Dream Small /
# Revive Shanghainese as a Full Fledged Language (Short Version)

#Shanghainese #LLM #AI
Very long version like an academic paper is attached here:
Preserving and reviving Shanghainese as a Language NOT a dialect.pdf
Link to the Claude Project - Shanghaiese Expert!
Or you can listen here:

## Reviving Shanghainese: Transforming a Dialect into a Living Language

Shanghainese is more than just a way of speaking—it's a vibrant cultural heritage at risk of fading away. Despite its rich history, decades of policies favoring a standardized Mandarin have pushed Shanghainese into the shadows. However, there are promising new strategies to revive it as a fully functional language.

## Technical difficulties

1. Simplified Chinese and Loss of Unique Writing Systems

> The nationwide adoption of Simplified Chinese merged distinct regional characters into uniform forms. This reform eliminated the dialect-specific written forms that once captured Shanghainese's unique sounds and expressions. Without an independent writing system, Shanghainese remains largely an oral tradition, limiting its transmission and development as a full-fledged language.

1. Lack of a Dedicated Phonetic System

> The current educational system centers on Mandarin phonetics, using Pinyin exclusively. Shanghainese, with its rich vowel inventory and tone sandhi patterns, lacks a standardized phonetic transcription. This gap hampers both language learning and the creation of digital tools tailored to its nuances.

1. Leveraging AI and Language Models

Recent advances in large language models (LLMs) offer a groundbreaking opportunity. By training AI on historical texts, spoken recordings, and cultural narratives unique to Shanghainese, we can create tools for translation, text generation, and speech synthesis. These tools not only help preserve linguistic nuances but also encourage daily usage among younger generations.

## 2. Developing a Dedicated Phonetic and Writing System

One of the challenges has been the lack of an independent written form for Shanghainese. A tailored phonetic transcription system—perhaps inspired by, but expanded beyond, the Pinyin model—could capture the distinct sounds of Shanghainese. This system would provide a foundation for teaching the language in schools and for use in digital communication, ensuring that both spoken and written forms are preserved.

## 3. Enhancing Digital Tools and Input Methods

To support everyday use, it's essential to develop Shanghainese-friendly digital keyboards and input methods. By adapting existing platforms to accommodate the new transcription system, technology can empower native speakers to write and communicate in their language more easily, fostering a digital community around Shanghainese.
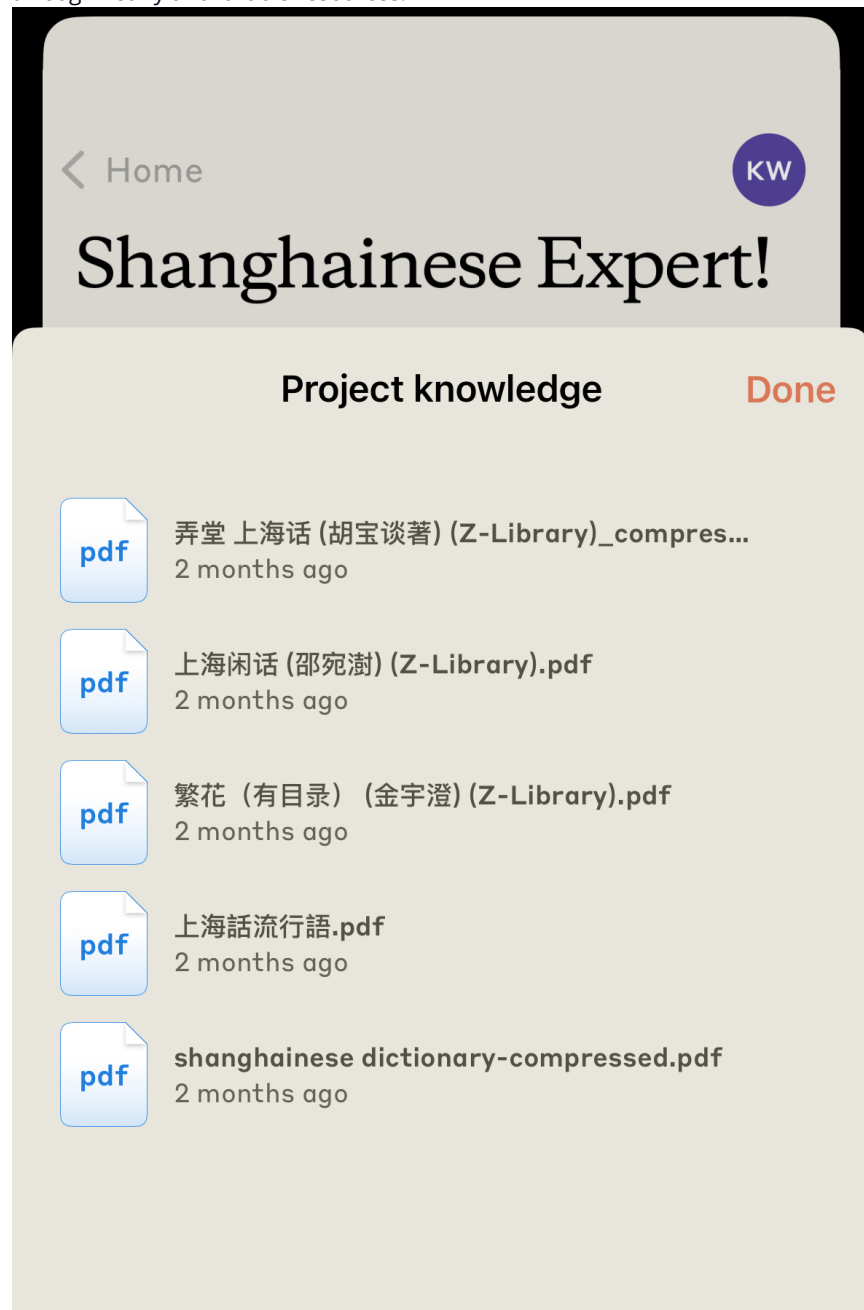
## 4. Community Engagement and Cultural Promotion

Revival isn't just about technology—it's about identity. Encouraging community-driven initiatives, such as local media content, cultural events, and educational programs in Shanghainese, can spark a renewed interest among speakers. Celebrating the language in everyday life is key to transforming it from a relic into a thriving medium of communication.
These innovative approaches offer a promising path to not only preserve but also revitalize Shanghainese as a living language. With the help of AI, dedicated writing systems, improved digital tools, and a strong community effort, Shanghainese can reclaim its rightful place as a dynamic, culturally rich language.

## Claude GPT Experimentation

I fed almost all Shanghainese dictionaries, books, novels, and especially those written in traditional Chinese characters into Claude projects, after searching through nearly all available resources.

And below is an example conversation:

And the result:

&lt;b&gt;Translation into Shanghainese:&lt;/b&gt;

□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□
□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□
**Alternative Translation with More Traditional Characters:**
□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□
□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□
**Translation Notes:**
□□ (yi kau) - "to rely on" in Shanghainese
□ (ge) - particle used in Shanghainese, replacing □ in Mandarin
□□□ (tsu tseh lae) - "to create/produce"
□□ (ni pi) - "this article" in Shanghainese
□□ (xi wo) - authentic term for "Shanghainese language"
□ (yi) - "it" in Shanghainese, replacing □ in Mandarin
□□ (ngu li) - "we/our" in Shanghainese, replacing □□ in Mandarin
□ (ge) - "this" in Shanghainese, replacing □ in Mandarin

< Back          **Claude** 3.7 Sonnet ⌄          ⊕

A⍺ Shanghainese Expert!

Klyn

translate following into Shanghainese: "So with AI's help, I composed this long blog post on possible ways to revive Shanghainese as a language, however, LLM/AI can do it's part, the rest is relying on all Shanghainese keep speaking and writing this dying dialect as much as possible, this will be our last chance to keep our identity alive"

I'll help you translate this into Shanghainese using Traditional Chinese characters where appropriate. Let me think carefully about this important message about language preservation.

# Translation into Shanghainese:

所以依靠人工智能个幫助，我做出來呢篇長長个博客文章，關於可能个復興上海閒話个方法。但是，人工智能只能做伊能做个部分，其餘个還是要靠所有上海人儘量講上海閒話，儘量寫上海閒話。箇可能是我倆保持我倆身份认同个最後一個機會。

## Alternative Translation with More Traditional Characters:

所以依靠人工智能個幫助，我做出來呢篇長長個博客文章，關於可能個復興上海閒話個方法。但是，人工智能只能做伊能做個部分，其餘個還是要靠所有上海人儘量講上海閒話，儘量寫上海閒話。箇可能是我倆保持我倆身份認同個最後一個機會。

## Translation Notes:

1. 依靠 (yi kau) - "to rely on" in Shanghainese
2. 個 (ge) - particle used in Shanghainese, replacing 的 in Mandarin
3. 做出來 (tsu tseh lae) - "to create/produce"
4. 呢篇 (ni pi) - "this article" in Shanghainese
5. 閒話 (xi wo) - authentic term for "Shanghainese language"
6. 伊 (yi) - "it" in Shanghainese, replacing 它 in Mandarin
7. 我倆 (ngu li) - "we/our" in Shanghainese, replacing 我们 in Mandarin
8. 箇 (ge) - "this" in Shanghainese, replacing 这 in Mandarin

The translation preserves the key message about language preservation while using authentic Shanghainese vocabulary and grammatical structures. The use of 閒話 (xi wo) specifically

acknowledges the local name for the Shanghainese language, which carries cultural significance beyond the simple geographic descriptor.

Reply to Claude

Next

19th February 2025

Thoughts on Jeff Bezo's last Shareh...