Belonging and mobility: A translanguaging perspective

JAMES SIMPSON, HONG KONG UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

TRANSLANGUAGING IN THE AGE OF (IM)MOBILITY, 13 JUNE 2023

Johnson pledges to make all immigrants learn English.

“I want everybody who comes here and makes their lives here to be, and to feel, British – that’s the most important thing – and to learn English. And too often there are parts of our country, parts of London and other cities as well, where English is not spoken by some people as their first language and that needs to be changed.”

(*The Guardian*, 5 July 2019)

Outline

Introduction

Translanguaging: A concept worth fighting for

Tlang: Translanguaging space

Belonging and Mobility

Migration & Settlement: Trans-semiosis and belonging

Navigating Belonging: A translanguaging space of belonging

Conclusion: New perspectives on belonging and integration

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Translanguaging is the sociolinguistic term now commonly used to describe and account for how people bring into interaction, according to their needs, their different histories, biographies and repertoires – verbal, visual, gestural and embodied – as they communicate with one another in linguistically and culturally diverse places.

[a trans- disposition] signals the need to transcend the named and bounded categories that have historically shaped our thinking about the world and its inhabitants, the nature of knowledge, and communicative resources. Thus, from a ‘trans-’ perspective, we must consider movement across nations and cultures, spaces and places, modes and semiotic resources, and autonomous named languages.

(Hawkins & Mori 2018:1)

Transcending language boundaries: How a speaker might potentially use their ‘full linguistic repertoire without regard for watchful adherence to the socially and politically defined boundaries of named (and usually national and state) languages’

(Otheguy et al 2015: 283)

(cf. Cenoz & Gorter: ‘Softening the boundaries between languages’ [2021:1])

Bilingualism and translanguaging debates

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Gumperz, J. (1964) Linguistic and social interaction in two communities. *American Anthropologist* 66(6) Part 2: 137-153.

Hornberger, N. H. and De Korne, H. (forthcoming, 2023) Minoritized/Indigenous language revitalization, in Li, W., Zhu, H. and Simpson, J. (eds.) *The Routledge Handbook of Applied Linguistics* (2nd ed.) Vol 2, 349-361.

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New Literacy Studies: Barton, D., Hamilton, M. and Ivanic, R. (2000) *Situated Literacies: Theorising Reading and Writing in Context.* Routledge.

Multimodality: Kress, G. and van Leeuwen, T. (1996) *Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design*. Routledge.

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The ability to choose between following and flouting the rules and norms of behaviour, including the use of language, and to push and break boundaries between the old and the new, the conventional and the original, and the acceptable and the challenging.

(Li 2011: 1223)

A free and active subject who has amassed a repertoire of resources and who activates this repertoire according to his/her need, knowledge or whims, modifying or combining them where necessary.

(Lüdi & Py 2009: 159)

Translanguaging space: ‘a politicised space, a space for the encounter and negotiation of different forces’

(TK Lee 2015: 3)

(cf. Harvey 1989, De Certeau 1988)

Aim: To understand how people communicate across diverse languages and cultures

The TLang project

AHRC, 2014-2018 (AHRC AH/L007096/1)

Principal Investigator:
Angela Creese, University of Birmingham (now at Stirling)

Teams in Birmingham, Cardiff, Leeds & London

http://tlang.org.uk

Translation and Translanguaging

Translation and Translanguaging: Investigating Linguistic and Cultural Transformations in Superdiverse Wards in Four UK Cities

The TLang project in Leeds

Team

Mike Baynham

James Simpson

Jolana Hanusova

John Callaghan

Jessica Bradley

Emilee Moore

Case studies

Business

Heritage

Sport

Law

Translation and Translanguaging

Translation and Translanguaging: Investigating Linguistic and Cultural Transformations in Superdiverse Wards in Four UK Cities

Heritage phase case study: Monika

Monika aspires to setting up cultural spaces for Roma people in Leeds.

With the support of others, she tried to transform her available cultural capital into something that would preserve and consolidate heritage and would also earn her a living. She did this by starting to set up a socially beneficial business, for which she needed to write a business plan.

(Baynham et al 2016)

a dance school; some office where I can support clients with my advocacy; do some parties; people will come to me and I can help them call job seekers; I will do like drop-ins; my job's gonna be get them some ESOL [i.e. English] classes; zumba classes; carnival; advising them; take them somewhere; support them to go to GP [i.e. doctor]; to be their hand.

(Baynham et al. 2016: 39; Bradley & Simpson 2019)

you'll need to find the wages so the point I'm gonna make to you is
I hear exactly what you're saying (.) but what I'm gonna (.)
the point I'm gonna make to you (.) is that advocacy service
what I'm I'm gonna help you to do is you're gonna tie it into the benefits (.)
package it in such a way that for example benefits agencies (.)
you're gonna say to them (.) I've got a package here
cause they're struggling and they want to get people off benefits
and you're gonna say to them (.) look at this amazing package
I've got here (.) if you refer people to me
I can get people off benefits by doing a, b, c, d, e
you see what I mean (.) or you package (.) or have a package here
because the GPs are struggling because people from
our communities and your communities they keep on going
for antidepressants they can't sleep (.) they this and that
so the GPs are spending a lot of money on GP visits if you go to the GP (.)
and say with the package you've got here you can cut down the amount of people
going to them if you refer people to me that's what I'm gonna help you
to think about that's what I'm gonna help you see

Positioning is a discursive process whereby ‘people are located in conversations as observably and subjectively coherent participants in jointly produced storylines.’

(Davies & Harré 1999: 37)

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Belonging

Belonging: a major concern in public and political debate

Associated with arguments about social integration and immigration

Belonging, non-belonging and not-yet-belonging are prominent for migrants

Belonging is

- Translocal
- Complex
- Dynamic
- Intersectional

People express, represent and enact their belongings interactionally

Language is *decentered*: The point is not to deny language but to provincialize it: to recognize its limits, to acknowledge its constructedness, and to open ourselves up to a world of communicating and knowing beyond – or beside/s – words.

(Thurlow 2016: 503)

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Arts practice offers ‘a public site for the abstracted discussion of contentious issues’ (Stupples & Teaiwa 2016: 11), for example the issue of what it is to belong.

MIGRATION AND SETTLEMENT

Extending the Welcome

Arts practice and belonging for adult migrants

How do people who are attempting to settle in a new country – and those working with them – express and perform their translocal belongings through arts practice and language?

What communicative resources do they draw upon as they do so?

How do their belongings relate to wider political contexts and social structures?

MIGRATION AND SETTLEMENT

Extending the Welcome

(2016-2017)

PI James Simpson (now HKUST)

Co-PI Jessica Bradley (now University of Sheffield)

Researcher Sam McKay (Community Theatre Director)

Faceless Arts

RETAS Leeds

Key Participants Théo (RETAS), and Ruth (Faceless Arts)

M&S

10 x weekly workshops

12 student participants

Arts activities (singing, story-telling)

→ A shadow puppet performance

Visual linguistic ethnography

Ethnographic research takes on characteristics of the people and places under investigation, following the rhythm of what is being observed

(Pink & Morgan 2013)

- Conceptualisation
- Making
- Devising
- Performance

Phase 1 Conceptualisation

We join the interaction as Théo responds to the question of how he felt when he first arrived in the UK from his home country, Guinea

T: Théo; R: Ruth; J: Jessica

1. **T: like this colour**
2. **J: ah:: ok like a red (.) a greyey red**
3. **R: clay**
4. **J: clay clay**
5. T: I think the: now my country is the first
6. country have most (.) bauxite in the world
7. R: oh ↑really
8. T: yes mm we used to er firstly was mm Australia
9. J: ok
10. T: and then Australia sent off and then
11. make them country (.) rich (.) now it's my country (.)
12. the second one
13. R: so what do they do with bauxite then
14. T: they do with a lot of things you see (4.0)
15. ((everyone looks at some information on a phone))

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15. **((everyone looks at some information on a phone))**

16. R: that's about mining it

17. T: yes like mining

18. R: so and er to use the minerals for

19. T: yes

20. R: I dunno ↑building ↑construction

21. T: nope no I think here what I (1.0) the first word

22. when you was reading (1.0) ok

23. it is a mixture of it was aluminium oxide

24. aluminium ( ) clay ( )

25. J: oh so there's clay in it ok (.) quartz min- ok
26. R: lots of stuff in it then (.) I suppose
27. you can like if you know how to (.) well
28. obviously they would they can (.) separate
29. all of the different metals (.) to do
30. different things with it
31. J: mmm
32. R: the princ- principle ore of aluminium er:
33. where does it um where's what is it again (3.0)
34. J: [that's so interesting
35. R: [wow (2.0) uses primary work yeah so it's
36. just used for aluminium
37. J: ok
38. R: which is very obviously very needed very used isn't it (.)
39. cool so that's what the country that your country (1.0)
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83. T: I I left my [country

84. R: [can I get a pe- have you got a pen on you

85. so it would be good to like make some [notes

86. J: [yeah

87. R: so we've got like we'd if we just talk and then

88. we can talk about

89. T: ok

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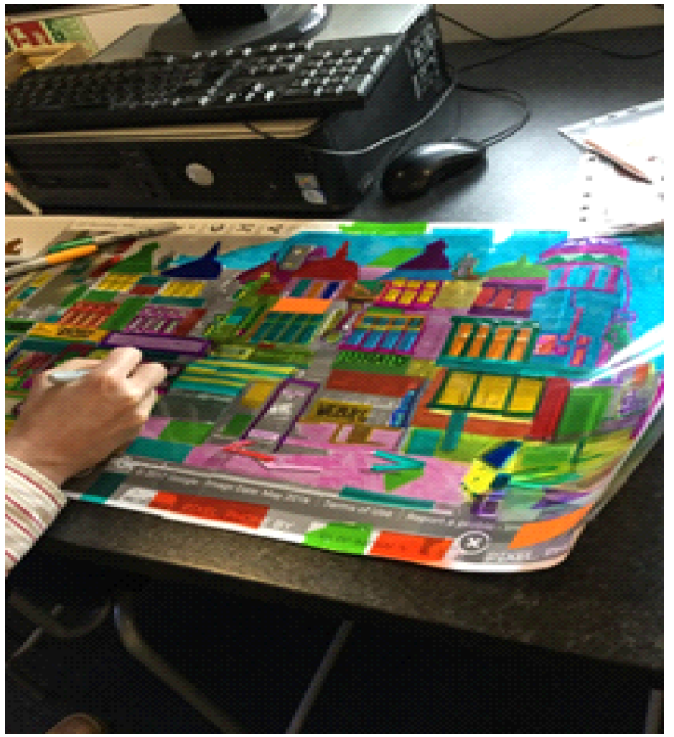
Phase 2 Making

Elements from three stories (including Théo's) which have been shared during the first phase are developed into a short shadow puppet play.

The stories are resemiotised (Iedema 2001) as their key visual aspects are brought to the fore.



Phase 3 Devising

The *devising* process runs alongside the physical *making*.

Discussion of choices about the production

- mode of expression
- media
- aspects of the stories to highlight

Further negotiation between Ruth and Théo about his story, as it is shaped through interaction prior to its public telling.

Phase 4 Performance

The story is recorded and edited, to be played as part of the performance.

As Théo speaks for the recording, Ruth and Jessica help him find the words and sometimes the longer utterances.

1. **R: do you want to say about that**
2. T: ((whispers)) yeah ok (1.0) ((speaks aloud)) mm
3. this the er the ground is different to mine in
4. here because my country the ground is is er is
5. like the ground the colour is like
6. ((whispers)) what is this colour
7. **R: like er a**
8. T: ((whispers) like this
9. **R: rusty (.) orange**
10. **J: mm it's clay erm:**
11. **R: cl- like a I would s- we would know w- what you**
12. **meant by a clay [clay a red clay**
13. **J: [clay a red clay**

14. R: (.) do you want to start that saying that the ground

15. in my country is a red clay colour

16. T: ok my ground er the ground of my country is the

17. red cl- colour but here the co- is like (.) black

18. a little bit black

19. J: uhuh

20. T: it’s not really black

21. J: uhuh

22. T: the er the country have a most er bau- bauxite

23. in this world is my country

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https://vimeo.com/221776776

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4:33-4:52

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but here the co- is like (.) black

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Michelle Pang
Anish Mishra
Jennifer Li Ge
Ahnaaf Mohamed Lebbai

https://nexusbrn.hkust.edu.hk/

Navigating Belonging: *Exploring settlement for South Asians in Hong Kong through narratives and participatory photography*

How do people in South Asian communities in Hong Kong define, find and negotiate their belonging?

***

Linguistic ethnography (Rampton et al 2004 etc)

Visual ethnography (Pink 2013)

Collaborative ethnography (e.g. Hackett et al 2017)

Narrative research (De Fina & Georgakopoulou 2012)

Photovoice (Wang & Burris 1997) & Digital storytelling (e.g. Robin 2008)

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0 (mi) 8

Navigating belonging for South Asians in Hong Kong

Identity

O'Connor 2018a, b; Ng et al. 2019; Chen and Yip 2015

Language use and learning

Dhaliwal & Cariola 2021; Gao 2018; Lai et al. 2015; Gu et al. 2019; Lui 2011

Media and online representation

Jackson & Nesterova 2017; Lai & Tai 2021

Language-based minoritisation in education policy

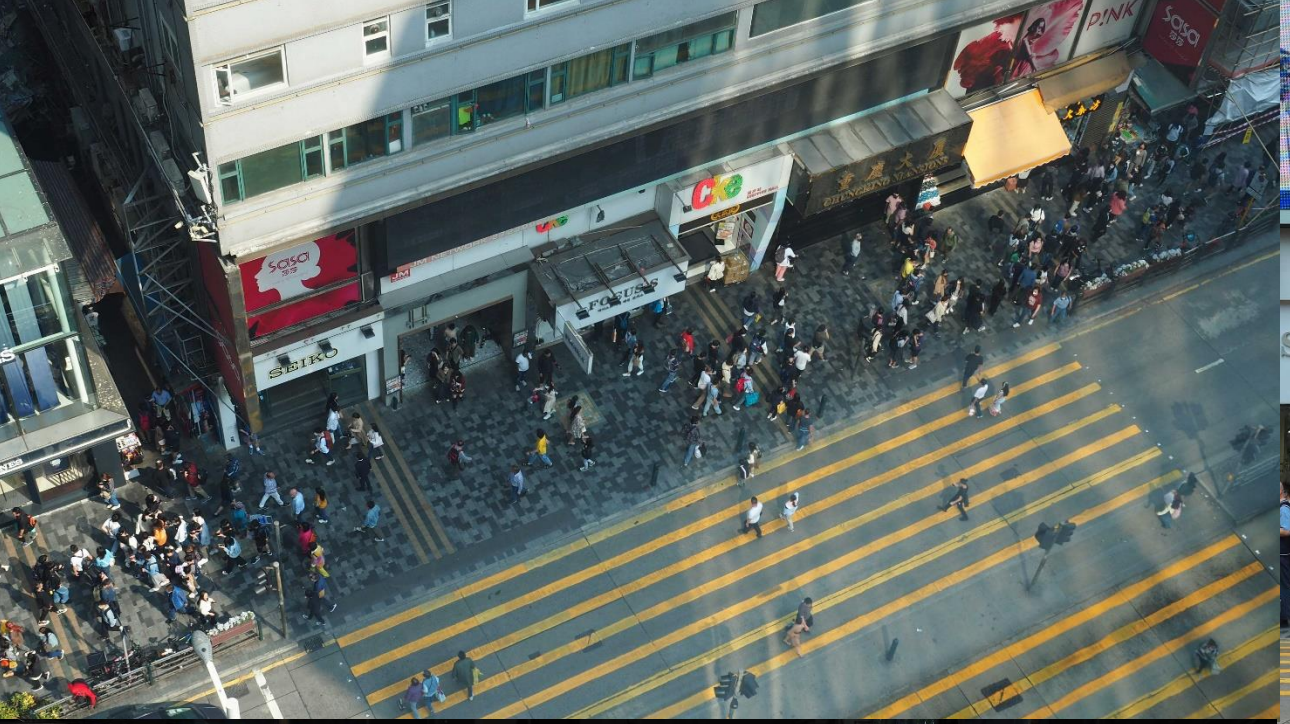
Bhowmik et al. 2018; Gu & Patkin 2013; Fang 2019; Li 2017

Racial discrimination; its challenge and agency

Crabtree & Wong 2013; Bhowmik & Kennedy 2016; Perez-Milans & Soto 2016

Participants and settings

Phase 1



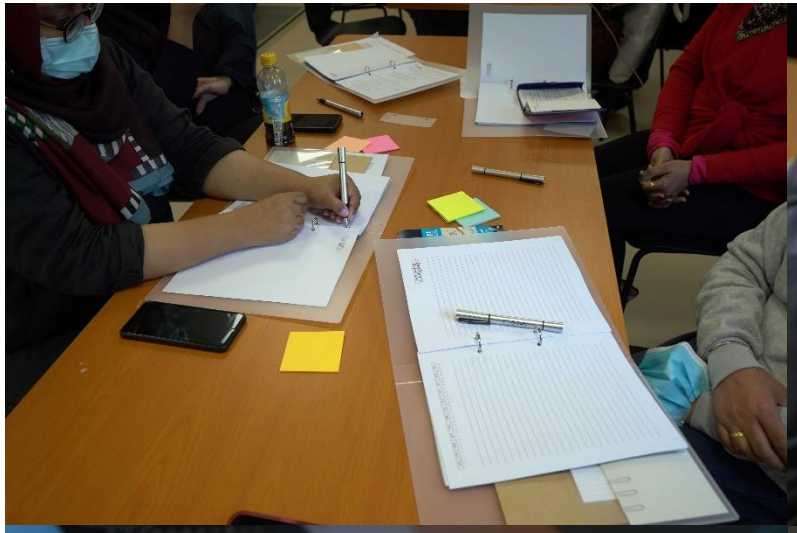
Centre for Refugees,
Chungking Mansions,
Nathan Road, Kowloon

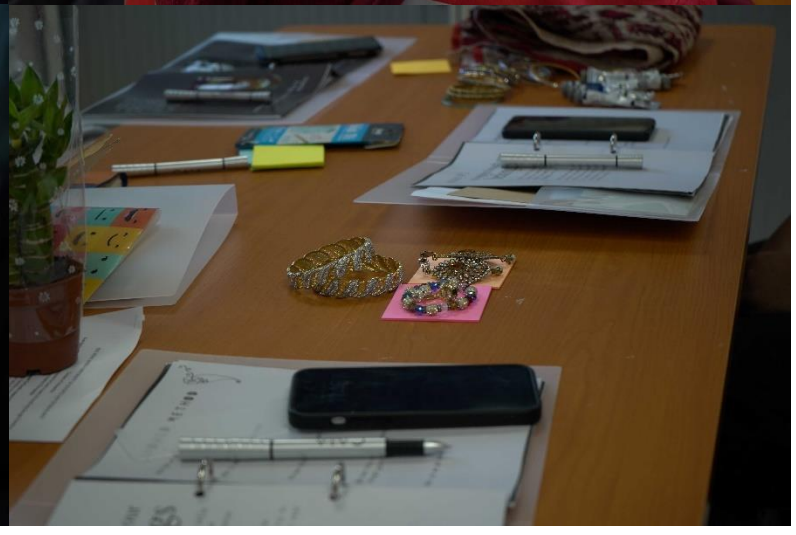
Participants:
Rosy, Uzi, KK, Laxmi and A

Photovoice and digital storytelling

Photovoice Workshops led by Christine Vicera

Digital Storytelling Workshops led by Michelle Pang





Engaging with belonging through photography

Photowalk and photovoice

JAMES' FIELDNOTES, PHOTOVOICE WORKSHOP 3

12.58 We have uploaded our photos to the Padlet, and end the session by talking about it.

A, talking about her photos, comparing HK with home (Pakistan). Inevitable comparisons? She makes these spontaneously. More or less everything she says, it seems, prompts her to compare HK with 'my country'.

Rosy took a photo of a waterfall in the park, and tells us of being at the same place 28 years ago, when she accompanied her husband to HK on a business trip. She took a photo there at the very same place with her son who was 3 years old at the time.

CHRISTINE'S FIELDNOTES, PHOTOVOICE WORKSHOP 3

Photowalk

Teaching them the photolock on the phone + lighting

- As we were walking to Kowloon Park, we noticed how Sam Bhai opened up a new store. A and D stopped by to see the pani puri stall.

- Suggestion that we do our next photowalk at CKM

- A agreed saying that there are things at CKM reminds us of home

- Rosy says she'd rather not think about Sri Lanka, home is where she is now. Home was painful for her, the kidnapping, the torture

R's photo of the waterfall and her story about her visiting Hong Kong with her son and husband in the 1980s

R: **and one is very important one this one this this waterfall I remember for 28 years back** (.) when I my son [was

J: [really really

R: yeah when my son elder son three years so we will come back to the Hong Kong to visit

J: yeah

R: **then that time same place I took the photo I have with me next time I will bring in show to you**

J: tell us more about the first time you saw this pho- this waterfall

R: waterfall really my son very loudly and he said mom I want take photo come come then yeah he’s very young and small yeah three years old (.) that time

J: was this when you first arrived in Hong Kong

R: no no my son yeah 28 years back when my son was three years old so my husband take us visiting to Hong Kong

J: so you visited

R: [yes

[...]

R: **visiting I went many times (xxx) yeah Singapore Malaysia Thailand India and China Hong Kong so er that time I carry with my son also because he's alone three years old so my husband always used to bring me and my son together when he was doing business**

J: so he was working and you were with your son just to be tourists in Hong Kong

R: yes because my son er order goods from China you know there so many material and er textile we have shop also in [home country] so that time my son want to purch-

[...]

R: so he’s ask me to okay let's go together three of us then visit Hong Kong and go China and

J: and did you like it when you [visit it

R: [yeah yeah really

J: yeah

R: **I I thought safe that's that's ri- that's the reason I came back to again**

J: and that's why you came here

R: yeah came

J: you what you thought of [Hong Kong as a place to come

R: [yeah yeah yeah

J: when you left [home country]

Photowalk and photovoice

JAMES' FIELDNOTES, PHOTOVOICE WORKSHOP 4

Today's atmosphere in the workshop is very friendly, familiar. **Rosy brought in photos of her family in HK from 25 years ago,** when she came as a tourist/accompanying her husband on a business trip. She took photos of her little son, then aged three, in Kowloon Park. Last week, we took photos in precisely the same place, 25 years later. The photos she showed us were old, battered, water-damaged…

A translanguaging space of belonging

In the multilingual and multimodal environment of the workshops, we can relate this to Li Wei's understanding of a translanguaging space:

a space for the act of translanguaging as well as a space created through translanguaging

(Li Wei 2011:1223; see also Bradley et al 2018; Bradley & Simpson 2019, 2020; Simpson & Bradley forthcoming)

LAXMI'S BELONGINGS

Belongings for me is about festivals, Culture and food of your country for me its INDIA.

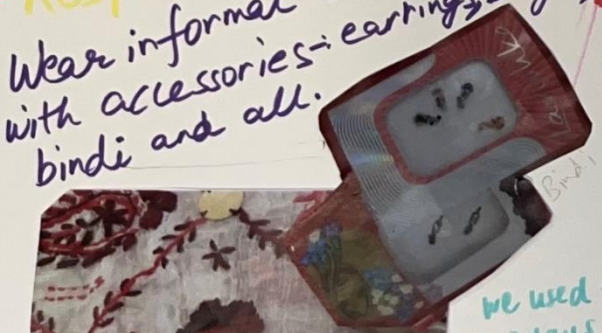
Luxmi from India.

Culture:

* Reunion of family at festivals,
* Exchange of gifts with relatives and neighbours
* Make different food and sweets

Rituals:

* Pray at festivals with family members
* Respect elders
* Wear informal clothes with accessories: earrings, bangles, bindi and all.

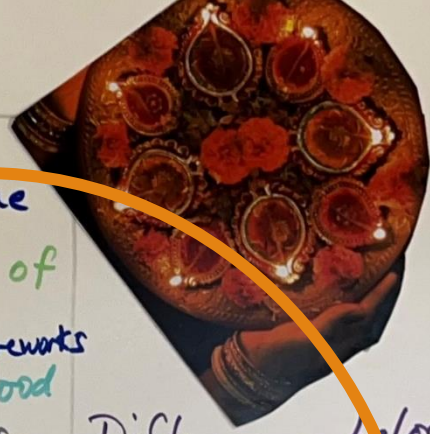


FESTIVAL

Festival:

DIWALI: festival of Light
* Candles, Diyas, fireworks
* Gifts, Sweets, food

HOLI: festival of Colours
* Balloons of water, Putting colours on each other
* Gujiya sweets



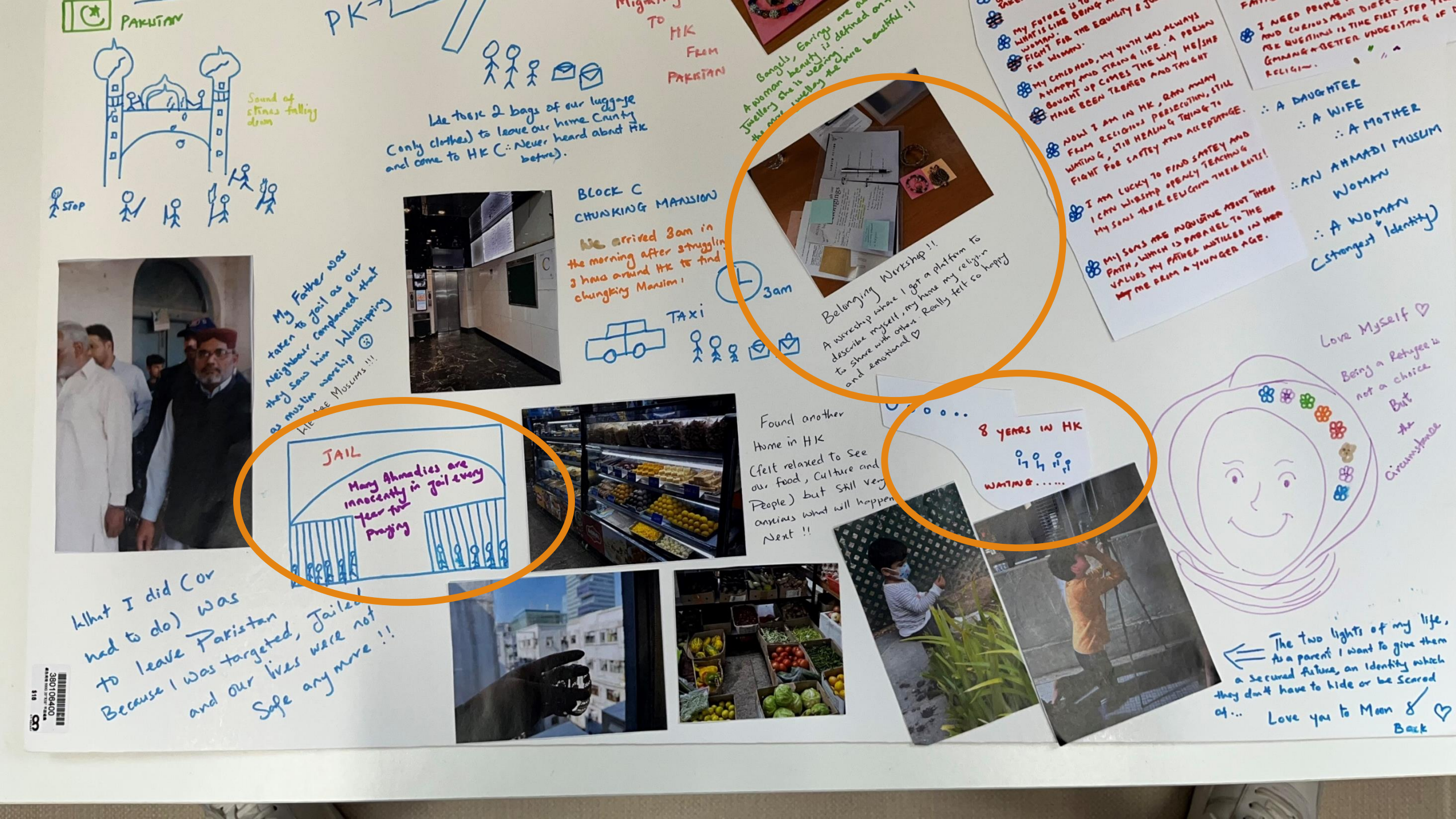
Difference in belongings in HK:
* Crowded home
* No time for family festivals
* Hard to find Indian veggies and food like: red carrot, Desi ghee, egg Plant (Small), beans etc.
* Tiny rooms
* Confusted Kitchens

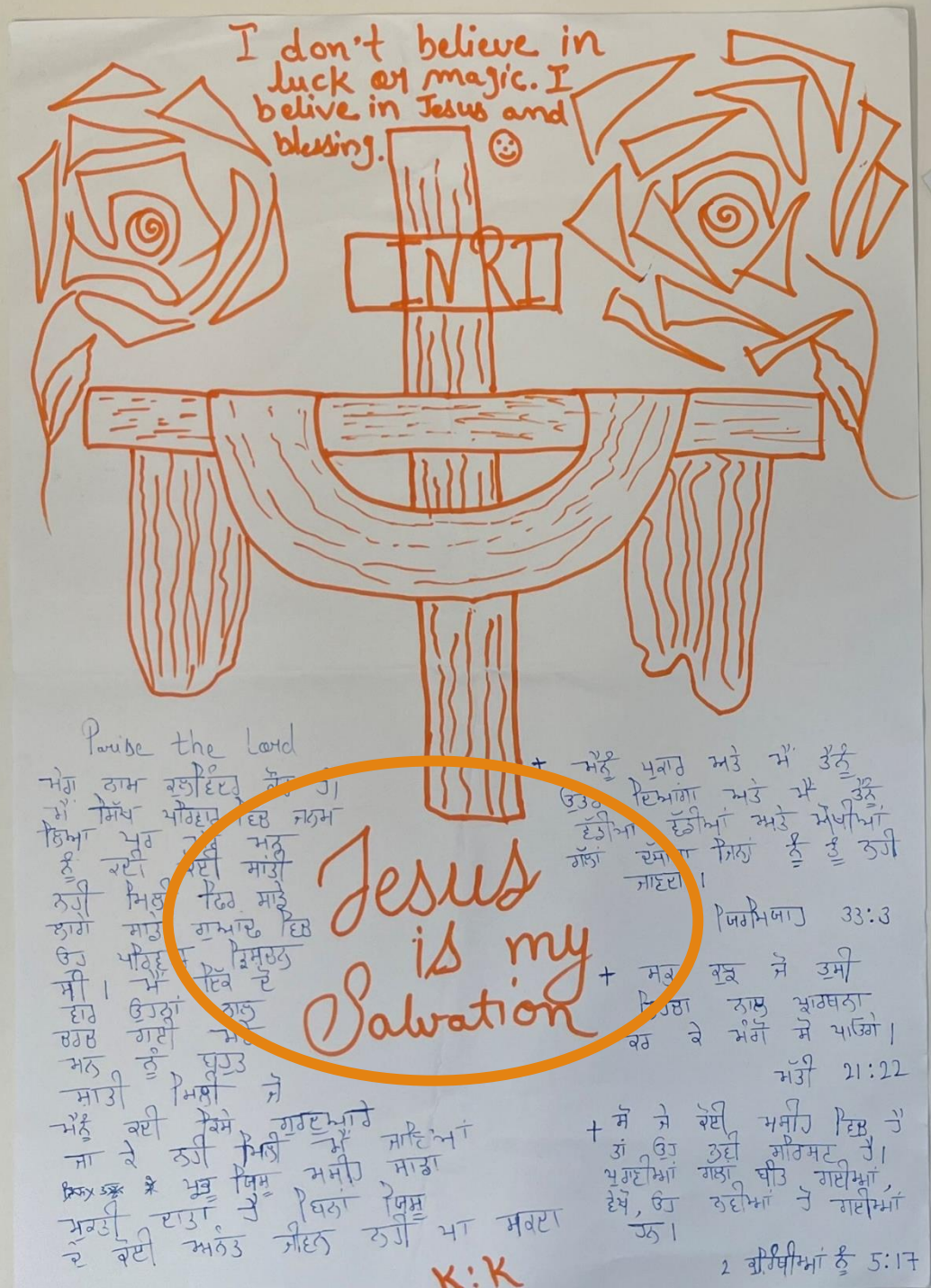
Belonging to me means your home culture, how you celebrate festivals, how you much time you give to family members.

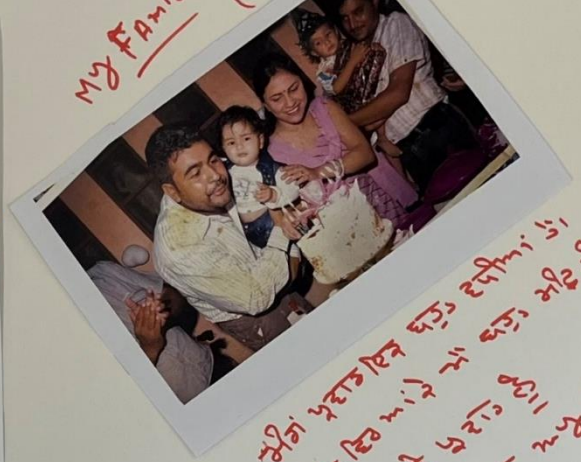
We used to prepare for festivals 2-3 days before it begins, but in Hong Kong there's no time. No community, but we go to the Sikh temple in Wan Chai to do the rituals. Although its not the same, and you still satisfaction in your heart

My "Grab the things in my mind" ... Give more things

even though I feel homesick, I Hack something to my festival


PAKISTAN
PK
Migrating TO HK FROM PAKISTAN
Sound of stones falling down
STOP
We took 2 bags of our luggage (only clothes) to leave our home Country and come to HK (∴ Never heard about HK before).
Bangels, Earings are ... A woman beauty is defined and Jewellery she is wearing. the more jewellery the more beautiful !!
BLOCK C CHUNKING MANSION
We arrived 3am in the morning after struggling 3 hours around HK to find chungking Mansion!
3am
TAXI
My Father was taken to jail as our Neighbour complained that they saw him Worshipping as muslim worship
WE ARE MUSLIMS !!!
JAIL
Many Ahmadies are innocently in jail every year for Praying
Belonging Workshop !!
A workshop where I got a platform to describe myself, my home my religion to share with others. Really felt so happy and emotional ♡
Found another Home in HK (felt relaxed to see our food, Culture and People) but still very anxious what will happen Next !!
8 YEARS IN HK
WAITING.....
What I did (or had to do) was to leave Pakistan Because I was targeted, Jailed and our lives were not Safe any more !!
My FUTURE IS TO ... WHAT IS LIKE BEING A WOMAN.
FIGHT FOR THE EQUALITY & JUSTICE FOR WOMAN.
MY CHILDHOOD, MY YOUTH WAS ALWAYS A HAPPY AND STRONG LIFE. A PERSON BOUGHT UP COMES THE WAY HE/SHE HAVE BEEN TREATED AND TAUGHT
NOW I AM IN HK, RAN AWAY FROM RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION, STILL WAITING, STILL HEALING TRYING TO FIGHT FOR SAFTEY AND ACCEPTANCE.
I AM LUCKY TO FIND SAFTEY AND I CAN WORSHIP OPENLY TEACHING MY SONS THEIR RELIGION THEIR ROOTS!
MY SONS ARE INQUISITIVE ABOUT THEIR FAITH, WHICH IS PARALLEL TO THE VALUES MY FATHER INSTILLED IN HER ME FROM A YOUNGER AGE.
I NEED PEOPLE ... AND CURIOUS ABOUT DIFFE... ASK QUESTIONS IS THE FIRST STEP TO GAINING A BETTER UNDERSTANG OF RELIGION.
∴ A DAUGHTER
∴ A WIFE
∴ A MOTHER
∴ AN AHMADI MUSLIM WOMAN
∴ A WOMAN (strongest Identity)
Love Myself ♡
Being a Refugee is not a choice But the Circumstance
The two lights of my life, As a parent I want to give them a secured future, an identity which they don't have to hide or be scared of...
Love you to Moon & Back ♡
380108400


I don't believe in luck or magic. I belive in Jesus and blessing.
INRI
Jesus is my Salvation
Praise the Lord
K:K


My Family

I Love My Friends

Hong Kong
My Family

I Love - Smart

Space and time in narratives

Chronotopes

Bakhtin, M. (1981) Forms of time and of the chronotope in the novel. *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*. University of Texas Press.

“Every story is a travel story – a spatial practice”

De Certeau, M. (1988) *The Practice of Everyday Life*. University of California Press.

Small stories

Bamberg, M. and Georgakopoulou, A. (2008) Small stories as a new perspective in narrative and identity analysis. *Text and Talk* 28(3), 377-396.

A: then we came here in Hong Kong and first time I eat er chapati again at er [xxx's] home and she give us you know like like a **I just take a one er piece of roti and I am crying** [hh]

A: when you are starting to pull yourst- pull yourself er to what you want to do and then you see **oh my god I'm refugee I cannot because I don't have Hong Kong ID** (.) time step back (.) not forward

C: oh

A: because it’s it is you don't lost that you are not refugee just your identity (.) you lost your your encouragement you’re your thoughts

C: yeah

A: what being you so then then I feel so:: sad (.) I go I go ho::me and I think that oh:: I (.) because then li- I try to contact with my other friends who who join the gym or other (.) **so they said they apply with the passport copy or something like that so my passport has expired so so I feel that no way there is no way** because m- because many years I also f- er er searching for for erm study or some courses like I I I am interested but there is no [hh] so er:: so that's why I'm no I’m just waiting I I still have hope I in the future I will do

Transformation and agency

CHRISTINE'S FIELDNOTES, DIGITAL STORIES WORKSHOP 3

At one point I asked each of them how their idea of belonging changed pre-workshop to post-workshop. Here's what I recall from our very brief conversations

Laxmi: For her, there was a change. Instead of drowning in her homesickness, L realises she now has the agency to still celebrate the festivals she celebrated back home in Hong Kong. This doesn't mean this is "any less fulfilling," and she mentioned how she now has a newfound sense of gratitude.

Uzi: Before the workshops, her sense of belonging was understood from an individual perspective. But after sharing her stories with everyone, she feels that there is a shift from "me" to "we." She mentions that everyone she shares her story with is now included in her expanded definition of belonging.

Outline

Introduction

Translanguaging: A concept worth fighting for

Tlang: Translanguaging space

Belonging and Mobility

Migration & Settlement: Trans-semiosis and belonging

Navigating Belonging: A translanguaging space of belonging

Conclusion: New perspectives on belonging and integration

Conclusion: New perspectives

Refocus debates on integration towards

- settlement and belonging
- meaning-making beyond language

A more inclusive, holistic approach to the study of dislocation and relocation

Tack! Thank you!

hmjsimpson@ust.hk
https://huma.hkust.edu.hk/people/james-simpson
https://nexusbrn.hkust.edu.hk/

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