

***Kongish Daily*: Researching Translanguaging creativity and subversiveness**

Li Wei¹ (li.wei@ucl.ac.uk), with Alfred Tsang² (lalfred@ust.hk), Nick Wong² (lnickwong@ust.hk), and Pedro Lok³ (pedrolok@twc.edu.hk)

¹ UCL Institute of Education, University College London, UK

² Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, Hong Kong

³ Tung Wah College, Hong Kong

On 3rd August 2015, a new Facebook page appeared from Hong Kong. It was called *Kongish Daily* 《港語日報》. Within 24 hours, it gained more than 10,000 likes, with Hong Kong Free Press claiming a figure of over 15,000. And within days, the social media in Hong Kong and beyond hailed it as 'Hong Kong's hottest new Facebook page' (Yu, 2015). Many of the reports, though, carried a health warning: don't expect to be able to understand a single sentence published by *Kongish Daily*, unless you are a young, hip Cantonese-speaker. The present article investigates the significance of the socio-cultural and political context in which *Kongish Daily* was created and the reasons for its popularity and provides a multidimensional analysis of its communicative practices from a translanguaging perspective, highlighting the playful subversiveness that it embodies. Whilst acknowledging the creators' original interest in the so-called Hong Kong English, we argue that *Kongish Daily* is best regarded as translanguaging in action, and as such, it plays an important role in the social changes Hong Kong is currently experiencing.

The research process that has led to the present article involves multiple levels of engagement and co-learning between the co-authors. We take it as an example of doing Participatory Linguistics, and we will explain the Participatory Linguistics framework and our research process after we outline the linguistic and social media landscape in Hong Kong and the context in which *Kongish Daily* was created. The core of the article is a multi-layered analysis of the translanguaging practices of *Kongish Daily*, including how postings are made, how its followers respond and how observer-analysts react to *Kongish Daily* as a social (media) phenomenon. We discuss what the co-authors of the paper have learned as participants in the research process. And we conclude the article with a discussion of the implications for studying writing in social media.

Languages and social media in Hong Kong

Hong Kong is a multilingual, post-colonial society. Since 1997 when the sovereignty of Hong Kong reverted from Britain to China, the official language policy has been 兩文三語, or two writing systems – Chinese and English – and three spoken forms – Cantonese, Putonghua and English. The vast majority of Hong Kong's population are Cantonese L1 speakers. English is taught throughout the Hong Kong education system and since 1997, Putonghua, the standardized variety of Chinese that has been promoted as the national language of China, has also been taught in schools and universities in Hong Kong. Most standard public signs are bilingual in English and Chinese. But informal notices tend to be in Chinese only. Hong Kong has maintained the traditional written Chinese characters, though increasingly simplified characters that are typically used in mainland China can be seen in public signs

and the print and digital media in Hong Kong too. Written Cantonese can be seen in both the print and digital media and in informal writing. The broadcasting media are in both Chinese and English and the entertainment programmes often contain a mixture of Cantonese, some localised Putonghua, and different varieties of English.

According to [statista.com](https://www.statista.com/statistics/973701/hong-kong-number-of-social-network-users/), there are around five million social media users in Hong Kong, mostly using multiple devices on multiple platforms (<https://www.statista.com/statistics/973701/hong-kong-number-of-social-network-users/>). Along with Instagram, WhatsApp, and WeChat, Facebook is one of the largest social media platforms with 4.5 million regular users in Hong Kong. The majority of Facebook users in Hong Kong are aged between 25 and 35. As the Chinese writing system is logographic whereas the input system for most digital devices is an alphabet-based keyboard, social media users in Hong Kong use a wide range of creative means to perform digital communication within the input constraint. Romanization systems do exist for Cantonese, known as *Jyut6ping3*, and for Putonghua, *pingyin*, both of which can be used to input Chinese characters digitally. But *Jyut6ping* is not systematically taught in Hong Kong schools; so only a few Cantonese speakers occasionally use it for input in digital communication.

The birth of *Kongish Daily*

Kongish Daily was the brain child of three young academics, the three co-authors, Tsang, Wong and Lok, of this paper who were, in 2015, all teaching English in Hong Kong. They had a particular interest in Hong Kong English and the mixing of English and Cantonese in daily communication between Hongkongers. They wanted to create a research site to collect data and obtained a grant from Tung Wah College to start a Facebook page where they would post stories from other media sources and translate them into what they called Kongish. Here's the front page of *Kongish Daily* as it stands in March 2020.



Figure 1. Front page of Kongish Daily

Under 'About', it states that 'This is a site written in Kongish for Hong Kong people. PS: This is a research site previously funded by the college research grant of Tung Wah College and currently maintained by the HKUST-TWC Kongish research group.' Under 'Our Story', it currently reads 'Kongish Daily is a local site sharing news in "Kongish".' But it used to state that 'Kongish Daily is a local site sharing news in Hong Kong English (Kongish).' This subtle change is highly significant in the context of the present article and we will return to this point later. Sewell and Chan (2017: 597-8) analysed an earlier version of 'Our Story' which contained the following:

Kongish ng hai exac7ly Chinglish.

The site is founded bcoz we want to collect relly research how people say Kongish by looking at everyone ge replies, including you and me, and share this finding to all people who think Chinglish = Kongish. But actcholly, Kongish hai more creative, more flexible, and more functional ge variety.

PS for secondary school chicken:

If you want to learn English, Sor(9)ly, this site ng wui help you learn more English, but to share news with you in Kongish, finish.

Sewell and Chan's (2017: 8) analysis goes like this,

'Kongish is a? blend of English and Cantonese that is characterised by the use of Cantonese words and expressions in romanised form, especially verb phrases such as hai ('is'), ng hai ('is not') and ng wui ('cannot'); there is a high degree of systematicity in these patterns. English usually predominates, but the Cantonese-ness of Kongish is asserted in multiple ways, including literal translations and unconventional spellings. The latter draw attention to Cantonese influenced pronunciations of English words (e.g., 'actually' as actcholly). The words with infixes (sor(9)ly and exac7ly, also written as sor9(r)y and exact7ly) represent so-called 'bad language', and demonstrate how the availability of keyboard characters is exploited to create the forms of Kongish. These forms also creatively exploit the fact that some number terms such as gau ('nine') have multiple meanings. There is abundant language play, for which Cantonese provides rich resources with its colourful idioms and ever-changing slang (Berg, 2013). In short, Kongish demonstrates various kinds of 'bilingual language play and local creativity' (see Luk, 2013).'

As mentioned above, *Kongish Daily* was an overnight success, attracting thousands of followers; the current figures stands at 49,820 (3 March 2020). Mainstream media also took notice of it. Earlier reports are listed in *Kongish Daily* itself, most of which described Kongish as a new form of Hong Kong English and emphasized its creative and playful nature of the language used in the Facebook page. Sewell and Chan (2017) raised the question: to what extent can Kongish be called a variety of English, indeed a variety of Hong Kong English? Their analysis showed limitations of the concept of 'varieties of English' and the variety-based approach, and highlighted the dynamic multilingual language ecology of Hong Kong that gave rise to Kongish and *Kongish Daily*. More recent discussions, whilst still largely couched in terms of Hong Kong English, have described Kongish as a language of protest (see: <https://theculturetrip.com/asia/hong-kong/articles/kongish-hong-kongs-language-of-protest/>). Hansen Edwards (2016) specifically linked *Kongish Daily* with the changing social attitudes in the post Umbrella Movement era. The 2019 protests against the extradition bill intensified the debate over Hong Kong's identity. In this context, Kongish has gained prominence in the lyrics of the song "Glory to Hong Kong", protest slogans and social media reports (Koo, 2019). On 18th of August 2019, *Apple Daily*, a popular Chinese newspaper in Hong Kong, carried a Kongish style headline 𠵼𠵼 Wai Yuen Gin (literally: today Victoria Park see. 'See you in Victoria Park today') to encourage them to join the protest. The online comments from its readers were also in Kongish style. It seems that Kongish has increasingly been seen as the default language for political activism in Hong Kong (Lim, 2019).

As the proverb goes, necessity is the mother of invention. So why did the creators of *Kongish Daily* feel the need to have the Facebook page and what needs of the ordinary Hongkongers has *Kongish Daily* met? In their interviews with various media outlets, the creators of *Kongish Daily* and co-authors of this article emphasized the reality checking aspect of their project, i.e. they wanted to document the innovation and change that were happening in the way multilingual Hongkongers, especially the post-1997 generations, communicated in daily social interaction. These changes went hand-in-hand with the socio-economic and political developments in the former British colony. There is no doubt that

since the handover of Hong Kong's sovereignty to mainland China in 1997, Hong Kong has remained a world's leading financial centre, with low taxation, almost free port trade and well established international financial market. The Economic Freedom of the World Index lists Hong Kong as the world's No. 1, i.e. with the highest degree of economic freedom, governed under positive non-interventionist government. It has also been able to capitalise on the rapid growth of mainland China as an exporter of manufactured goods and an importer of consumer goods and industrial machinery. Out of over 7.4 million population (end-2017), the unemployment rate in Hong Kong is less than 2.9%. Yet at the same time, the mainland's phenomenal economic growth since 1997 means that Hong Kong today is more reliant on the mainland and much less significant in relative economic terms; Hong Kong's GDP as percentage of China's GDP fell from 18.4% in 1997 to 2.8% in 2015. Hong Kong tourist board reported that the territory received eighteen times more mainland tourists in 2015 than in 1997, while the level of outgoing tourism from Hong Kong remained static. According to US consultancy Demographia, Hong Kong has the world's least affordable housing relative to income. As nearly 60% of Hong Kong's population are under the age of 40, property price has been a major social problem. Politically, the decision on electoral reform in Hong Kong by China's Standing Committee of the National People's Congress in 2014 that did not include universal suffrage for Hong Kong and the right for Hong Kong voters to elect the Chief Executive of the Special Administrative Region in 2017 triggered public protests that had not been seen before in Hong Kong and politicised the generation that has come of age since 1997. The Umbrella Movement in 2014, a largely student-led protest to demand universal suffrage in Hong Kong was a sure sign of the increased political activism among Hong Kong's youth and a strengthening of a local identity. Hansen Edwards (2016) cited an opinion poll by the University of Hong Kong which showed that just 3 per cent of Hongkongers aged between 18 and 29 described themselves as broadly 'Chinese', the lowest since the handover.

As it is often the case, language plays an important role in social change. And as Hansen Edwards' study (2016) showed, ethnic identity (i.e. identification as a Hongkonger) lies at the heart of growing acceptance and use of Hong Kong English. *Kongish Daily* was born in this context. A report in the student-run newspaper of the Chinese University of Hong Kong, *Varsity*, claimed 'Kongish ... is helping to redefine Hongkongers' identity ... The rise of Kongish also coincides with Hongkonger's heightened sense of local identity' (Chan, 2015). Similar observation was made by Li (2015) in *The Straits Times*, 'Kongish has obviously struck a chord among Hongkongers, at a time when the young especially are keen to highlight the city's uniqueness vis-à-vis mainland China'. The creators of *Kongish Daily* published a book documenting some of the distinctive features of Kongish (Wong, Tsang and Lok, 2017). In it, they reiterated the creative and playful nature as well as the socio-political dimension of the phenomenon.

Participatory Linguistics

As someone interested in multilingual creativity, Li Wei began to follow *Kongish Daily* in late 2015. He was invited to open the new Research Institute of Bilingual Learning and Teaching at the Open University of Hong Kong in December 2016 and in one of the talks he gave during his visit, he cited examples from *Kongish Daily*. Unknown to him, the creators of *Kongish Daily* and the co-authors of this paper were in the audience and they came up to him after the talk to introduce themselves. They have kept in touch with each other since

and engaged themselves in discussions of linguistic innovation and change, translanguaging and other topics through WhatsApp, email, and face-to-face meetings at conferences. The engagement process that had led to the writing of the present paper is what Li Wei has described as Participatory Linguistics (2017).

There is a well-established body of literature on participation in multiple branches of linguistics. For instance, in anthropological linguistics, language users actively participate in documenting, describing, and analysing the language they speak/use, including translation, writing grammar, etc. (Kutsch Lojenga, 1996). Sociolinguists and applied linguists have critically reflected upon ethical issues in engaging the language user in language research (Cameron, et al, 1992, 1993), especially with marginalized populations (Zentella, 1997; Leonard and Haynes, 2010; Czaykowska-Higgins, 2009; Rice, 2009; Stebbins, 2012). Rymes et al. (2017) advanced a programme of Citizen Sociolinguistics with deeper and critical engagements of ordinary language users and their everyday communicative practices (see also Svendsen, 2018). There is also discussions of 'linguistics of participation' – viewing language use as participation in social activity and the cultural world constructing and transmitting values (McDermott and Roth, 1978; Dore and McDermott. 1982), and moving the analytical focus from the production of codes, structures and systems to the production and reproduction of social practices, values, subjectivities, and ideologies. Building on the existing work, Li Wei's idea for Participatory Linguistics is informed in particular by Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (Smith and Osborn, 2008) and argues that (Li Wei, 2017):

1. The linguistic analyst's job is to try and make sense of the participants trying to make sense of their world, the 'double hermeneutic' (Smith and Osborn, 2008). What we are observing in linguistic ethnography is the participants trying to make sense of their world in real-life situations. By trying to make sense of their trying to make sense of their lives, we are participating in their social world as well. Indeed, their social world becomes part of ours and ours becomes part of theirs. But we must not pretend that we are presenting objective facts in our analysis; we are presenting our analysis of what we have observed which is necessarily subjective, and we should not be afraid to say so. In fact we as analysts have a responsibility to be open and explicit about our own social, cultural, political and ideological stance in presenting our interpretation and analysis and invite the reader to participate in our *analysis as a social act*.
2. Doing linguistics therefore has social consequences. We are participating in a social act, through the way we represent the community, the speakers, and their languages and language practices in our analysis. For a start, we as linguists have given names to communicative practices in communities and called them English, Arabic, Chinese, Dutch, Spanish, Swahili or Zulu, etc. And we often categorise the speakers/users of different languages as first, second, foreign language speakers or users. These names and categories carry specific social and political connotations beyond simple linguistic labels. A set of abstract codes is highly unlikely to be accorded any social status without a name or label. And the social status of the users is intrinsically linked to the names and labels of the codes. By describing someone as a second language user of English as opposed to a native-speaker of Arabic has serious social implications for their identity and expectations of their linguistic competence.

In the present project, we very much see our responsibility not simply as documenting and describing which named language is being used and how in the followers' responses to postings on *Kongish Daily*, but to participate in a social debate over the boundaries of named languages – a key position of the translanguaging perspective to which we turn in the next section. As mentioned above, Kongish is often taken as a new form of Hong Kong English or Chinglish. Through multiple levels of engagement and co-learning amongst us, we gained new perspectives and new thinking of the phenomenon. The 'Our Story' page of *Kongish Daily* currently contains the following statement:

Kongish =/= Chinglish; Kongish also =/= romanised Cantonese only; Kongish dou ng exactly hai Hong Kong English. If you ask little editers Kongish hai mud? Little editer can light light dick tell you: Kongish is a collective creation used and understood by Hongkongers ❤️<3

Only knowing English or Cantonese ng wui give you the full picture, you have to be a Hongkonger sin can fully understand our page, Kongish Daily 😊:))

This is a very different statement from the one the editors posted when the Facebook page was launched where Kongish was described as Hong Kong English. What the editors are now claiming is that linguistic knowledge of the two named languages, Cantonese and English, alone is not sufficient to fully appreciate the meaning and significance of *Kongish Daily*, one also needs to be quite familiar with the convention of language phenomena such as language switching, creative romanization of Cantonese in digital communication and so on, but crucially one needs to know what is happening in Hong Kong society. This is a good example of the impact of Participatory Linguistics where dialogues between the key participant researchers raised critical language awareness amongst themselves and changed their views on how Kongish is conceptualised.

The Translanguaging perspective: against the variety-based approaches

We are approaching *Kongish Daily* from the perspective of translanguaging (Garcia and Li, 2014). The routes to the current conceptualizations of translanguaging are well rehearsed (see especially Li Wei, 2018). The basic argument of translanguaging goes like this: named languages such as Arabic, Chinese, and English are socio-political constructs; they are not neurological entities; nor do they reflect psychological realities. Human beings process information and express their ideas and feelings with a combination of cognitive and semiotic means, of which language in the conventional sense of speech and writing is only one. Translanguaging is about transcending the boundaries between named languages and between language and other cognitive and semiotic means in sense- and meaning-making. And the *-ing* suffix in particular urges us to focus on the instantaneity and the transient nature of human communication (Lee and Li, 2020).

Translanguaging embraces multimodality - the simultaneous engagement of multiple modes in interaction. Indeed, recent work on transmodality and transmodalities emphasizes the interpenetration of modes that dynamically blend, shape, and reshape each other and consequently transform the shape of interaction (Murphy, 2012: 1969), and not only the 'simultaneous co-presence and co-reliance of language and other semiotic resources in

meaning-making', but also the capacity to destabilize and move beyond named categories of "modes" (Hawkins, 2018: 64). *Kongish Daily* is an example of transmodalities in action as video clips, images, different language scripts, emoticons, etc. are strategically interwoven, inviting multiple readings of the postings which at the same time offering a running commentary on a range of social issues in Hong Kong and beyond.

As Li Wei (2018: 23) points out, 'Translanguaging underscores multilinguals' creativity—their abilities to push and break boundaries between named language and between language varieties, and to flout norms of behaviour including linguistic behaviour, and criticality—the ability to use evidence to question, problematize, and articulate views' (see also Li Wei, 2011). In a recent study of what they call TransScripting – writing, designing and digitally generating new scripts with elements from different scriptal and semiotic systems, Li and Zhu (2019) advanced the idea of 'playful subversion'. The seemingly playful manipulation of rules and conventions is aimed at creating an alternative reality, afforded by new media technologies, that resists, challenge and subvert the status quo. The outcome is 'the mocking of authorities, the creation of alternative meanings and realities, the subversion and deception of roles, and the breaking of boundaries through play' (p. 13). Other studies of translanguaging in the digital environment include Panović, 2018, Spillioti, 2019, and papers from this special issue. We will examine examples of translanguaging playful subversion in *Kongish Daily* in this article.

The translanguaging perspective is preferred to a variety-based approach to the creative and dynamic phenomenon like Kongish for a number of reasons. First of all, as the creators of *Kongish Daily* very adeptly points out, Kongish is not Chinese or Hong Kong Chinese, nor is it English or Hong Kong English, nor is it China English or New Chinglish that some multilingual young social media users in mainland China are trying to reclaim (Li Wei, 2016). Kongish is more dynamic and spontaneous; it is translanguaging with an emphasis very much on the *-ing*. From a technical point of view, despite appearing to be a neutral term compared to others such as 'language' and 'dialect', the definition of 'variety' is very imprecise. As Hudson (1996) points out, the borders between varieties of the same type and between different types of varieties are often blurred and blurring and the nearest one can get to a definition of 'variety' is that it is a set of items with similar social descriptions. For Hudson, the solution thus is to avoid variety 'as an analytical or theoretical concept and to focus instead on the individual linguistic item' (p. 25). Perhaps most significantly, the notion of 'varieties of language' is so closely associated with notions of 'standard', 'national', 'native' languages that it cannot be used in any socio-politically and ideologically neutral way without reference to history, identity and power. Referring specifically to Kongish, Sewell and Chan (2016: 605) argues that 'the very concept of the variety, of a bounded linguistic entity associated with a particular location, is being undermined by the conditions of language use in "late modernity"' (See also Li Wei, 2020).

Let us now look into the contents of *Kongish Daily*. The examples are chosen by the editors and co-authors of the article, and they act as illustrations of the kinds of translanguaging practices one sees in *Kongish Daily*.

Translanguaging in action in *Kongish Daily*

Structure and content of Kongish Daily

As with most Facebook pages, *Kongish Daily* is essentially sharing news and postings by others to its followers and the general public. Most of the items it shares are either entirely visual, i.e. a picture or a video, or with texts written in full Chinese characters representing Cantonese or English. What is interesting about *Kongish Daily* is that it translates the texts or retells the story in Kongish (see Androutsopoulos in this issue for a different case), as the following example shows.



Figure 2. (Post title “Hong Kong airport handlers caught tossing baggage roughly,” 29 September 2018)

The page reposts an image from the Late Show showing airport ground staff roughly handling passengers’ suitcases in transit with the headline in Cantonese 香港機場疑有地勤掙篋 網民狂俾髒髒?, (Hong Kong airport handlers are suspected to literally throw cargo shipment to trolleys. Netizens found to be enraged?) the editors translate the headline in a sarcastic way: ‘Try ask d gorgors say goodbye and give a flying kiss next time after each bag-drop lor. Wui ng wui dor d ❤️❤️❤️ can give?’ (Why don’t ask those brothers for goodbye kiss to your luggage next time? Maybe more ❤️❤️❤️ will be given?). The translation is playful but also aims to arouse readers’ strong reactions.

Occasionally the editors post their own stories (see Figures 3 and 4), again in Kongish.



Figure 3 (Photo taken on 20 July 2017).

The editors of *Kongish Daily* published a book which was launched at the 2017 Hong Kong Book Fair, with gift stickers and accessories for sale. They promoted the event with the remarks: “Yau FREE Kongish Stickers, Yau CHEAP Kongish totebag, Yau PRICELESS Kongish textbook. Fai d cum here look and see la! Wanchai Bookfair Mingpao Counter (C04-16) – at 書展現場”. (There are free stickers, cheap tote bags, also our new book on Kongish! Have a look and you won’t regret! We are in the Wanchai Bookfair, at the Mingpao Counter (location: C04-16) in the Convention and Exhibition Centre.



Figure 4 Posting of 12 May 2017.

The editors to the office of *Mingpao Daily* to be interviewed about their book. They posted a self-portrait of the clothes specially designed with Kongish words “Diu” and “Exact7ly”, and wrote:

Visiting Mingpao Today 😊:) Of coz need wear har Kongish Tee ☐

(We had a chance to visit Mingpao today! Needless to say, we wore our best Kongish t-shirts.)

Dortze [Vintage Maze](#) ho hurry gam prepare the tshirt for us again ☐

(Thanks Vintage Maze for sponsoring us with the t-shirts within a very short time.)

An important part of the Facebook page is the followers’ comments and responses, and it was those that the creators of *Kongish Daily* were particularly keen to obtain as research data. The followers of *Kongish Daily* clearly understand what the Facebook page is about and most of their comments are in the same style of Kongish as the editors’ postings. Some of the comments then get highlighted by the editors via re-posting and sharing, as in the example below.



免費日本口罩for女仔 😊

🕒 啱啱來自 **maskforSex**

👍 1 Like

📅 新

☰ 睇 頭髮護理, 沐浴 & 身體護理

☰ 免費日本原裝口罩for女女
想搵知音人傾下計
岩傾約出黎交收
男仔免問
Dm傾
睇清楚個名ok先dm thanks
希望大家各取所需做個朋友

Kongish Daily « 港語日報 »
Published by Nick Wong 17 · February 6 · Edited

Hi maskforSex. Be frid ok?

🏷️ Tag Products · 📍 Add Location · ✎ Edit

22,637 People Reached · **9,176** Engagements · **Boost Post**

👍 266 · 43 Comments · 13 Shares

👍 Like · 💬 Comment · ➦ Share · 🗨️

Most Relevant

Veenasu Hayashi fyi the box in the pic ge mask is made in china ga lor... 500yen/60pcs.
Like · Reply · Message · 3w · Edited · 🗨️ 4

Ka Ka Tang Veenasu Hayashi now 8000 yen la 😊
Like · Reply · Message · 3w

Veenasu Hayashi aiii 好多日本人都冇炒 🤔
Like · Reply · Message · 3w

Reply as Kongish Daily

Gus Lee He is looking for his 5th ex girlfriend
Like · Reply · Message · 3w · 🗨️ 4

華特麥 2盒 thanks 🙏🙏🙏🙏
Like · Reply · Message · 3w · 🗨️ 1

Sheila Marie Hui Lilian Luk lollll
Like · Reply · Message · 3w · 🗨️ 1

Enzo Kwai Shing Yeung 俾仔真係好搵嘅心...
Like · Reply · Message · 3w · 🗨️ 5

Steins Steiner Leon Yeung Jack Poon 濕晒 🤔
Like · Reply · Message · 3w

華特麥 2盒 thanks 🙏🙏🙏🙏
Like · Reply · Message · 3w · 🗨️ 1

Cholam Ngan Charis Tam have mask fat fat 🤔
Like · Reply · Message · 3w · 🗨️ 1

Charis Tam Cholam Ngan u try
Like · Reply · Message · 3w

Reply as Kongish Daily « 港語日報 »

Tat Wong 情人節「快餐」優惠 🙏
Like · Reply · Message · 3w

Veenasu Hayashi fyi the box in the pic ge mask is made in china ga lor... 500yen/60pcs.
Like · Reply · Message · 3w · Edited · 🗨️ 4

Ka Ka Tang Veenasu Hayashi now 8000 yen la 😊
Like · Reply · Message · 3w

Veenasu Hayashi aiii 好多日本人都冇炒 🤔
Like · Reply · Message · 3w

Reply as Kongish Daily « 港語日報 »

Kavan Leung Maskfor6u0
Like · Reply · Message · 3w

Peter Hui Wendy Chow how to pick up girls 101 🤔
Like · Reply · Message · 3w · 🗨️ 1

Sheila Marie Hui Lilian Luk lollll
Like · Reply · Message · 3w · 🗨️ 1

Gus Lee He is looking for his 5th ex girlfriend.
Like · Reply · Message · 3w · 🗨️ 4

Figure 5. (Post title: “Exchanging masks for sex,” 6 February 2020)

Figure 5 captures a post on Carousell, a web-based marketplace for consumers to buy and sell brand-new and second-hand products. In the post, a user named “maskfor5ex” offers facemasks for free, remarks that the products are intended for girls (“女女”) exclusively, and stresses that boys are refrained from contacting the seller (“男仔免問”). The seller also requests to chat with the potential buyers and befriend them. The *Kongish Daily* editors repost the screen capture with the caption “Hi maskfor5ex. Be frd (befriend me) ok?” The post has received 8.8k clicks and 387 reactions, comments and shares amid the outbreak of coronavirus. Alongside the surging prices of surgical masks, the Carousell seller’s demands seem extraordinary as the post foregrounds the gender-specificity of the buyers and hints possible exchange for a sexual relationship. One follower of *Kongish Daily* responded with ‘markfor6u0’, mimicking the seller’s name. ‘6u0’ needs to be read upside-down as “On9,” which is homophonous with the vulgar Cantonese expression ‘idiot’ (“鸚鳩”).

The responses to this post also contain the following exchange:

Commenter A: *fyi the box in the pic ge mask is made in china ga lor... 500yen/60pcs* . (‘For your information, the box of masks in the picture is made in China. 500 yens for 60 pieces.’)
Commenter B replied on A’s response: Commenter A now 8000 yen la □ (‘To commenter A: it costs 8000 yen now.’)

Both lines have Romanised Cantonese functional words, such as the possessive marker *ge*, and the particles *ga lor* and *la*. The followers clearly follow the *Kongish Daily* style in communicating with each other.

Choice of topics

The affordance of the structure of the Facebook page determines the level of contribution and involvement by different participants. The editors decide what gets posted and shared on *Kongish Daily*. Followers and other readers can react with ‘like’ or by adding comments or sharing on their own Facebook page. Whilst the style of the presentation is usually playful and entertaining, the topics of the postings and sharings often concern controversial socio-political issues.



Figure 6 (Post titled “Experienced persons always act more tactfully”, 19 April 2019))

Figure 6 shows a *Kongish Daily* page where a video of the US President Trump speaking at a Republican fundraising dinner in Washington, DC, is reposted. During the speech, Trump underlined his friendly relationship with the Chinese President Xi. ‘President Xi, who is a strong man, I call him king. He said, “But I am not king, I am president.” I said, “No, you are president for life, and therefore you are king.” He said, “Huh huh.” He liked that. I call him king. I get along with him great.’ The headline 他喜歡我叫他皇帝 (literally: He likes my calling him the Emperor.) is superimposed on the image with an English subtitle ‘He liked that I called him King.’ The editors also added their own comment on the top with an English translation of a Chinese idiom ‘Old ginger always spicy’ (姜還是老的辣), meaning experienced persons always act more tactfully. Xi instigated a change to the Chinese constitution in 2018 that abolished the term limit of the presidency, in effecting enabling him to be president for life. Despite the fact that this is a taboo topic in mainland China, Chinese social media users have been particularly creative in circumventing censorship and voice their discontent. Trump’s comment appeared to be mocking Xi. In reposting the story, the editors of *Kongish Daily* have avoided commenting directly on the issue. But their sentiment is fairly clear.

KONGISH DAILY
港語日報

Kongish Daily 《港語日報》
@KongishDaily

Home
About
Posts
Photos
Videos
Events
Community
Info and ads

Write a comment...

Kongish Daily 《港語日報》
1 October at 18:18 · 🌐

Bin gor govern China, bin gor mai hai #ChineseGovernment lor
#onechinapolicy



HK.NEWS.APPLEDAILY.COM
【涉款\$5.8萬億】美國人持國民政府債券要中共還錢 大陸網民：搵錯人？

40
4 Comments 4 shares

Allen Tam Cheuk Fung 有著數先堅持一中是常識吧，贏國一直都係公我贏，字你輸架啦 🤔
Like · Reply · See translation · 4d

Zayin Wong 堅持一個中國，冇錯啊！ 🤔
台灣係「中華人民共和國」既其中一個省咁嘛，冇錯啊 🤔
Like · Reply · See translation · 4d

Shane Crawford Funny that the PRC insisted they were a party to the New Territories lease and didn't send the British off to find the long lost relatives of the Qing to negotiate a renewal...

Ri Kam Mi 無事就認親認戚，有事就割蔞潛水，台灣都司空見慣。
Like · Reply · See translation · 1d

Figure 7 (Post title “Chinese Government being urged to repay antiquarian bonds”, 1 October 2018)

Figure 7 reposts the news of the US government demanding China to repay the national debentures issued by ‘the Chinese Government’. But these debentures were issued by the Kuomintang government which ruled mainland China until 1949 when it fled to the island of Taiwan and continued to call it the Republic of China (NB. Kuomintang is no longer the ruling party in Taiwan.). The communists founded the People’s Republic in 1949 and has continued to claim that Taiwan is an integral part of China, through the One-China policy. Mainland netizens reacted to the US government demand by saying ‘搵錯人’ (found the wrong person), entailing that the US should have asked Taiwan to repay the debt. The

comments left by the followers include ‘有着數先堅持一中是常識吧, 贏國一直都係公我贏, 字你輸架啦’ (They insist One-China Policy only when there are benefits. This country plays the coin game with you on the principle that they win for face, and you lose for tail.) and ‘無事就認親認戚, 有事就割席潛水, 台灣都司空見慣’ (They claim to be your family members when there is no conflict, and whenever there is any, they abandon their liability at once. Taiwan is used to that.). The comments surprised many mainland Chinese who assumed that Hongkongers had little awareness of or interest in mainland China-Taiwan relations. They show instead a high level of socio-political sensitivity amongst the social media users of Hong Kong.



Figure 8 (Post title "Entry presence of ‘masturbate’ and absence of ‘freedom’ in Xinhua Dictionary," 13 April 2019)

Figure 8 is an example of playful commentary on a serious and politically sensitive issue. The 2019 edition of a student Chinese dictionary published in mainland China excluded the collocation '自由' (*zi you*; freedom), but has ‘自慰’ (*zi wei*; masturbate). This has not gone

unnoticed by the editors of *Kongish Daily*. In their posting of the story, the editors make use of the Chinese punctuation for books 《》 and made up a title *Sec-Sch Chick Dick-tionary* (Dictionary for Secondary School Kids), playing on the words and pronunciations of Sec-Sch (short for 'secondary school' but could be pronounced as 'sex'), Chick (for children), and Dick. They then provide examples of usage for both lexical items, but under Zi You (free/freedom), it uses the cyber slang '404 not found', meaning that it has been censored. Publication freedom in Hong Kong in a sensitive topic and has been hotly debated in the local media. The *Kongish Daily* editors participate in the debate in their unique ways.

The language and metalanguage of *Kongish Daily*

Apart from being a hybrid of scripts, symbols and styles, the language of *Kongish Daily* clearly orients towards Cantonese speakers. The following extract is discussed by Sewell and Chan (2016):

Many boss Day-day say, E+ di 90-after gei University graduates, keoi dei gei English ho rubbish. Wrong grammar, un-proper style, poor pronunciation. Cannot write or speak English goodest-ly. But, Hong Kong di university-s ming ming hai teach in English. After study for 4 years, should be gooder than secondary school ga wor. Dim gai gei, Dim gai gei, Dim gai wui gum gei? Gor problem hai where? (Kongish Daily, 2016)

Although it contains numerous English words, a monolingual English speaker with little experience of social media communication would have difficulty understanding the meaning, and the humour, of the text. The Facebook page plays on this insider exclusiveness of Kongish, and for that reason, it is regarded by its followers and the general public as an identity marker and the real language of the post-1997 Hongkongers. A translation of the above text in standard English would be:

Many bosses say this everyday: Nowadays, many univeristy graduates who were born at the 1990s were poor in English, exemplified by wrong use of grammar, inappropriate style, and poor pronunciation. They could not write or speak English well. But Hong Kong universities were indeed using English as the medium of instruction. After studying for four years, they should have been better than secondary school graduates. How come? How come? How come it would be like this? What's the underlying problem? (*Kongish Daily*, 2016)

Kongish Daily 《港語日報》 shared a post.
Published by Alfred Tsang [?] · 4 April at 18:11 · 🌐

If you hv already date your frd for drinks and ng duck haan to visit your ancestor, try this service.
Still a way to show your HOW heart.

am730
4 April at 13:15 · 🌐 Like as your Page

線上祭祖、直播掃墓，遲下會唔會有VR拜山? 🙄
【代客掃墓全程直播 重慶墓園：體現孝心】
<http://bit.ly/2la5eqF>
... See more



AM730.COM.HK
代客掃墓全程直播 重慶墓園：體現孝心 - 新聞 - am730
am730香港公信力第一的免費報紙 新聞 代客掃墓全程直播 重慶墓園：...

12,371 People reached 1,053 Engagements Boost Unavailable

👍👎🗨️ Cherry Law, Lydia Chan Ho Fai and 148 others 8 comments 20 shares

👍 Like 💬 Comment ➦ Share 🌐

Oldest ▾

Annika Chg Like ng is give to the news but your goodest konglish
Like · Reply · Message · 1w 👍 1

Figure 9 (Post title "Tomb-sweeping service to help commemorate ancestors," 4 April 2019)

Figure 9 is an example of language play that features prominently in *Kongish Daily* postings. The story that is being shared regards a new ‘tomb-sweeping’ service in mainland China. The Chinese traditionally visit the tombs of their deceased relatives several times a year, on their birthday, anniversary of death, Tomb-Sweeping Festival, etc. Some have to travel long distances to do so. There is now a business in China where people can pay for someone else to visit the graveyard, clean the tomb and conduct ceremonies as required. The service can be recorded on video or even broadcast live to the paying customer. The editors write ‘If you hv already date your frd for drinks and ng duck haan to visit your ancestor, try this service. Still a way to show your HOW heart’ (*If you have already got a date [on that day] and unavailable for the duty, try this service. It is still a way to show your filial piety.*). Here, ‘ng duck haan’ is a phonetic representation of the Cantonese phrase ‘唔得閒’ (Jyutping:

m4 dak1 haan4; lit. *not free*), part of it is Anglicised, where ‘duk’ is represented as ‘duck’. This is followed by ‘HOW heart’ in the second line, where it stands for ‘孝心’ (Jyutping: haau3 sam1; lit. *heart for filial piety*). This kind of language play enhances the sarcastic effect.



Figure 10. (Post title "A horse on road," 22 March 2019)

Some posts showcase translingual humour. As shown in Figure 8, a horse escaped from an equestrian centre and walked on the road with cars. The scene attracted people’s attention. Some commented that ‘馬路有馬好正常’ (*It is normal to have horse on road.*), where ‘馬路’ (*road*, but literally ‘horse-road’) originally referred to roads built for carriages. When the editors shared the post, a disclaimer was added to inform readers who do not understand Chinese that they might not be able to read the joke and continued, ‘Road have horse, very normal. Don’t forget, Horse sin hai Road gei Master’ (*It is normal to have horses on the road; Afterall, it is the Horse who is the Master of the Road.*).

In addition to the language mixing and playing we have discussed so far, there is another phenomenon which could be described as ‘metalanguaging’, using creative translanguaging to comment on language practices. Figure 9 is an example.



Figure 11. (Post title "Cantonese line found in Japanese drama," 8 March 2019)

To many non-Chinese speakers, Cantonese and Putonghua are dialects of the same language, Chinese. But this is a sensitive topic amongst the Cantonese speakers in Hong Kong, many of whom believe that Cantonese is a separate language and should have equal status as Putonghua if not higher in Hong Kong. An episode of the Japanese television series 'Le Uru Onna' (My Home is My Business) talks about the difference between Cantonese and Putonghua and involves some demonstration of Cantonese. Japanese TV programmes are popular in Hong Kong, but usually Hongkongers watch with subtitles, either in Chinese or English. The editors of *Kongish Daily* picked up the story and reposted it with a comment 'First time no need subtitle gum watch Japanese Drama 🍻', celebrating the experience of watching a Japanese television programme without subtitles for the first time.

Figure 12 is also metalanguaging on a language issue but with much more political sensitivity.



Figure 12. (Post title "A proclamation to serve the Chinese Communist Party by a so-named Taiwan lady," 19 March 2019)

At a session of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference in early 2019, a Hong Kong delegate who proclaimed her origin in Taiwan expressed her gratitude to the Chinese Communist Party to rescue and strengthen the country. She further expressed her personal wish that mainland China and Taiwan could be unified, so that Taiwan residents could become ‘true Chinese’. The editors wrote a comment in the reposting, starting with ‘Hi Taiwan MM’ (*Hi Hottie from Taiwan*), then questioning the representativeness of the delegate’s view ‘Your Putonghua very standard wor. Not even 1% Taiwan accent. In what way you represent Taiwan or HK lei?’ (*You can speak standard Mandarin Chinese. Not even 1% Taiwan accent. In what way do you think you can represent the ordinary view of people in Taiwan or Hong Kong?*). Whilst the comment is on her seemingly perfect Putonghua accent, it is also about the identities of Taiwan and Hong Kong vis-à-vis mainland China. It is a commentary on the delegate’s political alliance and shows the editors’ stance.

As we can see, most of the postings do not follow standardized transliteration or Romanization systems of Cantonese or Putonghua, nor standard English orthography. They often need to be read aloud in order to comprehend the meaning. This contributes to the reading of *Kongish Daily* as a translanguaging process whereby the reader needs to go beyond single modality and engage multiple cognitive and semiotic cues.

Visual and multimodal representations

Like practically all Facebook pages, *Kongish Daily* is a visual representation. All the postings have images to go with them, and in full colour. Very often, video clips with sounds are posted. Figure 11 is a set of examples from a video where the dialogues are in Cantonese, accompanied by Chinese and Kongish subtitles.

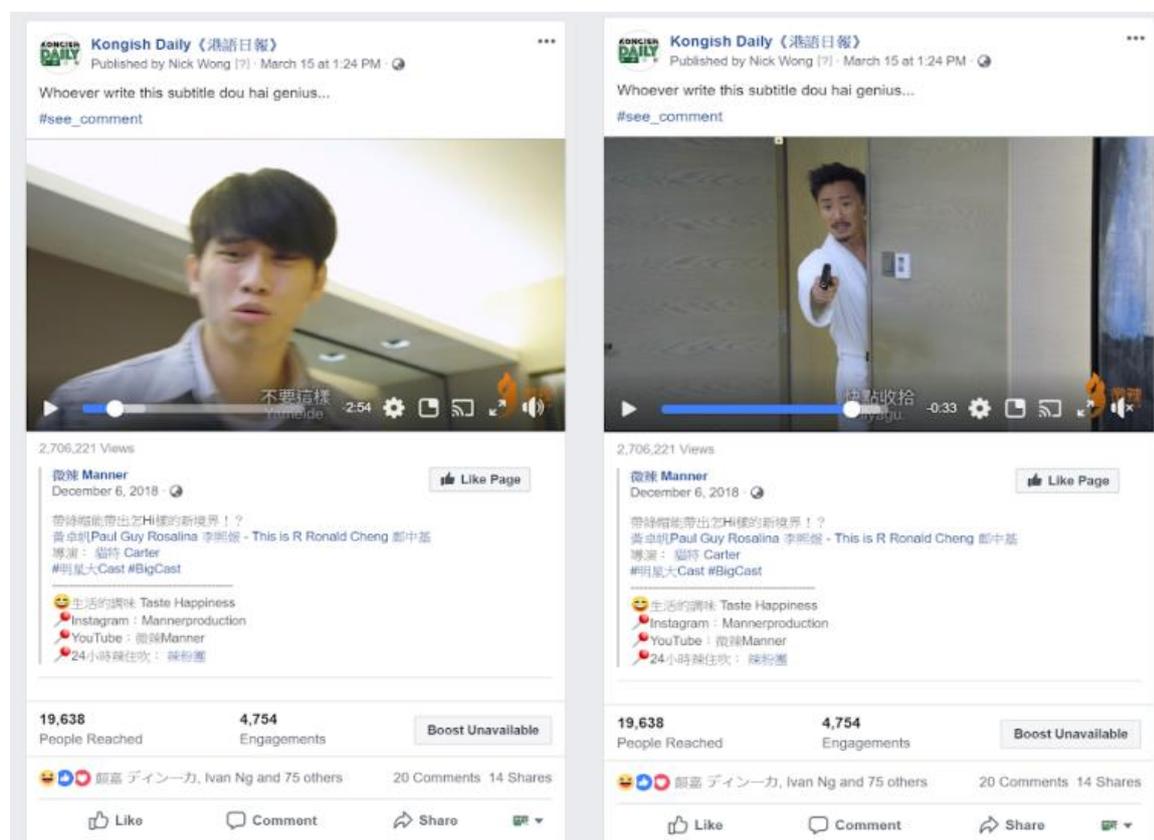


Figure 13. (Post title “Interesting English and Japanese subtitles used on a video produced by Manner”, 15 March 2019)

The dialogues are about a triangle affair between the boyfriend, the girlfriend, and Dragon Gor (Girlfriend’s secret lover). *Kongish Daily* shared this video with a comment *whoever write this subtitle dou hai genius* (‘whoever write this subtitle is indeed a genius’). Usually subtitling is meant to help the audience to understand the dialogue. But in this case, the audience have no problem understanding the dialogues. The subtitles act as a kind of meta-commentary on the contents of the dialogues and are meant to poke fun of them. The subtitles also contain phrases in Japanese. Japanese is a popular foreign language in Hong Kong and Japanese expressions are often seen in public spaces. Japanese entertainment programmes have lots of followers in Hong Kong. Many people therefore have passive knowledge of some Japanese phrases and expressions. Some of the Cantonese dialogues in these video clips have been translated into Japanese in the subtitles. For instance, *唔好咁啦* (‘Don’t be like this’) and *快啲執* (‘hurry up and pack’) are written as “Yameide” and “Hiyagu” respectively. They are phonetic transliteration of “やめて” meaning “stop” and “早く” meaning “as soon as possible” in English alphabet. Note that the transliteration is only an approximate and not in standard alphabetic spelling; for example, 早く is normally

spelt as “hayaku” but this subtitle is spelt as “hiyagu” instead. Furthermore, the spoken Cantonese dialogue and the Chinese subtitle includes the action of “packing”, but the transliteration in Kongish excludes that. The subtitles here add another dimension to the multimodal environment where the audience needs to go beyond languages and beyond modalities in achieving an understanding of the story.

All the *Kongish Daily* postings are embedded in multi-scriptal texts, often with emoticons and other signs and colours. Each page then is a sign, and a Translanguaging sign where the boundaries named languages, between language script and other signs and symbols, between language and other visual cues are blurred. Figure 14 is an example of multidimensional visual signs one can see on Kongish Daily pages.



Figure 14 (Post title: “Chinese 101,” 9 June 2018)

The editors shared a poster with different Chinese expressions containing the word 'heart' 心 in which both a literal and a more colloquial English translation is given for each expression and accompanied by coloured drawing. The editors added a comment:

Although man can sometime be ho flowerheart,
but some will be realheart when they find their sweetheart.
#old_post_revision

The meaning intended in this Kongish comment is that although men may fickle in love, some of them will still be single-minded when they find their beloved. The post was 'liked' by a total of 2,859 people and elicited 360 reactions, comments and shares. Some of the comments involving the theme of "heart":

- They forgotten glass heart
- Throw up heart
- I like DOT heart
- *Kongish Daily* You yau heart
- You left out dimsum.

These responses are literal translations of Chinese expressions into English, a form of Chinglish that multilingual Chinese social media users are particularly good at manipulating for strategic purposes (Li Wei, 2016).

Glass heart = 玻璃心 = very sensitive and emotionally vulnerable

Throw up heart = 嘔心 = disgusting

Dot heart = 點心 = dim sum, typical Cantonese cuisine of small bite-sized portions of food served in small steamer baskets or on a small plate

Yao heart = 有心 = have heart, being considerate

Dimsum = 點心 = typical Cantonese cuisine of small bite-sized portions of food served in small steamer baskets or on a small plate

These examples also echo Fung and Carter's (2007) that relexicalization is one of the linguistic processes in the 'invention' of a new variety in of the e-discourse. The mixing of signs in digital social media is often strategically deployed through literal translation and phonetic transliteration with emoticons, images and other signs. Boundaries between named languages and between language and other semiotic signs are deliberately manipulated and broken, a key feature of translanguaging practice.

Co-learning: Benefits of participation

The authors of the present article came into this Participatory Linguistics project from different backgrounds, with different knowledge and understanding of the local context and of the communicative practices amongst social media users in Hong Kong. We all shared an interest in linguistic creativity and the fluid multilingual practices, and we genuinely wanted to learn more, from one another as well as from the followers and contributors to *Kongish*

Daily. We did not intend to teach each other anything specific; nor to aim to achieve consensus in terms of our interpretation and understanding. As mentioned earlier, the creators of *Kongish Daily*, all Hong Kong-born who have received part of their education abroad, initially described Kongish as a new variety of Hong Kong English. They believed that by affirming its status with the name Kongish, they were promoting a new identity of the post-1997 Hongkongers. They are themselves users of Kongish, passionate for linguistic innovation and multilingual creativity, and concerned for the future of Hong Kong. Li Wei, on the other hand, was born in mainland-China, has spent some time in Hong Kong, and has worked in Britain for most of his career. As a researcher of Translanguaging, Li Wei has studied a number of post-multilingualism phenomena such as New Chinglish (2016) and Transcribing (Li and Zhu, 2018). He believes that mixing is an integral part of language evolution. Whilst he advocates the reclaiming of terms such as Chinglish for geopolitical reasons, he feels frustrated that the scholarship in intensive language contact regions such as Hong Kong and Singapore has remained largely of the variety of English type (cf. Kirkpatrick, 2015). When he first noticed *Kongish Daily*, he was particularly excited about its subversive potential, both in terms of linguistic and socio-political ideologies and in terms of research. He encouraged the creators of *Kongish Daily* to think of Kongish not as a variety of English or another named language, but as a communicative practice with creative and critical capacity. It has been a genuine, and ongoing, dialogue amongst this group of researchers with no clear division between the researcher and the researched; we are all keen to gain a deeper and richer understanding of the Kongish as a communicative practice, the context in which it has emerged and the role it plays in contemporary Hong Kong society. The benefits of our participating in this project are mutual, and we have all gained sociolinguistic and socio-political sensitivities through multiple levels of engagement. As a result, the contents of *Kongish Daily* are subtly changing: whilst maintaining the entertainment value of postings, there are more discussions of the socially and politically sensitive issues that concern the ordinary people of Hong Kong, including, for example, topics of the position of Taiwan vis-à-vis mainland China, the amendment of the Chinese constitution to abandon the fixed term of the presidency, the saga of Brexit, etc. The creators of *Kongish Daily* now more firmly believe in Kongish in its own right and no longer describes it as a variety of Hong Kong English (see also Androutsopoulos, 2010).

Summary and Implications

Within less than five years, *Kongish Daily* has grown from an experiment by three young linguists wanting to collect data on everyday communicative practices of ordinary people of Hong Kong to a well-established social media outlet that in itself has been the subject of media coverage and research. The phenomenal success is due to the fact that it captures sociolinguistic realities of the post-1997 Hong Kong and fills a gap in Hong Kong media landscape. It plays on the affordances of the digital environment to assert a distinctive identity of Hong Kong at a time of rapid socio-economic and political changes. Here are some of the comments from the followers of *Kongish Daily*:

"We think we've found our Kongish soul mates!"

"Kongish really mou tak ding." (Kongish really is the best.)

"Want to check just how "local" you are? Check Kongish Daily."

Milky Choi Kongish ng hai jing hai language, hai CULTURE ah! Yi every language doe base on culture ga, Kui accept ng doe just becoz kui Chinese/ Cantonese ng ho!

Zero Fung kongish daily 係比到香港人一種文化認同，肯肯定唔係教人英文、叫人黎學英文，更加唔係宣導香港學生用呢種「英文」。咁都分唔到已經唔係語文能力嘅問題，係判斷力嘅問題。

Amy So I seriously think that only ppl who are good at English sin can understand Kongish Daily geh posts lor. 😞

Antony Tsang Really? I don't think this will affect our language skills. As long as they know what is English and the page is Konglish. Besides, it could be an adapted language in HK and can be considered as one of the culture in HK, in a linguistic aspect. Not a pro tho 😊

Like · Reply · Message · 🇺🇸 3 · May 18 at 12:23am

Macarius Chan World go go country dou have their own ge English, gwai lou actcholly ng give sh*t gah lor... Un jau ok, ng un jau pk, it's that simple.

Like · Reply · Message · 🇺🇸 🤔 2 · May 18 at 12:27am

Zoe Chan one must know english and cantonese well sin can understand this page lor, phonics good sin can read kongish gah mah -,-

Like · Reply · Message · 🇺🇸 3 · May 18 at 12:54am

Peter Woo Humor is a sign of intelligence. Those who don't get it will never get it so forget about it. Kongish ho ho play ar, don't give up ar.

Like · Reply · Message · 🇺🇸 2 · May 18 at 1:14am

Figure 15 Comments extracted and reflecting readers' attitudes towards Kongish

Kongish Daily is an example of the translingual digital writing commonly witnessed in the 21st century. Whilst digital communication of this kind may seem to be different from conventional writing, it continues to make use of the writing scripts and alphabets of different named languages, with an interesting resurgence of stylised signs and symbols such as emoji. In this article, we have examined how different writing systems are combined with emoji and other visual signs to create *Kongish Daily*. Given the speed and volume of the interactions via digital media, one often gets the impression that instantaneity and transiency overtake durability as the key features of writing in 'liquid modernity' (Bauman, 2000). Yet the interactions are recorded in cyberspace and kept for a very long time to come. The recording is often multimodal, inviting a multimodal and multidimensional analysis.

Kongish as embodied in *Kongish Daily* has been studied as a 'new variety of Hong Kong English' (e.g. Hansen Edwards, 2016; Sewell and Chan, 2017). We have in our study approached it from a translanguaging perspective, seeing it as a social practice and emphasizing the *trans-ing* dimensions of the practice, i.e. transcending and transgressing boundaries and limits, and the spontaneous and transient nature of the practice. Essentially this approach means that we take the Facebook page of *Kongish Daily* as a sign, with a meaning potential, and read it holistically. And it is a Translanguaging sign that transcribes and transcripts standard news items and daily events multilingual, multi-scriptal, multimodal and multisensory signs through creative and playful use of multiple cues. The meanings of the signs are open to interpretation, depending on the reader's own experience, knowledge, and ideology. Followers, contributors as well as the editors of *Kongish Daily* all play a part in the dynamic Translanguaging process.

Through engagement at multiple levels, the authors of this article not only shared their different experiences, knowledge and ideologies but also developed linguistic and social sensitivities by learning from each other. The research process was not simply us trying to collect data and analyse them seemingly objectively. We have been participating in a social project that promotes plurality in society and the development of socio-cultural sensitivity and subjectivity. We are also encouraging a debate over the future of Hong Kong society including the future of its multilingualism.

Acknowledgements:

The writing of this article not only involved intensive exchanges between the authors, but also benefited from discussions with Tong King Lee of Hong Kong University and Zhu Hua of University of Birmingham. Li Wei wants to acknowledge the support from the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), UK, for its grant AH/L007096/1 that enabled him to develop the ideas of Translanguaging and Participatory Linguistics. Alfred, Nick and Pedro would like to thank Robert Bauer, Arthur McNeill, Lisa Lim, Jette Hansen Edwards, Katherine Chen and Carmen Lee for their unfailing support and practical advice since the early stage of the research project; special thanks are also due to Peter Tai for his assistance in compiling the *Kongish Daily Corpus*. An earlier version of the paper was presented at the workshop 'Multilingual Writing – methodologies and concepts across contexts', hosted by MultiLing, University of Oslo, 9-11 October, 2018. We are grateful for the organisers and the participants of the workshop for the opportunity and their extremely useful comments. The editors and the reviewers of this special issue offered the most insightful comments which hugely improved the quality of the final presentation of the paper.

References:

- Androutsopoulos, J. (2010). Localizing the global on the participatory web. *The handbook of language and globalization*, 203-231
- Cameron, Deborah, E. Frazer, P. Harvey, B. Rampton, and K. Richardson. 1992. *Researching Language: Issues of Power and Method*. New York: Routledge.
- Cameron, Deborah, Elizabeth Frazer, Penelope Harvey, Ben Rampton, and Kay Richardson. 1993. "Ethics, Advocacy and Empowerment: Issues of Method in Researching Language." *Language & Communication* 13 (2): 81–94. doi:10.1016/0271-5309(93)90001-4.
- Chan, T. (2015, December 14). Do you speak Kongish ar? Retrievable at: <http://varsity.com.cuhk.edu.hk/index.php/2015/12/kongish-hong-kong-english-redefine-identify/>
- Coulmas, F. (1989). *The writing systems of the world*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Coulmas, F. (2003). *Writing systems: An introduction to their linguistic analysis*. Cambridge University Press.
- Coulmas, F. (ed.) (1996). *The Blackwell Encyclopedia of Writing Systems*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Czaykowska-Higgins, Ewa. 2009. "Research Models, Community Engagement, and Linguistic Fieldwork: Reflections on Working within Canadian Indigenous Communities." *Language Documentation and Conservation* 3 (1): 15–50.
- Dore, J., & McDermott, R. P. (1982). Linguistic indeterminacy and social context in utterance interpretation. *Language*, 58(2), 374-398.
- Elmer, K. (2019, April 3). Donald Trump reveals he called Xi Jinping 'king' – and says Xi liked it. Retrievable at:

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3004431/donald-trump-reveals-he-called-xi-jinping-king-and-xi-liked-it>

- Hansen Edwards, J. G. (2016). The politics of language and identity: Attitudes towards Hong Kong English pre and post the Umbrella Movement. *Asian Englishes*, 18(2), 157-164.
- Hawkins, M. R. (2018). Transmodalities and transnational encounters: Fostering critical cosmopolitan relations. *Applied Linguistics*, 39(1), 55-77.
- Hudson, R. A. (1996). *Sociolinguistics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kirkpatrick, A. (2015). Chinese English or English Chinese? *Global Chinese*, 1(1), 85-110.
- Koo, F. (2019, October 18). Identity crisis: To address the cause of Hong Kong's unrest, look to Quebec. *Inkstone*. Retrieval at: <https://www.inkstonenews.com/opinion/identity-crisis-address-cause-hong-kong-unrest-look-quebec/article/3033492>
- Kutsch Lojenga, C. (1996). Participatory research in linguistics. *Notes on linguistics*, 73(2), 13-27.
- Lam, J. (2019, March 6). Extradition agreement with mainland China would damage Hong Kong's 'safe reputation' for business, AmCham says. South China Morning Post. Retrieval at: <https://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/politics/article/2188915/extradition-agreement-mainland-china-would-damage-hong-kongs>
- Lee, T.K. and Li, Wei (in press) Translanguaging and momentarity in social interaction. In De Fina, A. and Georgakopoulou, A. (eds) *Cambridge Handbook of Discourse Studies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Leonard, Wesley Y., and Erin Haynes. 2010. "Making 'Collaboration' Collaborative: An Examination of Perspectives That Frame Linguistic Field Research." *Language Documentation & Conservation* 4 (December). University of Hawai'i Press: 269–93. <http://scholarspace.manoa.hawaii.edu/handle/10125/4482>.
- Leung, K. Y. R. (2019, September 21). Insurgent tongues: how loose Cantonese romanisation became Hong Kong's patois of protest. *Hong Kong Free Press*. Retrieval at: <https://www.hongkongfp.com/2019/09/21/insurgent-tongues-loose-cantonese-romanisation-became-hong-kongs-patois-protest/>
- Lewis, G., Jones, B., & Baker, C. (2012a). Translanguaging: Origins and development from school to street and beyond. *Educational Research and Evaluation*, 18(7), 641-654.
- Lewis, G., Jones, B., & Baker, C. (2012b). Translanguaging: Developing its conceptualisation and contextualisation. *Educational Research and Evaluation*, 18(7), 655-670.
- Li Wei (2011) Moment analysis and translanguaging space: Discursive construction of identities by multilingual Chinese youth in Britain. *Journal of pragmatics*, 43(5), 1222-1235.
- Li Wei (2016) New Chinglish and the post-multilingualism challenge: Translanguaging ELF in China. *Journal of English as a Lingua Franca*, 5(1), 1-25.
- Li Wei (2017, July) Translating Karate: A Translanguaging perspective on learning, with contributions from Zhu Hua and Daria Jankowicz-Pytel. Keynote speech at the 15th International Pragmatics Conference, Belfast.
- Li Wei (2018). Translanguaging as a practical theory of language. *Applied Linguistics*. 39/1: 9–30
- Li Wei (2020) Multilingual English users' linguistic innovation. *World Englishes*. DOI: 10.1111/weng.12457
- Li Wei & Zhu Hua (2019) Transcribing: playful subversion with Chinese characters, *International Journal of Multilingualism*, 16:2, 145-161, DOI: 10.1080/14790718.2019.1575834

- Li, X. (2015, December 13). 'Kongish' speaks to hearts of Hong Kongers. Retrievable at: <http://www.straitstimes.com/asia/kongish-speaks-to-hearts-of-hong-kongers#xtor=CS1-10>
- Lim, L. (2019, August 30). Do you speak Kongish? Hong Kong protesters harness unique language code. *Inkstone*. Retrievable at: <https://www.inkstonenews.com/opinion/do-you-speak-kongish-hong-kong-protesters-harness-unique-language-code-empower-and-communicate/article/3025068>
- Lum, A. (2019, March 26). Hong Kong-mainland China extradition plan to be watered down by exempting 9 economic crimes, under intense pressure from business community. *South China Morning Post*. Retrievable at: <https://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/law-and-crime/article/3003320/hong-kong-mainland-china-extradition-plan-be-watered>
- McDermott, R. P., & Roth, D. R. (1978). The social organization of behavior: Interactional approaches. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 7(1), 321-345.
- Murphy, K. M. (2012). Transmodality and temporality in design interactions. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 44(14), 1966-1981.
- Panović, Ivan (2018). "You don't have enough letters to make this noise" - Arabic speakers' creative engagements with the Roman script. *Language Sciences*, 65, 70-81
- Rice, Keren. 2009. "Must There Be Two Solitudes? Language Activists and Linguists Working Together." In *Indigenous Language Revitalization: Encouragement, Guidance and Lessons Learned*, edited by Jon Reyhner and L. Lockard, 37–59. Flagstaff, AZ: University of Northern Arizona.
- Rymes, Betsy, Geeta Aneja, Andrea Leone-Pizzighella, Mark Lewis and Robert Moore. 2017. Citizen sociolinguistics: A new media methodology for understanding language and social life. In Ana De Fina, Didem Ikizoglu and Jeremy Wegner (eds.) *Diversity and Super-Diversity: Sociocultural Linguistics Perspectives*. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press. 151– 170
- Sewell, A., & Chan, J. (2017). Hong Kong English, but not as we know it: Kongish and language in late modernity. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 27(3), 596-607.
- Smith, Jonathan, Osborn, Mike, 2008. Interpretative phenomenological analysis. In: Smith, Jonathan (Ed.), *Qualitative Psychology*. 2nd edition. Sage, London, pp. 53–80
- Spilioti, T. (2019). From transliteration to trans-scripting: Creativity and multilingual writing on the internet. *Discourse, Context & Media*, 29, 100294.
- Stebbins, Tonya N. 2012. "On Being a Linguist and Doing Linguistics : Negotiating Ideology through Performativity." *Language Documentation and Conservation* 6: 292–317.
- Svendsen, B. A. (2018). The dynamics of citizen sociolinguistics. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, 22(2), 137-160.
- Wong, Nick, Tsang, Alfred and Lok, Pedro (2017) *Kongish Daily: Laugh L Die. Old News is Still Exciting, and Perhaps Educative*. Hong Kong: Xiao Ming Wen Chuang
- Yip, P. (2018, October 6). Solid minimum wage policy will benefit Hong Kong's lower paid. *South China Morning Post*. Retrievable at: <https://www.scmp.com/comment/insight-opinion/hong-kong/article/2167302/solid-minimum-wage-policy-will-benefit-hong-kongs>
- Yu, Pricilla (2015, August 10) *Kongish Daily: Hong Kong's hottest new facebook page*. Retrievable at: <https://coconuts.co/hongkong/news/kongish-daily-hong-kongs-hottest-new-facebook-page/>
- Zentella, Ana Celia. 1997. *Growing up Bilingual : Puerto Rican Children in New York*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers.