

Glossed text

See p. 212 in:

Matthews, Stephen & Li, Michelle. 2013. Chinese Pidgin English. In: Michaelis, Susanne Maria & Maurer, Philippe & Haspelmath, Martin & Huber, Magnus (eds.) *The Survey of Pidgin and Creole Languages, Vol. I: English-based and Dutch-based languages*, 206–213. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Law Suit¹

Go law pidgin velly bad. So smalla pidgin maskee
go law business very bad so small business never-mind
It is a bad thing to go to law. Such trifles can very easily

let passee. My chin-chin you make stop. By-and-by you
let pass 1SG ask 2SG make stop by-and-by 2SG
be looked over. I recommend you to stop proceedings at once.

look-see you no got profit. Court expensee too muchee.
look-see 2SG NEG got profit court expense too much
You will get no benefit from it at last. The Court fees are
very heavy.

You wantchee catchee one piecee lawyer. You no got time
2SG want catch one CLF lawyer 2SG NEG got time
You will have to engage a lawyer. Besides it takes up a great
deal of

do other pidgin. My talkee number one true. My hap
do other business 1SG talk number one true 1SG PFV
your time. My words are as precious as gold and silver. I have

¹ This excerpt from Tong's (1862: IV.32–33) Chinese-English phrasebook is the first section for which Pidgin equivalents are provided in the margins. Each sentence represents an entry in the phrasebook (see footnote 1 regarding the Standard English "translations"). The text has the character of a monologue concerning legal proceedings. Often one sentence follows naturally from the previous ones as in sentences 1–11, but this is not always the case.

go court one time. My too much trouble. Makee stand
go court one time 1SG too much trouble make stand
been to Court once. I was very much bothered. You have to
stand

makee wait alla day. My can settle that pidgin for you.
make wait all day 1SG can settle DEM business for 2SG
and wait there the whole day. I will get the matter arranged
for you.

Who man do he pidgin? Alla that pidgin you talkee
who man do 3SG business all DEM business 2SG talk
Who takes up the case for him? Give me the particulars of
the case.

me. My savvy how fashion do. What time you sendee
1SG 1SG know how fashion do what time 2SG send
I will know how to act. When did you file

petition? He hap makee answer that petition? What time
petition 3SG PFV make answer DEM petition what time
the complaint? Did he answer the complaint? When

makee trial? Hap makee trial how muchee time? He hap
make trial PFV make trial how much time 3SG PFV
will the case come on? How many times has the case been
brought up? Did he

come court houso? Thisee casee by-and-by makee trial
come court house DEM case by-and-by make trial
appear before the Court? The case has been postponed.

again. Justee now makee settle not too late. Alla pidgin
again just now make settle NEG too late all business
It is not too late to arrange it now. You leave it entirely

you give my hand. My long you makee alla proper.
2SG give 1SG hand 1SG BEN 2SG make all proper
to me. I will put it straight for you.