

RGC Ref. No.: <u>UGC/FDS11/H01/18</u> (please insert ref. above)
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**RESEARCH GRANTS COUNCIL
COMPETITIVE RESEARCH FUNDING SCHEMES FOR
THE LOCAL SELF-FINANCING DEGREE SECTOR**

FACULTY DEVELOPMENT SCHEME (FDS)

Completion Report

(for completed projects only)

<p><u>Submission Deadlines:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Auditor's report with unspent balance, if any: within six months of the approved project completion date. 2. Completion report: within 12 months of the approved project completion date.
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Part A: The Project and Investigator(s)

1. Project Title

Origins of the grammar of Chinese Pidgin English

2. Investigator(s) and Academic Department(s) / Unit(s) Involved

Research Team	Name / Post	Unit / Department / Institution
Principal Investigator	Dr LI Michelle Kin-ling Assistant Professor	School of Humanities and Languages, Caritas Institute of Higher Education
Co-Investigator(s)	N/A	N/A
Others	N/A	N/A

3. Project Duration

	Original	Revised	Date of RGC / Institution Approval <i>(must be quoted)</i>
Project Start Date	01/01/2019	N/A	N/A
Project Completion Date	31/12/2020	30/06/2021	12/08/2020
Duration <i>(in month)</i>	24	30	12/08/2020
Deadline for Submission of Completion Report	31/12/2021	30/06/2022	12/08/2020

Part B: The Final Report

5. Project Objectives

5.1 Objectives as per original application

1. To compile the first electronic corpus of CPE to be made freely available on the internet.
2. To provide thorough analysis of the origins of the light verb *makee* construction and for-complementation in CPE.
3. To compare similarities and differences between the grammar of CPE and similar phenomena in other bilingual language contact such as grammar of English contact varieties and code-switching.
4. To disseminate original research findings at international conferences in order to exchange new ideas and methodologies in the field of historical sociolinguistics, and publish academic papers in international peer-reviewed journals.

5.2 Revised objectives

Date of approval from the RGC: N/A

Reasons for the change:

- 1.
- 2.
3.

5.3 Realisation of the objectives

(Maximum 1 page; please state how and to what extent the project objectives have been achieved; give reasons for under-achievements and outline attempts to overcome problems, if any)

Objectives (1—4) have been fully realized. Different grammatical aspects of Chinese Pidgin English, particularly the origins and functions of *makee* and *for*, were presented at international conferences and three research papers on these features were submitted (objectives 2—3). In addition, the corpus of Chinese Pidgin English (objective 1) has been launched (<http://chinesepidginenglish.com>). During the project period, I underwent thyroidectomy in 2020.

Although the post-operative recovery slowed down the writing process to some extent, all three papers written so far are relevant to the research topics stated in the research objectives.

5.4 Summary of objectives addressed to date

Objectives <i>(as per 5.1/5.2 above)</i>	Addressed <i>(please tick)</i>	Percentage Achieved <i>(please estimate)</i>
1. To compile the first electronic corpus of CPE to be made freely available on the internet.	✓	100%
2. To provide thorough analysis of the origins of the light verb makee construction and for-complementation in CPE.	✓	100%
3. To compare similarities and differences between the grammar of CPE and similar phenomena in other bilingual language contact such as grammar of English contact varieties and code-switching.	✓	100%
4. To disseminate original research findings at international conferences in order to exchange new ideas and methodologies in the field of historical sociolinguistics, and publish academic papers in international peer-reviewed journals.	✓	100%

6. Research Outcome

6.1 Major findings and research outcome

(Maximum 1 page; please make reference to Part C where necessary)

Findings of this project were presented at three international conferences and were submitted to different venues.

In the SPCL meeting taking place at Lisbon in 2019, I presented some preliminary findings of the polyfunctional word *makee* in Chinese Pidgin English. *Makee* is derived from the English verb *make*. Although some of its meanings and functions resemble those found in the equivalent words *make* and *zou6 做* in English and Cantonese respectively, it also develops innovative features. For example, it functions as a verbalizer to change nouns into verbs; it also develops modal meanings such as obligation and imperatives. One of the characteristics of pidgins is that they are often lexically impoverished. As a result, words often develop multiple functions and meanings in order to make up for the lexical and grammatical gap. The polyfunctionality of *makee* confirms the tendency for pidgins to use periphrases to achieve lexical and grammatical elaboration. A paper on this topic has been submitted to the *Journal of Language Contact*.

Another polyfunctional word in Chinese Pidgin English is *for*. It serves as a preposition as well as a complementizer for introducing purpose clauses. An article on the emergence of *for* has been submitted to an edited book which examines language acquisition from a historical sociolinguistic perspective. In the article, I show that *for* is used for similar functions in Hong Kong English. The aim of the paper is to show that synchronic usage may help explain diachronic data.

In the 24th IAWWE conference, I presented a paper on the spread of Chinese Pidgin English words to other places. Some of these words even became part of the English language, for example, *chop-chop* ‘quick(ly)’ and *long time no see*. As Chinese emigrated to many parts of the world, those who had some knowledge of the pidgin might have transmitted the language to the new environment. My chapter in the *Handbook of Southeast Asian Englishes* proposes possible Chinese Pidgin English influence on the early stage of Malaysian-Singapore English.

These papers examine the development and influence of Chinese Pidgin English from different perspectives – balancing an in-depth study of the grammar of Chinese Pidgin English and the influences it had on other English varieties.

Finally, at the 23 Sociolinguistics Symposium in 2021, we introduced some features of the corpus of Chinese Pidgin English (<http://chinesepidginenglish.com>), which contains Chinese and English language sources ranging from the 18th to the 20th century. We plan to write a paper on this so that more people can use the corpus.

6.2 Potential for further development of the research and the proposed course of action

(Maximum half a page)

As more and more historical texts are available as digital forms, it has become easier to collect sources containing pidgin texts. It is hoped that the website can continue to be updated and expanded as language data are of paramount importance for investigations of language evolution. The addition of a dictionary section can complement the texts already contained on the website. Even though most words in Chinese Pidgin English are of English origin, they are often used differently from their source languages. Examples are *makee* and *for* examined in this project. Therefore, a word list would help users understand the language more accurately and thoroughly. Another FDS funding would certainly help put these plans into reality.

7. Layman's Summary

(Describe in layman's language the nature, significance and value of the research project, in no more than 200 words)

While the history of China-West contact between the 18th to 20th century is well documented, our understanding of how the Chinese and Europeans who did not share a common language communicate with each other is quite limited. This project aimed to examine the evolution of a contact language called Chinese Pidgin English whose vocabulary was mainly derived from English, but the grammar showed significant influence from Cantonese. Specifically, the project investigated the features: (a) the polyfunctional use of *makee* 'make' and (b) the use of *for* as a preposition and a complementizer. Though created in China, use of Chinese Pidgin English has been documented in Singapore, California, and Hawai'i. English varieties emerged in these places show similarities and differences with Chinese Pidgin English. For specialists in pidgin and creole studies, the output of this project offers new perspectives for understanding the mechanisms and results of language contact. The corpus of Chinese Pidgin English can be used to serve academic purposes such as teaching and researching. As the corpus is available online, even laymen can appreciate the innovative and unique features of the language.

Part C: Research Output**8. Peer-Reviewed Journal Publication(s) Arising Directly From This Research Project**

(Please attach a copy of the publication and/or the letter of acceptance if not yet submitted in the previous progress report(s). All listed publications must acknowledge RGC's funding support by quoting the specific grant reference.)

The Latest Status of Publications				Author(s) (denote the corresponding author with an asterisk*)	Title and Journal / Book (with the volume, pages and other necessary publishing details specified)	Submitted to RGC (indicate the year ending of the relevant progress report)	Attached to this Report (Yes or No)	Acknowledged the Support of RGC (Yes or No)	Accessible from the Institutional Repository (Yes or No)
Year of Publication	Year of Acceptance (For paper accepted but not yet published)	Under Review	Under Preparation (optional)						
		✓		Michelle Li	Acquisition of for-complementation in Chinese Pidgin English and Hong Kong English: A sociohistorical perspective /Language acquisition across the lifespan and language change: Applications in historical sociolinguistics, edited by Israel Sanz-Sanchez. John Benjamins.	N/A	Yes (Appendix 1)	Yes	No
		✓		Michelle Li & Stephen Matthews	Chinese Pidgin English in Southeast Asia: Contexts of use and influence /Handbook of Southeast Asian Englishes, edited by Andrew Moody. Oxford University	N/A	Yes (Appendix 2)	Yes	No

					Press.				
		✓		Michelle Li	The making of <i>makee</i> in Chinese Pidgin English/ <i>Journal of Language Contact</i>	N/A	Yes (Appendix 3)	Yes	No

9. Recognized International Conference(s) In Which Paper(s) Related To This Research Project Was / Were Delivered

(Please attach a copy of each conference abstract)

Month / Year / Place	Title	Conference Name	Submitted to RGC <i>(indicate the year ending of the relevant progress report)</i>	Attached to this Report <i>(Yes or No)</i>	Acknowledged the Support of RGC <i>(Yes or No)</i>	Accessible from the Institutional Repository <i>(Yes or No)</i>
6/2019/ Lisbon	<i>Makee</i> Constructions in Chinese Pidgin English	Conference of the Association of Portuguese and Spanish-Lexified Creoles (ACBLPE) & the Summer Conference of the Society for Pidgin and Creole Linguistics (SPCL)	31/12/2019	Yes (Appendix 4)	Yes	No
6/2019/ Limerick	When Chinese Pidgin English Took Centre Stage	24th Conference of the International Association of World Englishes (IAWE)	31/12/2019	Yes (Appendix 5)	Yes	No
6/2021/ Hong Kong	A Corpus of Chinese Pidgin English	Sociolinguistics Symposium 23	N/A	Yes (Appendix 6)	Yes	No

10. Whether Research Experience And New Knowledge Has Been Transferred / Has Contributed To Teaching And Learning

(Please elaborate)

The project attracted collaborations with junior researchers such as Mr Cheung Ching Yat,

who originally joined the project as a research assistant will continue to administer the website. We will co-author a paper on the corpus of Chinese Pidgin English. The materials on the website are freely accessible, so students, teachers, and researchers are welcome to use the data for teaching and learning.

11. Student(s) Trained

(Please attach a copy of the title page of the thesis)

Name	Degree Registered for	Date of Registration	Date of Thesis Submission / Graduation

12. Other Impact

(e.g. award of patents or prizes, collaboration with other research institutions, technology transfer, teaching enhancement, etc.)

One of the deliverables of the project is a website containing Chinese Pidgin English data from various sources. The corpus allows researchers and the public to access Chinese Pidgin English data in historical texts online. The corpus serves a variety of purposes such as teaching, research, or simply to understand how Chinese and Europeans communicate in the past. The website administrator, Mr Cheung Ching Yat of the University of Hong Kong, a former RA of the project, co-presented a conference paper on the corpus with me at the 23 Sociolinguistics Symposium in 2021. He will be moving on to Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics to start his PhD studies. Since one of his interests is the evolution of pidgin and creole languages, we will continue to collaborate in different forms in the future.

13. Statistics on Research Outputs

	Peer-reviewed Journal Publications	Conference Papers	Scholarly Books, Monographs and Chapters	Patents Awarded	Other Research Outputs (please specify)	
No. of outputs arising directly from this research project	1		2		Type: Website - The Corpus of Chinese Pidgin English (http://chinesePidginEnglish.com)	No. 1

14. Public Access Of Completion Report

(Please specify the information, if any, that cannot be provided for public access and give the reasons.)

Information that Cannot Be Provided for Public Access	Reasons