

**Afterlives:
Dis/Reorienting Thoughts on Evolution and Vitality**

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This presentation has as its aim the disorienting/reorienting of our thinking on evolution and vitality – of languages, communities, artefacts – and, consequently, the contemplation of how the concept of afterlives serves to frame our analyses in ways more nuanced and poignant. My first consideration is in the field of minority and endangered language communities, where I use as illustration the Peranakan community in Singapore, and their evolving language practices and vitality over different eras, which have been discussed in discourses such as those of language shift, revitalisation, postvernacular vitality, and authentication. I also address the contact dynamics involved in the evolution of new varieties of English in multilingual ecologies, focusing specifically on that most distinctive and instructive feature of Hong Kong English (or perhaps more appropriately, Kongish), the Cantonese phrase 加油 *gaa1jau4*, in its vitality that has seen it not only getting calqued as English/ Kongish add oil, and crossing from computer-mediated communication to non-CMC domains, but also evoked widely in art and politics. The paradigm of afterlives would appear to elegantly accommodate these scales of community, language, artefact, and poignantly capture and represent the complex temporality of succession and causality, the ideologies and social forces that underpin, and the continuity, ubiquity, and ramifications of a phenomenon's existence.