A So-Called Dialect of English*   **Alan S. Kaye**
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Fishman (1985b: 19) warns us that the entire subject of Judeo-English[1], (his term for the more popular designation Yinglish, which Fishman calls "mocking" for what he says is "less archaically: Jewish English") "still seems strange to most current investigators". As one might expect from our honoree Joshua Fishman, he is right. Just how strange it is will be explored in the following pages.

More research surely is needed on this subject, and will hopefully occur as the study of Jewish intralinguistics expands in the years and decades ahead. Undoubtedly, some better terms with their corresponding understanding for the entire phenomenon under discussion may be proposed and justified. However, it seems to me that the field first needs to come to some kind of agreement concerning what we are and are not talking about. It seems much easier to pinpoint what Jewish English is not than what it actually is, or if it actually is, assuming that what one means by this designation is the English spoken by Jews in general. We must, right at the outset, come to the realization that it is incorrect to think that all Jews in the United States (or Canada, Great Britain, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, etc.) speak their own unique dialect of English, i.e. Jewish English (hereafter JE) (an empty label, however, see below). Indeed many (most?) English-speaking Jews speak, in my opinion, nothing of the sort in their normal, everyday, speech patterns of discourse, using Hebrew-Aramaic or Yiddish loanwords or not, in monologues and dialogues, with their friends and relatives, whether they be at home, at their jobs, or at play. It seems to me that many or most American Jews speak English dialects at home (as their normal discourse) which are indistinguishable from those of their next door neighbors who just happen to be gentiles. Linguists should actually determine, using a sound sample for several different geographical areas both inside and outside of the United States, the precise statistics involved for the aforementioned claim.

Fishman's own thoughts on this intriguing subject may conveniently serve as a springboard for what follows (1985b: 19):

> Although various lexical, grammatical, prosodic and functional characteristics of Judeo-English have already been described [by David L. Gold in Fishman 1985c], the major Israeli, American, Canadian, British and Australian subvarieties and the features uniting and separating them still remain largely unformulated by socio-linguistically trained observers.

The purpose of this paper is to offer a reaction to the idea of JE. Basically, the point I want to make is that the designation JE or Judeo-English gives the erroneous impression that (all?) American, Canadian, British, etc. Jews some how have their own unique dialect of English. This is nothing more than a narrow-minded myopic lectism gone crazy. I do not think that the aforementioned point of view (or scientific opinion) can be substantiated, although I readily admit that some Jews (e.g. in the Flatbush section of Brooklyn, New York City), particularly Orthodox Jews (between 200,000-1.5 million of them according to Steinmetz 1981: 15, fn. 1) who know Yiddish and Hebrew/Aramaic (fluently, semi-fluently, or poorly), do speak a dialect which I can refer to as "New York Yinglish" (I do not use this term pejoratively) or Yiddish(ized) English (cf. Davis 1967 for Yiddish American English and Tannen 1981 for New York Jewish Conversational Style). This is but a part of what is meant by JE, however. In short, the concept of JE (as a whole), which involves much more than the stereotypic New York Orthodox Jewish "He's ah schmo who's heppy as ah boid", is a generalization which is so all-encompassing that, due to its gross imprecision, it becomes a

vacuous label. In other words, to use JE as a cover term for all Jewish English lects is a usage which is devoid of merit, both linguistically, ethnolinguistically, and probably historically as well. It is most often impossible to recognize a Jew by his/her dialect nor by his/her name. Fishman has, I believe, even questioned whether or not JE is a full-fledged language in the sense of a Judeo-Arabic or a Judezmo by writing (1985b: 19): "Is it possible that a Jewish language is being born before our very eyes but that few are aware of it?" This leaves the door open to investigate the possibility that there might be a JE dialect in the future. How does this point of view fit in with Gold's pronouncement that "older JE" to go on aliya - to come on aliya has changed to "current JE" to make aliya (Gold 1985b: 186), defined as "a complex term referring to the return of Jews to Israel" (1985b: 186), or that JE goes back to the 1600's (Gold 1987: 406, fn. 4)?

      I should confess right at the outset that I do not know how old JE is as a term, nor do I know who coined it or first used it in print, however, Steinmetz (1981: 15, fn. 2) relates that Fishman had already used it in his 1975 review of Walt Wolfram's Sociolinguistic Aspects of Assimilation published in Language, and that it had prior to that "been circulating informally among linguists for several years" (1981: 15, fn. 2). However, I began noticing the term quite frequently in various linguistic publications in the 1980's. It stands out quite conspicuously in, for instance, Gold (1981) and (1984) as well as Steinmetz (1981), and I believe it fairly safe to say that it is David L. Gold of the University of Haifa,[2] who has used the term more than any other single linguist (at least insofar as I am aware). It is even the title of an entire article by Gold (Gold 1985a). Gold (1985b), in advocating the appropriateness of the term JE, rejects the various designations used by other authors such as Engliddish, Yiddiglish, or Yidlish, coined by Lillian Mermin Feinsilver in the journal *American Speech*[3] While I can perhaps agree somewhat with Gold (1985b) that some of Feinsilver's seven proposed terms such as the three listed above are "infelicitous, unnecessary, and unwieldy", I believe that there are also many problems with the replacement term JE, which Gold states (1985b: 186) is based on the analogy of "black English" (sic), "white English" (sic), and "Mormon English" (sic). (What? No terms "Christian English", "Jehovah's Witnesses' English", "Catholic English", "Protestant English", and so on!)

      Gold's position on JE can succinctly be summarized thus. All (emphasis mine) Jews who are English-speaking speak a dialect of English properly designated as JE. As he explicitly maintains:

> Because Jewish English is a new concept (though the linguistic phenome-
> non it designates is itself as old as the end of the seventeenth century),
> immediate lay reaction tends to be "I speak English; there's no such thing
> as Jewish English". On countless occasions, Jews have told me that they
> speak English "without the slightest accent" (i.e. with no Jewish features),
> yet without exception I have been able to convince them otherwise.
> Indeed it is impossible to lead any sort of meaningful Jewish life without
> at least some special features in one's language. (1987: 406, fn. 4)

Using the logic that is evidenced in this statement, I am positive that Gold could "convince" any person of any religion that s/he was speaking a variant of English based on that particular religion. All religious groups have developed terminology which may serve to distinguish their members from others. (I shall not further complicate the matter by bringing in the realms of specialized phonology and grammar.) In addition, much religious-based vocabulary, similar to the Hebrew/Aramaic-Yiddish substratum in JE, is non-English in origin. For example, a Catholic, as opposed to non-Catholics, may tell others that s/he has just said the rosary or completed the Stations of the Cross or feels happy/unhappy that s/he is obliged to follow the moral teachings of the Pope when he is speaking ex cathedra. A Buddhist may

remark that s/he is happy that bodhisattvas aid mankind in its struggle to attain Nirvana. A Muslim may comment on his/her fervent desire to go on hajj to see the grand mosque in Mecca, and the importance of sawm or siyam "fasting" during Ramadan or of reading the Qur'a:n (= Koran), and facing the Qibla (the direction towards Mecca) during salat "prayer". Each of the above samples used a "special" feature (i.e. vocabulary) to distinguish the speaker. Further, said vocabulary can make an individual's spiritual and/or everyday life regardless of the particular religion practiced more "meaningful". But, does it necessarily follow that the reader has just been treated to excerpts of Catholic (or Christian), Buddhist and Muslim English, respectively? A simpler and more straightforward sociolinguistic conclusion would be that each of the highlighted speakers was speaking English using religion-specific nomenclature, which can be extended to include other socio-cultural terms as well.

Much of the vocabulary cited by proponents of the term JE as being typical of its usage deal with traditional (make that Orthodox, Ultra-Orthodox, Modern Orthodox, or Hasidic Jewish lifestyles). As Sol Steinmetz (1981: 6) states in the first sizeable article on JE:

> Jewish English is used to express the elements that characterize traditional Jewish life. Thousands of words and expressions have been taken from Yiddish and Hebrew ... The borrowings include, for example, terms pertaining to marriage (shiduch `match' ...), terms relating to death (... matzevah `gravestone'), terms dealing with study (talmid `student' ...) ...

In the above description, one could easily substitute any number of religions and the statement would still be valid. To illustrate very briefly, English-speaking Muslims use many words and expressions that are Arabic in origin. It is well known that when Muslims speak English (and other languages as well, such as Persian, Urdu or Hausa), they often interject various Arabic expressions such as *In sha Allah* "God willing" or *Ma sha Allah* "whatever God wills", and use Arabic words such as *bazaar, bedouin, caliph, hadith* = "a tradition going back to the Prophet Muhammad", *imam* "spiritual leader", *zakat* "alms", or *sura* "chapter of the Koran". Can we as linguists legitimately talk, therefore, of a Muslim English, and further subdivide it into a Sunni English, a Shi'ite English, an Ismaili English, and a Sufi English? (Compare, if you will, Ashkenazic vs. Sephardic English in Gold 1985b.) Yet, this is exactly what Gold is suggesting in a Jewish context when he notes that (1985b: 186): "*Jewish English* is the collective name for all English lects which are used only by Jews, including those lects which may differ from non-Jewish ones by as little as one feature". This is indeed an exact and very bold pronouncement which leads us to the following question. Just how much Hebrew/ Aramaic/Yiddish phonology/morphology/syntax/semantics/pragmatics, or non-verbal communication, etc. does this sort of term imply? Where do we or can we draw the line? Fishman seems to be acutely aware of the problem posed above in his definition of what a Jewish language is, for he states (1981: 5-6 with little change in 1985b: 4):

> I define as `Jewish' any language that is phonologically, morpho-syntacti- cally, lexico-semantically or orthographically different from that of non- Jewish sociocultural networks and that has some demonstrable function in the role-repertoire of a Jewish sociocultural network. The borderline cases pose considerable difficulty, as do all borderline cases, since it is at the borderlines where inter-network similarities are greatest, that it is (sic) hardest to define who and what is *Jewish* and who or what is *different*.

Gold's definition of "one feature" quoted above, however, leaves no room whatsoever for "borderline cases". Gold has even elaborated on this by further claiming that this "one"

feature need not necessarily be an active one. It can merely be passive as well. This is formulated as follows (1987: 399):

> By some stretch of the imagination one could conceive of a Jew whose life output of utterances could have been that of a non-Jew too, but who, at least, recognizes certain Jewish utterances as such and understands them, whereas non-Jews normally do not, like "Did you porge the meat?" Jewish and non-Jewish performance might thus be identical in such a hypothetical case, but not competence.

Agreeing with this philosophy is Steinmetz (1981), who uses the term JE to refer to the speech of Orthodox American Jews in his paper but extends this usage in his overall generalized definition of JE (1981: 14): "Jewish English can be defined as a form of Yiddish- and Hebrew-influenced English used by Jews, regardless of the extent of its hybridization". (This means that only one loanword[4] from Hebrew or Yiddish would make this particular English dialect JE.) Then Steinmetz concludes that some American Jews (1981: 14) "employ it only slightly or occasionally". How about Americans of all religions who regularly use words such as nosh, bubkes, and schmaltzy!

My problem with accepting the above definition is that there can be non-Jews who, thus, know JE better than some Jews. I am utterly confused because we can, apparently, have a non-Jew who speaks and understands more JE than a Jew. We can even have Jews who have never uttered a word of JE, and we can have non-Jews who speak JE daily, and, moreover, fluently. Frankly, where does it all end? And, what's the point?

For some who advocate the existence of JE, the question of just exactly where to draw the line between JE and non-JE is tenuous. In discussing regional varieties of JE, Gold (1981: 287) observes that: "British Jewish English particular "devout" = American Jewish English religious or observant, as in "They're very particular" (for American English "They're very religious/observant")". Why is this an example of JE? Can not Catholics, Protestants, Muslims, Hindus, Zoroastrians, etc., who happen to be British or American, also comment on the religiosity of those they meet, and in fact, use the exact same phraseology? Following this same line of reasoning, I can produce an example of a regional variant of Mormon English. British English *pram*, short for *perambulator*, = American English *baby carriage* or *buggy*. I have an acquaintance who was born in Utah and is a Mormon. His wife, also a Mormon, was born and raised in London. If one went to their home and overheard the following

> "Honey, where's the pram?"
> "I don't know where the baby carriage is.",

would this constitute a dialogue between speakers of British Mormon English and American Mormon English? To add to the confusion, Gold seems to be backpedaling from his previous position when he maintains (1985a: 281): "Naturally, not every utterance by a Jew is necessarily an instance of JE". It then follows from this that not every utterance by a non-Jew is necessarily an instance of non-JE. Of course, both groups can be speaking foreign languages or imitating other dialects, but how relevant or germane are these situations? The question now becomes how is one to tell if Jews or Mormons (or members of any other religion for that matter) are speaking in a form (read: dialect) of English directly linked to their religion, i.e. JE or Mormon English? If the Mormon couple's conversation about the elusive pram/baby carriage had also alluded to being late for the sacrament meeting (= Mormon terminology for religious service), could all or part of the discourse now be classified as examples of British Mormon English and American Mormon English,

respectively? I do not think that this would be an appropriate conclusion to reach, yet this is, in essence, what is being done by those who propose the use of such ambiguous terms as JE.

A possible pitfall of using a term as imprecise as JE is that it can easily lead the observer into basing language categorization on certain factors (such as religion) that are really quite xternal to the American-English speech community. Thus, a linguist could manufacture a convincing case for Christian English. One can even postulate an earlier Christian English "Holy Ghost" which has been changed to Modern Christian English "Holy Spirit" or an earlier Christian English "extreme unction" for the Modern Christian English "last rites" (cf. our earlier remarks on *go on aliya > make aliya* for JE). This is not to say that one's religion can not in varying degrees influence, especially through specialized terminology, one's language. However, it should not be viewed as one of the primary determinants when it comes to classificatory designations of English dialectology. If this were the case, then one need only ask a person's religion in order to ascertain what dialect (or variant) of English is being spoken.

Up until this point, I have focused my remarks on examples of what I have labelled religion-specific nomenclatures. Let us now examine other groups who also use a specialized terminology peculiar to their (non-religious but nevertheless socio-cultural) way of life. Many types of human endeavors (e.g. occupations, hobbies, clubs, sports) have associated with them vocabulary terms that are unique to their undertaking. Just a few of the things that accountants consider are future cash flows, EPS (= earnings per share), ROI (= return on investments = ROA = return on assets), self-liquidating cycles (= cash cycles = operating cycles = working capital cycles = the movement from cash to inventories to accounts receivables and back to cash), contribution margins (= revenues minus all variable expenses), the bottom line, and PV (present value). Ideally, a poker player wants to become a zombie (one who shows no motions and exhibits no tells = distinctive habits that would allow others to estimate the value of their hand), but wants to avoid zoo joints (= establishments in which cheating occurs regularly), and perhaps give tokes (= zukes = gratuities given to dealers and other service personnel, which is perceived as bringing good fortune or luck to the giver of the tip). Skiers can off-piste (= ski on unmarked slopes), langlauf (= cross-country skiing), hot-dog (= freestyle skiing noted for spectacular jumps), christy (= christiania = a medium-fast turn in which the skis are kept parallel), swing (= a high-speed turn in which the skis are kept parallel), etc. Linguists regularly discuss morphophonemic alternations, morphographemes, phrase-structure rules, transformational rules, agglutination, apophony and metaphony not to mention anticipatory coarticulation, dissimilation, *schwas*, *carets*, and so on. Needless to say, the list of further groups having specialized vocabulary is probably endless. The aforementioned terms all have specific meaning to each of the groups involved and undoubtedly make the lives of the participants more meaningful, at least in the context of group membership. Many of the terms cited may also be known to and used by the public at large. Further, of the cited terms, some are non-English in origin, which is a trait that is similiar to what the proponents of the term JE claim as a distinguishing feature. However, should this lead one to proclaim the existence of Accountant's English or Skier's English and so forth? I think this would not be a meaningful generalization.

There are many other glottonyms which further complicate the meaning to the designation JE used by Gold (1985b) and elsewhere, viz., "Ashkenazic English", "non-Ashkenazic JE", "Sephardic English" and "non-Sephardic English". One can easily get bogged down with such confusing terminology! How would one say "How are you?" or "I'm tired. I want to go to sleep" in each of these so-called dialects of English? To make the matter even worse, Gold (1985a) uses even finer distinctions in his subdivisions (see 1985a: 280, fn. 1): "American Ashkenazic English", "Ashkenzic English", "American Eastern Ashkenazic English", "American Western Ashkenazic English", "British Ashkenazic English", "Eastern

Ashkenazic English" and "Western Ashkenazic English". Not wanting to intentionally poke fun at this Jewish lectism gone wild, is there an "American Southern Ashkenazic English" which can then be further bifurcated into a "Southeastern" and a "Southwestern" branch? And can these so-called dialects be then further bifurcated once again? And then again? Is not this sort of terminology rather like saying that there is a 42nd and Broadway (i.e. Times Square, Manhattan, New York City) English, a 43rd and Broadway English, a 44th and Broadway English, and so on? This is linguistic isoglossal lectism taken to the extreme and should be recognized as such.

Let us now consider the case of a certain Jew growing up in Flatbush, Brooklyn, New York City, who, according to the above criteria, must speak JE. On his (or her) twenty-first birthday, he (or she) decides to leave the Jewish faith and converts to Christianity. Does his or her JE now instantaneously become "Christian English" or is s/he now a non-Jew speaking JE? I feel certain that instances such as this have occurred, although not necessarily when a person reaches a birthday, without any change whatsoever in one's speech patterns. Or consider the opposite situation of someone converting to Judaism. Does that person's English automatically become JE after a week as a member of the Jewish faith? A month? A year? The late actor-singer-dancer-entertainer, Sammy Davis, Jr. converted to Judaism many years ago. Can one legitimately invoke Gold's definition quoted above to proclaim Davis' normal conversational English to have been in JE?[5]

Let us now leave the realm of speech and switch gears to a discussion of the written or graphemic representation of language. Jewish languages such as Judeo-Arabic have a long tradition of scholarly attention as there is an extensive body of Judeo-Arabic literature written in Hebrew characters employing certain diacritics (Judeo-Arabic is not written in the Arabic alphabet). But clearly, there is no such comparable written version of JE, or is there? Presumably, if I write the JE word *aliya* (see above on this term) in the Jewish alphabet (sic) (see below), I would now have "graphemie JE" (cf. the parallel with Judeo-Arabic, yet I do not see any significant difference in writing *aliya* or a word such as Satan, an English word which has been borrowed from Hebrew). Yet Gold states (1985a: 280) that JE "has usually been written in the English alphabet". This means that JE is also written in some other alphabet, too. Gold (1984: 271) does talk of the "Jewish"[6]. alphabet, which does not appear to be standard usage, as the reader will momentarily come to appreciate. He states (1984: 271): "Since Yiddish is normally written in the Jewish alphabet, a suitable romanization must be found for Yiddish-origin words in Latin-letter languages". Normally, one does not talk of the "Jewish" alphabet. (Ferguson and Heath 1981: 289 have even edited Gold's use of "Jewish" alphabet to read the "Hebrew" alphabet: "Unlike older Jewish languages, which have traditionally been written in the Hebrew alphabet, JE is almost always [emphasis mine: ASK] written in the roman alphabet, because most of its users have had training in written non-JE".) The standard work on the history and development of the alphabet by one of the world's leading authorities on the subject (Diringer 1968: 208) states explicitly that the "Hebrew" script (read: alphabet) has been adapted to Yiddish (as well as for Arabic, Turkish, Judezmo, etc.). Diringer writes (1968: 208): "Yiddish employs the Modern Hebrew alphabet". Similarly, one does not talk of the Muslim alphabet, the Hindu alphabet, nor the Buddhist alphabet. One refers to the Arabic (or Perso-Arabic) and Devanagari alphabets, respectively, although Buddhists use various scripts for their languages (e.g. Thai and Sinhalese). To call the Hebrew alphabet the Jewish one is similar to calling the Cyrillic alphabet the Communist one. To put it in other words, the designation Jewish alphabet (see Gold 1982) is not an appropriate term because the phrase suggests historical and religious connections which are contrary to fact.

One can only wonder why there was no mention of JE in the series of conferences held in March-April 1975 at the University of Michigan and New York University entitled "Jewish Languages: Theme and Variations". The following Jewish languages were discussed at these

conferences: Hebrew, Aramaic, Yiddish, Ladino (also known as Dzhudezmo, Judezmo or Judeo-Spanish), Judeo-Persian and Judeo-Arabic. The proceedings of these conferences have appeared. as Paper (1978), and nowhere in this volume was there any mention of JE. If JE were considered a Jewish language at these conferences by some of the linguists present, I am sure it would have received formal, or at least, informal treatment.

Offered as somewhat of a parallel, Youtie (1978: 155-157) mentions a scholarly attempt to set up a "Jewish Greek", but finally firmly rejects this notion. Other scholars such as Paul Wexler recognize a Judeo-Greek, however, this is referred to by Gold (1987: 400) as "Yevanic". Interestingly enough, even Gold (1981: 273) does not include JE as a Jewish language of great importance in the United States reserving those places rather to Yiddish, Hebrew, and Dzhudezmo. In this regard, I find myself forced to agree with Hebraist and general linguist Saul Levin (1983: XII, no. 15): "I must protest against the exaggerated [emphasis mine: ASK] conception of `Jewish languages'. It makes for self-deceptive nationalism". Yiddish, a language which almost everyone would associate as a lingua franca of Western and Central European Jewry, was used by many non-Jews for commercial purposes (this is still somewhat true today). Incidentally, one Israeli linguist, Uzzi Oman, does not even consider Hebrew a Jewish language (see Oman 1985). However, Gold vehemently disagrees (1987: 398-399). Herein, Gold (1987: 399) also gives no reasons for his refusal to believe Oman's conclusion that "upper-class British English is used by many Jews in Britain exactly as do their socially equal, non-Jewish peers", except to note that Oman may be speaking of "Britishers of Jewish ancestry". How would Gold define a Jew vs. someone of Jewish ancestry?[7]

There is already an established field of Jewish interlinguistics (e.g. see Wexler 1981), or as Gold prefers, Jewish intralinguistics (Gold 1987: 405, fn. 2), and I wholeheartedly endorse Paper's (1978: vii) coinage of an Islamic interlinguistics, a Buddhist one, and an Eastern Christian vs. a Western Christian interlinguistics. We will, however, have to get our terminology straight for these fields to progress in an enlightened manner. This means that we will need to avoid ambiguous, imprecise, and misleading terms such as JE, Muslim English,[8] Buddhist English, Eastern Christian English vs. Western Christian English, and so on, at all costs. It is tempting to look at external factors such as religion to try to come up with all-encompassing conclusions such as those discussed previously herein. However, unless we can be certain that our views hold scientific water, every attempt should be made to inform the reader to proceed with caution or "let the reader beware".

Notes

I wish to thank my wife Susan M. Kaye for many useful suggestions. Indeed, she has seen things which I have failed to, and her comments have greatly enhanced both the clarity and organization of the paper so much in evidence in the final product. I would also like to express my appreciation to Ronald Butters, Joshua Fishman, and Saul Levin, all of whom commented on a preliminary version of this paper. The usual disclaimers apply.
1.   Actually, the designation Judeo-English goes back at least to 1972 when Richard N. Levy used it in a review of Raphael Patai's *Tents of Jacob*, *The New York Times Book Review*. See Steinmetz (1981: 16, fn. 6). Levy writes therein (quoted in Steinmetz 1981: 15): "... one can make a case for the barely perceptible (emphasis mine: ASK) beginnings of a Judeo-English - cf. words like Bar Mitzvahed.... "
Ronald Butters has pointed out to me (p.c.) that the term Jewish dialect (applied to a variety of American English) is old, e.g. in H.L. Mencken's *The American Language* (1937). In checking Mencken, one indeed finds "Jewish Dialect", and "Yiddo-American" (1937: 368-369, fn. 2), written about by C.K. Thomas and R. Sonkin in *American Speech* (1932 and 1933). Mencken (1937: 634 ff.) further describes what he calls American Yiddish.
2.   Cf. The Jewish Language Review, an annual publication that began in 1981, which

Gold claims (1985a: 297) contains "reliable information on JE".

3.   The exact references are cited by Gold (1985b: 185).

4.   The late Mayor LaGuardia of New York City reportedly spoke Yiddish and Yiddish(ized) English, in addition to Italian and English, and used them to his great advantage in campaigning for the job of mayor, i. e. the Jewish vote was very important. It would not be correct, in my opinion, to characterize LaGuardia's dialect of English as JE when he campaigned for the Jewish vote and addressed Jewish audiences. LaGuardia could use Hebrew, Aramaic, or Yiddish expressions or lexemes in his English, such as "to make *aliya*" _ "to immigrate to Israel", yet so may anyone. Gold states that expressions such as "make aliya" (from the Hebrew root `ly meaning "go up") are part of and characteristic of JE. He actually states that kosher is Ashkenazic English (1985b: 186), whereas I would think that it is just, synchronically speaking, good ol' plain everyday English.

To cite another example, consider the famous conversationalist and author Alexander King (*Mine Enemy Grows Older* and *May This House Be Safe from Tigers*), who appeared so often during the 1960s on the old Jack Paar Show (The Tonight Show). He spoke Yiddish (some say native-like). However, I believe he was an avowed atheist (although born a Christian). If occasion so suited him, he could sound like the well-known nightclub and TV personality and fellow New Yorker, actor and comedian Jackie Mason (who incidentally is also a former Rabbi). I do not think we could thus describe King's English as the atheistic variety of JE any more than we could characterize it as "Atheist English" (paralleling JE, "Mormon English", and so on). Although born in Europe, King considered himself first and foremost a New Yorker. New York City is an enormous population center, yet not all New York Jews, even in this largest conglomeration of them in one city in the world, can be said to speak this so-called JE. I am willing to exclude, however, English-speaking New York Orthodox Jews in the context of a Yeshiva, studying the Talmud, where the term Yiddish English or Yiddishized English (= Yinglish) may be in order.

5.   If anything, Davis was well known for his code-switching abilities between Black English and Standard English (at least under certain public circumstances). I cannot understand how appropriate it would be to consider Sammy Davis, Jr., Jerry I,ewis and Jackie Mason speakers of JE. Gold might argue that Davis, I,ewis and Mason are representative of three different "subvarieties" of JE (his term 1985b: 186), yet I think this summation would lead us to the absurd conclusion that there are almost as many JE sub-categories as there are speakers. Further, do Black Vernacular English and Chicano English have so many subvarieties?

We can facetiously coin the new, ultra-confusing "American Black JE" for Sammy Davis' English dialect. If his ex-wife, actress May Britt were Jewish (I am not sure whether she was/is Jewish), did she speak "American non-Black JE"?

6.   The terms "Jewish" and "Yiddish" can sometimes be interchangeable. Some Jews, e.g. when speaking English, actually say that they speak Jewish, by which they mean Yiddish. I can personally attest to this. This usage is reported in Weinreich (1980: 322). Even Gold (1984) seems occasionally to be using the term Jewish as a more or less loose synonym for Yiddish or Yiddishized. This usage is listed, however, only in some English dictionaries. The *American Heritage Dictionary*, 2nd college edition (1976: 688) does not mention this nor does *The New Century Dictionary* (1944: 875). However, *The New World Dictionary of the American Language*, 2nd college edition has it (1978: 758) as do *Thorndike Barnhart Advanced Dictionary* (1973: 552) and *Funk and Wagnalls' Standard College Dictionary* (1974: 727). Quite surprisingly, the *O.E.D.* (Vol. V, p. 578) does not mention this particular nuance.

Histories of the designation "Yiddish" occur in Weinreich (1980: 315-317; 322-325) (also Jüdisch-deutsch, Judendeutsch, Jüdisch, Jude, Juif, Zyd, (H)ebräer, Yid, Israélite, etc.). See also Herzog (1978) on the subject. I do not know why Yiddish has an orthographic geminated

<d>, whereas the Hebrew or Yiddish spellings <yydyʃ> or <ʔydyʃ> - <ʔydyt> do not. Gold (1984: 272) says that Yiddish is "properly Yidish". If 1 may offer an hypothesis, the geminated <d> follows the English spelling rule to geminate a consonant to keep a preceding vowel "short" (only at the orthographic level - not the phonological one). Cf. *hide > hidden*, *rid > ridden*. Otherwise, there would be a confusion with *riding*. Perhaps the spelling Yiddish with geminated <d> imitated an already existing and familiar spelling jiddisch in German in which the double -dd- would have been quite normal to show that the preceding vowel -i- is not long, as the cognate umlaut vowel is in *jüdisch*.

7.   I find it difficult to understand Gold's unsound reasoning when he proclaims that those Jews who do not speak JE "must be Jews in name only". One need only mention the Falasha Jews of Ethiopia and the Chinese Jews of Kai-Feng Fu to note that Jews have tremendously different backgrounds.

8.   Would it not be absurd to claim that Karim Abdul Jabbar, Muhammad Ali, or Queen Noor, the American-born wife of Jordan's King Llussein, speaks Muslim English? I refrain from expatiating further allowing the reader to decide for himself/herself. I could also be creative and invent a Zoroastrian (= Parsi) English, however, the reader is free to do so for himself/herself as well.