(^7\) The SMR Company, commonly known as Mantestsu, exercised great influence and built the foundation for the Japanese imperial project in Manchuria. At the same time, nevertheless, especially from the mid-1920s, there were growing nationalist sentiments by the Chinese against Japanese colonialism in South Manchuria.\(^8\) These sentiments continued to build up until the breakout of the Mukden Incident in 1931.

On 18 September 1931, the Japanese military staged an incident by blowing up the SMR track north of Mukden, creating a justification for a military invasion of Manchuria. Back home in Japan, the invasion was widely reported by the Japanese press and radio, creating a sense of racial superiority and propagating its imperialist project abroad.\(^9\) Soon after, Japan attacked China on another front—the bombardment of Shanghai started in January 1932. Due to the geographical distance and lack of interest, neither European nations nor the United States responded effectively to the Japanese invasion of Manchuria.\(^10\) As a result, on 6 February 1932, the Imperial Japanese Kwantung Army entered Harbin. The last Manchu emperor of the fallen Qing empire, Puyi 溥仪, brought by the Japanese from Tianjin to Port Author under military escort, was appointed president of the newly independent state Manchukuo, founded on 1 March

\(^6\) Gamsa, Manchuria, 63.
\(^8\) Gamsa, Manchuria, 67.
\(^9\) Gamsa, Manchuria, 87.
\(^10\) Gamsa, Manchuria, 87.
1932. On 25 August, the Diet in Tokyo officially recognized Manchukuo, and later in September, the new state was recognized by the Tokyo government.

In March 1934, Puyi became the Kangde emperor in Changchun, the city that had been renamed Xinjing (New Capital), and declared the capital of Manchukuo in April 1932. Most Chinese scholars, such as Gong Xue, label Manchukuo as “the false Manchukuo” or the “false Manchu government,” indicating their refusal and that of Chinese governments to recognize Manchukuo as an independent state. After the Japanese invasion in September 1931, Chiang Kai-shek, leader of the Nationalist government in China, announced that China would not confront Japan but would instead turn to the League of Nations to resolve the conflict. Chiang was hesitant to engage the militarily-superior Japanese forces, and also concerned about repressing the Chinese communists; his refusal to fight Japan directly was unpopular with many Chinese.

After an assessment, even though the League’s Lytton Committee rejected the Japanese claim of self-defense and called for the restoration of the status quo in Manchuria, the League of Nations was eventually ineffective in countering Japanese imperialism, as Japan simply left the League in 1933. After receiving some recognition internationally, Manchukuo received further recognition amongst countries occupied by the Axis Powers with the breakout of World War Two.

The Japanese imperialist project in Manchukuo significantly influenced the demographics of the region. In the 1930s, Chinese migration to Manchuria declined as a result of strict regulations imposed by Japanese officials. The Chinese immigrants also faced austere labor

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11 Gamsa, Manchuria, 88.
13 Gamsa, Manchuria, 90.
environments and living conditions.\textsuperscript{14} They were controlled by their foremen and received less than half of the wages paid to Japanese workers. In December 1941, after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Manchuria was forced to mobilize to support Japanese military actions in World War Two. From Feb 1942, Chinese young men were conscripted for labor on military projects, which eventually made up 71\% of the entire workforce by 1945.\textsuperscript{15} These young men were forced to work in mines and other environments with harsh conditions of slave labor.\textsuperscript{16} At the same time, nevertheless, the Japanese officials realized that over-dependence on Chinese laborers in the construction of Manchukuo was a pressing issue. The most effective solution would be to encourage migration from Japan.\textsuperscript{17} In 1936, Tokyo announced the expansionist goal of settling one million Japanese households in Manchuria, amounting to a fifth of the Japanese rural village population at the time.\textsuperscript{18} To achieve its aim of racial extension, Japan set up a huge propaganda campaign based on two major factors: patriotic and personal. Officials advocated for colonization as an act beneficial to the Japanese homeland and increasing Japan’s international standing. At the same time, they portrayed Manchukuo as an “empty land” with abundant opportunities for individuals to take advantage of. As a result, about 322,000 Japanese immigrants were brought to Manchuria from 1937 to 1945.\textsuperscript{19}

At the inauguration of the new state, the Japanese advertised Manchukuo as the “a paradise of five nations”: Han Chinese, Manchu, Japanese, Korean, and Mongol. Since President Woodrow Wilson’s Fourteen Points at the end of World War One, the old style of colonialism was no longer acceptable internationally, advocating that states should be determined by the free
will of their population.\textsuperscript{20} Hence, the image promoted in Manchukuo was used to justify Japanese colonialism in Asia. Along with the Greater East Asia Co-Prospereity Sphere, Japan promoted a greater pan-Asian vision to create a new order in East Asia. It was outspokenly anti-Western and meant to replace the Versailles system, which Japan claimed had been imposed on the international system after World War One.\textsuperscript{21} Despite the interracial harmony (\textit{minzu xiehe}/\textit{minzoku kyōwa} 民族協和) image the Japanese officials attempted to depict in Mancukuo, it solely convinced the Japanese rather than the other ethnic groups. To further reinforce the illusion of Manchurian sovereignty, Japanese officials were required to learn Chinese, although Japanese was the official state language. Other activities to promote interracial harmony include the encouragement of intermarriage among the “five nations” and the worshipping of Confucianism by building Confucian temples.\textsuperscript{22} Even though Manchukuo was inherently an expansionist and imperialist project, the Japanese officials, ironically, employed Pan-Asianism as an ideology to counter traditional Western colonialism and propagate its own occupation of Manchuria.

Despite this effort, the Japanese occupation of Manchuria met constant resistance. In November, General Ma Zhanshan 马占山 ignored the official non-resistance policy and engaged the Japanese army in battle on the Nenjiang River, which is located in today’s Heilongjiang Province. Other Chinese military leaders led a defense of Harbin, allowing the city to resist the occupation until February 1932.\textsuperscript{23} Exiles from occupied Manchuria formed the Northeast Salvation Society, a group pressuring the Chinese government to publicize and support the resistance in Manchuria. Their resistance, however, was brutally suppressed by the Japanese

\textsuperscript{20} Gamsa, Manchuria, 97.  
\textsuperscript{21} Gamsa, Manchuria, 97.  
\textsuperscript{22} Gamsa, Manchuria, 98.  
\textsuperscript{23} Gamsa, Manchuria, 94.
army. When Japanese soldiers committed massacres in villages where they suspected that guerillas were hidden.\textsuperscript{24} In Japanese military operations against the guerillas, about 66,000 Chinese were killed between 1932 and 1940, and resistance was completely crushed by 1941. The resistance in the Northeast comprised a rather diverse group, including former bandits, such as Wang Delin 王德林, who formed a National Salvation in Yanji(eastern Jilin) and achieved certain success in resistance before falling into conflict with another volunteer army.\textsuperscript{25} It is evident that such internal conflicts among different Chinese groups became one of the major factors, along with a shortage of supplies, preventing effective resistance against the Japanese military. Because of their lack of ideology, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) denied the voluntary armies until the united front of 1937.\textsuperscript{26} In the postwar era, in order to reinforce its political validity, the People’s Republic of China (PRC) deliberately highlighted the resistance to Japan under the communist party. At the same time, it has downplayed the other groups’ roles in resistance.

On August 15, 1945, Emperor Hirohito announced Japan’s surrender in a radio broadcast. Three days later, the Soviet military entered Harbin and was welcomed by the city’s Russians.\textsuperscript{27} Chinese Communist troops soon joined the battle in Manchuria, aiming to prevent the establishment of Soviet power.\textsuperscript{28} After Mao Zedong’s negotiations with Chiang Kai-shek failed, the Communist army launched its offensive in the Northeast, restarting the Civil War in China.\textsuperscript{29} Despite some victories by Kuomintang (KMT) through the summer of 1947, by the end of that year the CCP had seized 586 cities at the end of that year.\textsuperscript{30} The complete conquest of Manchuria

\textsuperscript{24} Gamsa, Manchuria, 94. 
\textsuperscript{25} Gamsa, Manchuria, 95. 
\textsuperscript{26} Gamsa, Manchuria, 95. 
\textsuperscript{27} Gamsa, Manchuria, 108. 
\textsuperscript{28} Gamsa, Manchuria, 110. 
\textsuperscript{29} Gamsa, Manchuria, 110. 
\textsuperscript{30} Gamsa, Manchuria, 110.
was achieved by the Communist army on November 5th, 1948, under Lin Biao 林彪, who later became Mao’s deputy, and marked the turning of the war in the CCP’s favor. After the CCP victory over the KMT in China, Mao declared the establishment of the PRC on Tiananmen Square on 1 October 1949 while the KMT retreated to Taiwan.31

After the Communist victory, since Harbin was the first city “liberated” by the CCP, it served as a testing ground for later urban takeovers. After seizing the city in April 1946, the CCP arrested 933 people on the outskirts of Harbin, including suspected Japanese war criminals, their Chinese collaborators, landlords, and counter-revolutionaries.32 The communist purge demonstrated the plan to “cleanse” the outskirts before tackling the city itself. This strategy was soon implemented all over the PRC to establish control.33 Hence, it is evident that the PRC’s priority after the war was attempting to eradicate any remaining Japanese influence in China. On the Japanese side, although its army filled the trains that headed south to Korea, where the soldiers sailed back to Japan, the Japanese civilians were left behind.34 Amongst the remaining 223,000 residents, about 78,500 perished due to violence, starvation, or disease.35 Some survivors spent a year in the Soviet refugee camps, and some women settlers decided to marry Chinese peasants and remain in China. Five thousand Japanese children were abandoned in Manchuria, leading to a long process of repatriating Japanese children from China in the post-war period. This process, however, was highly complicated since the Japanese society was reluctant to accept these children, who did not speak Japanese nor know their original Japanese names. A legal settlement guaranteeing them acceptable living conditions was granted as late as 2007. The conditions of the war orphans demonstrate that the Second World War did not simply

31 Gamsa, Manchuria, 112.
32 Gamsa, Manchuria, 112.
33 Gamsa, Manchuria, 112.
34 Gamsa, Manchuria, 107.
35 Gamsa, Manchuria, 108.
end with the surrender of Japan—the war shadows of the war, and the repercussions of the mingling of societies in Manchuria due to Japanese conquest and settler colonialism in Manchukuo, continued to haunt Manchuria, China, and Japan over time.

**Historiography and Methodology**

Due to its unique position in Japanese imperialism, Manchukuo’s history has been a topic that attracted wide scholarly attention. Even though it was a short-living project, scholars tended to examine it from various perspectives.

Some historical works have examined Manchukuo purely focusing on the Japanese imperialist project. *Japan’s Total Empire* by Louise Young and *Sovereignty and Authenticity: Manchukuo* and the East Asian Modern by Prasenjit Duara are both well-known works that carry out thorough studies to demonstrate the complex nature of the building of Manchukuo. In her work, Young views Manchukuo from a domestic view. Young argues that Manchukuo was not an isolated project overseas but required constant interaction between the Japanese people back home. Young creates the concept of “total imperialism,” which emphasizes the idea that the total empire stemmed from the home front, requiring “mass and multidimensional mobilization of domestic society.”

Young finds that various domestic factors, such as the mass media, the academy, women’s organizations, and so on, all helped to mobilize popular support for Manchukuo, encouraging Japan’s overseas expansion. Duara, on the other hand, examined Manchukuo through the lens of modernity. Since Manchukuo urgently sought international and domestic recognition of its sovereignty, Duara dived into how Japan claimed to “represent the

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36 Louise Young, *Japan’s Total Empire: Manchuria and the Culture of Wartime Imperialism*, 1. paperback print, Twentieth Century Japan 8 (Berkeley, Calif.: Univ. of Calif. Press, 1999), 13.

37 Young, *Japan’s Total Empire*, 13.
authentic culture of the land and peoples.”

Hence, during a period in which imperialism became increasingly illegitimate, Manchukuo became an embodiment of complex ideologies including nationalism, imperialism, and modernity.

Other historians focused on a broader picture beyond but closely related to Manchukuo: the Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere. Since there is no strict definition of this concept, historians developed different focuses and interpretations. For instance, W.G. Beasley in Japanese Imperialism 1894-1945 emphasizes the unequal relationship within the Co-Prospereity Sphere. It stresses that this concept allows Japan to enjoy economic benefits but rejects the conventional European colonial models. In his work, Japan's Co-Prospereity Sphere, A.J. Grajdanzev suggests that it is “an expression of hope for the Japanese people who had no clear idea of the purposes of the war…”

Historian Jeremy A. Yellen offers another interesting perspective by characterizing the Co-Prospereity Sphere as “Japanese dreams for a new order.” He further connects his arguments with Young’s “total empire.” He agrees that the empire-building process in Manchuko initiates a multidimensional mobilization of the Japanese state and society in irrevocable ways, incubating the Japanese desire to break away from the old order.

Recently, scholars began to examine Manchukuo through more narrow and specific perspectives. For instance, in her dissertation, The Cartographic Steppe: Mapping Environment and Ethnicity in Japan's Imperial Borderlands, Sakura Christmas approaches this topic through

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39 Duara, Sovereignty and Authenticity, 1.


the lens of ethnicity and environmental science. In her work, Christmas detailedly discusses the environmental consequences of Japanese imperialism. When Japanese imperialism overlooked the Mongolian territories as empty space, the social scientific theories, and land surveying technologies combined to disrupt the lives of “hunters, herders, and farmers with environmental consequences.”

Similar to Christmas’ approach of conducting an interdisciplinary study between environmental science and the history of Japanese imperialism, this thesis aims to examine the history of Manchukuo through the lens of linguistics, which is a field that has been previously overlooked. The existing scholarly works have already demonstrated that Manchukuo is not only purely part of the Japanese imperialist project but an embodiment of many complex ideologies that persisted since the interwar period into the Second World War. My study of Manchukuo through examining the Chinese-Japanese pidgin, hopes to bring new ideas into the field and further demonstrate the complex nature of Manchukuo.

To demonstrate how language intertwines with Manchukuo’s history, this thesis will present a wide range of primary sources. Even though I will refer to scholarly works for background information, due to limited study in this particular field, the majority of my arguments directly stem from kyowa-go’s primary sources. The content of each of my chapters will closely relate to one piece of the primary source that I find a representative of the chapter’s major arguments.

In my first chapter related to the emergence of kyowa-go in the Japanese military, I will be focusing on a reference book issued to Japanese soldiers during the Japanese invasion to teach them Chinese phrases and sentences useful in implementing military strategies as well as on

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43 Sakura Christmas, “The Cartographic Steppe: Mapping Environment and Ethnicity in Japan’s Imperial Borderlands,” Harvard University, Graduate School of Arts & Sciences, iii.
carrying out daily activities. The phrasebook provides important insights into the formation process of the initial stage of kyowa-go and how exactly they were utilized during interactions with local Chinese civilians. In the second chapter, I turn to the use of military postcards during the Second World War, on which Japanese officials printed cartoons and illustrations in kyowa-go. These postcards were later circulated back to the homefront in Japan. Hence, these postcards became important symbols of the imperialist project in Manchukuo, allowing the Japanese officials to propagate imperialist ideologies and mobilize Japanese people back home to support their overseas expansion. Finally, I will move on to the postwar period and examine the remain of kyowa-go in the contemporary era. Surprisingly, many of the kyowa-go expressions are preserved in modern Chinese TV series. These productions serve as essential sources for understanding post-war Chinese reactions against Japanese colonialism and how ideologies associated with kyowa-go changed over time. Apart from the major sources, this essay will also include personal memoirs and newspapers to add personal accounts and specific details to the broader picture. The many sources presented to demonstrate that kyowa-go is a language phenomenon unique to Manchukuo’s history, providing another valuable perspective to understand the Japanese imperialist project.

Into the Linguistics Field

One of the by-products or haunting traces of Japanese colonization in Manchuria lies in the language. Since Chinese and Japanese contact intensified at the end of the Qing Dynasty, their culture and language inevitably began to interact and, to a degree, converge.

Chinese characters were first used in Japan in the early fifth century CE when court records and other documents were composed in classical Chinese, which played a role in East
Asia similar to that of Latin in Europe. Japanese language, as opposed to a script, is entirely unrelated to Sinitic languages, but as the Chinese literary corpus (in classical Chinese) was introduced to Japan, Chinese words were absorbed into the Japanese language. In recent centuries Japanese has been written with syllabaries (kana), symbols derived from Chinese characters but used only for their phonetic value, interspersed with Chinese words written with the original characters (which, when read aloud, were read in Japanese, not Chinese, pronunciation). Although linguistically in an entirely different family from Sinitic languages, therefore, Japanese has for centuries included, continued to incorporate, and even create new words using the corpus of Chinese characters. Chinese and Japanese continued to interact, in other words, linguistically, even when relations between states in China and Japan were chilly. In the late 19th century, as Japan rushed to absorb Western technologies and ideas following the Meiji Restoration, Japanese thinkers put together Chinese characters in new ways to coin thousands of new words to translate Western or modern concepts into the East Asian written lingua franca. Both the ancient and modern lexicographies of Chinese and Japanese (as well as Korean and Vietnamese) overlap considerably, sharing tens of thousands of words which, though pronounced differently in different places, are visually identical and recognizably cognate.

The Sino-Japanese linguistic interaction continued under special conditions in Manchuria due to Japanese colonization and the Sino-Japanese War. The concrete and codified result of the Manchukuo episode of linguistic confluence was a pidgin called kyowa-go 协和语, or "the harmony language." The “harmony” in the name of kyowa-go symbolizes the interracial harmony which Japanese officials advocated for its imperialist project in Manchukuo. Hence, inherently, kyowa-go embodies the ideal of Pan-Asianism that Japan utilized to justify its
expansion. In order to fully understand the messages kyowa-go carries, it is necessary to understand the linguistic significance of a pidgin.

In general, the history of pidgins involves misunderstanding. Pidgin languages are one of the much-misunderstood by-products of colonization or interaction in nearly every African, American, or Asian region where the outside and local populations have come into contact. Pidgins served as means of communication, a simplified form of communication when the two groups of linguistically diverse people interact with each other. Today, despite some extent of disapproval, the importance of varieties of pidgin is increasing. The “misunderstanding” of pidgins usually appears when people mistakenly consider a pidgin as a mispronunciation of the original language. In the Western world of pidgin, to those who speak European languages, pidgin merely sounds like a mispronunciation of their own tongues, hence pidgins have been labeled as “bastard lingo” or “gibberish.” The term “pidgin” was even employed to describe any formless speech, such as the broken English phrase “No tickee, no washee” attributed to Chinese laundrymen. In contrast to these misunderstandings, investigations in Haiti, Melanesia, and elsewhere have shown that pidgins are far more than half-learned versions of languages. The pidgins are languages in their own right, containing sounds and grammar and the internal consistency required by any stable system required for any stable system of communication.

This misunderstanding and prejudice against hybrid languages are evident throughout the history of kyowa-go. When the Japanese and Chinese used kyowa-go for communication in Manchukuo, many of them did not even realize that they were speaking a pidgin but rather felt it was a completely foreign language. In contemporary society, when hearing or even mimicking

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kyowa-go, most Chinese would not recognize it as kyowa-go but rather as bad Chinese. It is evident that there is indeed an ambivalent line between a pidgin and a mal-spoken language.

It is thus important to clarify what exactly defines a pidgin. The most significant characteristic of a pidgin is its hybrid nature, but pidgins are not the only form of mixed language. It is essential to make a three-way distinction between the “lingua-francs,” “the pidgin languages,” and the “creolized languages.” According to linguist Robert A. Hall:

A lingua franca is any tongue serving as a means of communication among groups that have no other language in common; for example, English in India and the Philippines. A pidgin language is a lingua franca that, in the course of its adoption had become simplified and restructured. The reduced language which results from this process is nobody’s native language…When a pidgin is pressed into service as a native language, its vocabulary must greatly expand to accommodate its users’ everyday needs. A reduced language, when thus re-expanded, is called a creolized language (the creole languages of Haiti and other Caribbean areas are typical). 47

By this definition, kyowa-go falls under the category of a pidgin instead of a creole since it does not have a second generation of speakers. It was the lingua-franca between the Chinese and Japanese as simplified versions of both languages were utilized to enable communication between the two groups. According to the Chinese scholar Gong Xue, kyowa-go is the product of war and Japanese colonialism, so it naturally died out when the war came to an end. 48 Gong is one of the very few Chinese scholars in the field who considered kyowa-go an independent topic and conducted a comprehensive study in her work Research on Kyowa-go 协和语研究. Due to the difference in writing styles, Gong, like many other Chinese scholars, does not suggest a central argument in her work, but comprehensively provides information for the different aspects of kyowa-go. Apart from some linguistic analysis, Gong heavily focuses on the relationship

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47 Hall, “PIDGIN LANGUAGES,” 125.
between the pidgin and Japanese imperialist project, including the arrival of Japanese soldiers in Manchukuo, the interaction between Chinese civilians and Japanese migrants, the fall of kyowa-go after the war, and so on.\(^{49}\) Gong’s work provides essential background context for this thesis, as well as a Chinese scholarly perspective on the study of kyowa-go. Gong explicitly suggests that “Chinese scholars commonly believe kyowa-go is a language commonly used in the false Manchukuo…a product of Japanese imperialism’s oppressive policies…”\(^{50}\) The inherently negative attitude is evident in Chinese scholars’ works on kyowa-go.

At the same time, Gong provides a list of Japanese scholars whose works she considers essential in the field. According to Gong, the concept of kyowa-go was introduced by Okada Hideki. In his works, Okada noticed the existence of kyowa-go. Not attributing it to any specific language, Okada considered kyowa-go a pidgin created by the need for daily communication between Chinese and Japanese people.\(^{51}\) The other Japanese scholar Gong mentions is Sakurai Takashi, who not only affirms the pidginized nature of kyowa-go but highlights the ideologies embodied in the name “harmony language.” Sakurai argues that the Chinese-Japanese pidgin began to emerge after the Russo-Japanese War and the Japanese occupation of the SMR. Kyowa-go, nevertheless, was a term unique to Manchukuo, so there must be additional sentiments involved.\(^{52}\) Interestingly, Gong highlights that she had visited Sakurai in 2013 and discussed the lack of scholarly study on kyowa-go in Japan. Sakurai pointed to the close relationship between the pidgin and the Second World War. Japanese tend to avoid topics relating to the war, indicating that kyowa-go is perhaps directly overlooked in Japan, leading to the lack of study in the field. Another noticeable phenomenon in the field is that there

\(^{50}\) Gong, “Research on “Harmony Language,”” 4.
are a number of Chinese scholars, such as Liu Jian and Zhang Shouxiang, producing scholarly works in Japanese. This phenomenon might stem from these Chinese scholars’ research in Japan or collaborations with Japanese scholars. Potentially due to the sensitive nature of the topic, the works of Liu and Zhang restrict their analysis to linguistic matters, instead of connecting kyowa-go to the war or Japanese imperialism. For instance, in Zhang’s work “Language Contact in Manchukuo 満洲国における言語接触,” Zhang emphasizes some key linguistic characteristics of kyowa-go, including 1) the massive borrowing of Chinese phrases, 2) the frequent use of personal pronouns “デー,” 3) the use of the auxiliary verb “アル,” and the omission of particles, auxiliary words, formal nouns, and so on.53 Zhang’s analysis matches the previously discussed essential feature of a pidgin: simplification.

The Tokyo University professor Akegi Shigeo 明木茂夫 distinguishes the concepts of Chinese-based kyowa-go and Japanese-based kyowa-go, indicating that the two kinds of kyowa-go are simplifications made based on either Chinese or Japanese language.54 Using Zhang’s work as an example, “アル” and the omission of certain linguistic features are associated with the simplification of Japanese, while the others are related to the Chinese language. This thesis will not intentionally distinguish between the two different types but discuss them both together as kyowa-go.

Among Western scholars, even though there are a variety of studies about Manchukuo’s history from a range of perspectives, there is currently no specific work examining kyowa-go. Hence, this thesis also attempts to fill in the gap between Western and Asian works, applying

some major ideas, such as those of the Japanese imperialism and nationalism, to the Asian scholars’ linguistic analysis of kyowa-go.

A product of this chaotic period, kyowa-go itself embodies contradictions. Despite the name kyowa, which advocated for racial harmony and the so-called “co-prosperity,” the language developed fundamentally conducted under Japanese rule and was used to justify Japanese imperialism. Following this trend, this thesis examines the other contradictions related to kyowa-go. The first chapter will outline the introduction of kyowa-go into Manchukuo through the Japanese military, focusing on the soldiers’ efforts to learn Mandarin for both daily necessities and to implement better control over the region. The formation process of kyowa-go demonstrates the Japanese officials’ efforts to process to propel the idea of co-prosperity in Manchukuo while at the same time also constructing a strict power hierarchy to ensure Japanese superiority. The second chapter focuses on the rise of kyowa-go by including the Japanese residents in Manchukuo in the discussion. Despite being an overseas project that was intended to promote the colonization of Manchuria, it inevitably led to a reciprocal effect as the construction of Manchukuo simultaneously mobilized Japanese civilians on the home front. Finally, the third chapter discusses the fate of kyowa-go in the post-war period. While the PRC deliberately attempted to eliminate the influence of kyowa-go, its cultural influence was preserved in contemporary Chinese popular cultures, such as films and television series. Although Kyowa-go initially emerged as an unconscious byproduct of Japanese imperialism, it soon became a symbol of superiority within the power dynamic between China and Japan. As a result, both nations strategically employed this unique pidgin language to further their own interests, highlighting the intricate interplay of linguistic and political forces in the region.
Chapter 1

The Mandarin Reference Book

“兩手舉起來！不舉手要打了！Raise your hands! I’ll shoot if you don’t!”

This is a line frequently learned and spoken by Japanese soldiers when the Japanese military invaded Manchuria in 1931. Understanding—or not understanding—it was a matter of life or death.

Since 1931, Japan was continuously interacting with Manchuria through militaristic activities. As Japanese soldiers marched into the puppet state Manchukuo in the 1930s, one item they carried stood out amongst the rest—“The Must-Have Practical Shinago for Imperial Army

皇軍必携実用支那語.”55 It is a tiny reference book around the size of an adult’s palm, which is a very suitable size for soldiers to carry around and utilize for daily needs. It teaches Japanese soldiers simple Mandarin phrases to use on various occasions. By closely examining the linguistic features and messages behind these short phrases, one gains a peek into the initial process by which, and reasons why, kyowa-go was introduced into Manchukuo. The reference book’s content and characteristics demonstrate two main phenomena at the starting stage of kyowa-go formation. The first is the chaotic language environment in Manchukuo, and the second is the traces demonstrating the beginning of the integration of both Chinese and Japanese linguistic features.

In this chapter, I will start by introducing the introduction of kyowa-go’s initial stage, “Military Japanese,” which mainly originated from the need of Japanese soldiers to meet daily living in Manchukuo as they marched into the region with insufficient language background.

Then, through the lens of the formation stage of kyowa-go, I will examine both sides of the

Japanese imperialist project, including its association with brutal military activities and the advocation for Co-Prosperity to maintain regional harmony. Even though the two concepts seem contradictory at first glance, they fundamentally contributed to the same end as they served different purposes in constructing the complex Japanese imperial project in Manchukuo. Hence, the pidginized language kyowa-go was originally a subconscious byproduct of Japanese imperialism but simultaneously utilized on purpose to reinforce it.

To start with, the reference book serves as an ideal entry point for examining the initial formation stage of kyowa-go, divided according to different situations Japanese soldiers faced in which they might need to communicate with local Chinese. On each page, the Japanese meaning is listed on the top, and Mandarin is listed on the bottom accordingly (picture 1). Each Chinese character is annotated within katakanapronunciations. The first few chapters of the book begin with “Standing Guard 歩哨,” “Interrogation 變问,” and “Scouting 斥候.” The remaining chapters transition into soldiers’ daily lives, such as “Residence 宿營” and ”Meal 食事.” Finally, the book ends with “Pacification 宣抚,” which instructs the Japanese soldiers to appease the local Chinese residents.

When considering the individual chapters together, one can identify that the first three chapters are all directly related to Japanese military activities entailing interactions with the local Chinese residents. For instance, in the first chapter of

§ Katakana is the Japanese syllabary used primarily for transliterating non-Japanese words.
the book, the content of the phrases focused primarily on scolding the other person or commanding certain actions, such as “stop 站住” and “come here 到这来.” 57 These phrases do not offer context, and comprise direct orders to the people they speak to. As used in command form, these phrases also don’t address specific subjects, which is generally considered impolite language use. In the second chapter, the reference book provides more specific content. The sentences indicate intense Japanese and Chinese militaristic interactions taking place during the Sino-Japanese war. Focusing on interrogating Chinese civilians, the second chapter includes sentences such as “You must be a plain-clothes soldier 一定是便衣隊罷” and “Isn’t this cryptography? 不是寫的是暗號麼?” 58 Both “plain-clothes soldiers” and “cryptography” are military terms that refer to Chinese strategies employed during this period that were of concern to the Japanese military. In the third chapter, the book continues to teach soldiers phrases related to daily military activities: “When did they leave? 甚麼時候兒走的” “Where did they retreat? 從那方面退走的.” 59 Again, the specific information revealed in this chapter indicates that the Japanese soldiers were frequently interacting with local Chinese residents to acquire information. By closely examining the short sentences written in the first three chapters, one can already identify the initiation of the exchange between the Chinese and Japanese languages, producing what is known as the “Military Chinese 大兵中国语,” the initial form of kyowa-go. It is essential to clarify that “Military Chinese” was not yet kyowa-go that was a well-developed pidgin, but rather a stage in between mispronounced Chinese and a systematic pidgin. In this chapter, the term “Military Chinese” symbolizes the origin of this language exchange in the activities of Japanese occupying forces. The phrases are in inaccurate Mandarin as spoken by

57 Useful Chinese to carry.
58 Useful Chinese to carry.
59 Useful Chinese to carry.
Japanese that was still in the stage of moving towards pidgin language.60

Besides the content representing military strategies, the first three chapters also demonstrate an association between emerging pidgin and the use of violence. In chapter 2, interrogation, there are a significant number of phrases, including coercive orders that force Chinese civilians to carry out certain actions, including “take off your shirt 把衣裳脱下来,” “take off your pants 把裤子也脱下来,” “If you don’t write, we’ll punish you. 若不写严重办你,” “Do you want to die? 你不要命么.”61 These phrases and sentences contain words and phrases that directly threaten the well-being of Chinese civilians and even their lives. Fundamentally, the project to colonize Manchuria is inseparable from military conquest. Violence and brutality carried out on civilians served as means to achieve the military strategies. Using coercive language, the Japanese soldiers created a clear power hierarchy to oppress and dominate local civilians. During the process of constructing this hierarchy, the Japanese military contributed to the initial formation of kyowa-go, which remained as “Military Japanese” at this stage.

Examining the reference book from a linguistic point of view, one can identify that the Mandarin it teaches Japanese soldiers is sometimes written in incorrect syntactic structures. For instance, when translating “Don’t stand there” into Japanese, the book represents this phrase as “在那地方别站着.” The correct grammatical structure, however, should be “別站在那儿.”62 This reversal and relocation of the sentence’s structure is a common grammatical error among non-native Chinese speakers, especially native speakers of Japanese, which indicates locality early in a sentence, and places verbs at the end. In addition, there are also simplifications of sentence structures and inaccurate usage of certain Chinese words based on Japanese usage. In

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60 Gong, “Research on “Harmony Language,”” 17.  
61 Useful Chinese to carry.  
62 Useful Chinese to carry.
the question “Who are you,” even though Japanese were used to saying “お前は何物だ,” saying “你是甚麼” is totally illogical in Mandarin since “甚麼” is an interrogative pronoun used when asking about an object instead of a human being. The inaccuracies in this reference book demonstrate two main phenomena at the starting stage of kyowa-go formation. The first is the chaotic language environment in Manchukuo, and the second is traces demonstrating the beginning of the integration of both Chinese and Japanese linguistic features.

During the Sino-Japanese war, millions of Japanese soldiers arrived in China. According to the observation of Japanese scholars, with all their might, these soldiers were attempting to speak Chinese with all their might, resulting in inaccurate Mandarin that was completely incomprehensible.63 Few of the soldiers learned the Chinese language systematically, but they insisted on speaking languages they themselves considered “Mandarin.” The large amount of vocabulary shared by Chinese and Japanese no doubt contributed to the belief that they were, in fact, speaking “Chinese.” Interestingly, the local Chinese did not recognize this language and believed that the soldiers were communicating with them in Japanese. It is essential to distinguish between this kind of incomprehensible Chinese from kyowa-go, since some distance remains for these early efforts to be viewed as a pidgin. In this chaotic language environment of early Manchukuo, the reference book mentioned above might serve as one of the sources leading Japanese soldiers away from these standardized Chinese and towards the “Military Chinese.”

At this stage, even though kyowa-go was still in the process of formation, it is undeniable that both Chinese and Japanese languages continued to impose influence on each other throughout the process. In the reference book, apart from the sentence that refers to cryptography, there are similar sentences structuring Chinese characters with Japanese grammar.

In chapter two, the rhetorical question “你不是在那兒藏著來的麼？” forces the Chinese words into a typical Japanese grammatical structure ending the sentence with “ではないか。”64 Due to standard Mandarin’s lack of emphasis on sentence endings, however, this Japanese grammatical structure makes the sentence more difficult for listeners to understand. Applying Japanese grammar to Chinese illustrates the lack of professionalism of the editor of the reference book. More importantly, it demonstrates that the exchange and integration of culture were inevitable under close interactions. In this sense, the seemingly chaotic and irregular “Military Chinese” lays the foundation for more systematic combinations of Japanese and Chinese linguistic features in the future.

In the fourth to the seventh chapter of the phrasebook, while maintaining the linguistic features displayed in chapters one to three, the content shifts away from sentences frequently used in a military context to daily life. Although grammatical inaccuracies persist in these lines, the tone softens, and there are a lot more reassurance and requests of the civilians to replace direct commands. For instance, on the topic of residence, the sentences instructed by the book include “I want to ask you to do something 我托你点儿事儿,” and “The Japanese army will definitely not loot 日本兵绝不抢掠.”65 In these conditions, instead of attempting to intimidate local civilians, the soldiers approached them with a relatively more peaceful, cooperative attitude. Surprisingly, this cooperative attitude continues to coexist with the previously rude and insulting language.

As this phenomenon transits into chapter 8, the reference book dedicates an entire chapter to pacification.66 In this chapter, the sentences written begin to completely deviate from the militaristic context and center around casual conversation for propaganda purposes. There are a

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64 Useful Chinese to carry.
65 Useful Chinese to carry.
66 Useful Chinese to carry.
number of sentences attempting to comfort the civilians’ emotions, such as “Don’t be scared 不用害怕,” and “Don’t be afraid of the Japanese army 別怕日本軍.” Some others aim to create an idealized and positive image of the Japanese Empire and convince Chinese civilians to subordinate: “Japan is a holy country 日本是一個神國;” “I’m here to protect you 我來保護你們來了.” The pacification in this chapter forms a stark contrast with the sentences scolding and interrogating sentences at the start of the book, which makes the central theme of this book appear rather irrational and contradictory.

In order to understand this contradiction, it is necessary to understand the concept of “pacification” as employed by the Japanese in Manchukuo. The word “pacification 宣抚” dates from Tang Dynasty in Ancient China. It was first used to address the messengers who, representing the emperors, were sent to districts that had experienced natural disasters and comfort local civilians. Towards the later Tang dynasty, this role transformed into mediating the conflicts between different districts. By separating the term “宣抚,” “宣” means announcing the emperor’s order, and “抚” means consoling civilians who experienced distress and anxiety due to war or natural disaster. Hence, in the Tang period, pacification was an action initiated by the central government to local districts for the purpose of ensuring social stability. In other words, from central to local, the initiator of pacifying actions must have power over the group as the receiver. After this word died out after more than a thousand years, it was reactivated by the Japanese government and became a frequently used military term in Japanese colonial strategies. In the newly published Japanese dictionary in 1939, it defines the “pacification team 宣撫班” as “undertaking the responsibility for comforting and leading people in occupied territories.”

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67 Useful Chinese to carry.
Indeed, this definition of the pacification team reveals the essential role it played during the Japan-occupied Manchukuo. The pacification Japanese soldiers implemented was also intended for stabilizing civilians in colonized areas and minimizing any potential resistance. Hence, even though pacification does not appear to relate directly to brutal Japanese militaristic activities, it also serves as another means for the Japanese to achieve their imperialistic ambitions.

Examining chapter eight of the reference book under the lens of colonialism, one can evidently identify the clear dominance of Japanese authority over local Chinese civilians. By mentioning that Japan is a holy country, the Japanese soldiers attempt to justify Japan’s authority in the area and its occupation of China. The pacifying sentences in chapter eight establish a clear power hierarchy. Both the actions of causing harm and providing protection require one party to have superior power over the other. In this case, the Japanese military was the side that held power and was able to determine which actions to implement. On the other hand, the local Chinese civilians had no choice but to receive these actions passively. In addition, pacification demonstrates that the Japanese officials focused heavily on the utilization of ideologies to justify invasions. The fundamental value behind pacification is the promotion of peace and harmony under Japanese control. This idea was inseparable from the core foreign policy the Japanese Empire adopted at the time: The Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere, which advocated for both Pan-Asianism and interracial harmonies in Manchukuo. As demonstrated by the pacification process, the Japanese Empire did not hesitate to stress that this prosperity and harmony must be realized under the Japanese leadership.

Despite the inaccuracies in its contents, this reference book was issued by the Japanese-Manchukuo Educational Committee 日滿敎育協會. In other words, an official organization delivered the books to the Japanese soldiers, indicating that the central messages
directly reflected the key strategies and policies the officials wanted the soldiers to follow. Based on the above discussion of the reference book, two central themes emerge: 1) The use of violence to achieve military objectives and oppress local civilians, and 2) The use of pacification to justify the Japanese invasion and minimize any potential resistance. In this short reference book, one can identify the self-contradictory messages embedded in Japanese colonialism. Even though extreme brutality and violence were employed to maintain dominance in Manchukuo, Japan, at the same time, hoped to promote peace and harmony to advance her imperial project. Thus, Japanese military authorities took pains to teach front-line soldiers how to say, in Chinese, the sentence with which this chapter began:

“Raise your hands! If you don't raise your hands, I'll shoot!”

The rest of this chapter will delve deeper into the underlying messages conveyed by this sentence, shedding light on its broader implications and significance within the context of Manchukuo’s history.

Language for Daily Necessities

Starting from Meiji Restoration, Japan had pursued imperialistic conquest and colonialism, imitating the Western great powers, a process that propelled eventually step onto the paths of militarism and imperialism. From the First Sino-Japanese War in 1894 to the Mukden Incident in 1931, Chinese territories had been one of the primary goals for Japanese invasion and conquest. During the 1930s alone, the Japanese invasion of Chinese Manchuria required an investment of more than one million soldiers.\textsuperscript{70} When the Japanese soldiers marched into China,

\textsuperscript{70} Gong, “Research on “Harmony Language,”” 22.
apart from their daily duties and military activities, they also had to consider living, including
food and accommodation. In order to satisfy their needs, these Japanese soldiers had to interact
and communicate with the local Chinese residents in Mandarin. According to Tomita Hiroo 富田
博男, who worked in the Japanese military in Manchukuo, “One needs to learn the local
language after arriving in Manchukuo….If one doesn’t understand Mandarin, there will be many
troubles in daily life. Hence, one should learn some Mandarin phrases that are frequently used in
daily life as soon as possible.” 71 Although each Japanese troop was equipped with some
Mandarin translators, there was a very limited number. They could hardly complete all the
military tasks, not to mention to take care of the daily lives of the soldiers. Due to the lack of
translators in the military, most Japanese soldiers had to communicate with local Chinese by
themselves. In his memoir, another Japanese soldier recalled:

> For us, Mandarin is an extremely difficult foreign language, but we don’t have anyone in
the troop who speaks Mandarin. Hence, we hired a Chinese cadre from the training camp
to be our mentor, and we had lessons once a week. However, when we were actually
communicating with the local Chinese residents, we discovered that their pronunciation
was completely different from ours, and we couldn’t communicate. 72

In both Tomita's and this Japanese soldier’s experiences, it is evident that Japanese
soldiers realized the necessity of studying Mandarin in this environment. However, the Japanese
officials evidently did not prepare the military for the cultural aspects of colonization. This
insufficiency eventually led to an insurmountable language barrier for many Japanese soldiers in
Manchukuo. In his memoir, the anonymous Japanese soldier mentioned that after realizing the
problem, the Japanese military did attempt to solve it, for example by hiring teachers to give

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72 Haraguchi, Totaro 原口统太郎 [Yuankou Tongtailang]. 1938. Shinanin ni sessuru kokoroe 支那人に接する心得
(The reflection of contact with Chinese people). Tokyo: Jitsugyōnihonsha 実業之日本社, 118.
soldiers language lessons, but these proved to be ineffective in helping the Japanese soldiers to
overcome the language barrier.

Despite their lack of cultural preparation for Japanese soldiers, as evident in the reference
book and actual historical background, they were instructed to carry out complex activities with
local Chinese civilians, such as pacification. These activities usually required the communication
of complex messages that further complicated the communication between Japanese soldiers and
local civilians. The discrepancy between Japanese soldiers’ lacking Mandarin skills and the
language ability required to perform their duties and satisfy daily needs formed a huge gap
between ideal and reality. As a result, the aforementioned reference book, along with some
language training programs, were efforts to fill up this gap but proved to be unsuccessful. This
gap eventually compelled the soldiers to invent their own ways of communication, which was
the “Military Japanese” that turned out to be incomprehensible to most Chinese civilians.
Nagaoka Norio’s 長岡規雄 notes in his memoir an amusing anecdote that took place due to
inaccurate communications:

Although both Japan and China use Chinese characters, those who went to the mainland
(Manchukuo) were amazed by China as “the country of characters.” Many Chinese words
with the same characters but different meanings are really “shocking.” A soldier who was
active in the middle region went to a farmer’s house in De’an and said, “玉子をくれ”
(give me some eggs). Due to language barriers, he wrote the character “egg 子” on a
piece of paper to show the farmer, but the farmer still couldn't understand. Thus, he wrote
the word "卵子" on the paper again. This time, the Chinese farmer couldn't help but burst
out laughing. "No, no!" he said, running away. The soldier returned to the unit
disappointed, complaining about what just happened. The translator laughed when he
heard this and said: “‘Tamgo 玉子’ is an egg. If it is written as ‘卵子,’ it means
reproductive organs." The soldier who told this story couldn't help but also laughed.73

In this anecdote, besides its amusing effect, one can clearly identify two essential
characteristics of the Japanese-spoken military Chinese at the time: 1) the urgent need for the
Japanese soldiers to fulfill daily needs and 2) the initiation of the integration of Chinese and
Japanese linguistic features. In the story, it is evident that Japanese soldiers, such as the one who
told the story, needed frequent interactions with local civilians to fulfill their daily needs. The act

73 Nagaoka, Norio. 1942. watashi no zakkichō senji kaiko 私の雑記帳・戰時回顧 (My Memory of the War). Isobe Kinoe Yōdō 礫部甲陽堂.
of buying eggs underscores the fact that besides militaristic activities, there were many practical issues the soldiers needed to resolve. As demonstrated in chapters four to seven in the reference book, these needs range from all aspects of their lives, including eating, trading, accommodation, and so on. This urgent need to fulfill everyday requirements incentivized the soldiers to attempt to overcome the language barriers. In this situation, in order to fill the language gap, the soldier applied Japanese linguistic features in this situation. Since the word “egg” in Japanese is “玉子,” the soldier thought that adding the same character “子” to “卵” would achieve the same result, but apparently, it did not. Hence, this anecdote illustrates that when the Japanese soldiers forcibly attempted to overcome the language barrier, they subconsciously turned to their native tongue and brought Japanese grammar and phrases into the conversation. Ironically, despite the chaotic language environment at the time, the Japanese soldiers’ efforts to communicate with local Chinese civilians initiated the process of language integration, which laid the foundation for a more systematic pidgin to develop in Manchukuo.

**Language and The Power Hierarchy**

Although in the egg anecdote, the Japanese soldier approached the farmer peacefully to trade, this story certainly does not depict the complete power hierarchy at the time. According to records, some of the trades between soldiers and civilians involved great brutality and violence. For example, in Jinzhou, a person with the surname Sun managed a sesame seed shop. A Japanese soldier came to the shop to buy sugar. Because of the language barrier, he pulled out his knife and slashed at Sun's head, Blood flowed immediately, and Sun died 12 days later. The tragic incident in this record demonstrates that kyowa-go is inseparable from the history of

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conquest, colonization, and violence. Looking back to the first three chapters of the reference book, one will realize it did not start with violent and aggressive language without specific reasons. The Japanese military never hesitated in establishing a clear power hierarchy in Manchukuo, demonstrating the dominance of the Japanese Empire over the occupied territories.

Haraguchi Totaro 原口統太郎, was a soldier who traveled to Beijing with the Japanese army in 1900 and was stationed in Tianjin. Following the Mukden Incident, he returned to the Chinese Northeastern region. According to his recollection, there were soldiers from dozens of countries stationed in China, and the allied forces fought against the Boxers in the region between Tianjin and Beijing. He soon noticed an interesting phenomenon: when encountering Chinese people, people from various countries were speaking in their own languages even though they were barely understood. Only the Japanese soldiers avoided speaking in Japanese as much as possible. The habit of attempting not to speak Japanese but in Mandarin was a phenomenon that continued to exist in Manchukuo. The recollection of Haraguchi raised an interesting question that puzzled modern historians: What factors caused this phenomenon and what specifically made Japan different became an area that was hard to explain. At the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, for the first time, Japanese soldiers participated in the line of imperialism and colonization. In Gong Xue’s article “The Recognition of Harmony Language under the Perspective of Colonialism Culture,” Gong mentions Japanese soldiers’ psychology of lacking experience in fighting on an international stage. Like immature children amongst soldiers of other countries, they were inevitably intimidated. Gong also suggests that the Japanese soldiers’ attitude toward China was infused with a unique feeling of occupation and conquest. Gong argues that during the developing stage of kyowa-go, the idea that China could only be conquered and colonized by Japan became a kind of spiritual support.

75 Haraguchi, The reflection of contact with Chinese people.
for the Japanese. Gong does not elaborate further on her argument, nor does she provide any substantial evidence to support her arguments about Japanese psychology as colonizers. However, one major idea she mentions is fundamental and correspondent with the formation process of kyowa-go: the establishment of power hierarchies.

Apart from the frequent usage in daily life and the gradual integration of Chinese and Japanese linguistics features, it is hard to neglect that in its formation stage, kyowa-go was filled with rude, violent foul language. In the second chapter of the Mandarin reference book, there are lines that teach Japanese soldiers these insulting phrases, such as “混蛋” (fuck off). Similarly, in Japanese translators Ura Astushi 浦辺淳 and Kurosaki Yoshinori’s 黒崎善一 article “Nostalgic Military Chinese,” they mention 23 memorable phrases frequently used in military Chinese. “脑袋坏了,” “埋太,” and “王八” are all impolite phrases in Mandarin. Interestingly, many of these phrases don’t have corresponding meanings in Japanese, indicating that these concepts were newly acquired by the soldiers after arriving in Manchukuo. Ura and Kurosaki’s article also provides an example of a Japanese soldier communicating with civilians:

A new recruit is at the site of building a fortress. Using the Mandarin he learned, he said, ‘Get a ladder.’ The civilian shakes his hand and responds, ‘I don’t understand.’ So the recruit drew two long lines on the ground and said: ‘This, this, this. Understand!? ’ Then he drew five or six horizontal lines between the two long lines and stepped on them with his feet. After taking a few steps, he pointed at the ladder and asked, “Do you understand?! 明白明白か?” After repeating this a few times, the civilian finally slapped his thigh and said, “I understand, I understand, it's ハシゴ (ladder). 明白了，明白了，ハシゴ的.”

Similar to the story of buying eggs, the story is rather amusing. Through a close reading of the narration, one can sense the clear power dynamic that existed at the scene. Throughout the process, the Japanese soldier was the person giving out orders, while the Chinese civilian was the one attempting to receive the message and act accordingly. Apart from the apparent relationship between dominance and obedience, the power dynamic is illustrated through the conversation.

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77 The phrases translate into: “idiot,” “dirty,” and “bastard.”
79 163rd Infantry Regiment, 1.
After seeing that the civilian failed to understand his Mandarin, the Japanese soldier did not quit the conversation. Instead, he forcibly continued it by using visual aids and a combination of both Mandarin and Japanese expressions. Referring to “明白,” a Chinese word meaning “understood!”, the recruit applied typical Japanese grammar of repetition and added the question particle “か” at the end, making the phrase “明白明白か.” After understanding the Japanese, the Chinese civilian also responded in both languages, revealing that he already knew the word for "ladder" in Japanese. Similar scenarios occurred in all aspects of daily lives, when soldiers asked local civilians to perform certain tasks or when bargaining in the markets. In these cases, it is evident that the Japanese soldier played the active role of initiating the process of language integration, and the Chinese civilian was only passively following his lead. Unlike in the process of natural cultural exchange, the Japanese soldiers intruded into the Chinese language system with their native linguistic features backed by military force. The cultural intrusion is parallel to the process in which Japanese soldiers marched into Manchukuo and established local influence. This dynamic further reinforces the notion that Japan occupied the higher end of the power hierarchy, asserting its dominance over the local population.

It is worth noting that Military Chinese at this point not only placed Japanese soldiers in a higher position than Chinese civilians but also provided the long-serving soldiers in Japanese armies with superiority. Corporal Tomizawa Shigeru, in his work Long-serving Soldiers and Mandarin 老兵和汉语, specifically introduced the conditions in which the long-serving soldiers utilized Military Chinese. He recalled when he first joined the army, the long-serving soldiers always spoke to them arrogantly, mixing Mandarin with Japanese (Modern Mandarin phrases in bold):
1. おいで、新兵。おれのタバコを拿来（Hey, recruit. Get my cigarette.)

2. 明日は頂好、頂好的外出では、サイコサイコだ（The weather is nice tomorrow. Let’s get a woman.)

3. こちら、初年兵。你来來（Hey, recruit. Come over here.)

4. まあ、初年兵サンよ。これだけいえば明白だろう（Hey, recruit. If I put it this way, you should understand.)

5. ああ、いつになったらこの軍隊と再見できるのかなあ（Ah, when can I say “bye bye” to this troop?)

6. おお、これはご苦労様（Oh, thank you for your hard work.)

7. この、腦袋坏了么（Hey! Are you out of your mind?)

8. まあ、たまには馒头ぐらい食べたいものだな（I say, sometimes I want to eat something like Mantou.)

9. なにをいうか。この他妈的！（What did you say?! F* you!)^{80}

The long-serving soldiers of this unit had two basic survival skills: one was to adapt to military activities, and the other was to speak Military Chinese to communicate with local civilians. Therefore, when facing new recruits, they were proud to show off these skills. In other words, the ability to serve as a soldier and the ability to communicate became the two basic needs of the Japanese army at that time. By taking a closer look at the context, a power hierarchy was established between the long-serving soldiers and new recruits on three levels: 1) direct military ranking, 2) the disparity in experience, and 3) the superiority gained from colonization.

In the common sentences recorded in Tomizawa’s work, there are a lot of direct commands, such as the long-serving soldier ordering the new recruits to get his cigarette. These commands are often mixed with abundant insulting language. In this case, as the long-serving soldiers usually had a higher military ranking than the recruits, the hierarchy was naturally formed as they owned the physical power to give commands to the recruits. Again, it’s essential to note that Japanese is a language with relatively few insulting phrases, so the introduction of such Mandarin phrases into the military was a process of importation. After learning aggressive languages in Manchukuo, Japanese soldiers seem to apply them widely on many occasions to demonstrate power and authority. After establishing a clear hierarchy with Chinese civilians using Military Chinese, the long-serving soldiers naturally brought this phenomenon back and practiced it in the military setting. In this case, the use of insulting language in Military Chinese was to deliberately exaggerate and reinforce the power hierarchy between the long-serving soldiers and new recruits.

Besides the apparent physical power, long-serving soldiers’ utilization of Military Chinese demonstrates the disparity of experiences. As mentioned earlier, Mandarin was a difficult language for most Japanese soldiers to learn but proved to be an essential skill to meet daily needs. Despite the inaccuracies in Military Chinese and difficulties when communicating with local civilians in practice, the Japanese insisted on their “proficiency” in Mandarin, or at least, they attempted to create this image to impress the new recruits. For instance, in the sentence “なあ、たまには馒头ぐらい食べたいものだな (I say, sometimes I want to eat something like Mantou.),” the long-serving soldier was referring to a kind of Chinese food “Mantou 馒头.” By mentioning Mantou, the long-serving soldier demonstrated a high level of awareness of local Chinese culture as he knew what was a preferable local food to eat. By saying Mantou in
Mandarin, the long-serving soldier also implied his experience of eating the food before and his ability to obtain it. In other words, the ability to interact with Chinese civilians to gain necessities was considered a superior skill only mastered among the long-serving soldiers.

Lastly, the use of Military Chinese showcased Japanese long-serving soldiers’ pride in colonizing and conquering Manchuria. Again, as mentioned, not only did the soldiers need Mandarin to meet their daily needs but to perform a variety of tasks to reinforce their control and dominance over Manchukuo. For example, pacification was always considered an essential task to reduce civilians’ resistance to better maintain stability in local regions. Hence, a demonstration of proficiency in Mandarin also proved one’s capability to perform complex tasks on this level that contributed to the Japanese Empire’s ideal of colonialism and imperialism.

When speaking to the new recruits with typical phrases in Military Chinese, the long-serving soldiers were also teaching these phrases and passing them down, along with their pride in their dominance in Manchukuo.

Thus, when considering the formation and broader implications behind kyowa-go, one naturally comes to notice that it has to be read with Japanese imperialist ideals during the start of the 20th century. Otherwise, it fails to capture the complete picture behind this fascinating pidginizing process of Chinese and Japanese languages. After the initial formation of kyowa-go as a subconscious product, the Japanese military began to take advantage of this pidgin to establish hierarchy and maintain superiority both in Manchukuo and within the military.

Co-Prosperity?

After the examination of the initial utilization of kyowa-go regarding violent and military activities, it is essential to view another side of the picture: its presence in pacification. As
demonstrated in the reference book, even though pacification was not as prioritized as the use of military force, the Japanese officials still dedicated specific sections to instruct soldiers on ways to promote ideologies depicting Japan as the savior of Asia. For instance, sentences such as “Japan is a holy nation. 日本是一個神國,” and “God will protect you from here. 從這兒神就保護你們了,” frequently appear to demonstrate the “holiness” of the Japanese empire. Since there is little follow-up content in the book related to religion, the mentioning of “God” in this context is merely providing further justification for Japan to implement its colonization. Similar to Western imperialism, Japan adopted a similar ideal of “saving” the colonized people from their current conditions. At the same time, nevertheless, Japan attempted to break away from Western colonialism and create its own project to become a regional hegemony in Asia. The formation stage of kyowa-go, then, also connects to one of Japan’s crucial international political policies at the time: the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere.

The term “Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere” appeared in Japanese publications in the third or fourth year of the undeclared Sino-Japanese War, which was a relatively early stage in the Japanese invasion of China. It was an expression of hope for the Japanese people who had no clear idea of the purposes of the war and who were only gradually coming to understand that the ultimate objective of the war was far beyond a conflict between Japan and the Chinese Nationalist Party. It was also a slogan to combat the enmity of the Chinese and other peoples who, by force of arms or by the threat of force, were included in this sphere. These peoples were to be convinced that their inclusion in this co-prosperity sphere was in their own interest, that not only Japan but also the population of the occupied regions would derive advantages from the occupation.81

81 Grajdanzev, A. “Japan’s Co-Prosperity Sphere.” Pacific Affairs, University of British Columbia 16, no. 3 (1943): 311–28, 311.
This great ambition originated from the Japanese diplomat and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Empire of Japan during the early stages of World War II, Matsuoka Yosuke 松岡洋右. Matsuoka’s vision combined great ambition but also optimism and naivety. He hoped to create a sphere of influence in Asia to build legitimacy in Japanese leadership through peaceful negotiations within Asia. He also hoped to use negotiations with the United States and USSR to gain acceptance of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere and recognize Japanese hegemony in Greater East Asia.82 Beyond Manchukuo and China, the Co-Prosperity Sphere’s vision includes the Philippines, the Netherland Indies, French Indo-China, Thailand, and so on. Nevertheless, within this grandiose plan, Manchukuo and China always appeared at the very center. Lieutenant-Colonel Tsukasa Kato, chief of the Military Affairs Bureau of the War Ministry, wrote in April 1942: “The development of southern resources is of vital importance….This is all very well, but it is nevertheless very important that, in its enthusiasm over the south, the Japanese nation shall not neglect vital interests nearer home which concern Japan, Manchukuo, and China.”83 Greater East Asia was divided into two parts: one suitable for Japanese immigration and one part that was not. The suitable region was comprised of Manchukuo and some northern regions of China.

Two of the major ideas of the Co-Prosperity Sphere correspond with the characteristics of the formation of kyowa-go: the reduction of local civilians’ resistance and the initiation of cultural integration. For the Co-Prosperity Sphere, the Japanese utilized this idea to reduce the resistance of Asian countries to Japanese dominance, arguing that all would benefit from the advantages of occupation. Similarly, in Manchukuo, Military Chinese was an important means of

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83 Grajdanzev, “Japan’s Co-Prosperity Sphere,” 312.
spreading pacifying ideals in local communities and attempting to urge Chinese civilians to obey Japanese occupation. With respect to integration, one of the fundamental end goals of Japanese expansion and imperialism was the immigration of the Japanese population, and Manchukuo was considered the most suitable option. The vision of Manchukuo as a future area of residence inevitably led the Japanese to subconsciously introduce Japanese linguistic features into Chinese culture, participating in the initiation of cultural integration and laying the foundations for the complete dominance of Japanese culture. In other words, the introduction of kyowa-go, parallel to the Co-Prosperity Sphere, served the purpose of providing a middle ground for the future steps of Japanese expansion and colonization. Hence, the initial formation process of kyowa-go was limited to not only the Japanese invasion and occupation of Manchukuo but also Japan’s vision and ideologies on an international level.

This chapter focuses on the initial formation stage of kyowa-go, which was better characterized as “Military Chinese.” The Mandarin reference book showcased the contrast between the Japanese military’s goals to both use violence to implement certain military strategies but also promote peace and harmony in Manchukuo. While its initial origins were practical goals connected to daily necessities, after kyowa-go’s initial formation, the Japanese military started to intentionally utilize kyowa-go as a means to reinforce control within the region. After the first phase of its development, when it operated essentially as Military Chinese, it widened in the context beyond military usage. The conditions under which kyowa-go matured and combined with existing linguistic structures to culminate in a systematic and fully developed phase will be the subject of the next chapter.
Chapter 2

The previous chapter focuses solely on the introduction of kyowa-go through the invasion of the Japanese military, as well as its influence from a militaristic perspective. As the initial phase of kyowa-go gradually developed and integrated, its eventual influence reached far beyond the scope of Manchukuo. After kyowa-go’s early introduction as a military tool in Manchuria, its influence reached well beyond that province and aimed at more than military strategy, affecting even mass culture like postcards.

The kyowa-go represented in the military cartoons contrasts starkly with the initial chaotic stage of Military Chinese. Despite Japan’s original effort to make Manchukuo a suitable colony for massive Japanese immigration in the future, its domestic culture was eventually influenced as kyowa-go flowed back from Manchukuo to Japan much as these postcards were mailed to recipients back home. While the directional flow of this influence seems contradictory to the expansionist goals of the Japanese officials, it actually reveals the empire-building process identified by Historian Louise Young as “total imperialism” at work. In this process, not only military actors but also Japanese immigrants and Chinese civilians interacting with each other furthered Japan’s imperialistic goals of integration and domination.

The continued development of kyowa-go reflects this process, as it progressed from its early “Military Chinese” stage to a more widespread, systematic, and pidginized language
characterized by more regular vocabularies and grammatical rules that create noticeable patterns. This chapter focuses on the peak of kyowa-go, as it became a well-developed pidgin language. It will detailely examine Japanese officials’ employment of this pidgin in its use of military postcards to propagate the imperial project on the home front. Japanese scholarly writings from that time and the official distribution of military postcards reveal an increasing awareness of kyowa-go's emergence, as well as efforts to control and harness the pidgin language for the purpose of empire-building during the wartime period.

After Japan started to learn from Western culture since the Meiji Restoration, postcards became a popular means of communication among officials and the wider public due to their convenience. During the Japanese invasion of China, a lot of Japanese soldiers left their hometowns, so postcards became one of the primary methods they used to communicate within militaries and also with their families back home. Hence, this tiny piece of paper became one of the significant symbols of this period and was deeply embedded in the war context. From the 1920s to the 1930s, thousands of military postcards were illustrated and issued by Japanese officials, portraying various topics but mainly surrounding militaristic activities and the daily lives of Japanese soldiers.84

In the collection, one of the postcards had the title “Mutual existence, mutual profit.” This postcard depicts a scene of a common marketplace in Manchukuo, where the Japanese soldiers traded with local Chinese merchants. In this setting, both sides are communicating in the typical Japanese-based kyowa-go, as annotated in the bubbles next to the figures in this illustration.85 The Japanese-based kyowa-go follows basic Japanese grammatical structure but ends with a simplified ending, “アル,” to allow non-native speakers to speak and comprehend

more easily. In this dialogue, kyowa-go is written in black, primarily in Japanese, mixed with katakana and kanji. The red characters indicate the Chinese translation of the Japanese-based kyowa-go. The Japanese soldier initiates the conversation as follows:

“Hey, this is too expensive. Make it two cents cheaper.”
“You are Japanese military. I have no chance against you. I will make it cheaper.”
“Hey, bring it over quickly.”
“Thank you for your order.”86

A common motif in this illustration is laughing faces. Both Chinese merchants and Japanese soldiers have “friendly smiles” on their faces, indicating that they are very much enjoying each other’s presence. The smiling faces correspond to the title of this illustration: mutual existence, mutual profit. At first glance, this postcard seems to demonstrate the harmonious relationship between local Chinese and Japanese in Manchukuo, suggesting that they are mutually benefiting during interactions such as trade. With a close examination of the content of the conversation, however, one can identify that the images and textual content create a juxtaposing effect. Throughout the conversation, the Japanese soldiers speak in commanding tones by giving direct orders to the merchants. On the contrary, the merchants are passively responding and reacting to the soldiers’ requirements. Hence, under the smiling faces, a clear power hierarchy exists between the Japanese military and Chinese civilians.

This message of both integration and dominance of the Japanese military in Manchukuo is inherent to kyowa-go, as discussed in Chapter 1. It is worth noting, however, unlike the Mandarin reference book that circulated solely within the military, a military postcard bridges the distance between soldiers in Manchukuo and friends and families back home in Japan. In this illustration, the red Chinese characters are annotated with katakana, while the black Japanese

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katakana and kanji stand alone. In this case, it is evident that the postcard primarily targets native Japanese speakers and especially the Japanese people back home who had very limited knowledge of the reality in Manchukuo.

When a military postcard was created and sent back to Japan, it simultaneously achieved two purposes: 1) creation and propagandizing an ideal image of Sino-Japanese interaction in Manchukuo and 2) a reflection of a written form of kyowa-go. When receiving military postcards back home, the Japanese civilians inevitably filled their knowledge gap of Manchukuo with the images constructed by Japanese officials on the postcard. In this specific piece, the peaceful marketplace scene demonstrates daily trade between local Chinese and Japanese military, demonstrating that both sides benefited from their exchanges, corresponding with Japan’s foreign policy’s aim of constructing the East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere. Although similar to many other military postcards, the specific date of this one is unknown, which leads to the difficulty in interpreting the Japanese official’s exact intention in releasing this series of postcards, its title “Mutual existence, mutual profit 共存共荣” most directly correlates to Japanese propaganda of the Co-Prosperity Sphere. When many civilians were as yet uncertain about the major goals of Japanese colonization and imperialism, simple illustrations on postcards clearly depicted an ideal image of Japanese overseas colonies, convincing them that the overseas investments were beneficial. As explained in the previous chapter, even though the co-prosperity theory was not entirely successful, it became the major propagandizing means of Japanese officials, both domestic and abroad. However, as demonstrated in the clear power hierarchy in the illustration, the Co-Prosperity needs to take place under the Japanese Empire’s leadership.

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The other significance of this postcard lies in its reflection of the kyowa-go language. The “Military Chinese” discussed in Chapter 1 was highly unstable and mainly spread through verbal communication. It was the first integration stage of the two languages, placing it at an ambiguous stage with a blurred line between the formation of a pidgin and the so-called “bad Chinese.” In contrast to the previously chaotic stage, the kyowa-go presented in this postcard has a regular and re-occurring pattern.

In the illustrated conversation, the sentence ending “アル” regularly appears in both Japanese soldiers' and Chinese merchants’ speeches. For instance, the soldier initiates the conversation with “ソレ高イアル...” In response, the merchant says, “...トメ勝ちナイアルナ...” In both sentences, “アル” and “アルナ” are not standardized endings in Japanese sentence endings, which require conjugations in accordance with the form of speech. For ease of communication, nevertheless, the Japanese-based kyowa-go unified sentence endings into the shorter form アル so that non-native Japanese speakers could more easily comprehend and speak the language. This specific postcard does not stand alone. In many other military postcards, illustrators demonstrate daily scenes of Sino-Japanese interactions that closely resemble the language phenomenon in Manchukuo, including the exchange of vocabularies, simplification of grammatical structures, and the mixture of linguistic features from both languages. The existence of these postcards underscores that kyowa-go was highly prevalent during the period and gradually transformed into a fully-developed pidgin throughout the process.

**Historical Background**

After the victory of Japan in the Russo-Japanese War, the Japanese Empire took over the Liaodong Peninsula and gained control of the South Manchurian Railway. After the war, the
Imperial Japanese government set up the South Manchurian Railway Company (SMRC) to assist with its expansionist and imperialist projects in Asia, which soon developed into a Japanese commerce and research center that brought Japan massive profits through the control of growing railway networks. At the same time, the Japanese Empire assigned the Kwantang Army to the region to protect the newly established Japanese economic interests. The Mukden Incident set the stage for the Manchukuo puppet state in 1932, which eventually allowed SMRC to acquire control of the newly consolidated Manchukuo National Railway in 1933. On the map displayed in the “Manchuria Year Book” produced by SMRC, the rail lines in the region extend directly from Japan into the Chinese Northeast region, covering a significant amount of land.

After the establishment of the puppet state of Manchukuo, the Japanese population in Manchukuo swelled into the region, reaching around one million in the next decade. Depicting Manchukuo as a free zone beyond Western control that corresponded to the central theme of East-Asian Co-prosperity, the Japanese government encouraged its people to seek new opportunities outside the homeland. When arriving in Manchukuo reality, Japanese settlers benefited from Japanese imperialist practices and displaced existing Chinese residents by expropriating their lands. The SMRC likewise gained massive profits due to its near-monopoly status and ability to protect its economic interests, backed up by the threat of force from the Japanese Kwantung Army.

Amongst the mass immigration of Japanese into Manchuria, especially the in the Southern region along the Southern Manchurian Railway. Most Japanese residents within regions made an effort to study Mandarin for the convenience of their daily activities. Due to the

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geographical area of their residence, the kind of Chinese language most Japanese contacted was Mandarin, spoken in the Northern Chinese region. In the Ming and Qing periods, because the capital was in the northern city of Beijing, the Mandarin spoken in Northern China was considered the official or standardized language of officialdom, hence the English name "Mandarin" (官话). When the Japanese immigrants attempted to learn Chinese, it was this northern Mandarin that they mimicked. For this reason, the type of pidgin developed amongst the immigrant population was known as the “Mandarin along the [Railway] Line 沿线官话.”

As the Japanese immigrants contacted local Chinese and Mandarin on a much wider scope in most aspects, including the exchange of culture, trade, and education, allowing the integration of both languages to take place to a greater extent. Similar to the formation of Military Chinese, the development of kyowa-go amongst Japanese immigrants was based on their daily needs but on a much wider scope. Even though there was some intersection between Military Chinese and Mandarin along the Line, the latter was usually considered the second phase of kyowa-go development, given the formation of the pidginized language in a more systematic way. After the Sino-Japanese war in 1937, the kyowa-go imported for the Japanese military began to gradually integrate with the one developed by Japanese residents in Manchukuo.

Hence, the second phase of the development of kyowa-go is inherently inseparable from the Japanese immigrant project in Manchukuo and requires close examination under this specific context. Since the start of the Japanese immigrant project, the government has emphasized the spread of the Japanese language and culture in the puppet state. Many Japanese intellectuals sided with their government and assisted with cultural assimilation in Manchukuo. During this process, many intellectuals started to notice the pidginization of Japanese and Mandarin within

the region. Despite there being multiple Japanese colonies in Asia, including Taiwan and North Korea, the phenomenon of language integration was most prominent in Manchukuo. Although the term “kyowa-go” had not yet been coined at the time, Japanese intellectuals soon took note of the unique language integration that was taking place.

**Emerging Reactions**

In 1942, one Japanese writer named Maruyama Rinpei 丸山林平 published an article titled “Japanese in Manchukuo.” This article vividly delineates two separate scenes in which Japanese women bought vegetables from Chinese merchants at the marketplace.

1. ニーデ、トーフト、イーヤンデ、ショーショー、カタイカタイ、メーユー？
2. ニーデ、チャガ、ダイコン、ナカ、トンネル、タータ、ユーデ、プーミシナ！

The two sentences translate into the following:

1. A: Do you have anything similar to tofu but small and hard?
2. B: Your radish has holes in it. It’s not good!

These sentences are later used as classic examples for Chinese and Japanese linguistics to study. They demonstrate a typical trading scene in which kyowa-go is utilized by Japanese residents in Manchukuo, indicating that the pidgin was created between interactions of local people for the convenience of everyday activities. Apart from their symbolic function of demonstrating the language conditions, they also illustrate some typical linguistic characteristics of the developed kyowa-go. Even though both sentences are spoken by different Japanese women under different contexts, many lexical and syntactic similarities remain. For instance, both sentences use the phrase “ニーデ” to represent “you,” which is most likely imported from

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the Mandarin second person “you 你.” At the same time, even though both sentences are
Chinese-based kyowa-go, they still mix some Japanese vocabulary in the expressions, such as
“カタイ” meaning hard in Japanese and “ダイコン” meaning daikon radish. Syntactically, these
elements reverse common Mandarin sentence structures. While most Mandarin sentences place
adjectives in front of the nouns, kyowa-go reverses this order and places nouns in front of the
adjectives. From these characteristics, we see that kyowa-go, in the second phase, began to
demonstrate more complete language integrations and re-occurring languages.

In 1938, a writer for the Japanese Magazine 落穂 commented on the ongoing language
phenomenon in Manchukuo, which translates into the following:

When people living in other northern cities in China visit Hsingking (Changchun), they
felt it was very difficult to communicate with local people. Similarly, when northeastern
Chinese meet Kyushu Japanese and hear them speak Japanese-based kyowa-go, they will
say, “Japanese and Manchukuo language [indicating kyowa-go] are all the same.”

To some extent, this passage reflects the nature of kyowa-go in the second phase:
prevalent but not recognized nor accepted. As the capital of Manchukuo, Hsingking was one of
the locations where kyowa-go most rapidly developed. For effective communication, local
Chinese and Japanese residents soon adopted kyowa-go during daily activities. Geographically,
Hsingking was also located in the Chinese northwestern region. During the Japanese occupation,
the language gap between its capital and the other areas indicated that kyowa-go spread beyond
prevalent and began to occupy its own “territory,” creating boundaries with regions where
kyowa-go was not yet spoken to the same extent. Despite this language phenomenon, this
passage also demonstrates that both Chinese and Japanese people were far from recognizing
kyowa-go as their own language. As suggested, when local Chinese hear Japanese speak

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95 Takatakotosaburowa タカタコトサブロウ. 1938. man shūno nihongo kyōiku 満洲ノ日本語教育 (Japanese education
in Manchukuo). hochibo オチポ.
kyowa-go, they will consider them speaking in Japanese. Similarly, Japanese residents will naturally consider themselves communicating in Mandarin. This phenomenon also demonstrates that since the term “kyowa-go” was not officially introduced at the time, many people did not realize that they were communicating in a pidginized language but used it solely as means of adapting to the surrounding environment.

Indeed, since scholars began to notice and study kyowa-go as a unique language phenomenon, different names were introduced to define the language pidginizing process, including “integrated Japanese-Manchukuo language” and “Japanese-Manchukuo friendly language.” Even before the foundation of the puppet-state Manchukuo, there were records of intellectuals’ study of the ongoing language phenomenon. In 1925, Japanese scholar Nakatani Rokuji 中谷鹿二 published his study *Accurate Chinese Language* 正确的中国语. In this series of works, he continuously adjusted the term used to describe kyowa-go in accordance with the shifting political condition. For instance, he initially named the pidgin “Japanese-Sino Cooperative Language 日中合办语,” and later changed it to “Japanese-Manchukuo Cooperative Language 日满合办语” when the Manchukuo puppet state was officially founded. Even though we can only interpret limited information from Nakatani’s change of terminology, it is evident that he was closely following the status quo at the time and publishing his studies accordingly. By changing the word “Sino” to “Manchukuo” in the terms he used to address kyowa-go, Nakatani is clearly separating Manchukuo further away from China, making the pidgin a unique product under Japanese colonization. Hence, even though intellectuals like Nakatani did not pick up rifles to invade Manchuria, their works took on the form of cultural colonization, which also penetrated and occupied Manchukuo.

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97 Sakurai, Takashi 櫻井隆. 2012. *Manshū Pijin Chūgokugo to kyōwago 満州ピジン中国語と協和語 (Chinese pidgin in Manchukuo and Kyowa-go).* Akemi nihongo 明海日本語 17..
The increasing study and analysis of the unparalleled language phenomenon in Manchukuo reaffirmed the growing prevalence of kyowa-go and its influence within the region. As a result, despite there being still limited recognition of the kyowa-go as a pidgin, complicated attitudes started to form towards it.

In 1932, Japanese writer Odagiri Ten'u 小田切槙雨 published a series of articles named “Chinese personality.” In his works, Odagiri mentioned: “Japanese women sometimes use a kind of ‘disqualified Japanese’ to communicate with Chinese at the markets. According to Mandarin specialists, this kind of disqualified Japanese is half Japanese and half Chinese. It should be disdained.” The exceedingly negative attitude towards kyowa-go is rather curious. In Chapter 1, I discussed that in the initial phase of the kyowa-go introduction, also known as the “Military Chinese,” kyowa-go was widely utilized in militaries and even employed by long-serving soldiers to create superiority over the new recruits. The ability to integrate Mandarin into their daily activities demonstrated a soldier’s ability to meet their daily needs and successfully accomplish their military missions. On the contrary, after the emergence of the second phase of kyowa-go, it was solely viewed as a byproduct of increasing Japanese influence—a malformed product of forced cultural integration between the Chinese and Japanese.

Similarly, another Japanese writer Katsumi Yasui 保井克巳 wrote in his article “Japanese in Manchukuo,” that “in Hsingking, many young men and women do not understand Japanese.” Even though they are benefiting from schools with the best facilities, in reality, they are not implementing the Japanese learned in classrooms in societies.” In this writing, it is evident that Katsumi is against the idea that people only “partially learned” Japanese language, but not fully.

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99 Katsumi, Japanese in Manchukuo, 35.
accepting and embracing it. In other words, he believes that it is crucial to completely permeate Manchukuo society with authentic Japanese language, spreading its influence to a greater extent to replace kyowa-go. During the process of Japanese colonization, language and culture became closely intertwined with its other military activities. Apart from the pacification work introduced in Chapter 1, the implementation of Japanese education also became one of the responsibilities of the military. Hence, the existence of kyowa-go represents not only the physical occupation of the Japanese military but also its invasion through cultural and social means to colonize residents in Manchukuo. In contrast to the initial stage in which kyowa-go was recognized by the Japanese military as the symbol of successful integration, kyowa-go in the second stage was rejected amongst intellectuals as it represented the Japanese empire’s failure to colonize Manchukuo thoroughly. Despite some opposing attitudes against kyowa-go, the Japanese military officials were not reluctant to utilize it as one of the major propaganda means to reaffirm their control over Manchukuo. To fully understand the function and ideologies behind kyowa-go in its second phase, it is essential to examine a collection of valuable sources created based on this pidgin.

Military Postcards

Apart from Japanese intellectuals’ observations of Manchuria and local residents’ memoirs, the Japanese military postcards provide the most direct and symbolic illustrations reflecting the systematic usage of the second-phase kyowa-go in Japanese-occupied Manchuria. In this section, I will primarily use primary sources that are included in Chinese scholar Shouxiang Zhang’s essay, “Language contact in ‘Manchukoku’: The actual situation of the language contact based on some newly discovered materials.” These uncovered materials

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100 Gong, “Research on “Harmony Language,”” 41-42.
refer to the Japanese military postcards that Zhang closely examined. The material he used was a collection of illustrations that circulated during the second world war. The collection included 104 postcards in total and was organized into four categories based on their text format, which circulated during the Second World War. Many of these illustrations vividly represent people in Manchukuo interacting in a developed kyowa-go. According to Zhang’s introduction, the postcards were created by artists based on actual daily events that took place in Manchukuo. Although there might be some degree of exaggeration in the portrayals, these images do not deviate from reality. In his essay, Zhang examines these illustrations primarily through a linguistic lens, including vocabulary, phonetic features, and grammar items. I would like to examine these illustrations from a historical perspective and focus mainly on the language context delineated and analyze how Japanese officials’ dissemination of these images reflects the core ideologies of Japanese colonialism in Manchuria.

In the first image, named “conversation on the road 路の会話,” the artist demonstrates a daily scene of interaction between a Chinese civilian and a Japanese soldier. In the middle of

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101 Zhang, A contact of language in Manchukuo, 56.
the road, the person in Chinese clothing with a horse encounters the person on the right, who is wearing a Japanese military uniform. Their conversation translates into the following:

“Your horse is very good.”

“Good to see you. Mr. Japanese soldier.”

In this illustration, both figures are illustrated equal to scale and positioned side by side, placing them both in equal positions. The setting and content of their conversation are casual and relaxed. Similar to the postcard presented at the beginning of this chapter, the two people are communicating in the typical kyowa-go. Again, similarly, the pronunciations of the dialogues are represented with Japanese katakana, and the meaning is annotated with traditional Japanese kanji and hiragana, indicating that the targeted audience is mainly native Japanese speakers instead of Chinese residents in Manchukuo. The linguistic characteristics in this source match the aforementioned dialogues between Japanese women and Chinese merchants. This conversation includes the pronoun “テー,” along with a combination of Mandarin and Japanese vocabulary. Apart from depicting a daily scene in Manchukuo, the illustration also aims to delineate an idealized relationship between Japanese soldiers and local Chinese. In Chapter 1, I presented sources in which the Japanese soldiers integrated Mandarin foul language in the initial stage of kyowa-go formation. When miscommunications took place between the Japanese soldiers and local Chinese, they also did not hesitate to employ violence on civilians. In this source, however, the Chinese and Japanese are walking side by side, and the Chinese civilian appears delighted to meet the soldier. This apparent contradiction stems from the Japanese officials' desire to propagandize a harmonious relationship between the civilians and the military. Even though it is difficult to reject the accuracy of this illustration’s portrayal completely, it clearly

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102 Zhang, A contact of language in Manchukuo, 56.
104 Gong and Shang, “The Recognition of Harmony Language under the Perspective of Colonialism Culture,” 2.
does not represent a comprehensive picture of Sino-Japanese interactions in Manchukuo. The Japanese officials associate the use of kyowa-go, a unique characteristic of Manchukuo, with peace and harmony, which justifies the Japanese colonization of Manchuria amongst Japanese people back home, gaining their support for this project.

Another postcard demonstrates a similar theme but further exaggerates the message conducted. In the second image, named “Japanese bushido 日本武士道,” the Japanese soldiers are not only peacefully living with Chinese civilians, but even providing them with all kinds of aid.\(^{105}\) On the very right of the illustration, the soldier is giving out food shaped like typical Japanese rice balls: onigiri. Chinese men, women, and children surround the soldier to receive food from him. On the very left, the soldier is holding a Chinese boy and giving him a Japanese snack okashi お菓子. In the back, a Chinese woman is taking her sick child to the Japanese military clinic. In the left corner, a woman smiles and says, “we no longer have to take refuge.” Similarly, the figures in this image are speaking in the second phase of kyowa-go, which integrates both Mandarin and Japanese languages. Paying close attention to the details, one can see that the Chinese child on the lower right is holding a Japanese flag, whereas the woman on

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\(^{105}\) Zhang, A contact of language in Manchukuo, 58.
the left also attaches a Japanese flag to her arm. The title “Japanese Bushido” originates from the
code of conduct of the samurai but also represents a certain set of Japanese ideologies and virtues
that were closely associated with Japanese nationalism following the Meiji Restoration and
during the Sino-Japanese War.106 In this sense, the image portrays the Japanese soldiers as
following traditional virtues and helping people who are in need. This representation creates two
layers of implications under the context of Japanese colonialism: 1) the complete colonization of
Manchukuo and 2) Japanese leadership in Asia.

In comparison to the first image, this illustration not only represents the Chinese living
harmoniously with the Japanese but also shows that they accept and welcome Japanese
colonization. As the Chinese suggest in the image, “we no longer have to take refuge,” signifying
that the Japanese colonization brings them relief from the previously harsh living conditions. In
addition, the Chinese people in the image are totally submerged in Japanese culture: eating
onigiri and okashi, and even holding Japanese flags. This scene symbolizes the complete
colonization of Manchukuo, both physically and culturally, potentially leaving the Japanese
people at home with an impression that Manchukuo is the perfect land for immigration outside of
Japan since they share the same culture. Again, it serves as propaganda for delineating a
successful immigration project. Second, the referral to Japanese bushido also represents the
Japanese military as the savior of local Chinese civilians. In fact, in Chapter 1, I discuss in detail
how the military is also responsible for the works of pacification in the colony. Soldiers learned
such phrases as as “We are here to protect you.”107 The message behind this military postcard,
along with the pacification work implemented, suggests that the Japanese Empire naturally

106 “Bushido | Virtues, Significance, History, & Facts | Britannica,” accessed April 26, 2023,
107 Useful Chinese to carry.
positioned itself as the leader of the East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere, disguising its ambition of expansion as merely helping other Asian countries in need.

At the same time, nevertheless, the 104 military postcards are not conveying a unified message of harmony. Some contradictory images add complexity to the messages that the Japanese officials delivered to their people. In the third image, a Japanese soldier is sitting on a rickshaw pulled by a local Chinese civilian. He says, “This western vehicle is faster than a carriage.” In this illustration, the power dynamic is extremely apparent. The Japanese soldier relaxes at a higher position while the rickshaw puller sweats and strains below. This sentence is a kind of kyowa-go since both “western vehicle” and “horse carriage” are Chinese words with Mandarin pronunciations phonetically indicated with little kana beside them. By calling the Chinese rickshaw a "western vehicle," the soldier makes a visual pun since the automobile in the background could also be called a "western vehicle." The joke is at the rickshaw puller's expense, however, and the soldier speaks with a condescending tone and objectifies the person by commenting on his “function.” The left side of the card contains a list of common Chinese words, such as "I," "you," and "he/she" with pronunciation and Japanese translation; the first word on the list is "rickshaw puller." Thus, apart from some of the illustrations underscoring harmonious relationships in Manchukuo and how Japanese soldiers assisted Chinese civilians, in
this card, intended for a Japanese audience, it's clear who's boss. Illustrations of this kind demonstrate the difference between the colonizers and the colonized people in Manchukuo.

A close examination of some of the military postcards reveals the core characteristics of the second phase kyowa-go at the time. Even though these illustrations also focus on the interactions between the Japanese military and local Chinese civilians, they fundamentally differ from the initial stage of kyowa-go: Military Chinese. Instead of forcing themselves to speak in a kind of “bad Chinese,” the Japanese soldiers, as demonstrated by these illustrations, began to speak in a more systematic and effective pidgin. There are re-occurring linguistic patterns, including a fixed pronoun, the reverse of sentence orders, simplification of grammatical structures, integration of Mandarin and Japanese vocabulary, and so on. As I stated earlier, some Japanese, especially intellectuals, held a negative attitude towards kyowa-go, considering it a misshaped product of cultural assimilation and potentially symbolizing the inability of the Japanese colonizers to completely occupy Manchukuo with Japanese culture. Despite the existence of this attitude, the Japanese military did not make an effort to suppress the spread of kyowa-go within it. Instead, the officials are still willing to create images based on this pidgin, exploiting its value for propaganda to influence people’s thoughts about Japanese imperialism at home. Although the creation of kyowa-go is primarily based on the interaction between Japanese soldiers and the Chinese civilians in Manchukuo, at this stage, its influence is no longer contained within this region but plays a role in Japanese “total imperialism.”

Total Imperialism
The term “total imperialism” was introduced by Louise Young, a historian of modern Japan, in her work *Japan’s Total Empire: Manchuria and the Culture of Wartime Imperialism*. In this piece, Young provides a clear definition of what she means by total imperialism:

“The term does not signify absolute or totalitarian, but is used, rather, as an analogue of ‘total war.’ Like total war, the total empire was made on the home front. It entailed the mass and multidimensional mobilization of domestic society: cultural, military, political, and economic…in using the term total I want to convey the widespread, even comprehensive, character of Manchukuo’s impact on Japanese society.”

In her work, Young eloquently analyzes the significance of Manchukuo to Japan’s empire-building and, most importantly, how the imperial Manchukuo eventually played a part in Japanese domestic mobilization. In part 2, specifically, Young examines the popularization of the new imperialism to the growth of institutions of mass culture and mass politics, which I find fundamentally parallel to my study of kyowa-go in the second phase of how the military officials employed propaganda as a means to influence domestic attitudes towards the imperialist project in Manchukuo. Throughout the chapter, Young lays out the various agents playing a role in the formation of Japanese domestic mass culture, including newspapers, movies, and literature.

For instance, in 1931, the news of war in Northeast China first spread throughout the press. The front page of the leading Japanese daily newspaper, the Osaka *Asahi*, reads, “in the act of outrageous violence, Chinese soldiers blew up a section of Mantetsu track located to the northwest of Beitaying [Military Base] and attacked our railway guards.” In the following days, various news media competed to be the first to deliver firsthand news to their readers about Japanese army movements. Due to the high literacy rate in urban and rural Japan, newspaper reading is prevalent in every social class of Japanese society. 80 percent of 659 worker

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108 Young, *Japan’s Total Empire*, 13.
109 Young, *Japan’s Total Empire*, 57.
110 Young, *Japan’s Total Empire*, 58.
households surveyed in the Tokyo working-class neighborhood of Tsukishima in 1919 subscribed to newspapers. Hence, this high demand for newspapers encouraged the development of the mass media, which provided a key channel for the Japanese government to manipulate public reaction to events and policies, or in other words, “public opinion.”

Like the newspapers, military postcards were a means to control public opinion. Even though all of the illustrations were created during the Japanese occupation of Manchuria, there isn’t a record of the specific dates on which they were created. Thus, we can notice that the images convey complex and constantly shifting messages to domestic Japanese citizens. Through the circulation of the images and the introduction of kyowa-go, the Japanese officials were able to control and channel public opinion and impressions of Manchukuo at home. The spread of kyowa-go and kyowa-go-based sources create a new lens for examining the mass media and mass culture in Japan besides the more traditional means of propaganda. My study of the second phase of kyowa-go development echoes Louise Young’s concept of total imperialism—the Japanese occupation of Manchukuo is never an isolated project but involves frequent interactions and transfer of ideas from Manchuria to Japan, heavily influencing Japanese domestic opinions and mobilization. As soon as Japanese officials sought to harness kyowa-go to further colonization goals by using it to connote a harmonious overseas project under Japanese leadership, a view portrayed in the series of military postcards.

This chapter has shown how Japan’s ongoing colonial project contributed to the development of kyowa-go into the second phase, leading it to reach its peak. During this period, the language became more systematic linguistically in various aspects. Although many Japanese intellectuals were skeptical of the newly formed pidgin, seeing it as debasing Japanese, the

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111 Young, Japan’s Total Empire, 59.
112 Young, Japan’s Total Empire, 56.
Japanese officials in the field were willing to use it as vehicle for propaganda, manipulating public opinion and creating idealized images of Manchukuo for Japanese residents back home. Hence, it is evident that the wide influence of kyowa-go restates the idea that Japanese imperialism in Manchukuo was not implemented in isolation but involved both the colony and its homeland in total imperialism. The development of kyowa-go's influence peaked during the Sino-Japanese War and waned in the postwar period, due in part to the departure of Japanese colonizers from China. However, as the subsequent chapter will demonstrate, it was not only Japanese actions but also those of Chinese officials that played a significant role in shaping the long-term trajectory of kyowa-go.
Chapter 3

Introduction

One of the episodes in a 2004 Chinese wartime TV series, History of the Sky 历史的天空, one of the episodes captures the following scene: After conquering a Japanese base, the Red Army discovers a Japanese girl left behind. The leader of the Red Army, Jiang Daya, attempts to communicate with the Japanese girl, but she doesn’t understand. Eventually, the Chinese leader decides to send the girl back to the Japanese army. In response, the Japanese military leader praises Jiang as a true warrior.

Interestingly, Jiang’s attempt to communicate with the Japanese girl demonstrates a fairly accurate representation of kyowa-go. He says: “You, little Japanese girl, don’t be afraid, and don’t cry. What do your father and mother do? Tell us all. Do you understand? 你的，小小的日本的花姑娘。害怕的不要，眼泪的不掉。你的爹老子，娘老子， 什么的干活。统统地告诉我的。你的明白？”

In his conversation, Jiang uses the symbolic pronoun in kyowa-go, “ニーデ,” representing “you.” Other features include the utilization of reversed syntactic orders and integrated vocabularies, such as “爹老子，娘老子,” which does not appear in the standardized Mandarin language. It is fascinating to see that almost sixty years after the Sino-Japanese war, Chinese TV series were able to capture the historical linguistic phenomenon with this degree of accuracy. Hence, I believe it is necessary here to look beyond the TV series and understand what was the remaining influence of kyowa-go in contemporary China.

Indeed, the Chinese TV series did not choose to include a scene of kyowa-go for no reason. A close analysis of this scene and the larger context reveals the purposes it served,

including 1) entertainment, 2) an accurate historical portrayal, and 3) the emphasis on the heroism of Chinese characters. This scene’s intention for entertainment is perhaps the most obvious. Most Chinese audiences will not recognize Jiang’s lines as “kyowa-go” but merely “bad Chinese” or “Chinese with a Japanese accent.” No matter how hard Jiang attempts to communicate with the Japanese girl using the language he considers to be “Japanese,” the latter fails to understand. The scene in which a Chinese military man tries to speak to a Japanese girl in accented Chinese creates an amusing contrast that entertains the audience. In this case, the director’s inclusion of kyowa-go merely wants its audience to laugh at this malformed product of Chinese and Japanese integration.

In addition to entertainment, after the examination of kyowa-go in the previous two chapters, we see that this portrayal of communication between Chinese and Japanese is accurate. In chapter one, I demonstrate that during initial contact, the Japanese soldiers were determined to communicate with local residents in Chinese. In chapter two, I present examples of Chinese residents communicating with Japanese immigrants through kyowa-go, illustrating the prevalence of the pidginized language. Hence, it is an accurate portrayal that Jiang instinctively attempts to communicate with the Japanese girl in kyowa-go since he considers this pidgin the most effective means to communicate with Japanese or the language he speaks is indeed Japanese. Adopting this language phenomenon creates a more immersive historical context, allowing the audience to better engage in the TV series set in the Sino-Japanese War. Finally, the use of kyowa-go in this context contributes to the heroization of the main character, Jiang Daya. His attempt to communicate with the Japanese girl in kyowa-go demonstrates his high moral standards. After his failure to communicate with the girl, one of his subordinates suggests that the girl is the daughter of the Japanese military leader, thus advising Jiang to kill
the girl. Jiang, however, rejects this idea and condemns the immorality of killing a young girl. Jiang’s moral standards form a stark contrast with the Japanese soldiers, who brutally slaughtered Chinese civilians during in Sino-Japanese war. As a result, even the Japanese military leader respects Jiang’s morality and praises him as a true warrior. In this case, the employment of kyowa-go is crucial in leading up to the following story plot, which adds to the buildup of Jiang’s character, portraying him as an admirable national hero.

History of the Sky is only one of the many Chinese TV series set during the Sino-Japanese War, a war known in China as the Anti-Japanese War (抗日战争). Hence, these shows are more widely known in China as anti-Japan (抗日) TV series. Since its emergence, this genre has received great popularity and success among the audience. The creation of anti-Japan TV series under different time periods demonstrates distinct styles, hence reflecting the unique characteristics of each era. For instance, during World War 2 and the postwar period, these TV productions demonstrated strong nationalist and revolutionary sentiments. Since circa 2010, anti-Japan TV series underwent the process of commercialization, receiving even higher audience ratings and social influence. As demonstrated in History of the Sky, kyowa-go is a constant motif in anti-Japan TV series. Thus, the widespread influence of these TV series also demonstrates kyowa-go’s lingering presence in contemporary China.\(^\text{114}\)

However, it is wrong to consider that kyowa-go does not live on unhindered. In fact, after the impact of the pidgin peaked during the Sino-Japanese War, its decline began after the war under Chinese official policies to “purify” the Chinese language from the intrusion of Japanese colonialism, especially within the educational system. The continuous eradication of kyowa-go from Chinese people’s daily usage and the deliberate effort to maintain it in TV productions is an

interesting paradox. Despite the fact that TV producers seemed to pursue different paths from the Chinese government’s policies during the postwar period, they were both fundamentally post-colonial reactions to the Japanese colonization of Manchuria. Both reactions aimed to regain control over kyowa-go, hence reversing the power dynamic between China and Japan as China regained control over Manchuria following the end of the Second World War. In this case, kyowa-go became a tool in the hands of the Chinese to diminish Japanese colonial influence and even reshape the image of Japanese invasion to their own advantage.

Background

According to the sociologist Max Weinrich, “A language is a dialect with an army and navy.” This quotation comments on language’s inherent connection to power and politics. Linguistic conditions alter when sociopolitical changes take place, so language itself reflects the ongoing turbulence and instability in human civilization. Specifically, pidgins such as kyowa-go and Yokohama pidgin reflect the interactions between nations, including cultural exchange, trade, colonization, war, and so on. During this deliberate contact between nations, language integration oftentimes happens subconsciously as people seek means of effective communication. For this reason, since Japan invaded Manchuria in 1931, kyowa-go had become prevalent among both the Chinese and Japanese. In its nature, kyowa-go is intertwined with war, colonization, and Japanese imperialism in Manchukuo. In other words, kyowa-go was born and developed in this specific environment. When Japan surrendered in 1945, signifying the end of Japanese imperialism, kyowa-go lost the conditions on which it depended for survival, leading to its inevitable downfall after the war.
Despite its decline, kyowa-go’s influence on the Chinese language did not automatically disappear. Postwar Chinese society was active in distinguishing these traces and treated them as “cultural pollution” from the Japanese invasion. According to a postwar Chinese scholar, kyowa-go is a heavy burden placed on Manchuria. From the standpoint of language purity, the Japanese invasion contaminated the Chinese language environment:

What is kyowa-go? It is the integration of Japanese grammar into Mandarin, disturbing the standardized Chinese grammar and vocabulary, brutally mixing it with Japanese linguistic characters, grammatical structures, and lexical factors, creating a malformed product named “kyowa-go.” During more than ten years of Japanese occupation in Manchuria, kyowa-go appeared to different extents in massive newspapers, magazines, and books.\(^{115}\)

In this quotation, even though the Chinese scholar is commenting on the general linguistic features of kyowa-go, such as “grammar and vocabulary,” he describes the pidgin as aggressive and intrusive. This reveals his negative attitude towards the pidgin and highlights its close association with Japanese colonialism. This description does not view kyowa-go simply as a product of cultural exchange or integration but underscores its invasiveness, which he claims disrupts the original nature of the Chinese language and culture. This view is widely shared among Chinese scholars and supported by the Chinese postwar literary system and educational system.\(^{116}\)

Indeed, Kyowa-go’s invasiveness does not stem solely from daily exchanges between Chinese and Japanese people but from Japanese officials’ deliberate efforts to implement language policies. After the establishment of the Manchukuo government, Japanese colonists began to promote the use of the Japanese language systematically. They implemented Japanese


\(^{116}\) Gong, “Research on “Harmony Language,”” 121.
as a subject in the education system, requiring Chinese students to learn Japanese from primary school. In the secondary stage, schools began to emphasize learning Japanese, resulting in more than twice as many Japanese classes as Chinese classes. At the same time, officials created Japanese proficiency exams, utilizing Japanese in Manchukuo’s governmental documents and, finally, allowing it to become the official language of Manchukuo.117 In students’ textbooks and newspapers, Japanese rulers massively incorporated Japanese, leading to the Sino-Japanese integration in written texts. Specifically, Chinese historical, geographical, and other specific terms were all represented in Japanese katakana, leading to confusing expressions.118 For instance, the Japanese textbook in Manchukuo represents daily scenes in students' lives, including how they should interact with their parents and teachers, signifying cultural synchrony in every single aspect (Image 1). Since many of the expressions written in katakana also have corresponding kanji expressions, Chinese speakers were confused about the different pronunciations, eventually contributing to the vast usage of mixed Sino-Japanese expressions, spreading the influence of kyowa-go.

Apart from education, mixed expressions frequently appeared in publications issued during the war. For example, the “Manchuria Survey 满洲概况” published in 1937 records the following:

“优秀的大型货物船热田山丸大连着...”

“日小铁工业满洲移驻...”

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It is very difficult to translate the sentences above since they represent confusing content under the use of mixed Chinese and Japanese expressions. For the first sentence, it is most likely that the writer hopes to convey “an excellent cargo ship, ‘热田丸’ (name of the ship)’ arrives arrived in Dalian.” In this sentence, the verb “着” is an expression signifying “to arrive” in Japanese but is rarely used in modern Chinese. The verb also appears at the end of the sentence, illustrating a reverse in standard Chinese grammatical structure. Hence, the presence of misused Japanese linguistic features in these sentences inevitably deprived them of their original meanings. For these reasons, Chinese scholars consider that for both daily conversations and written texts, the introduction of kyowa-go distracted the traditional order of the Chinese language.

Language Policies

As a result, both Chinese intellectuals and officials strove to reject kyowa-go, and believed extirpating the pidgin from people's speech was an act of nationalism. In an article in the People’s Daily in 1955, Xia Yan underscores the importance of standardizing the Chinese language.  

He claimed to have identified more than one residual kyowa-go expression in recent newspapers. According to Xia, the author of an article published about industrial production, the author repeatedly uses the character “荒” to represent thickness. However, “荒” is the Japanese character for this expression, and “粗” is the correct Chinese character. In another text, the author writes, “This person is like a supervisor.” Similarly, he uses the Japanese word “见回” to

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119 She, Mei 余梅. 2004. Miandui wenhuazonghe yu wenhuashitiao 面对文化综合与文化失衡 (In reaction to Culture Synthesis and Culture Imbalance) Tongji University, no. 6, 119.
represent supervisor instead of the Chinese word “监工.” Xia argues that Chinese civilians are reading, listening, and learning from these publications and literary works every day, so inaccurate language usage will inevitably lead to the spread of this unfavorable phenomenon. In this case, not only were civilians unable to learn standardized Chinese expressions, but it also created a negative national image as Chinese writers were unable to employ their mother language correctly. Hence, Xia characterizes this chaotic language phenomenon as damage to people’s interests. He views the unification and standardization of the Chinese language as a serious political mission that deserves the government’s special attention. It is evident that Xia not only views remaining kyowa-go as a contamination of the Chinese culture but elevates it to the level of national and political crisis. Fundamentally, he utilizes nationalistic sentiments to raise people’s attention to the language conditions.

Besides the intellectuals, Chinese officials also took action to decolonize the Chinese language. Another People’s Daily article published in 1950 mentions the educational reforms in Manchuria. Due to the development in public education, a significant number of children from the working class were able to attend school, increasing their literary and political knowledge. As a result, secondary school students were able to write passages free of kyowa-go influence. In addition, during the postwar period, the Manchuria Material Mediation Committee edited and issued the “Kyowa-go Mandarin reference table” attempting to eliminate the intrusive kyowa-go vocabulary and thus maintain the supposed purity of Chinese language. The reference table compares kyowa-go with Mandarin from nine different aspects, including “general,” “official documents,” “personnel,” “finance,” “education,” “agriculture,” “land,” “accounting,” and “public security.” Among them, there are 92 standard terms in “general,” 55 standard terms in “official documents,” 66 common terms in “personnel,”

121 Xia, Literature Work and the Standardization of Chinese.
22 standard terms in “finance,” and four standard terms in “education.” There are 13 standard terms under "agriculture," 8 standard terms in “land,” 30 standard terms in “accounting,” and ten standard terms in “public order,” for a total of 300 terms. Ironically, the effort to eliminate kyowa-go instead created a systematic treatment and codification of the pidgin that is still preserved today.¹²²

When commenting on the policies implemented by Chinese officials in Manchuria, Chinese authors Wen Feng and Wang Zheng write, “today, after nine years after the Japanese surrender, the kyowa-go that destructs our national language and contaminates language purity still remains in the words of our national language. We have to pay attention to this matter. Even though there have been a lot of efforts made in recent years to clean the traces left by colonialism, kyowa-go’s remnants are still present in many comrades’ speeches and writings.” In this passage, Wen and Wang repeatedly use the term “national language,” closely associating the lack of standardization in the Chinese language with nationalistic ideologies. Similar to Xia, by using these terms, the authors not only portray the existence of kyowa-go as unfavorable culturally but noxious on a national level as well. At the same time, Wen and Wang underscore kyowa-go’s relation to the painful memory of Japanese colonialism, justifying the need to remove the pidgin from the Chinese language completely.¹²³ Analyzing Chinese people’s attitudes towards kyowa-go both from the intellectuals' and officials’ perspectives, one can conclude that the elimination of kyowa-go was not only carried out in the name of the nation but also utilized nationalism as a means to raise social awareness and propel the implementation of policies accordingly.

The History of anti-Japan TV Series

Given the extremely negative attitudes against kyowa-go in the postwar period, it is normal to expect that it would soon die out under strict official policies. However, as we see in the scene at the beginning of the chapter, kyowa-go was very well preserved in the anti-Japan TV series. Not only was it preserved, but it also demonstrated a high degree of similarity to the actual kyowa-go spoken in history. In contemporary China, the audience is still able to watch and listen to kyowa-go in these TV shows and even imitate the Japanese soldiers’ way of speaking kyowa-go. In other words, kyowa-go became deeply embedded in the popular culture of the Chinese film and television industry. It seems contradictory that this pidgin, accused of contaminating Chinese culture and national image, has survived after almost 80 years after the Japanese surrender and still occupies a unique position in Chinese society.

In order to understand the kyowa-go’s role, it is necessary to examine the larger context: the development of anti-Japan TV series. Even though this television genre gained wide popularity in recent decades, the theme of anti-Japanese invasion started after the Japanese invasion in 1931. Even though Japan soon occupied Manchuria, China had not officially declared war on Japan. Under this situation, the filmmakers at the time decided to record the actual battle scenes and present them to the public. In 1932, the Japanese army attacked Shanghai. The commander of the 19th Route Army ordered a counter-attack. After hearing the gunshot, the factory manager of the Lianhua Film Company led his team to the battlefield, producing the

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documentary *The History of the 19 Route Army’s Defense against Japan.* Presenting valuable historical scenes, this production is one of the earliest films that fall under the anti-Japan genre. Even though “defense against Japan” is the more suitable term to describe this genre, the remainder of this chapter will use “anti-Japan” for ease of discussion.

After the war, companies continued to produce anti-Japan films but added unique characteristics of each time period, reflecting Chinese core political values as time proceeded. After the foundation of the People’s Republic of China, private film companies were completely nationalized. Unlike the previous productions multifaceted productions, the productions during this period focused on the proletariat and the working people. For instance, in films such as the Red Detachment of Women, the protagonists are usually members of the working class. These films primarily focus on creating heroic images of the working class and associating them with anti-Japan and revolutionary ideologies, known as the “red films.” This characteristic became even more exaggerated and prominent during the time of the Cultural Revolution. The red films were used to propagate communist ideologies and political education. When its use for political purposes peaked, the productions were significantly standardized, severely limiting producers’ freedom and creativity.

When the cultural revolution came to an end, the major Chinese political goal soon turned from revolutionary ideals to economic development, hence encouraging nationwide innovations. The artistic environment thrived, leading to film productions with avant-garde features. The anti-Japan genre is no exception. The directors of this time were known as the “fifth generation,” who were willing to explore new techniques and ideas and integrate them into their productions. Within the existing anti-Japanese themes, these directors demonstrated strong

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126 Yue Ding, “大陸抗日題材影視劇的嬗變,” Jilin University, 2016.
individual styles, such as Zhang Yimou’s *Red Sorghum*, which utilizes rich and intense colors to showcase the rich vitality of the sorghum fields, as well as the director's personal style.\textsuperscript{127} Overall, the anti-Japan films in this era pushed back against the limitations and rigid framework of the previous generation.

In the 1990s, the development of the film industry began to slacken, allowing space for the TV industry to catch up and explore new directions. In Chinese culture, films are often associated with relatively abstract ideologies, requiring of their audience to have a certain degree of cultural appreciation.\textsuperscript{128} Hence, the TV industry began to grow in the opposite direction, demonstrating emerging traits of commercialization and secularization, attempting to separate the TV series from higher ideologies and focusing on the dramatization of their plots. With success in *Drawing Sword* 亮剑 (2005), *Lurk* 潜伏 (2008), and *Snow Leopard* 雪豹 (2010), the anti-Japan TV series naturally entered popular culture, becoming one of the most well-received TV genres at the time. Under this general topic, TV series developed into subcategories, such as spy dramas, special war dramas, and so on. In 2010, there were 78 anti-Japan TV series produced, occupying 17.89% of all TV series. In 2011, the production of this genre increased to 138, occupying 29.42% of the entire industry. This data is enough to demonstrate the high popularity of anti-Japan TV series and the industries’ willingness to produce them. Due to the rapid increase in numbers, the production quality of these shows significantly decreased, leading to many illogical and exaggerated story plots. These shows are later known as the “Ridiculous anti-Japan Plays” 抗日神剧.

There is no strict definition for Ridiculous anti-Japan Plays. This term automatically emerged from popular culture—a sarcasm of the high audience rating of these shows in contrast

\textsuperscript{127} Zhang, Yimou 张艺谋, dir. 1988. *Honggaoliang* 红高粱 (Red Sorghum).
to the low production quality. In this chapter, I would like to define the Ridiculous anti-Japan Plays as productions that have severely illogical plots, unrealistic character settings, and the over-heroization of the protagonists. Despite all these negative characteristics and superficial content, these TV series still generally gained high popularity among their audience.

One of the most typical examples of Ridiculous anti-Japan Plays is anti-Japan Swordsman 抗日奇侠.\(^{129}\) In this show, the director introduces martial arts elements in the context of the Sino-Japanese War. All of the main characters possess extraordinary strengths, such as exaggerated Chinese Kungfu and the ability to engage in close combat with Japanese soldiers using their bare hands. Under Japanese soldiers’ attack with bayonets and bullets, the main characters remain unharmed. The most absurd scene in the show becomes the symbol of all Ridiculous anti-Japan Plays. In this scene, one of the main characters holds the Japanese soldier and tears him into two halves with bare hands. This scene not alone represents history falsely but illustrates an abrupt scene that resembles all the essential elements of my definition: an illogical story, unrealistic character, and over-heroization.\(^{130}\) Ironically, this show’s portrayal of its protagonist provides a new direction for other producers. They continue to create absurd plots, including a soldier of the Eight Route Army piercing the enemy's chest with his hand, a female soldier killing all Japanese soldiers with a bow and arrow, and children killing well-equipped Japanese soldiers with slingshots…. Despite the low qualities of these Ridiculous anti-Japan Plays, they are still able to thrive in the markets, creating a certain extent of influence. Hence, we need further analysis to explain this contradiction in the TV industry.


\(^{130}\) Zhe Wang, “A Review of the Researches of the ‘Shocking TV Series,’” School of Literature, Guangxi University, 2016, IV.
Ridiculous anti-Japan Plays remain inseparable from nationalistic ideologies. In fact, the TV industry’s success stemmed from the reverse of the power dynamic between Chinese civilians and Japanese soldiers. During Japanese colonization, Chinese civilians were victims of extreme oppression and violence, haunting Chinese people’s wartime memories. The portrayal of Chinese protagonists easily defeating the Japanese soldiers in Ridiculous anti-Japan Plays reversed the roles between the Chinese and Japanese. Despite being a historically inaccurate portrayal, such portrayal successfully satisfied the nationalistic sentiments of the Chinese audience.

In his article “The Analysis of Counter-Japanese Drama in the View of Social Psychology,” Chinese scholar Gong Daichen defines extreme nationalism as a radical ideology that considers the nation’s interest above everything else. It demonstrates strong national superiority, promotes ethnic discrimination, and holds expansionist ambitions to oppress other people. According to this definition, extreme nationalism is evident in the Ridiculous anti-Japan Plays. Since the creation of anti-Japan films and TV series, the imperialist Japanese military and Chinese people are positioned on opposite sides, constantly contrasting with each other. This portrayal is a means of artistic expression that extols the bravery and other positive characteristics of Chinese people, raising audiences’ nationalistic sentiments and recognition of national identities.131

The Ridiculous anti-Japan Plays exaggerate the contrast between both sides, constructing a rigid stereotypical image of the Japanese soldiers. In these shows, the Japanese soldiers have two main characteristics: they are evil and foolish. Even though the Japanese possess advanced equipment and weapons, they act with great stupidity and lack effective military tactics. In the

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aforementioned TV series, anti-Japan Swordsmen, the Japanese military leader is named “Doihara 土肥原,” which has the same pronunciation as “土肥原” in Chinese, labeling the Japanese with an image that is clumsy, short, and fat. In addition, this show portrays the Japanese military leader as extremely brutal when he slaughters Chinese civilians. When he encounters the protagonists, however, his thoughts and behaviors become slow and cowardly, begging the protagonists to spare his life. All these behaviors seriously deviate from the characteristics of a military man. Even though extreme nationalism seems to underscore the positive traits of the “anti-Japan heroes,” it is inherently a superficial strategy that achieves this purpose by vilifying the opponents. Not only is this portrayal inaccurate to history, but it also leaves an impression that wartime heroes are able to defeat Japanese soldiers effortlessly. In reality, scholars identify that during the Sino-Japanese war, the overall casualties between the Chinese and Japanese had a ratio of 17:1. This data suggests the total opposite of the scenes in which Chinese people were able to kill hundreds of Japanese soldiers instantly. Even though some audiences might enjoy these vengeful emotions, it is difficult for the majority to resonate with these plots, which recount a false history and belie the truly austere conditions Chinese people faced during the war.

Kyowa-go’s Roles

The change and development in the anti-Japan films and TV series are evident. Many Chinese scholars are sensitive to this phenomenon, proposing different theories for the changes and criticizing the emergence of low-quality productions. Scholars tend to analyze film and TV production from many aspects, including their plots, costumes, characters, and so on. Most of

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132 “土肥圆” in Chinese literally means dirty, fat, and circular. The name of the Japanese military leader in the show has the same pronunciation (in Chinese) as the three characters representing the traits stated above.
them, however, tend to overlook an essential factor present in all of the productions: language. In fact, from some of the earliest films to contemporary TV series, kyowa-go figures constantly in productions related to the Sino-Japanese War and in the anti-Japan genre. Both Wang and Gong’s successfully identify that the Japanese soldiers tend to repeatedly use the following phrases: “よし good,” “めしめし eat,” and “大大的 very.” Both authors also argue that the utilization of these phrases contributes to the building of stereotypical images that severely limit the characteristics and behaviors of the Japanese, presenting them as evil, obscene, and foolish. Within the context of these post-colonial, unfavorable depictions of Japanese, Chinese film and TV directors took over the power to utilize kyowa-go to their advantage. In contrast to Japanese officials’ usage of kyowa-go to propagate and reinforce their colonization, Chinese directors turned the pidgin against the Japanese in the modern age to shape historical memory according to their own will. Even though the classical war films and the Ridiculous anti-Japan Plays differed significantly in their production qualities and artistic portrayals, they both employed kyowa-go to achieve certain effects in productions.

From the postwar period to the cultural revolution, two of the most well-known anti-Japan productions are Tunnel Warfare 地道战 (1966) and Landmine Warfare 地雷战 (1962). The two classic films are known as the two great battles in the history of anti-Japan films. As the title suggests, both of the films recount two clever military strategies Chinese civilians utilized to combat Japanese soldiers during their invasion. Both of the films were produced in the 1960s, very close to the Cultural Revolution that started in May 1966. During this period, even though film production met certain restraints, it still remained true to history. At the beginning of Tunnel Warfare, the film shows a few lines of text: “During the anti-Japan

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War…under the leadership of Mao Zedong…civilians carried out community-based guerrilla warfare…creating various types of clever strategies….Tunnel Warfare is one of the glorious examples.”

This text clearly presents the central ideas of the film—Besides glorifying the leadership of Mao, it also contains an educational purpose of allowing the audience to learn about classic warfare. Indeed, the director of the film, Ren Xudong, suggests that Tunnel Warfare is scientifically and historically authenticity. To achieve this aim, Ren visited one of the Chinese soldiers who fought in the war and learned about his experiences of using Tunnel Warfare to combat the Japanese. Similarly, in Landmine Warfare, the director’s team invited General Wang Yaonan to be the advisor to the film, who was an expert in using explosive tactics during the war.

The production stories of both films demonstrate the directors’ focus on historical accuracy, corresponding to their active usage of kyowa-go. Interestingly, even though the Japanese soldiers in both films have limited lines, they are all written with accurate kyowa-go. The majority of these lines are Japanese military leaders communicating with the Hanjian 汉奸, “race traitors” who served the Japanese during the war. For instance, in Tunnel Warfare, the Japanese military leader says, “General Tan, you are not a real military man. You don’t understand military tactics. The soldiers of the Eighth Route Army are very cunning. 谭司令，你的，真正的军人的不是。战术不懂。八路的，这个，狡猾狡猾的。” Similarly, in Landmine Warfare, the Japanese military leader speaks with the Hanjian about military strategies: “You, that way. I, this way. Understand? 你的，这个。我的，这个。明白？” It is worth noting that the use of kyowa-go is associated with two main characteristics: 1) communication between Chinese and Japanese and 2) discussion of military tactics. First, in the portrayals, Japanese soldiers are mainly speaking to Chinese traitors, who also respond in kyowa-go. 139 This representation is

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historically accurate as kyowa-go inherently bridges the language gap and serves as an effective means of communication between Chinese and Japanese. Second, unlike the Japanese leaders in the Ridiculous anti-Japan Plays, the leaders in Tunnel Warfare and Landmine Warfare are seriously combating the Chinese soldiers and calculating their moves. This illustration affords the Japanese soldiers to possess more complex characteristics and reflects the Chinese soldiers’ difficulties in winning the warfare. Hence, the utilization of kyowa-go in classic anti-Japan films contributes to the construction of an accurate historical background, allowing the audience to better immerse in this context. Based on this representation, the films highlighted the wisdom and bravery of Chinese people fighting against the Japanese military in difficult conditions, further glorifying national heroes and propagating nationalism.

In the new era of anti-Japan films and TV series, the utilization of kyowa-go began to diminish. Drawing Sword serves as a watershed as very few productions after it is willing to employ kyowa-go in the lines of Japanese soldiers. Even though Drawing Sword is a TV series with good production and reputation, the Japanese soldiers in the show all speak standardized Japanese, even when speaking with the Chinese, which fails to fully capture the language condition during the Sino-Japanese war. There is no specific reason to explain this phenomenon. Perhaps imitating the success of Drawing Sword, the television series produced after it also tended to avoid using kyowa-go. Some of them even started to write Japanese soldiers’ lines in standard Chinese, especially in the Ridiculous anti-Japan Plays. In the aforementioned anti-Japan Swordsmen, all Japanese characters speak fluent Mandarin. Even when communicating with each other, Japanese soldiers speak Chinese instead of Japanese. In contrast to the employment of kyowa-go, Japanese soldiers speaking in these scenes diminish the historical accuracy, making it harder for the audience to understand the historical background. The same phenomenon

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140 Ren, Xudong 任旭东, dir. 1965. Didaozhan 地道战 (Tunnel Warfare).
appears in other widely known Ridiculous anti-Japan Plays, such as *Arrows on the Bowstring 箭在弦上* (2012). These details demonstrate that the role of kyowa-go began to weaken in the contemporary era as the production team of these TV series on relevant topics began to pay relatively less attention to accurate historical portrayals.

However, although they utilized it in different ways than the previous productions, there are still instances in which TV series in the new era employed kyowa-go. For instance, in another Ridiculous anti-Japan play *Forever Designation 永不磨灭的番号* (2011), the production team does include kyowa-go in Japanese lines. In this TV series, one of the most controversial scenes is the destruction of a Japanese plane. In this scene, one of the Chinese military leaders successfully destroys a Japanese plane by throwing a grenade. After airing, many audiences questioned the practicality of this action and criticized the exaggeration in portrayal. Even though this show also preserves kyowa-go, instead of constructing an accurate historical context, the use of kyowa-go in this context is completely illogical, which solely contributes to the reinforcement of the stereotypical images of the Japanese. In the show, when one of the main characters is injured, his friend pretends that he was shot by the Eighth Route Army. When sending the injured Chinese to the Japanese hospital, the Japanese doctor agrees to save the Chinese for the harmony between the Chinese and the Japanese. When speaking to the Chinese, the Japanese doctor says, “The Eighth Route Army is too brutal. Take him in, and we’ll do the operation. 八路，太残忍了。抬进去，我的，做手术。” Again, the Chinese people successfully tricked the Japanese, emphasizing their foolishness and creating an entertaining effect. It is also impractical that a Japanese doctor during wartime would save Chinese lives solely for the

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purpose of building the East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere. But kyowa-go in this context helps harden the image of the Japanese: speaking improper Chinese, evil, and always losing against the Chinese. In contrast, the Chinese soldiers are brave, united, and intelligent. Despite the differences in the intended effect, the use of kyowa-go in Ridiculous anti-Japan Plays demonstrates that the Chinese TV producers now possessed dominance over kyowa-go, utilizing it to associate Japanese soldiers with these stereotypical negative images.

Through these specific cases, the examination of kyowa-go reveals that the Ridiculous anti-Japan Plays in contemporary China are serving a purpose other than strict historical accuracy or realistic portrayal of Japanese characters, opting purposefully for rigid and stereotypical images of the opponents to promote a distorted nationalism. The change in utilization of kyowa-go supports Wang and Gong’s arguments, which demonstrates the existence of the current low-quality anti-Japan TV series is dependent on the spread of extreme nationalism. Both the classic anti-Japan films and the contemporary TV series illustrate that despite the decline of kyowa-go’s influence beginning after the war, its influence continues to persist in today's society. While it may seem contradictory for the Chinese government to actively remove kyowa-go from the Chinese language system while the Chinese television industry contributes to its persistence in society, this apparent inconsistency is, in fact, not necessarily contradictory. Both actions can be seen as responses to Japanese occupation during the Second World War. By taking control of kyowa-go, they are able to utilize it for their own purposes and even reshape the image of Japanese soldiers in modern Chinese culture. It is essential to remember that this chapter has focused on the downfall phase of kyowa-go, during which those who were once under occupation effectively seized one of the tools used by the occupying forces and turned it against them. The decision to take control of kyowa-go not only
underscores its importance as a tool but also highlights its role as a symbol of power. By controlling and repurposing the language, the once-occupied side is able to assert their position higher up in the power hierarchy, emphasizing the need to understand kyowa-go's historical significance in this context.

Conclusion
Through the three different stages of kyowa-go, initial introduction, peak, and downfall, we understand that Japanese colonization in Manchukuo was much more than just the puppet-state government, but reflected the full ideology of Japanese imperialism and its remaining influences. Despite being a short-lived pidgin, kyowa-go offers a unique angle on this period of history, directly portraying the interaction between the Chinese and Japanese and the power dynamics between them. This thesis has illuminated the contradictions within kyowa-go, a language born amidst Japanese imperialism. Although advocating racial harmony and co-prosperity, kyowa-go reinforced Japanese superiority. Three chapters explored its introduction through the military, its impact on Japanese residents in Manchukuo, and its post-imperialist legacy. The analysis revealed kyowa-go's multifaceted role in promoting immigration and mobilizing Japanese civilians while simultaneously sustaining power dynamics. Despite efforts to erase its influence, kyowa-go's cultural remnants persist, exemplifying the intricate interplay between linguistic and political forces in the China-Japan relationship.

Indeed, The history of the Japanese language has long been entangled with that of the Chinese. In the case of kyowa-go, the Japanese language serves as the influencer, initiating the integration process as Japan invaded China. When tracing the history of the Japanese language, however, one will notice that Chinese heavily influence the formation of the Japanese language. Even though spoken language and written language have influenced one another, they each have unrelated histories. While the origin of the spoken language remains a mystery, the written language is evidently taken from Chinese.144 The Japanese had no writing system prior to the introduction of the Chinese one, which was originally employed by the Chinese people who lived in Japan during the early Christian era, bringing the writing system to the Japanese elite

class. The earliest known examples of Japanese writing back in the 5th and 6th centuries are names inscribed with Chinese characters on a mirror and a sword. In the later centuries, Chinese characters were employed to represent the Japanese language. Due to the differences in the two languages’ syntax and phonology, Chinese characters and loanwords gradually “Japanified” to fit into its language system. In the formation period of the Japanese language, we see it continued to experience influence from China, including other cultures such as Buddhism, government model, agriculture, and so on.

Since the Meiji Restoration, the influence of English on Japan has become more and more prevalent, and there were efforts to break away from the Chinese kanji system. Some influential leaders even advocated for the elimination of the Japanese language and replacing it with English. Less radical voices suggested replacing the Sino-Japanese characters with hiragana and katakana from the mid-nineteenth century onwards. Both suggestions represent Japan’s attempt to break away from the traditional Chinese or Asian order and better adapt to the Western system. Despite its continued acceptance of Western influence, the turning point took place since the Second World War and the American occupation. Since then, the quantity of English in Japanese, both in foreign-loan words and grammatical transfer, has increased substantially. In contrast, Japanese officials reduced the use of Chinese characters. In 1946, the government issued a list of 1,850 characters, recommending that people confine themselves to these. English foreign loan words have become extremely prevalent in today’s Japanese language, and it is almost impossible to have daily conversations without them.

145 “The History of the Japanese Language.”
146 Stanlaw, Japanese English: Language and Culture Contact, 64.
147 Stanlaw, Japanese English: Language and Culture Contact, 65.
Historically, the Japanese language frequently took on the role of the receptor, accepting influences from different groups. Accordingly, when receiving these influences, Japan was always on the lower end of a power hierarchy, including its relationship with ancient China, its initial contact with the Western world, and the US occupation after the Second World War. Hence, the birth of kyowa-go, in which Japan took on the role of the active influencer in China, became an especially unique case to study. Following the existing trend in the history of the Japanese language, kyowa-go demonstrates the Japanese desire to break away from the traditional order of Western colonialism and start to create its own sphere of influence in Asia. At the same time, by imposing its influence on the Chinese language system, Japan from the late nineteenth century reversed its relationship with China since ancient times, taking on the superior position in the power hierarchy. The same paradox applies to the Japanese rejection of Western colonialism while following similar policies to expand in Asia.

Overall, the case of the Japanese language showcases how the study of languages, particularly pidgins, can provide valuable insights into international interactions throughout history. Traditionally, linguistics and historical studies have been regarded as separate fields, with pidgins often overlooked or dismissed as mere "mispronunciations" or "mal-spoken" languages. By examining Manchukuo through the lens of kyowa-go, this thesis highlights the significance of pidgins in historical studies. Pidgins, with their short-lived and verbal nature, offer a focused snapshot of the time periods they relate to, enabling a deeper understanding of historical events. While the majority of existing pidgin studies emphasize Western influences on colonies, this thesis showcases that pidgin research need not be solely Western-oriented. The examination of kyowa-go, formed between Chinese and Japanese languages, reveals its
importance in understanding the Japanese imperialist project in the early twentieth century and its lasting impact on Sino-Japanese relations.

The third chapter of this thesis focuses heavily on the utilization of Chinese-based kyowa-go to examine modern Chinese popular culture. This thesis paves the way for future research exploring the "Japanese side" of the story, potentially including the examination of Japanese-based kyowa-go found in media such as anime. A comprehensive approach encompassing both sides will ultimately provide a more complete understanding of kyowa-go's role in history, emphasizing the critical importance of studying pidgins in historical analysis.

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