

OF HONGS AND TONGS AND ALL THAT JAZZ:  
A NOTE ON LEXICAL BORROWING FROM  
CHINESE IN ENGLISH WITH SPECIAL  
REFERENCE TO HONG KONG

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In a language contact situation such as exists in Hong Kong, and has existed since the mid-nineteenth century, there is bound to be some degree of mutual exchange. The extent to which English has affected the vocabulary of Hong Kong Chinese is notable, but, as I have discovered in a previous study undertaken by myself and my colleague, Helen Kwok, by no means as extensive as might be expected, considering the tremendous influx of new 'things' and concepts from the West.<sup>1</sup> In general the local population has to a large measure relied on native resources of vocabulary-building to fulfill lexical needs as they arise.

In a second joint study, just completed, of which this paper gives a summary, I am concerned with Chinese words which have entered the vocabulary of English with special reference to the English used in Hong Kong.<sup>2</sup> It is of course a well-known fact that the English vocabulary is a highly heterogeneous one, made up of borrowings from many Western as well as Eastern languages. Studies of the origins of English words tend to give detailed lists of words borrowed from Greek and Latin, French, Germanic and Middle Eastern languages among others. They also tend to include quite a number of examples from Eastern languages like Indian and Malay. But when it comes to Chinese the inclusions tend to be few indeed. Otto Jespersen, in *The Growth and Structure of the English Language*, giving examples of English words borrowed from various sources, writes, 'From Chinese we have *kowtow*'.<sup>3</sup> A careful search of the Oxford English Dictionary and various editions of the Webster will reveal a somewhat larger number of words, the etymology of which is at least conjecturally Chinese. But the words themselves and/or their etymologies tend to be little known generally. I have

consulted a number of dictionaries of foreign words and phrases and discovered a disappointingly low number of Chinese entries.<sup>4</sup>

In the world-wide use of the English language the number of loan words from Chinese is not large. For example, *sampan*, *tea*, *cheongsam*, *mahjong* are fairly well-known. And in recent years it has become fashionable to include Romanized forms of Chinese words to give local colour in newspapers and journals, local as well as international, and in works of fiction, especially where subject and/or locale are 'Chinese'. But as far as I am able to discover, the subject of lexical borrowing from Chinese into English has not been systematically studied.

A. J. Bliss, in his *Dictionary of Foreign Words and Phrases* gives a lengthy and analytical account of the process of borrowing from Greek and Latin and French. He makes the point that the nature of language contact results in different types of words being borrowed. In his Appendix he suggests the type of research which can be undertaken in connection with the history of contact between English and other languages by giving examples of words borrowed in different periods. The list for Chinese is brief. It goes:

17th Century *sampan*

18th Century *typhoon*

19th Century *kowtow*, *loquat*

20th Century *cheongsam*, *kuomintang*<sup>5</sup>

Though brief, it is instructive, and tracing, however briefly, the history of West and East coming into contact is certainly a necessary part of a complete study of lexical borrowing from Chinese. But only one aspect of it. What is needed is a systematic study of other aspects, particularly linguistic ones, of the subject as well. The contact between English and Chinese has been brought about as much by the coming of English-speaking people to China as by the migration of Chinese people to English-speaking lands. My collaborator and I have attempted to extend our study as far as possible to English outside Hong Kong and to the borrowings resulting from the earliest periods of language contact, and have made use of literature written in English about China and the Chinese or reflecting interest in such a subject from the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.<sup>6</sup> I

am perfectly aware that it is notoriously difficult to ascribe lexical innovations to specific dates or occurrences with any degree of authority or accuracy. But my focus is on Hong Kong English at the present time, the English which is in use among native speakers of English. By 'native speaker', I mean L<sub>1</sub> users of English — those who have not had to acquire it as a second language — in Hong Kong today. The business of etymology-hunting becomes less tenuous: we have actually witnessed the initial appearance of specific loan words, then the process of their being popularized by the media; for example *mafoo* (stable boy), a word which was already current in Shanghai and which gained currency here because of the Royal Hong Kong Jockey Club's dispute between management and labour in the 1970's and now once more in the news. This time it appears unmarked, un glossed, whereas when it appeared over ten years ago, it was almost inevitably accompanied by an explanation.

Though the borrowing from Chinese to-date has not been very significant, it is evident that, because of the cosmopolitan nature of Hong Kong and the easy movement of people to and from Hong Kong, some of these lexical innovations, such as they are, may find their way outside Hong Kong, gain international currency and eventual sanction by inclusion in reputable dictionaries. Contact between various dialects of Chinese immigrants, in Hawaii, in Chinatowns in New York, San Francisco, Boston, London and Sydney, etc. has also resulted in mutual lexical borrowing. Some of the immigrants originate from Hong Kong. And since the late 1960's and early 70's the English-speaking world has had much more direct access to China and to the Chinese language used on the Mainland.

My co-researcher and I have made an investigation of the subject according to the following headings.

- I. An outline history of contact between the two languages, with illustrative examples of the loan words resulting from various types of contacts. The focus is on the lexical consequences of historical events, not the events themselves, for example we are interested more in the popularizing of the term *kowtow* than in the political or commercial results of the Amherst embassy.

II. A detailed account of the language contact situation in Hong Kong. With the question of 1997 looming very large, changes in the language situation and in attitudes to both English and Chinese are taking place, and this is a rich area for further sociolinguistic research.<sup>7</sup>

III. An analysis, with illustrations of the methods of naming new 'things'. The exposure to things Chinese inevitably leads to the need to 'name' things which are Chinese and new and alien to the English-speaking expatriate. Hockett writes of 'need-filling' as one motive for borrowing.<sup>8</sup> The methods are:

(i) The adaptation of an existing English term. This appears to be a favoured method when the referent is an object with a discernible physical appearance or a distinctly describable function. English speakers have tended in some instances to extend the semantic range of existing terms in their own language in order to give a name to the newly-introduced object. For example, traditional Chinese in Hong Kong are firm believers in the principles of *fungshui* 風水 literally 'wind and water', or the proper and propitious placing of objects so as to ensure good fortune. While the term has been borrowed locally as a phonetic loan and *fungshui* appears in local publications and novels with a Chinese setting, an English term *geomancy*, borrowed, but not from Chinese, has been modified to refer to this Chinese belief and art. The loose unisex garment worn by the working class, the *samsfu* 衫褲 has been dubbed *pyjamas*. The individual pieces which make up a mahjong set being referred to as *tiles* is another example of adaptation.

(ii) A second method of coping with the need for new 'names' based on the use of native resources is operative among the English-speaking expatriates in Hong Kong. They take the English 'name'

for the familiar object and adapt it to fit the new object by adding a prefix indicative of its Chinese origin. Examples are *Chinese cabbage*, *Chinese mushrooms*, *Chinese boxing* and *Chinese frying pan* (later simplified to *wok*, a phonetic loan.)

- (iii) A third method by which the users of the English language deal with the naming of new 'things' through reliance on native resources is the very common method of loan translation. This appears to take place especially when either the Chinese term is self-explanatory or when it is itself metaphorical and has been taken over because of its picturesque qualities; for example 'The Middle Kingdom' from 中國 is well-established. We have a great deal of work on this aspect of lexical borrowing, and the findings are to be included in a second Centre of Asian Studies Monograph. One example of a recent loan translation which has captured the imaginations of local expatriates and bilingual speakers, and which has gained considerable currency is *snake* as a premodifier for *boat* or *head*. A *snake boat* translated from 蛇船 and a *snake head* translated from 蛇頭 are respectively metaphorical expressions for a boat carrying illegal immigrants and a person in charge of such an illegal operation. (e.g. *The Star*, Hong Kong, 13/7/81). An even more recent loan translation is *fish-ball* from the Chinese 魚蛋 literally 'fish-ball', the name of a concoction made from chopped fish and spring onion, and which developed a metaphorical sense in local Chinese and refers to vice dens and illicit sex as in 'fish ball stalls' and 'fish-ball girls'. (e.g. *S.C.M.P.* 2/3/82, *S.C.M.P.* 9/7/82).
- (iv) The fourth method is to borrow the Chinese term as a phonetic loan and phonetic borrowing is the main focus of interest in our study.

- IV. An attempt at analysing the stages of integration of a phonetic loan, from a spoken stage to a written one and in some cases to inclusion in a standard dictionary.
- V. A discussion of the linguistic changes, phonological, graphological, grammatical and semantic, which take place when an item from Chinese is borrowed as a phonetic loan into the English vocabulary.
- VI. A fairly exhaustive account of all the phonetic loans in the active/passive vocabularies of Hong Kong expatriates, with explanations with regard to dialect of origin, stage of integration, and notes, where relevant, on well-known examples of uses. Some reference will be made, where applicable, to stylistic values.
- VII. A survey of 'false loans', words commonly thought, mistakenly, to be of Chinese origin. Examples are 'joss', 'nullah', or 'catty'. Many tend to be words of Eastern, rather than specifically Chinese, origin.
- VIII. An Appendix giving a list of phonetic loans with notes on pronunciation, meaning and etymology. I have included a very much abridged version of this appendix, giving only the loan words and the Chinese characters from which they are believed to have been derived together with very brief definitions.

We have carried out our research through observation, listening and discussions and years of reading local and international publications. More specifically, for this project our corpus is made up of a selected sample of newspapers and journals, published locally, in the United Kingdom and the United States, read regularly, and in the case of two English language newspapers published locally, daily, for a period of two years. Also included in our corpus is a group of novels and works of non-fiction about China and Hong Kong.<sup>9</sup> In addition we sent out 300 questionnaires to a sample group of expatriates in an effort to discover the loans which were actually in their

active and/or passive vocabularies, their attitudes to Chinese culture and the Chinese language. An attempt is made to analyse the extent to which their knowledge of Chinese loan words is conditioned by their life style. Of the 300 questionnaires sent out, 128 were returned. We selected at random 100 as our sample. While we did attempt to find answers to the vexed problem of what constitutes full integration for a loan word partially through the responses, our conclusions were by no means dependent on the subjective answers of the respondents, but were based very much on linguistic criteria. By way of comparison we sent an abridged questionnaire to respondents living in Britain and the United States, most of whom had never been east of Suez; we were astounded by the extremely low rate of recognition by both groups.

Given the sociological factors, which act as incentives or disincentives to learning a language, and the vastly disparate nature of the two languages, it *should* come as no surprise — although it often does — that the number of loans from Chinese which have entered the English vocabulary, in various stages of integration, is very low indeed, far lower than English words which have entered into the lexicon of Hong Kong Chinese. The exchange has by no means been an equal one to date.

The list of English loan words in Hong Kong Chinese given in our earlier monograph comprises almost 400 items while our list of Chinese loans comprises only about a quarter of this number, and a larger number in the former list meet our tentative criteria of full integration. What is more, our studies seem to indicate that with a few exceptions like *tea*, *kowtow* and *tycoon*, *kaolin*, *gung ho*, Chinese loan words are usually restricted to strictly 'Eastern' or specifically Chinese contexts and are sometimes used on a sort of transliterated 'once-off' basis in novels or journalistic writing with a view to giving stylistic flavour, for example, *Tien-tze* 天子, immediately glossed in *Elegant's Dynasty* as 'The Son of Heaven' (p. 20). Most Chinese terms have, as in the nature of lexical borrowing in general, been taken over because of the need to find a name for a thing new to the borrowing culture and hence without a name in the borrowing language.

A word needs to be said about the term 'Chinese'. Within China now live a number of ethnic groups. In addition to the Han majority, there are Manchus, Mongolians, Tibetans, and so on. Linguistically, the word 'Chinese' is usually made to refer to 漢語 or the language of the Han group. A number of dialects are found within the Han language, the ones of most interest to us in our study being Cantonese, Mandarin, and to a lesser extent, Amoy. The great majority of the loans described in our study have entered English from these three dialects. In a small number of cases, e.g. *Lama*, *Manchu*, *Cathay*, we have extended the word 'Chinese' to cover non-Han languages used in China. A few loans described in our work have entered English through another language, as in the case of *tycoon* ultimately from 大官 or 'great Mandarin' and *soya* ultimately from 豉油 *shi-yu* which were borrowed through Japanese.

We have excluded from our list of loans those words which refer only to individual persons and specific geographical locations. Our selection is based on the meanings of the loan words in the borrowing language, and not on their originals, which may be the names of people or of places. For example, the source for *Bohea* 武夷 *Wu-i* is the name of a mountain range transliterated according to its Amoy pronunciation, and the name of a city Nanking 南京 has given rise to *nankeen* the name of a kind of cloth. In the case of *Confucius* and *Mao*, these combine readily with other elements to form words which refer to a philosophy, an ideology, or even a style of clothing, e.g. *Confucianism*, *Mao jacket*.

We have taken care only to choose those words which are in general use, and have excluded the 'jargon' associated with various specialized fields, e.g. *wu tsai* or 'five colours' connected with the study and appreciation of Chinese porcelain, or *ping*, *shang*, *qu*, *ru* used to refer to the tones in Chinese linguistics.

The loan words chosen for discussion in our study have been selected according to the following criteria:

- (1) they occur in books and periodicals published in Hong Kong or abroad within the last three decades (up to 1983).

- (2) they are understood by at least 50% of the respondents to our questionnaire (In some cases the percentage is much higher).
- (3) they are found in at least one of the dictionaries we have consulted viz. O.E.D., Webster, Collin's Random House (In many cases they are listed in more than one dictionary).

All the words listed in the Appendix which will be included in our study, fulfill the first of the three criteria mentioned above. A large number also meet the other two criteria. A small group of words fail to meet the third criterion. This last group consists of more recent borrowings, and includes terms with restricted currency within Hong Kong, e.g. *tai tai* and *pak pai*, and terms originating from contacts between China and the west after 1950, e.g. *Renminbi* and *Putonghua*, of which there are twenty-five in our Appendix.

In general, meanings and etymologies given are based mainly on the various editions of the Oxford English dictionaries; whenever useful, this information is supplemented by explanations taken from other dictionaries, but since a word in the lending language may be changed beyond recognition once it is borrowed into another language, the origins of some loan words are shrouded in mystery, and their etymologies may be based on conjecture rather than fact, e.g. *ketchup* and also *gung ho*. According to the O.E.D. and Collins *ketchup* is derived from Amoy *koêtshiap* or *kê-tsiap* or 'brine of pickled fish', but it would be virtually impossible to find the Chinese words which would convey sound and alleged sense. *Gung ho* allegedly is derived from the Chinese for 'work together', possibly 工合, but the etymology is dubious.<sup>10</sup> Also, over a period of time, mutual borrowing among a number of languages and related dialects may take place, so that it is often difficult to discover the path through which a loan has travelled, and the changes which have taken place through the varying intermediate stages. We have made every effort to discover the true etymologies of the loan words. Many 'old China hands' and indeed 'new' hands know *cumshaw* as a loan word. But at least two theories exist concerning its origin. It is either derived from the Amoy pronunciation of 感謝 'thank you' or it

is a perversion of 'come ashore', the call used to entice Western sailors ashore. In the majority of cases there is little controversy, especially when we are dealing with the more recent borrowings.

We have noted the relatively small number of phonetic loans from Chinese, but of course the process is a continuing one, with new loans being added from time to time. And I ought at this point to consider the possible forces militating against the large-scale borrowing of phonetic loans from Chinese into English. There would appear to be some rather obvious factors, while others are put forward much more tentatively, confirming the theory that there are no hard and fast rules governing word borrowing.

- (1) *The Disparate Nature of The Two Languages.* Unlike related languages such as, for example, French and German, the structures of English and Chinese are very different, and this tends to discourage borrowing and assimilation.
- (2) *The Absence of a Very Large Group of Persons Proficient in Both Languages.* In order for large scale borrowing to take place a considerable group of bilinguals has to be assumed. In Hong Kong, as people living here are aware, the vast majority of those who have any degree of bilingual mastery of Chinese and English are in fact Chinese, and the type of bilingualism consists of what has been described as 'additive' bilingualism<sup>11</sup> and is rarely ambilingualism. Only a rare few among the English-speaking community speak any dialect of Chinese, and fewer still are able to write Chinese. The lexical borrowing therefore naturally tends to be more in one direction. And this leads us to a third possible factor for the relative smallness of the number of phonetic borrowings.
- (3) *Lack of Integration by the Majority of the English-speaking Expatriate Community.* Leonard Bloomfield has written, 'Cultural borrowing of speech-forms is ordinarily mutual. It is one-sided only to the extent that one nation has more to give than the other.'<sup>12</sup> I am certainly not saying that the Chinese language or

Chinese culture is intrinsically poor or has less to give than the English language or Western culture. Far from it, it is just that except for the missionaries who came to China, there was little incentive on the part of westerners to learn the language. And the contact of Chinese immigrants with Americans resulted only in a few phonetic loans associated with certain aspects of material civilization — e.g. *chopsuey*, and terms like *tong*. And in the Hong Kong context more of the local population has adopted western ways than the expatriates have adopted Chinese ones. The expatriates in Hong Kong, unlike immigrants into a new society, rarely attempt to genuinely assimilate the local culture. As a consequence they accept far fewer cultural loans. But given the number of words of Indian origin entering English and attaining varying degrees of integration during British rule in India, I cannot say with certainty that this attitudinal factor is a strong cause for the paucity of Chinese loan words in English. And there are expatriates who are exceptions to the general rule. In some cases, out of a disinterested desire to integrate or to know more about the place in which they live, or out of a desire for professional advancement, or because of a mixture of motives, expatriates do learn the language and culture. Moreover, with the changing situation of Hong Kong, attitudes of native speakers of English to the Chinese language are undergoing perceptible changes.

(4) *Absence of a Single Dominant Form of the Lending Language.*

Up until the last War, expatriate exposure to Chinese was to a mixture of mutually unintelligible Chinese 'dialects'. Of expatriates resident in China between 1870 and 1940 approximately one-third lived in areas where they were exposed particularly to Cantonese (in Hong Kong, Canton, Macao), another third in areas exposed particularly to Shanghainese, and the rest partly in areas exposed to Mandarin (in Peking, Tientsin, Wuhan, etc.) and partly in areas exposed to *Min* dialects

(Swatow, Amoy, Foochow). Many expatriates, and most particularly those long resident expatriates most sympathetic to things Chinese, regularly moved up and down the coast, from one 'dialect' area to another. The expatriate community was essentially one — the 'China Coast community' — with intimate inter-port contacts, but the native communities among which this expatriate community was scattered formed not one, but several quite separate communities. In these circumstances words borrowed by the China Coast expatriate community and so completely assimilated as to appear in writing, had to be acceptable to expatriates in all areas of the China coast. Obviously, the presence of competing models, pronounced differently, from different 'dialects', would slow down assimilation of any one of them severely. It is only since 1950 that expatriates exposed to Chinese have overwhelmingly been exposed to only one dialect — Cantonese — and since the process from initial interest in a foreign model, through use in racy speech, to tentative use in writing to final formal lexicographic acceptance is at best a matter of several decades, it is not surprising that it is only in the last decade that the numbers of linguistic loans from Cantonese in Hong Kong English have become substantial.

### *Motives for Phonetic Borrowing*

Countering the forces acting against phonetic loans are others which encourage them, albeit on a relatively small scale. The motives for phonetic borrowing are various. In the case of lexical borrowing from Chinese into English with special reference to the Hong Kong situation, it seems justifiable to enumerate the motives in the following way:

- (1) Economy and precision in need-filling;
- (2) The desire for freshness and raciness of expression;
- (3) The desire to give exotic connotations; and a sense of local colour;

- (4) The 'prestige' factor — the wish to appear knowledgeable;
- (5) The desire to show a spirit of good fellowship and camaraderie, or a genuine wish to integrate.

In most cases, of course, we cannot isolate a single motive for the borrowing of a term. There is usually a mixture of motives. We have observed more than once that there seems to be no hard and fast rules governing the choice of method in the introduction of a new 'name'. Much depends on the caprice of the users of a language.

In our Appendix we have some 105 items; 23 of them, either because they are recent borrowings and/or because their currency is restricted to Hong Kong, have not been sanctioned by inclusion in any standard dictionary. The words include 'names' for various aspects of material and spiritual civilization. As might be expected, the largest number of loan words come from the field of food and beverages, ranging from *tea* through *pak choi* to *tofu* to *dimsum* and *yumcha*. A number of loans come from Chinese religious and philosophical beliefs, and range from established terms like *taoism* and *zen* and the much-abused pair *yin* and *yang* to *fungshui* to purely 'local' terms like *Chung Yeung* and *Tin Hau* and even *Choy Sun* (used in the local English media exclusively to mean the financial Secretary.) There are quite a few borrowings relating to clan and social or other organizations, like *tong* and *hoey*<sup>13</sup>, and *kuk* as in *Heung Yee Kuk* and *Po Leung Kuk*, and sports and recreation, for example *kungfu*, *tai chi*, *mahjong*.

Compiling a fairly exhaustive list of loan words in general use and supplying their etymologies and examples of uses are arduous and time-consuming tasks, but what is perhaps most interesting and thought-provoking, from the linguist's point of view, in the study of word borrowing, is the vexed question of what constitutes integration of the so-called loan words into the vocabulary.

When I use terms like 'borrow', 'import' and 'loans' in discussions of lexical borrowing, in fact, these terms do not accurately describe the process by which, say, *tea* has become a 'borrowed' term. In this process new words may be added to the

lexicon of one language, but these are not 'loans', and no 'borrowing' is involved, since there is no requirement that they be returned to the 'lending' language. Also, the language from which the words originate does not actually lose the words, which still form part of its vocabulary. In the case of words of Chinese origin in English, what really happens is that the English language fashions a word out of its own phonetic material based on a model which exists in another language, in this case Chinese, and assigns a meaning to this new word similar to, or identical with, the meaning of the 'model'. The question then arises: When does a 'new' word become fully assimilated into the English vocabulary? What criteria could be used to determine whether a word is part of the language or whether it is still 'foreign'? An early attempt to deal with the issue is found in the Introduction to *The Stanford Dictionary of Anglicized Words and Phrases*. The compiler, C. A. M. Fennell uses a narrow set of criteria based on English as the language of Great Britain only. He dismisses as 'exotic' words which 'have been neither wholly nor partially naturalized; such as the names of foreign institutions, of articles which are unknown in Great Britain, or only seen in museums and collections, of foreign offices and dignities & c. . . . And foreign words which are seldom or never used except by writers addicted to interlarding their pages with foreign words and phrases.'<sup>14</sup> The idea of integration into English today is no longer one of 'Anglicization' because of the existence of English as a world language. We are concerned with English as used by English-speaking people all over the world, but especially with English used in Hong Kong. The problem of assimilation is not an either/or matter, but there are intermediate stages. In considering this question two complementary approaches may be adopted. Firstly, we take into account the native-speakers' reactions. Do they consider the word in question to be an English word, or is it a Chinese word which sometimes occurs in English discourse, in the same way as, for example, a French phrase or two may be thrown in for effect? We have found that a number of the words in our appendix are still felt to be 'foreign' by the respondents to our questionnaire, this despite their rather frequent occurrence in English publications. Although they are easily understood by English-speakers, the words are often

considered to be 'foreign' when the objects or ideas they refer to are largely restricted to an alien culture. One respondent to our questionnaire has this to say about *wok*: 'Of course it is a Chinese word. I never use the word because I don't use the thing.' A word like *tea* is considered to be English partly because its referent has become very much a part of the life of the English-speaking world. Using familiarity with the objects designated by the words as the sole yardstick would exclude thousands upon thousands of words listed in various standard dictionaries from the English word stock, among many other words like *fo* from 佛, *petunse* from 白墩子 'China stone', and *loquat* from 蘆橘. This criterion must therefore be supplemented.

According to the Oxford English Dictionary, 'The Vocabulary of widely-diffused and highly-cultivated living language is not a fixed quantity circumscribed by definite limits. . . . So the English Vocabulary contains a nucleus or central mass of many thousands of words whose "Anglicity" is unquestioned; some of them only literary, some of them only colloquial, the great majority at once literary and colloquial, — they are the *common words* of the language. But they are linked on every side with other words which are less and less entitled to this appellation, and which pertain ever more and more distinctly to the domain of local dialect, of the slang and cant of "sets" and classes, of the peculiar technicalities of trades and professions, of the scientific terminology common to all civilized nations, of the actual languages of other lands and peoples. And there is absolutely no defining line in any direction: the circle of the English language has a well-defined centre but no discernible circumference'. (xxvii) The phrase that is of special interest to us is 'the actual language of other lands and peoples'. Of the words in the English vocabulary some would be, in the words of the O.E.D. 'originally native', and could be traced to 'their earliest English, or earliest Teutonic form', (xxxi) but an English word may also have been 'adopted from some foreign language, i.e. it is a word once foreign, but now, without or with intentional change of form, used as English'. (xxx)

I have said that the line dividing English words from 'foreign' words cannot always be sharply drawn. A word may be

borrowed, and may remain on the periphery of the vocabulary, or it could move, through various intermediate stages, towards the core of the English word stock. A.J. Bliss in his *Dictionary of Foreign Words and Phrases* has this to say about words of foreign origin in the English vocabulary: 'Words of foreign origin form a spectrum graduating imperceptibly from words like *faith* at one end, the foreign origin of which would be obvious only to the professional student of language, to words like *eclat*, which no one would consider anything but "foreign", at the other; it would be possible to prepare a segment of words each slightly but perceptibly more "foreign" than the preceding one, covering the whole range between these two extremes'.<sup>15</sup>

When an expatriate greets his Chinese colleagues with *dzou san* 'Good Morning', or when he thanks a waiter for bringing his food by saying *m goi* 唔該 'Thank you', he is speaking Chinese, perhaps with an English accent. The expressions are not, strictly speaking, loans, even though they occur in the midst of what is predominantly English speech. For such words and expressions, there are no standardized written forms, and the speaker would, in most probability, not think of using them with other expatriates except perhaps in a humorous context. Other expressions well-known to the expatriate community in Hong Kong include *nei hou ma*; 你好嗎? 'How are you?' and *tsoi gin* 再見 'See you again' or 'good bye'.

Ronald W. Langacker uses the example of 'hippie' to illustrate his point that changes in the structure of a language do not come about instantaneously. 'Take the word *hippie* for instance, which has spread very rapidly through much of the English-speaking world. Someone must have used the word first, or maybe a small number of people created it independently. In either case, many weeks or months must have gone by between the time it was coined and the time it became an item of general use'.<sup>16</sup> In the case of loans, the words may appear first within quotation marks or in italics, to indicate their foreign origin. Before a word becomes sufficiently familiar, it is customary to provide a kind of gloss or explanation. Of course many words which have gained currency in Hong Kong are less familiar to readers outside Hong Kong, and writers may feel a need to

explain their meanings. For example, in Clavell's *Noble House*, almost all the Chinese words are italicized, and a short gloss is often worked into the text. For example, we have the following: 'Tai-fun, the Supreme Winds, were gusting at 170 m.p.h.' (p. 692). 'Tai-tai meant "supreme of the supreme" wife' (p. 712); 'Knots of owners and trainers and jockeys were conferring, ma-foos — stable hands — walking horses in their blankets.' (p. 370) We can take the following as further examples. Describing the making of bamboo scaffolding in the building industry, the *South China Morning Post* on July 19, 1982 quotes someone as saying, "Obedience is important" he said, "as the 'see-fu' (master) teaches you the main skills . . .'" From the *Asia Magazine*, July 4, 1982 we have the following: 'A strong Chinese belief is that one's fook (all-embracing luck) can be derived from ancestors.' *The Waikiki Press*, July 16, 1982, in its article introducing Chinese food to its tourist readers, offers this explanation among others, 'Bok coy: a celery-like cabbage with a very pleasant flavour'.

Lack of standardization in spelling still characterizes a number of words. We have, for example, *kylin* or *ch'i-lin*, meaning the Chinese mythical beast, *lychee* or *litchi*, *tai chi ch'uan* or *tai chi chuan*, *wan tun* or *won ton*. From the *Waikiki Press Beach Press*, July 16, 1982, we can find the following: 'Lychee: also spelled "litchi" and half a dozen other ways . . .' Webster records five. The July, 1982 issue of an advertising magazine contains the following advertisement: 'Classes. Chinese Shadow Boxing (*Tai Chi Ch'uan*) — a graceful path to all-round fitness'. In the *University of Hong Kong Bulletin* for members of staff, September 15, 1982, the expression is written without the apostrophe: '*Tai Chi Chuan* is the ancient Chinese method of maintaining the flow of "chi" or vital energy through the body.' *The Asia Magazine* July 18, 1982, begins its article on London's Chinatown by referring to the 'pungent' smell of 'chow mein and won ton.' *The South China Morning Post* uses *wan tun* in its May 4, 1982 issue, when it reports about a U.S.-based Chinese fast-food chain called Charlie Chan restaurants.

Grammatically, there may be confusion over whether a countable noun should take a plural ending or be marked by zero. In *The Noble House*, we find the writer vacillating between *quai*

*loh* with an -s and also without, e.g. 'She's Chinese and we *quai loh!*' and '. . . *quai lohs* 're so cheap compared to Hong Kong girls!' (p. 711) The latter example, which uses the -s plural morpheme, shows little regard for gender. Another example relates to the word *samfu* or *samfoo* from Cantonese *saam fu* 衫褲 literally 'jacket and trousers'. The April issue of the British Airways inflight magazine has the following in its article about New York's Chinatown: 'Some of the old folk still wear traditional Chinese dress: men in long black gowns, a wispy beard even, and women in *sam fu*, those comfortable-looking baggy pyjamas.' Here the -s ending is missing, while an -s is put in to denote plurality in an advertisement publicising a fashion show appearing in *The South China Morning Post* which refers to 'Hand embroidered *chi-paos* and *samfus*.' (16/10/82)

In time, if the word catches on, the italics, quotation marks, and explanatory notes may no longer be necessary. This certainly applies to a number of words occurring in publications aimed primarily at the Hong Kong expatriate. In many cases standardization has been achieved in relation to the written form as well as pronunciation and meaning. Such words include *mahjong*, *typhoon*, *cheongsam*, *taipan*, *hong* and so on. For example, *The South China Morning Post* refers to 'the determination of the hong's' and 'the amount of money at their disposal' (20/4/82); the *Hong Kong Standard* talks about 'people playing mahjong and children scampering about with their own games'. The loan words are unmarked.

We have said that 'linguistic borrowing' in fact involves fashioning a new word based on a 'model' in another language. To qualify as a fully assimilated item of the vocabulary, the new word usually has to meet certain requirements. It has to conform to the phonological, orthographical, and grammatical rules of the language. The spoken form is made up of the phonemes of the language, and these are combined to form permissible sequences according to the rules governing the phonology of that language. The written form has to make use of the graphemes of the language. This is no more than saying that the word must 'look' and 'sound' like an English word. In this process, certain linguistic changes have to be undergone. We have noted that

words of Chinese origin are almost always anglicized in pronunciation. There may be doubt concerning how the word should be pronounced, but rarely is the Chinese pronunciation retained. For example, take the word *cheongsam*. The affricate /ts/ is replaced by the English /ch/ and the rounded vowel similar to that in the English "bird", but with lip-rounding, is replaced by a vowel identical to that in the English 'long'. Similarly in *fung shui* the Cantonese diphthong /oey/ (similar to that in the French 'lui') is substituted by the /u/ + /i/ sequence as in the English 'ruin'. On the graphological level, there is no question of the loans being written in Chinese characters. The letters of English alphabet may however occur in rather unfamiliar combinations, as in the case of e-o-n-g occurring in *cheongsam*, and u-e-y in *chopsuey*.

Another requirement for full assimilation is related to the grammatical status of the word. Grammatically, it is assigned to a word class, or may have multiple-class membership. It behaves like other members of the class, so that if it is a countable noun it is inflected for number, and if it is a verb, it can take a past tense ending, and so on. Thus *typhoon* is inflected for number and *kowtow* for person and tense. It obeys the syntactical rules of the language in combining with other words to form grammatical sentences. For example, the headline 'Running water for lamas' occurs in *The South China Morning Post*, (7/82) also in the same paper, someone is described as 'mingling with the rich *tai tais*'. The word is not restricted in occurrence to limited contexts, but may be found to combine freely with other words to form bigger constructions, so that one can speak of Bruce Li as a 'kung fu superstar' *The South China Morning Post* (26/4/82), while in *Noble House* the writer mentions 'a flood of *amah* Cantonese' (p. 1017). *Cheongsam*, in its past participle form, functions as an adjective in '*cheongsamed* girl', as used by Richard Hughes (p. 98) and James Clavell (N.H., p. 9). Derivational affixes may be added, as when 'ism' or 'ist' is added to the loans *tao*, *lama*, *Mao*, giving *taoist*, *taoism*, *lamaism*, *Maoist* and so on. It does not matter that *Confucius* originally derives from a surname plus a title; now that it has been established in the English language, one can derive *Confucian* and *Confucianism* from it. Again, it is of no significance that the model for *Shanghai*

is the name of a city, or that *kowtow* comes from a verb plus noun construction in another language, or that *chin chin* derives from a Chinese salutation or greeting. As English verbs they behave like verbs in English, so that one can say 'He loves to kowtow to people in high places', or 'A lot of unfortunate people were shanghaied against their will', or 'They were chin-chinning each other'. There is the tendency for English speakers to borrow whole units from Chinese, rather than individual morphemes, without regard to the grammatical classes to which the borrowed morphemes belong. For example as I have said *kowtow* is a combination of verb + noun, but not only does neither *kow* nor *tow* appear in any other combinations or singly, the verbal inflection for tense comes at the end of what was the noun part of the borrowed term, hence *kowtowed*, not *kowed the tow* when the word is used in the past tense form.

In the process of assimilation into the borrowing language, a loan word may undergo semantic change: it may become more general or narrower in meaning. For example, *kung fu* from 功夫 is the term for Chinese martial arts but now it often collocates with *shoes*, and *kung fu shoes* refers to flat cloth shoes not necessarily used in doing kung fu. Thus *kung fu* as premodifier for *shoes* has been generalized in meaning. A very interesting case of a word broadening its meaning through insufficient information about the lending language is *gweilo* 鬼佬, which among all but the most knowing expatriates, is taken to be a generic term for 'foreign devils', both male and female. In Clavell's *Noble House* we find 'any quai loh woman' (p. 712). We often hear Western women referred to as 'gweilo lady'. In fact, the second morpheme of 'gweilo' is masculine, a coarse term for 'man'. The feminine equivalent is 婆, and the Chinese term for an expatriate woman would be 鬼婆, the transliterated form of which — *gwei por* — is gaining some currency at least in the spoken language of expatriates.

In becoming more like a word of the borrowing language, the loan word may become less and less like the 'model' in the lending language, in pronunciation, in written form, in grammatical function and — in a few cases — in meaning. Perhaps we can take it that a word has become an integral part of the language

at least for some sections of the language community, when it occurs in puns and other examples of wordplay. During a popular television show in the U.S. a chow dog which bites people but is quite timid is described as 'chicken chow mein'. The term *wok* has become so familiar that it has become a favourite item for puns. A fast food Chinese restaurant in Boston is called 'Wok In'. In San Francisco audiences watching a cooking programme are told to 'get wokking'. When someone had returned from a trip to Bangkok with some Thai silk ties, an expatriate colleague of ours was heard to make the following remark: 'Did the Thai *tai tai* tie your Thai tie? The noun *lap sap* from Cantonese *laap saap* 垃圾 'rubbish' is known to almost every English-speaker who has lived in Hong Kong for some time. Some people objected to the use of the word 'rubbish' as a verb in a slogan for the Clean Hong Kong Campaign launched by the Government recently: 'Don't rubbish your city' was felt to be bad English. The following letter to the editor of *The South China Morning Post* may be taken as evidence that *lap sap* and 'rubbish' are taken to be synonyms in the same language: 'To whoever gave us "Don't rubbish your city", a piece of advice. Don't lap-sap your language.' (South China Morning Post, 7/12/82).

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> See M. Chan and H. Kwok, *A Study of Lexical Borrowing from English in Hong Kong Chinese*, Centre of Asian Studies, University of Hong Kong, 1982.

<sup>2</sup> The study is in the form of a monograph entitled *Chinese Loan Words in English with Special Reference to English in Hong Kong* has been accepted for publication by the Centre of Asian Studies, University of Hong Kong, and will appear by early 1985. The monograph will include an appendix giving a list of 105 loan words with notes on pronunciation, meaning and etymology.

<sup>3</sup> Oxford, 1962, p. 143.

<sup>4</sup> For example, A.J. Bliss, *A Dictionary of Foreign Words and Phrases*, London, 1980, includes *chopsticks*, *chopsuey*, *kowtow*, *kuomintang*, *sampan*, *tycoon*.

D. Carroll, *Dictionary of Foreign Terms in the English Language*, New York, 1973, has *kowtow* and *sampan*.

A.H. Hall, *Phrase and Word Origins*, New York, revised 1961, has fairly lengthy explanations of pidgin terms and prevalent false etymologies, and includes references to *chop chop*, *chow*, *kumquat*, *chau min*.

<sup>5</sup> A.J. Bliss, *op. cit.*

\* For example, Aeneas Anderson, *A Narrative of the British Embassy to China in the Years 1792, 1793 and 1794*, London, 1795.

James Dyer Bull, *Things Chinese*, 4th edn., Hong Kong 1903.

John Barrow, *Travels in China*, London, 1806.

J.F. Davis, *Chinese Miscellanies*, London, 1865.

C. Toogood Downing, *The Fan-qui in China in 1836-1837*, London, 1838.

James Bromley Eames, *The English in Chinese*, London, p. 82.

Mary Gertrude Mason, *Western Concepts of China and the Chinese 1840-1876*, New York, 1938.

<sup>7</sup> See H. Kwok and M. Chan, "Where the Twain Do Meet", *General Linguistics*, Pennsylvania, Vol. 2, #2, 1972, pp. 63-82.

K. Luke and J. Richards, 'The Role of English: Status and Fuction', paper for RELC Conference held in Singapore, 1982.

A survey on English Language Use in different fields is being undertaken in the Department of English Studies and Comparative Literature by K. Luke and K. Bolton with the aid of a research grant from the University. Findings should be published shortly.

<sup>8</sup> Charles F. Hockett, *A Course in Modern Linguistics*, New York, 1965, pp. 393-423.

<sup>9</sup> Partial Listing: David Bonavia, *The Chinese*, London, 1981.

J. Clavell, *Taiwan*, London, Joseph, 1966.

*Noble House*, London Hodder and Stoughton, 1981.

Eric Cumine, *Ways and Byways*, Hong Kong, 1981.

R. Elcgant, *Dynasty*, New York, Fawcett Crest, 1977.

*Manchu*, New York, McGraw Hill, 1980.

R. Hughes, *Borrowed Time, Borrowed Place*, London, Deutsch, 1968.

Maxine Hong Kingston, *China Man*, London, PAN, 1981.

*Woman Warrior*, New York, Knoff, 1976.

T. Mo, *The Monkey King*, London, Deutsch, 1978.

*Sour Sweet*, London, Deutsch, 1978.

Ian Steward, *The Peking Payoff*, Middlesex, Hamlyn, 1978.

<sup>10</sup> In Webster we find this definition: 'enthusiastic, cooperative, enterprising, etc. in an unrestrained, often naive way'. Collins gives the definition: 'U.S. slang, excessively, or foolishly enthusiastic (c. 20th Century — pidgin English from Mandarin, Chinese *kung work* + *ho* together.)

The Chinese morphemes involved would seem to be [gun] 'work' 工 and 合 together. The term may well be pidgin English, as Collins suggests, since the expression 工合 [gun ho] does not in fact occur in Chinese.

<sup>11</sup> K. Luke and J. Richards, op. cit.

<sup>12</sup> L. Bloomfield, *Language*, New York, 1933, p. 461.

<sup>13</sup> This is the O.E.D. spelling of the word derived from Chinese 會. In Hong Kong the word is usually written *wui*, reflecting the Cantonese pronunciation. 'Wui' is used with this spelling as a technical term in the New Territories Ordinance.

<sup>14</sup> *The Stanford Dictionary of Anglicized Words and Phrases*, compiled by C.A.M. Fennell, C.U.P. 1982.

<sup>15</sup> A.J. Bliss, op. cit.

<sup>16</sup> R.W. Langacker, *Language and Its Structure, Some Fundamental Linguistic Concepts*, New York, 1968, pp. 177-194.

<sup>17</sup> Eric Cumine, *Kong kong Ways and Byways: A Miscellany of Trivia*, Hong Kong, 1981, p. 177.

## APPENDIX

Note: This is a much shortened and simplified version of our complete appendix, which includes both the Cantonese and Mandarin pronunciations of the Chinese characters from which the loans have been borrowed, and much more detailed accounts of meaning and etymology. I have, for the sake of brevity, left out references to dictionaries. The Dictionaries consulted were The O.E.D., Webster, Collins, Random House, Penguin. The words asterisked have not been sanctioned by inclusion in standard dictionaries.

<i>Loan Word</i>	<i>Chinese Characters</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
Bohea	武夷(山)	A black Chinese tea, once regarded as the choicest, but now as an inferior grade.
Cathay	契丹	China.
Char	茶	<i>Brit.</i> a slang word for tea.
Cheongsam	長衫	A straight dress, usually of silk or cotton, with stand-up collar and a slit in one side of the skirt, worn by Chinese women.
Chin	琴	A Chinese zither consisting of an oblong slightly curved wooden box over which are stretched strings that are stopped with one hand and plucked with the other.
Chin Chin	請請	A phrase of salutation.
China	秦	A species of earthenware of a fine semi-transparent texture originally manufactured in China, and first brought to Europe in the 16th Century by the Portuguese, who named it <i>porcelain</i> .
Ching Ming	清明	A spring festival in China when graves are put in order and special offerings are made to the dead.
Chopsuey	雜碎	A dish prepared chiefly from bean sprouts, bamboo shoots, water chestnuts, onions, mushrooms, and meat or fish and served with rice and soy sauce.
*Chow fan	炒飯	Fried rice mixed with diced meat, shrimps, egg, spring onion, etc.
Chow or chow-chow	狗	A heavy-coated blocky powerfully built dog that is believed to have originated in north China.
Chow mein	炒麵	A thick stew of shredded or finely diced meat, mushrooms, vegetables, and seasonings that is served with fried noodles.

<i>Loan Word</i>	<i>Chinese Characters</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
*Choy sum	菜心	A species of leafy Chinese vegetable, with yellow flowers.
Confucius	孔夫子	K'ung Fu-tse n. the Chinese name of Confucius.
Congou	工夫	A kind of black tea imported from China.
Cumshaw	感謝	In the Chinese ports: A gratuity.
*Chung Yeung	重陽	A Chinese festival falling on the ninth day of the ninth moon on which according to traditional belief people have to go up to high places to avoid calamity. Also a day for sweeping ancestral graves.
*Dimsum	點心	Tidbits eaten at a Cantonese repast taken either in the early morning or at lunch time known as <i>yum cha</i> or 'drinking tea'.
*Ding how	頂好	Literally meaning 'the most excellent best'.
*Fanqui, fankwei	番鬼	Literally 'barbarian ghost', used to refer to westerners in the early days of contact between China and the west.
Fan-tan	番攤	A Chinese gambling game in which a random number of counters are placed under a bowl and wagers laid on how many will remain after they have been divided by four.
Fen	分	A monetary unit of the People's Republic of China worth one hundredth of a yuan.
Feng shui, fung shui	風水	In Chinese mythology, a system of spirit influences, good and evil, which inhabit the natural features of landscapes; hence, a kind of geomancy for dealing with these influences in determining sites for houses and graves.
Fo	佛	Chinese Buddha.
*Foki	伙記	A term used to refer to waiters in restaurants, but sometimes also used in the wider sense of people who work in the same organization, i.e. 'colleagues'.
Foo yung, fu yung	芙蓉	Fu yung, lit. hibiscus: a Chinese omelet made with bean sprouts, green pepper, and onion and fried in deep fat.
Galingale	高嶺薑	Lit. 'mild ginger from Ko'.
Ginseng	人參	Either of two arallaceous plants, <i>Panax Ginseng</i> ( <i>Schinseng</i> ), of China, Korea, etc., or <i>P. quinquefolium</i> , of North America, having an aromatic root used in medicine by the Chinese.

<i>Loan Word</i>	<i>Chinese Characters</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
Gung ho	工 合	Enthusiastic, cooperative, enterprising, etc. in an unrestrained, often naive way.
*Gweilo	鬼 佬	Literally 'ghost' or 'devil man', used to refer to Westerners. Widely current in Hong Kong.
Han	漢	Of, relating to, or having the characteristic of, the period of the Han dynasty; of, relating to, or being a nationality group of Chinese descended from the original Chinese constituting an overwhelming majority of the population and the dominant cultural group; belonging to the Chinese proper as distinguished from other nationality groups.
Hakka	客 家	One of a tribe or race of Chinese dwelling in parts of southern China, particularly in the province of Canton, descendants of immigrants from northern China in the middle ages; also their dialect.
Hoey (wui)	會	A society of Chinese; especially a secret society. In Hong Kong a savings club.
Hong	行	A foreign trading establishment in China or Japan.
Hyson	熙 春	A species of green tea from China.
I-ching	易 經	An ancient Chinese book of divination and a source of Confucian and Taoist philosophy.
*Kaito	街 渡	Literally 'street ferry', used to refer to boats plying between various points in Hong Kong.
*Kaifong	街 方 (坊)	Literally 'street square', used to refer to a neighbourhood, especially to community organizations.
Kaolin	高 嶺	A fine white clay produced by the decomposition of feldspar, used in the manufacture of porcelain; first employed by the Chinese, but subseq. found in many places.
Ketchup	茄 汁	A sauce made from the juice of mushrooms, walnuts, tomatoes, etc.
Kowtow	叩 頭	The Chinese custom of touching the ground with the forehead, as an expression of respect, submission, or worship.
*Kuk	局	Literally 'association', 'society', 'committee'.
*Kung hei fat choy	恭 喜 發 財	Literally 'wish you grow prosperous'. A Chinese New Year greeting.

<i>Loan Word</i>	<i>Chinese Characters</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
Kumquat, comquat	金 橘	The small round orange fruit of such a tree, with a sweet rind, used in preserves and confections.
Kung fu	功 夫	A Chinese martial art combining principles of karate and judo.
Kuomintang	國 民 黨	The main political party of the Republic of China, founded chiefly by Sun Yat-sen in 1911 and led since 1925 by Chiang Kai-shek; the dominant party in mainland China until 1948.
Kuoyu	國 語	The name given to the Chinese "national tongue", form of Mandarin adopted for official use.
Kwan-yin	觀 音	One of the Chinese female Buddhas, noted for her kindness.
kylin	麒 麟	A fabulous animal of composite form, figured on Chinese and Japanese pottery.
Lama	喇 嘛	A Buddhist priest of Mongolia or Tibet.
*laisee	利 是	The red packets containing money meant to bring luck given on birthdays and festivals, especially at Chinese New Year.
*Lap sap	垃 圾	Rubbish.
*Lap sap chung	垃 圾 虫	Literally 'rubbish worm', meaning a litter-bug.
Li	里 / 厘	A Chinese measure of distance 27-4/5 li = 10 miles, or a Chinese weight, one-thousandth part of <i>liang</i> .
Loquat	蘆 橘	A small evergreen tree of the rose family, native to China and Japan; the small yellow, edible plum-like fruit of this tree.
Lychee	荔 枝	The fruit of the <i>nephelium litchi</i> .
Mafoo	馬 伕	A Chinese stable boy or groom.
Mahjong, mah-jong(g)	麻 雀 / 馬 將	An old Chinese game, played usually by four persons with 136 or 144 "tiles".
Manchu	滿 洲	(One) of the native Mongolian race of Manchuria which formed the ruling class in China from 1644 to 1912.
Mao	毛	Adjective from Mao Tse-tung.
*Maotai	茅 台	Strong Chinese alcoholic drink.
Nankeen	南 京	Kind of cotton cloth originally made of naturally yellow cotton.
Oolong	烏 龍	A dark variety of cured tea.

<i>Loan Word</i>	<i>Chinese Characters</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
Pak-choi	白 菜	Another name for Chinese cabbage.
*Pak pai	白 牌	Literally 'white label', meaning hire cars which are in fact operating illegally because they are not licenced to carry passengers for a fee.
Pekingese	北京 (狗)	A small long-haired dog, of the pug type, orig. brought from the Imperial Palace at Peking.
Pekoe	白 毫	A superior kind of black tea, so called from the leaves being picked young with the down still on them.
*Pinyin	拼 音	Literally 'to write according to sound' referring to the romanization system used to write Chinese rather than the traditional Chinese characters.
Petuntse, Petuntze	白 墩 子	A white earth, consisting of pulverized granite; used in combination with kaolin in the manufacture of Chinese porcelain.
Pipa	琵琶	A 4-stringed Chinese musical instrument plucked like a guitar and having a large body resembling a lute and a neck with 12 or more frets that leads into the body.
*Putonghua	普 通 話	Literally 'ordinary speech', the standard dialect of China.
*Renminbi	人 民 幣	Literally 'the people's currency', referring to the currency of the People's Republic of China.
Samfoo	衫 褲	A style of casual dress worn by Chinese women, consisting of waisted blouse and trousers.
Sampan	舢 舨	Applied by Europeans in the China seas to any small boat of Chinese pattern.
Samshu	三 燒	An alcoholic liquor distilled in China from boiled and fermented rice.
*Sharpei, sharpi	沙 皮	Literally 'sand-skinned', referring to the rough and loose skin of this breed of dog, formerly known as the 'Chinese Fighting Dog'.
Shanghai	上 海	To drug or otherwise render insensible, and ship on board a vessel wanting hands.
Shantung	山 東	A soft undressed Chinese silk.
Shih tzu	獅 子	A Chinese breed of small dog similar to a Pekingese.
Souchong	小 種	One of the finer varieties of black tea.

<i>Loan Word</i>	<i>Chinese Characters</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
Soy	豉 油	A salty, fermented sauce much used on fish and other dishes in the Orient, prepared from soybeans.
Tai chi (chuan)	太極 (拳)	A series of postures and exercises developed in China as a system of self-defence and as an aid to meditation, characterized by slow, relaxed, circular movements.
*Tai tai	太 太	Meaning 'Mrs', a title for a married lady, placed after the surname as in 張太太 or 'Mrs. Cheung'. In the Hong Kong media it has acquired specific connotations and refers to wealthy married ladies who are usually prominent in society and are arbiters of style and fashion.
Taipan	大 班	The head of a foreign house of business in China: a great merchant.
Taiping	太 平	The name given to the adherents of a great rebellion which arose in Southern China in 1850, under the leadership of Hung Siu-tsuen.
Tanka	蜑 家	The boat-population of Canton, who live entirely on the boats by which they earn their living; they are descendants of some aboriginal tribe of which <i>Tan</i> was app. the name.
Tao(ism) (ist)	道	A system of religion, founded on the doctrine set forth in the work <i>Tao te king</i> 'Book of reason and virtue'.
Tea	茶	The leaves of the tea-plant; first imported into Europe in the 17th C. A drink made by infusing these leaves in boiling water, having a somewhat bitter and aromatic flavour, and acting as a moderate stimulant; largely used as a beverage.
*Tin Hau	天 后	Literally 'Queen of Heaven', goddess who is patroness of fishermen and sailors.
Tofu	豆 腐	The bean-curd or bean-cheese of China and Japan, made from soya beans.
Tong	堂	A Chinese secret society.
Tung (oil)	桐	A yellow drying oil derived from the seed of a tung tree, <i>Aleurites Fordii</i> , used in varnishes, linoleum, etc.
Tycoon	大 官	A businessman having great wealth and power.

<i>Loan Word</i>	<i>Chinese Characters</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
Typhoon	大風/颱風	A violent cyclonic storm or hurricane occurring in the China seas and adjacent regions, chiefly during the period from July to October.
Wok	鑊	A large metal Chinese cooking pot having a curved base like a bowl and traditionally with a wooden handle.
Wonton	雲吞/餛飩	Filled pockets of noodle dough boiled in and eaten with soup.
Yin, Yang	陰 陽	Two complementary principles of Chinese philosophy: Yin is negative, dark, and feminine, Yang positive, bright, and masculine. Their interaction is thought to maintain the harmony of the universe and to influence everything within it.
Yuan	院/元	The basic monetary unit of China established in 1914; a department of government in the Nationalist government of China.
*Yum cha	飲 茶	Literally 'drink tea'. A Cantonese repast taken in the early morning or at lunch time at which <i>dimsum</i> or small tidbits are consumed along with Chinese tea.
*Yum sing	飲 勝	Equivalent to 'bottoms up,' to drink the whole glass. Often used in mixed social gatherings of expatriates and local people.
Zen	禪	Buddhism. A Mahayana movement, introduced into China in the 16th C. A.D., and into Japan in the 12th C., the emphasis of which was upon enlightenment for the student by the most direct possible means, accepting formal studies and observances only when they formed part of such means.