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Facilitation of transference: The case of monosyllabic salience in Hong Kong Cantonese

DOI 10.1515/ling-2015-0037

Abstract: Drawing on Clyne's (2003) explanatory framework of facilitation, this study presents evidence of monosyllabic salience in Hong Kong Cantonese. Grounded in the perceptual salience of bilingual speakers of two or more languages (Clyne 1997: 95), facilitation extends Clyne's earlier work on triggering (1967, 1980), which seeks to explain why linguistic (phonological, lexical, syntactic, semantic, etc.) features of one's earlier-acquired language(s) may be transferred to languages learned or used later. In a corpus of texts appearing in informal discourse of Hong Kong Chinese newspaper columns in the mid-1990s (Li et al. 2014), a large number of monosyllabic English words, occurring as unintegrated insertions (Muysken 2000), were found. Building on Luke and Lau's (2008) empirically supported insight that Cantonese verbs and adjectives are more characteristically monosyllabic compared with nouns, we present additional evidence in support of the Monosyllabic Salience Hypothesis (MSH): (i) shorter average word length in Cantonese vis-à-vis Mandarin, as evidenced in miscellaneous wordlists, including the Leipzig-Jakarta list (Tadmor et al. 2010: 239–241) and the World Loanword Database (WOLD) online (Haspelmath and Tadmor 2009); (ii) the truncation of the first syllable of polysyllabic words embedded in the A-not-A structure; (iii) bilingual punning; and (iv) monosyllabic Romanized Cantonese words (e.g., *chok*, *chur*, *hea*).

Keywords: monosyllabic, lexical borrowing, transference, codeswitching, language contact

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1 Introduction

Following the exponential expansion of the Internet and tremendous technological advancement since the 1990s, both the quality and efficiency of electronic communication has been significantly improved. Impact of this development can be felt in many facets of everyday life, for instance, calling someone or sending images – still or animated – over a distance is now much easier. The battle among transnational consortiums and providers of electronic gadgets to win over the hearts of end-users worldwide has been driving one technological breakthrough after another, with enhanced user-friendliness being the ticket to success. As a correlate of English being used as an international lingua franca, for example in marketing campaigns, one linguistic consequence of this development is the growing visibility, and versatility, of the letters *i* and *e*. Following the example of *e-mail*, an initial attempt to replace the longer *electronic mail*, the transnational corporate giant of e-gadgets, Apple Inc., decided to name its new products strategically with *i*: iPhone, iPad, iPod and iTunes. In effect, *i* has become a one-syllable substitute for *internet*, in the same way that *e* has taken the place of *electronic* where linguistic parsimony matters to the speakers/writers and their interlocutors. Among the more recent neologisms involving these two morphemes are *e-learning*, *e-channel*, *iMedia*, and *iTouch* (hyphen increasingly dispreferred, except when parsing may be a problem, e.g., *e-gadget* and *e-channel*).

Since advertising space is costly, marketing professionals are keen for their target clients to remember their products. It is therefore not surprising that marketing experts seek every possible means to get their message across concisely, hence the appeal of monosyllabic words and morphemes like *e-* and *i-*, but also compounds and abbreviations such as *Facebook* and the now defunct *ICQ* ('I seek you'). A quick search of IT applications and gadgets – *IT* itself being another revealing example of this trend – yielded the following functions and product names: *app* (clipped from *application*), *Chat, Dontalk, Snapchat* and *Talk*. Long expressions tend to be abbreviated (e.g., *GB, OS, SMS*), especially if this results in an acronym pronounceable as a syllable (e.g., *RAM* and *WAP*). As of the time of writing, Samsung promotes a new smartphone function called *kill switch*, which allows the owner to deactivate the device if it is lost or stolen. All this suggests that monosyllabic English words have a strong appeal among marketing professionals of IT products.

In a corpus of texts collected from written Hong Kong Chinese newspaper columns (Li et al. 2014), which are characterized by adherence to vernacular-style and plenty of Cantonese-English code-mixing, we found a large number of

monosyllabic English words (MEWs) which, following Muysken (2000), are mostly insertions into Hong Kong Written Chinese (HKWC, Shi 2006). This study is an attempt to account for the preponderance of MEWs in Hong Kong Cantonese and Written Chinese.

2 Theoretical framework in this study

In light of varying terminologies in research on language contact, we find it useful to adopt a set of terms that would subsume what is elsewhere referred to by various scholars as "code-switching", "code-mixing", "code-alternation" and "borrowing", among others. Toward this end, we will follow Clyne's (2003) terminological delineation as follows:

> A 'transfer' is an instance of transference, where the form, feature of construction has been taken over by the speaker from another language, whatever the motives or explanation for this. 'Transference' is thus the process and a 'transfer' the product. (Clyne 2003: 76)

Transfer or transference may take place at different levels – lexical, semantic, phonetic/phonological, prosodic, tonemic, graphemic, morphological and syntactic, and any combinations of these (Clyne 2003: 76). They free us from a concern, to what extent the transfers in question have been integrated (partially or fully, the latter being more like borrowings comprehensible to monolingual speakers), or are unintegrated into the recipient language, from ephemeral "nonce loans" that would fail to catch on as a result of low social acceptability in society (see Onysko 2007: 37–38 for a critical discussion), to frequently occurring insertions whose pronunciation approximates that of the source language. This point is especially important as much of the data reported in this study comes from written sources, where the English words inserted into Chinese texts cover a wide range, from "nonce loans" to frequently-occurring switches.

At the heart of Clyne's (2003) explanatory framework is facilitation, a construct which he considers more precise and less controversial than the earlier concept of "triggering" (p. 162; cf. Clyne 1967, 1980). Clyne (2003) shows convincingly how, in a migration settlement context like Australia, different community languages of European (including via Latin America such as Italian and Spanish) and Asian origin undergo various linguistic changes under more or less the same language contact conditions, with English as the common nexus. Rather than universalist constraints on code-switching (e.g., Equivalence Constraint, Free Morpheme Constraint, Government Constraint, Conjunction Constraint), Clyne (2003: Ch. 3) demonstrates that code-switching data presented in previous models

and analyses are more productively seen as strong tendencies resulting from one or more facilitating principles that account for "transversion" (term he prefers to code-switching) at the lexical, tonal/prosodic, and syntactic levels.

With the help of a wealth of data sets involving bilingual and trilingual speakers of various community languages as diverse as German, Dutch, Croatian, Italian, Spanish and Vietnamese, Clyne presents solid evidence showing how unintegrated transfers such as proper nouns in the embedded language, and bilingual homophones which have an identical or similar pronunciation as a matrix language counterpart facilitate transversion (Principle 1, "lexical facilitation", pp. 162–175). Likewise, drawing on bilingual data from Mandarin and the Vietnamese communities, Clyne shows a similar mechanism at work at the tonal-prosodic level, where the matrix language "lexical items in a tonal language whose tone is identified with the pitch and stress of the non-tonal language in contact are liable to facilitate (though not necessarily cause) transversion" (p. 175; Principle 2, "tonal facilitation", pp. 175–177). At the syntactic level, where syntactic structures occur or where contact-induced syntactic convergence has taken place, the points of convergence are often perceived as "triggers" or sites of switching, which allow the speaker to proceed in any of the languages in the language dyad or triad, thereby facilitating transversion (Principle 3, "syntactic overlap/transference/convergence [secondary facilitation]", pp. 177–179). One instructive illustration involves "multiple transference" of the collocation *for lunch*, uttered by a second-generation German-speaker, in what Clyne calls anticipational (as opposed to consequential) facilitation of transversion:

(1) Wir haben aus *FOR* LUNCH gegangen
we have-1PL out for lunch go-PAST.PT
Homeland Ger.: Wir sind zum Mittag ausgegangen
'We went out for lunch'
(MGP 161–162; second generation) [52 in Clyne (2003: 178)]

Here, we see evidence of syntactic convergence to English, as shown in the choice of auxiliary *haben* (*haben...gegangen*) instead of *sein* 'be' (*sind ... gegangen*), and the preposition *aus*, which was probably triggered by phonetic similarity with English *out* in *out for lunch*. It is termed "multiple transference" since *out for lunch* is not a single-word switch but a high-frequency collocation (cf. embedded language island, Myers-Scotton 1993). Clyne (2003) notes that syntactic overlap is only partial because the discontinuous structure, *aux* + participle, is maintained (i.e., it would have been total syntactic transference if the speaker had said *Wir haben gegangen aus for lunch*). Clyne comments

that syntactic convergence and transference "function like other forms of convergence and overlap due to perceptual identification between items in the two languages as a potential *facilitator* of switching" (p. 178, emphasis in original). Perceptual salience is thus postulated as a theoretical premise behind facilitation. We will come back to this point later.

Additional compelling evidence comes from three data sets obtained from trilinguals: Dutch-German-English (DGE), Hungarian-German-English (HGE), and Italian-Spanish-English (ISE) (Clyne 1997). Under "Trilingual convergence" (Clyne 2003: 105–109), Clyne demonstrates that a strong "tendency for trilinguals to extend to the third language a feature shared by two of their languages is found at the lexical, semantic, syntactic, morphemic, phonological/prosodic levels" (p. 105), a feature characterized as "interlingual identification based on correspondences between two of the languages" (Clyne 1997: 95). Thus at the level of phonology, instead of *pronuncia* in homeland Italian, ISE trilinguals with Italian as L1 or L2 would pronounce it as *pronunciazone*, probably under the joint influence of Eng. *pronunciation* and Span. *pronunciación*. Similarly, homeland Ger. *provinziell* gave way to *provinzial*, aligning with Eng. *provincial* and Dut. *provinciaal* (Clyne 2003: 95). Where cognates exist, the prosodic pattern shared by two languages may exert pressure on the third. This is apparently why an HGE speaker pronounced the word for *accent* in Ger. as ['ɛksɛnt], which deviates from homeland Ger. *Akzent* [ak'tsɛnt] (compare: Eng.: *accent* ['aeksent]; Hung.: *ékezet* ['e:kɛzɛt], p. 108). Morphologically, among the DGE, homeland Ger. fused comparatives (e.g., *normalste*) gave way to analytic comparatives (e.g., *meist normale*; compare: Dut. *meest normale*; Eng. *most normal*, p. 107). At the syntactic level, to express the meaning 'to like', the English of ISE speakers shows a word order preference which is shared by Italian and Spanish, e.g., 'The garden like it my wife', where the experiencer (here, 'my wife') is placed at the end of the clause rather than being thematized as subject (compare: *Il giardino piace a mia moglie*; *El jardin le gusta a mi mujer*, pp. 106–107). Apart from the variety and sheer amount of solid evidence from different language dyads and triads with English as the common nexus, Clyne (2003) demonstrates convincingly that transference, often manifested as transversion (code-switching), is often motivated by overlaps or similarities in the linguistic subsystems of the languages in contact: lexical, tonal/prosodic, and syntactic.

After reviewing various language processing models to date, Clyne (2003: Ch. 6) draws implications and concludes that:

> Each language constitutes a network. The networks are connected through items that are linked because such items (lexemes, tones) are (perceived to be) part of, or employed in, more than one language. Thus, using any item from a particular network is sufficient to activate the network (language) of which it is part or with which it is identified. There is

> also a secondary facilitation, where activation according to a similar procedure is further assisted by overlap in, and convergence of, grammatical structures that are the same. Transversion may be facilitated by anticipating a trigger-item or in consequence of one. (Perceived) overlaps in the lexicon and also in the prosody and syntax of the languages function as gateways to another network. (Clyne 2003: 211–212)

Clyne's hypothesis of tonal/prosodic facilitation (Clyne 2003: 175–177) is based essentially on the data sets collected from second-generation and young first-generation Mandarin-English bilinguals and first-generation Vietnamese-English bilinguals. In both cases, a strong correlation was found between the pitch level of the words immediately before a switch to English (Viet.: 85.46%; 33.41% in Tone 1 or high pitch, and 51.95% in Tone 2 or 3 mid pitch; Mand.: 96.49% of switches came after fourth (53, falling), half-third (35, falling then rising; and neutral). Clyne (2003: 175) argues that "[w]ords with these tones bring speakers into the tonal range which is also possible in English, i.e., which overlaps in the two languages". This appears to facilitate transversion and transference from Vietnamese and Mandarin, respectively, into English.

Clyne's notion of perceptual salience, the *modus operandi* behind facilitation of transference across languages, arguably underlies the theories in a few other prominent language contact studies. For instance, perceptual salience, which plays a crucial role in Field's (2002) critical examination of hierarchies of borrowability based on the morphological typologies of the languages in contact, is subsumed in two complementary principles: Principle of System Compatibility (PSC) and Principle of System Incompatibility (PSI), which he applies to account for the extensive borrowing of Spanish into Modern Mexicano (Nahuatl). Field's (2002) findings are neatly summarized by Comrie in the foreword as follows:

> the borrowing language's morphological typology – whether it is isolating, agglutinating, or fusional – will constrain the possibility of borrowing features from another language. An isolating language can borrow neither agglutinating nor fusional morphology. An agglutinating language can borrow agglutinating, but not fusional morphology. A fusional language can borrow both agglutinating and fusional morphology. (Comrie 2002: x)

Facilitation mediated by perceptual salience is also clearly at work in graphic borrowing, which represents the focus of Hansell's (2002) functional analysis of lexical borrowing. Hansell observes that graphic borrowing "requires not only that both languages be written but that they also share a common script. English can borrow graphically from French *but not from Japanese* while Japanese can borrow from Chinese but not Arabic, etc." (p. 156, emphasis in original). Two of Hansell's illustrations of graphic borrowing or transference are particularly instructive (2002: 157–158). First, the morpho-syllables 社 and 會, which had

been borrowed from Classical Chinese into Japanese earlier, were combined to form a Japanese neologism 社會 (*shakai*) in the late nineteenth century to render the western concept of 'society' (written as 社会 in both kanji and simplified Chinese). This bisyllabic word was subsequently re-borrowed into Mandarin (*shèhuì*) for that modern meaning (compare borrowing of morphemes written in a different writing system: Ger. *Automobil* < *auto-* from Greek αυτο- 'own, self' + Latin *mobilis* 'moveable'; Eng. *television* via Fre. cognate *télévision* < *tele-* from Greek τηλε- 'far away' + Latin *vision-* 'sight'; Hartmut Haberland, p. c.). Second, Eng. *boycott* was transliterated in Hong Kong Cantonese as 杯葛 *bui1 got3*,[1] but the two morpho-syllables were later borrowed into Mandarin, albeit pronounced differently: *bēigě*. These examples lend strong support to Hansell's view that the sharing of a common script facilitates or "expands the possibilities for interaction between languages, especially lexical borrowing" (2002: 154).

We believe Clyne's (2003) twin postulate of perceptual salience and facilitation lends itself very well to explaining a large number of MEW (monosyllabic English word) insertions in Hong Kong Cantonese, which is arguably due to a community-wide perception of MEWs being functionally akin to Cantonese morpho-syllables. This claim logically entails linguistic evidence of the perceptual salience of the Cantonese morpho-syllable. Below, we will first present a list of MEWs separated by word class in our 1990s corpus of written data collected from informal sections of the Hong Kong Chinese quality press (Li et al. 2014). Then, to contextualize how MEWs are used in Hong Kong Chinese newspapers, we will outline the findings of a survey of reader response to one comic strip containing MEWs. Our key research question is: Roughly one in five English words inserted into Hong Kong Cantonese is monosyllabic, suggesting that MEWs are treated on par as Cantonese morpho-syllables. What linguistic evidence is there to facilitate transference?

3 MEWs in Hong Kong Cantonese mixed code: Corpus data in the 1990s

The preponderance of MEWs in Cantonese first came to our attention when processing data consisting of mainly Hong Kong Chinese newspaper columns

1 The romanization system, Jyutping, developed by the Linguistic Society of Hong Kong (LSHK) will be used to transliterate Cantonese morphemes. The number at the end of a Cantonese syllable refers to the number of the toneme (1–6). Morphemes in Mandarin will be transliterated in pinyin.

collected in the mid-1990s – when the Internet was just beginning to become popular, and Chinese word-processing was technically rather difficult. The size of the corpus is about 600,000 Chinese characters. Data came from three main sources: *Hong Kong Economic Times* (香港經濟日報), *Hong Kong Economic Journal* (信報), and *Ming Pao* (明報). These sources may be broadly characterized as "quality press" (as opposed to "popular press") material. A column typically contains no more than 400 characters, and the topic is usually thought to be of interest to readers (e.g., personal commentary on a recent news story) or within the columnist's expertise. The columns, in the form of clippings, were collected randomly as they came to the attention of the first author; they were selected usually because there were one or two points of linguistic interest, of which one had to do with the insertion of some English element in Chinese. The clippings were sorted according to their points of interest. They were inputted into a database only recently. Since columns and other soft genres like adverts, cartoons and infotainment news stories are usually outside the scope or target of large-scale databases such as Linguistic Variation in Chinese Speech Communities (LIVAC, Tsou et al. 2011; http://www.livac.org/), our data is qualitatively different from mainstream Chinese databases in that, by virtue of text type and content, Hong Kong columnists are usually able to draw on vernacular-based norms more freely without meeting with editors' disapproval. This makes for an interesting writing style, and space, where vernacular-based writing proliferates (Snow 2004). Such a writing style has a precursor dated from the 1950s known as *saam1 kap6 dai2* (三及第, origin related to "imperial examination's three top honours", Cheung and Bauer 2002), where modern Chinese is blended creatively, sometimes unexpectedly and humorously, along with elements from classical Chinese and Cantonese (Wong 2002). This is the background against which insertion of English words of various lengths is seen by Hong Kong Cantonese speakers and readers as perfectly natural, which is rather different from prevailing norms for hard news stories.

With the help of two research assistants, who were instructed to proofread each other's typed drafts by cross-checking the original clippings, all the monosyllabic English word (MEW) types and tokens were entered into an Excel file. Table 1 gives an overview of the word types listed alphabetically according to word class (Table 1; those bolded in **red** appear in five different texts or more).

Below are six examples of MEWs, two each from three word classes (N.: *band, Line;* V.: *call, Talk*; and Adj.: *cool, HIGH* – upper or lower case as in original), showing how they appeared in our Chinese corpus.

Table 1: List of monosyllabic English words: 156 Noun types, 66 Verb types, and 40 Adjective types.

MEW Noun types (n=156)	MEW Verb types (n=66)	MEW Adjective types (n=40)
air (footwear), aunt, **ball** (dancing party), band (education), **band** (music), bass, beat, belt, bench, bit, blues, board (committee), boss, booze, bow (tie), brick, brie, brunch, **call** (incl. call 機, *ko1 gei1* 'call-machine'), case (incident), cast, class, client, cloves, club, coke, cost, course (learning), course (dining), court, crowd, crude, cruise, cult (fashion), cut, dance, dip, dorm, drive (car), earth, grunge, face, fact, **fan(s)**, **fax**, fear, feel, **file** (stationery), flames, folk, fool, form, **friend(s)**, **fun**, funk, fur, gag, games, gays, gold, golf, good, grade, graph, grunge, guest(s), guide, guts, gym, haves (counterpart of not-haves), hip, home, hong, horn (car), house, in (fashion: a state of being 'in'), jazz, job, key (musical sense, '啱 key' *aam1 key*, literally 'of the same key', metaphorically 'can get along'), king, kitsch, lab, lift, line (e-communication), live (object of the verb 唱 *coeng3* 'sing': singing performance), look, lounge, lunch, man, mass, Miss (term of address for female teachers or adults in general), mood, mug, myth, nude, pain, pair, part, pets, **phone**, plaid, plot, plus, point(s), post, pub, punk, queen, quote, rap, ring, rock (music), role, roots, rose, sake, **sales** (salesperson), sand, say, scoop, sculpt, sell (embedded in 'sell 屎', *sel1 si2*, salesperson), set, shirt, shot (cinema/photography), **show** (performance), shorts, **Sir** (term of address for male teachers and officers of disciplinary forces), size, skill, snacks, speed, sport, start, stick, stool, strength, stripe, swing, tack, taste, tense (grammar), tips, touch, trash, trend, trust, van, vest, waif (fashion), wine, wire, wit, work, world, zone	act, ban, beat, book, **call**, care, charge, check, cut, do, drive, gel (one's head, used as verb), choke (pipe in a car), fax, fit, fight, firm (confirm), flirt, get, go, guard, hint, hold, hug, hurt, jam, jump, keep, like, list, love, meet, mind, miss, naked, own, pay, plan, play, plug, pop (e.g., cough syrup), port (complain), print, quit, quote, sale (used like the verb 'sell'), say, see (imperative: See!), **sell**, sense, serve, set, **show**, soft (so1 fu4 'have a good time'), spend, spit, study, sue, talk, tick, touch, win, work (Three phonetic loans used as verbs: ***good*** [onomatopoeia *gut2*, in imitation of the sound of drinking, e.g., water]; ***high*/*hi*** [homophone of the Cantonese verb *haai1* 揩: 'to touch', 'to get involved in' but also psychological, e.g., 'high 咳水'*haai1 kat1 seoi2*, 'get high by abusing cough syrup']; and ***wet*** [*wet1*, to have a good time, typically in the evening, e.g., at a sleazy party])	bare, blue, bold, both, camp (fashion), **cheap**, **cool**, crude, cult, cute, fine, firm, fit, friend ('friendly'), gay, grunge, **high** (excited), hip, **in**, light, lone, loud, low, live (performance), mass, mod (recent fashion/style), pain, rave, sad, shot/short (both 'deranged', probably via Japanese), sick, slim, smart, spoil (used like 'spoiled'), stuck, talk (hot [gossip]), top, tough, trash, **yeah** (trendy)

N.B. Words within round brackets provide information about the semantic field or intended Cantonese pronunciation, including three phonetic loans (*good*, *high*, and *wet* – all used as verbs), i.e., English words borrowed for their pronunciation to represent Cantonese morphemes, with little or no connection to its meaning in English (Li 2000b).

(2) 張以式說：「好聽的 melody, 全在腦中, 夾 band 不需睇譜的！」
Cheung Yee Sik *syut3* *hou2teng1* *dik1* MELODY, *cyun4* *zoi6* *nou5*
Cheung Yee Sik said pleasant NOM[2] MELODY all in head
zung1 *gaap3* BAND *bat1seoi1* *tai2* *pou2* *dik1*
within play.together band no.need read musical.notes SFP
'Cheung Yee Sik said, "pleasant melody, it's all in the head; playing in a band, [there's] no need to read musical notes!"'
[BM1710]

(3) 玩 Line 好煩, 啲人成日都唔覆機。
waan2 LINE *hou2* *faan4,* *di1* *jan4* *seng4jat6* *dou1* *m4* *fuk1gei1*
play LINE very troublesome CLF people always also NEG reply
'Playing Line (making phone calls randomly) is troublesome. Others always don't reply (to you).'
[Q435]

(4) 不過講得幾句, 志偉又被睡魔急 call, 頭一歪又想會周公。
bat1gwo3 *gong2* *dak1* *gei2* *geoi3,* *Chi Wai* *jau6* *bei6* *seoi6mo1*
but talk only a.few sentence Chi Wai again PASS sleep.demon
gap1 CALL, *tau4* *jat1* *waai1* *jau6* *soeng2* *wui6* *Zau Gung*
urgent CALL head once lean again want meet Zau Gung
'But after uttering a few words, Chi Wai felt being called by a sleep-demon again, leaning his head [to one side] to meet with Zau Gung [Deity of Sleep].'
[S464]

(5) 透過螢光幕與鍵盤與不同的對象 Talk。
tau3gwo3 *jing4gwong1mok6* *jyu5* *gin6pun4* *jyu5* *bat1tung4* *dik1*
through screen and keyboard with different NOM
deoi3zoeng6 TALK
target TALK
'Talk with various targets through the screen and keyboard.'
[Q435]

2 List of abbreviations in interlinear glosses: 1SG: '1st person singular'; 2SG: '2nd person singular'; 3SG: '3rd person singular'; CLF: 'Classifier'; COP: 'Copula'; DM: 'Disposal Marker'; NEG: 'Negator'; NOM: 'Nominalizer'; PASS: 'Passive'; SFP: 'Sentence Final Particle'.

(6) 齊兄心地善良, 只可惜包裝甚 cool。
Cai Hing sam1dei2sin6loeng4, zi2 ho2sik1 baau1zong1 sam6 COOL
Cai Brother kind-hearted only pity packaging very COOL
'Brother Cai is kind-hearted, except that the way he is packaged is so cool.'
[G209]

(7) 這隻「可卡因」吃後十分過癮, 好興奮, 好 HIGH 和 HAPPY。
ze2 zek3 'ho2 kaa1 jan1' hek3 hau6 sap6fan1 gwo3jan5,
this CLF cocaine eat after really gratified,
hou2 hing1fan5, hou2 HIGH *wo4* HAPPY.
very excited very HIGH and HAPPY
'After taking this cocaine, I feel really gratified and excited, very HIGH and HAPPY.'
[AN1158]

Table 2: Number of monosyllabic and polysyllabic English words (word types) and their percentages.

	Insertions*	Letter words (e.g., A, B, N, CD, DJ, IBM)	Subtotal	Percentage
Monosyllabic	262	26	288	18
Polysyllabic	1,164	150	1,314	82
Total			1,602	100

Note: *Excluding letter words.

As shown in Table 2, the ratio of monosyllabic and polysyllabic words is 18: 82 (or 1: 4.56), suggesting that roughly one in four to five inserted English words, including letter words in the corpus is monosyllabic (acronyms pronounceable as single syllables like *RAM* and *WAP* are treated as monosyllabic; abbreviations are polysyllabic, e.g., *CD* and *DJ* are disyllabic; *IBM* is trisyllabic).

As illustrated in (2)–(7), the vast majority of MEWs (and polysyllabic English words, as in *MELODY* (2) and *HAPPY* (7)) occur as unintegrated single-word insertions – bare nouns, verbs or adjectives (Muysken 2000). There is no question that the matrix language in our corpus is Hong Kong written Chinese (HKWC) which, following Shi (2006), is characterized by considerable influence from Cantonese lexis and syntax, and from English to some extent. By virtue of these influences, readers tend to have the impression that HKWC follows the norms of speech (or vernacular style) rather than Mandarin-based standard

written Chinese, which is the expected style for writing hard news stories, editorials, feature articles and other formal genres in public discourse.

4 Survey of reader response to a comic strip containing MEWs

As cartoons or comic strips typically feature social interaction in speech, it is not surprising that MEWs also figure prominently. One recent example consists of four panels, each of which contains one or more MEWs, as in (8) (text only; the four panels in the original appeared vertically, see Appendix 1 for the original).

(8)

Panel 1	Panel 2	Panel 3	Panel 4
Third Uncle's **Sm@rt P@use** function: [if you] stop watching the screen, the **video** will automatically stop playing. Is the above function really that **smart**?	Imagine when you are watching a horror film..."Wow! This **part** is ultra-horrifying!!"	"Can't fall asleep if [I] watch. [I] won't watch!!" Third Uncle fears that you might have **missed** [that, and] helps you to press **pause**.	When you turn your face to the screen again, [Third Uncle would] continue to **play** and let you see [it]. "RRRAAAWWWRRR"

('三叔有幾 smart?', by Summer&Muu, *Headline Daily*, 2013–4–8, p. 14)

The first two syllables in the title '三叔有幾 smart?' (*Saam1 Suk1 jau5 gei2 smart*? 'How smart is Third Uncle') is an unmistakable allusion to Samsung, the

brand product being thematized (trade mark in Chinese: 三星, saam1 sing1). Samsung is one of the most popular brands for mobile phones in Hong Kong; it is often jokingly referred to by the kinship term *Saam1 Suk1* (三叔 'Third Uncle'). By tracking the user's eye movements, apparently the new model of e-gadget would pause if the user is detected as not viewing, and would continue once the e-gadget user's attention is restored. The cartoonist makes fun of this new function. Of interest to us is the fact that five MEWs are used in addition to *video*, of which three are verbs (*miss, pause, play*), one adjective (*smart*) and one noun (*part*).

To ascertain whether MEWs such as these are commonly used among Cantonese-English bilinguals in Hong Kong, a survey was carried out with about 400 students studying at the Hong Kong Institute of Education (84%) and the Hong Kong Polytechnic University (13%) from October to November, 2013. Aged between 18 and 21, the respondents were mainly first-year students (94%, the rest second-year). The gender ratio, female-male, was about 3:1. In terms of their majors, 36% indicated a discipline in the humanities, 35% in business, 23% in social sciences and 6% in science. Nearly two-thirds (74%) of the respondents were born in Hong Kong and the rest (26%) were born outside of Hong Kong. Besides, 82% of all respondents indicated that Cantonese was their first language.

An e-questionnaire was used as instrument to tap into our students' awareness to what extent such MEWs were familiar to them, and whether they themselves would use them (Appendix 2). It consisted of 12 multiple choice questions. A small-scale pilot was carried out with over 10 students before the actual survey, and their feedback was used to fine-tune the wording of the questions. The survey was conducted in the respective lessons of the authors at the beginning or the end of our classes. The cartoon was first projected on the screen and the purpose and content of the questionnaire were briefly explained before the survey started. The respondents were asked to key in their choices via their mobile devices such as smartphones, tablets and netbooks. It took approximately 15 minutes to complete the e-questionnaire. All students were requested to send their completed questionnaire to a designated e-address. A total of 392 valid questionnaires were successfully collected.

After analysing the data using descriptive statistics, two main findings came to light. Firstly, the result shows that most of the respondents (74%) were familiar with the discourse and language use patterns of comic strips in Hong Kong Chinese newspapers such as the one in (8). The use of MEWs in the comic strip (8) did not present any literacy problems, except for the Mandarin-dominant respondents (19%) from mainland China. About half of them mentioned the reason(s) why they did not understand the expressions in the comic strip (e.g., don't speak/read Cantonese; words are difficult). Interestingly, Cantonese was

the cause of literacy problems rather than MEWs. Secondly, 95% of the respondents were able to provide examples illustrating how they themselves would use those MEWs, while 82% replied that the MEWs in the comic strip sounded natural to them in both spoken and written forms. Further, some 77% indicated that they would use those MEWs when communicating in Cantonese in their daily life. In short, the survey results provide empirical evidence that MEWs like those used in the comic strip (8) are indeed commonly found and used by Hong Kong Chinese students in their social interaction with others. The result of the survey suggests that for educated Chinese bilingual speakers, MEWs constitute an additional pool of linguistic resources for meaning-making. In what follows, we will briefly outline the context of Cantonese-English contact, the types of transference reported in the literature and how tightly they are integrated into Cantonese, before presenting evidence in support of the Monosyllabic Salience Hypothesis (MSH) in Cantonese.

5 The context of Cantonese-English contact in Hong Kong

Until 30 June 1997, Hong Kong was a British colony for over 150 years. Since the colonial period, in the formal curriculum English is introduced from primary to the end of secondary levels. In practice, English has been an integral part and, in some residential areas, a selling point of pre-primary institutions to attract pupils. Consequently, all children growing up in Hong Kong learn their ABC and some basic English vocabulary before formal schooling starts at primary. Under the nine-year compulsory education policy (Grade 1–Grade 9), which has been extended to 12 years from September 2012 (Grade 12), all secondary school-leavers have learned English for over 10 years, with those students (roughly 30% of every cohort) receiving English-medium education having considerably more exposure to English. Hence young people in Hong Kong have quite a bit of English as a meaning-making resource in addition to Cantonese. At the tertiary level, in general, English is an important subject and medium of instruction (MoI) for most disciplines in all of the eight government-funded tertiary institutions.

There is some evidence that when conversation topics related to school work and university life are invoked, Hong Kong students find it difficult not to code-switch to English. Li (2011) invited 43 students in Hong Kong and 65 in Taiwan to take part in an experimental study. At a briefing, students were asked to use only their dominant local language for one day (Cantonese in Hong Kong, Mandarin in Taiwan) and to report on "rich" experiences that happened to

them. With the help of an e-template for jotting down 'who speaks what to whom and when' and expressions that they wanted to use but could not, students wrote a diary up to two pages reflecting on their feelings, giving details of one or two rich events that left them a deep impression. These diaries were then collected and salient events reported were extracted as stimulus material for more in-depth discussion at a two-hour focus group interview attended by students studying the same discipline (cf. Li and Tse 2002). The results revealed evidence of a "medium-of-learning effect" (MOLE); when reference is made to subject-specific content, technical concepts learned in English or school events (for Hong Kong participants in particular), they felt seriously inconvenienced by not being able to use English. As one would expect, the MOLE effect is more marked among Hong Kong students than their Taiwanese peers, probably because English is used less extensively as MoI in Taiwan.

6 Types of transference in Hong Kong

With Clyne (2003), we regard words or linguistic features from English as instances of transfer, irrespective of whether they are invoked following English pronunciation norms and traditionally analyzed as code-switching (some never occurred again – nonce loans), or closely integrated into the recipient language (i.e., loanwords). The process and types of transference may differ. Broadly, depending on the linguistic level, we can distinguish between phonological (including prosodic), lexical, syntactic, semantic, and graphemic transference. All of these types of transference have been reported in Cantonese-English contact research in Hong Kong, including Cantonese-English interaction among university students (Chan 2003, 2009a; Li and Tse 2002), Chinese newspapers (Li 2000a, 2000b), Canto-pop music (Chan 2009b), and transference of the "Sino-alphabet" (Hansell 2002) or letter words (i.e., letter names and abbreviations, Cheung and Bauer 2002; Li 2000a, 2000b) across different print and multimedia genres.

The frequent contact between English and Cantonese in Hong Kong has brought about the integration of a large number of English loanwords in Hong Kong Cantonese (Wong et al. 2009). These loanwords have led to an influx of "loanword syllables". According to Bauer and Wong (2010), there exist a total of 78 such syllables in Hong Kong Cantonese, an expansion from 40 in 1997 to 49 in 2006 as documented in Bauer and Benedict (1997) and Bauer (2006) respectively. These loanword syllables are "non-occurring syllables or unused syllables which represent both accidental and systematic gaps in the syllabary" (Bauer and Wong 2010: 7). For example, the loanword syllable [wɛn^{55}], from the English word *van*,

is commonly used in phrases such as [hʊŋ^{21} wɛn^{55}] and [lʊk^{22} wɛn^{55}] (literally 'red van' and 'green van', referring to two types of mini buses in the public transport system). The syllable [wɛn^{55}] did not exist in the Cantonese syllabary, which means that although the individual vowel [ɛ] and consonants ([w] and [n]) are phonemes of Cantonese, the combination of all three as [wɛn^{55}] was not used in any existing Cantonese word, until the loanword [wɛn^{55}] appeared. It figures prominently in the title of a recent Hong Kong film, which is often referred to in infotainment stories elliptically as《紅工 VAN》(*hung4 wen1*). Similarly, the loanword syllable [k^{h}ɔ^{55}] used to be an unused syllable. It originated from the English word *call* and is only used in the loanword noun phrase [k^{h}ɔ^{55} gei^{55}] ('beeper' or 'pager') or as verb, as in [k^{h}ɔ^{55} ŋɔ^{23}] 'call me'.

What is more intriguing is that some of these new loanword syllables do not conform to what is traditionally known as "the labial-dissimilation constraint". This rule from Cantonese phonotactics predicts that labially articulated vowels do not combine with labially articulated final consonants (Bauer and Wong 2010: 18), but this rule may be relaxed in baby talk, onomatopoeia expressions and loanwords. The three new loanword rhymes that show such a feature are [ɔm], [œm], and [ɔp]. The rhyme [ɔm] can be found in the loanwords [fɔm^{55}] (for 'form' as in *an application form*) or [wɔm^{55}] (for 'warm'). The rhyme [œm] is used in loanwords such as [fœm^{55}] (for 'firm', or 'to confirm') or [pœm^{55}] (for 'permanent'). The third rhyme [ɔp] can be found in loanwords like [pa^{55} t^{h}ɔp^{55}] (for 'bra top') or [tsɔp^{55}] (for 'job').

Research since the 1980s has shown that individual English content words and expressions are often "mixed" into Hong Kong Cantonese and informal written Chinese (Chan and Kwok 1990). Consonant with previous research in other language-contact settings, nouns are more commonly transferred than verbs and adjectives. Most of the reported cases of lexical transfer are insertions (Muysken 2000), but a few verbs would trigger lexico-syntactic transference (Clyne 1991, 2003), where the V-O pattern in English is preferred to the verb-specific O-V pattern in Cantonese. For example, compared with (9), (10) is far more frequently used:

(9) 我要將張相擺上網
ngo5 jiu3 zoeng1 zoeng1 soeng2 baai2 soeng5 mong5
1SG need DM CLF photo put onto internet
'I need to upload the photo onto the internet.'

(10) 我要 upload 張相上網
ngo5 jiu3 UPLOAD *zoeng1 soeng2 soeng5 mong5*
1SG need UPLOAD DM photo onto internet
'I need to upload the photo onto the internet.'

Today, since *upload* has been calqued as *soeng6 zoi3* (上載) and become widely accepted, they are treated very much like lexical variants depending on the speaker, interlocutor(s), and the context at large. Similar examples are commonly found with other causative verbs such as *undo*, *unstar*, *update* and *upgrade* (Li 2000a: 317). The "code-mixed" pattern as in (10) is preferred probably for its simpler valency relations (Clyne 2003: 114), much like in Australia German-speaking migrants gradually shifted to *remember(n)* in their community language in place of their homeland German counterpart *sich erinnern an* (reflexive pronoun *sich*, preposition *an*, plus accusative). Similar evidence has been found among second-generation Croatian-English bilinguals, where *remember* is preferred to homeland Croatian *sjeam* + ACC, which requires a reflexive clitic *se*, plus the marking of the agent and patient in the nominative and genitive, respectively (Hlavac 2000; cited in Clyne 2003: 114). As Clyne has pointed out, such cases of lexico-syntactic transference may be due to the bilingual's attempt to maintain grammaticality.

Semantic transference involves mapping the meaning of an English morpheme onto an existing Cantonese morpheme, resulting in expansion in the latter's semantic scope. For instance, Shi (2006) has found that under the influence of English, the Cantonese verb *fan1 hoeng2* 分享 'share' may be used in reference to negative experiences, a usage which is considered anomalous in Mandarin (*fēnxiǎng*). Similarly, since the 1990s the morpho-syllable 芒 (*mong1*, as in *mong1 gwo2* 芒果, 'mango', e.g., *ceng1 mong1* 青芒 'green mango'; graphic variant *mon*) has been popularly used to refer to the 'monitor' (of a computer), resulting in semantic expansion or extension of 芒.

As for graphemic transference, perhaps the best-known example is the letter D (*di1*, possessive marker or nominalizer in Cantonese), which in informal written Cantonese is often preferred to the homophonous but considerably more complex (including in electronic communication) Chinese character 啲. Other English letters borrowed into Hong Kong Cantonese include *B, D, E, K, T, Q*, and *X* (Cheung and Bauer 2002). Still other letters have been found in more recent research (e.g., *U* for 'university', Chan 2011). As electronic communication gradually became more powerful and convenient to use, plenty of innovative examples of graphemic transference in Roman script may be found in all sorts of social media like ICQ and more recently facebook, twitter and whatsapp, for example, Romanized adjectives like *hea* (*he3*, 'laid-back' or 'tardy'), *chok* (*cok3*, 'suffocating') and *chur* (*coe2*, 'hard pressed for time') (see Section 7.5). These are all Cantonese morphemes, whose written forms are clearly modeled on English (compare: *heavy*, *choked* and *church*). While it may not be easy to trace their origin, it seems safe to assume that such Cantonese morphemes written in Roman script first caught on in speech among young Cantonese-English bilinguals, before being popularized in their e-communication.

There is also some evidence of syntactic transference in Hong Kong Written Chinese (HKWC, Shi 2006). Thus, the pervasive use of the English structure 'it is time (for someone) to do something' has led to a widely used Anglicized structure in Hong Kong Chinese media, as in clauses beginning with *si6 si4 hau6*... (是時候..., 'it is time to...'), sometimes with a locative expression occupying the subject position, which is not admissible in standard Chinese. For instance:

(11) 香港是時候重新輸入活雞了.
hoeng1gong2 si6 si4hau6 cung4san1 syu1jap6 wut6gai1 liu5
Hong Kong is time again import live chicken SFP
'It is time for Hong Kong to import live chickens again.'
(Slightly modified, adapted from Shi 2006: 310)

With regard to the crucial question, whether the patterns of lexical transference are more appropriately seen as code-switching or borrowing, Clyne (2003: 142–152) proposes three parameters to probe into the extent of integration: types, degree and stability. The types of transference outlined above suggest a fairly high level of integration; corroborative evidence may also be found in the two other parameters. In what follows, we will illustrate how tightly knitted MEWs are in Hong Kong Cantonese.

Regarding the degree of integration, sound evidence of close integration may come from the conversion of the source language word into a verb using the regular verb morpheme (e.g., Ger. *-ieren*: *farmerieren* 'to farm', literally 'to farmer'; *gärtnerieren* 'to garden' among migrants in Australia, Clyne 2003: 111), or the use of plural or case marking in the recipient language. Cantonese being an isolating language, no such morphological evidence may be found; unintegrated English verbs and adjectives transferred into Cantonese typically appear as bare forms (i.e., free from any tense, person/number, or comparative/superlative marking). A high-frequency noun like *fans* (often capitalized as *Fans*) appears to carry the plural morpheme, whereas it is sometimes found in contexts where the number of 'fans' being referred to consist of just one person (*jat1 go3 Fans*, 'a fans'; compare: Danish *en hotdogs*, 'one/a hot dog' and Ger. *Keks* (singular) < Eng. *cakes*, Hartmut Haberland, p. c.). The singular form is dispreferred probably because the word is invariably realized in speech as a bisyllabic word: *fen1 si2* (often written as *FAN* 屎).

Nevertheless, there is ample evidence that English verbs and adjectives are commonly suffixed by aspect markers such as perfective *-zo2* (e.g., *out–zo2* '[the ball] is out'), experiential *-gwo3* (e.g., *pass–gwo3* 'has passed'), progressive *-gan2* (e.g., *run–gan2*, 'is running [the program]'), and tentative aspect marked by verb

reduplication, typically to soften a request (e.g., *m4 goi1 bong1 ngo5 check check aa1*, 'please check [it] for me'). English adjectives may be affixed with the comparative marker *di1* (*ni1 go3 cheap di1*, 'this is cheaper') or *-gwo3* (*nei5 fit gwo3 ngo5*, 'you are fitter than me') and the superlative (*nei5 zeoi3 friend*, 'you are the most friendly'). These illustrations show that MEWs can be inserted into Cantonese like other Cantonese morphemes. Also, the word class of an MEW insertion may shift, as when *friend* is used like an adjective.

Further evidence of close integration involves polysyllabic English words (PEWs) in syntactic frames such as the A-not-A (yes-no question) structure. For instance, in the Hong Kong white-collar workplace, it is very common to embed the adjective *available* in this structure (12) (see Section 7.4).

(12) 你 aa6 唔 available 呀?
nei5 aa6 m4 available aa3?
2SG a– NEG available SFP
'Are you available?'

Close integration of MEWs is also evidenced in the common practice of bilingual punning, which is very common in Hong Kong advertising language. MEWs such as *fun*, *high* and *phone* are often blended into Cantonese to create additional semantic nuances (Li 2000a; cf. Li and Costa 2009; see Section 7.3). There is thus strong evidence that for Cantonese-English bilinguals in Hong Kong, MEWs constitute a pool of additional resources with regard to the rhetorical function of punning. Notice that in Cantonese, a syllable is the minimal segmental unit of punning, whatever the linguistic resource. Thus in the wake of the Edward Snowden affairs, a widely reported sub-syllabic pun like 'Yes, we s̲can' by European protesters, in mockery of President Obama's election campaign slogan 'Yes, we can' during his first official visit to Germany in June 2013, cannot be replicated in Cantonese (or Chinese) because Chinese, and Japanese kana, "both permit phonological processing (...), but not of units as small as a phoneme" (Hansell 2002: 152–153).

As for the third parameter, stability, Clyne (2003: 146–147, 210) notes that speakers belonging to tight social networks tend to be more conservative toward maintaining community language norms, an attitude less adhered to when speaking to others. In Hong Kong, thanks to the implementation of 9-year compulsory education for children from primary level (recently extended to 12-year since September 2012), the level of English literacy among young people is quite high. Further, as Hong Kong is in the forefront of and testing ground for new IT gadgets, the use of electronic media is widespread and very popular among young people, from (earlier) ICQ and MSN to facebook, twitter and whatsapp. The ratio of cellular phones per person is also among the highest in the world.

Thus linguistic innovations tend to catch on quickly, subject to their perceived trendiness and popularity among members of various networks of bilinguals big and small across different age groups. Thanks to the convenience afforded by various forms of social media and the many channels through which code-switching could be produced, displayed or shared, it usually does not take long for English words embedded in code-switching – pervasive and ubiquitous Hong Kong wide – to stabilize and become linguistic borrowings.

7 Evidence of monosyllabic salience in Cantonese

7.1 Truncation of polysyllabic words to monosyllables

To our knowledge, Luke and Lau (2008) is the most comprehensive study that presents solid evidence in support of a strong tendency of monosyllabicity in Hong Kong Cantonese, especially with regard to verbs and adjectives. Earlier research showed that there was a widely postulated bisyllabic minimality constraint bearing on loanwords adapted into Cantonese through some productive processes such as epenthesis and deletion (see, e.g., Yip 1993, 2002), such as those in (13):

(13) Epenthesis: *fluke* > fu:^{21}lʊk^{5} *cream* > kei^{22}li:m^{55}
Deletion: *broker* > pʊk^{5}k'a^{25} *freezer* > fi:^{55}sa:^{25}
(Luke and Lau 2008: 348)

Based on an analysis of 1447 loanwords (with 1,833 variant forms) collected from two periods: 1970s–1990s (554 "old loans", 660 variants, 38.3%), and 1990s- (893 "new loans", 1,173 variants, 61.7%), Luke and Lau (2008) found that the constraint applies to Cantonese nouns but does not apply to verbs and adjectives. Such an asymmetry is clearly evidenced in their "new loans" subcorpus, which contains 35% more verbs and adjectives than in their "old loans" subcorpus (p. 351). Further, in their "new loans" subcorpus, many more monosyllabic truncated verbs and adjectives were found (44 out of 448, or 9.82%), as opposed to 23 out of 1,298 nouns (1.77%). The figures were shown to be statistically significant. Interestingly, without any exception, all truncated verbs and adjectives are monosyllabic, whereas truncated nouns are mostly bisyllabic (p. 352). This result led Luke and Lau (2008) to conclude that "verbs, as opposed to nouns, are found to be much more prone to undergoing 'monosyllabic truncation'" (p. 347), and that such a "marked difference between [Cantonese] nouns and verbs suggests a strong relationship between word class

status and word length" (p. 352). Luke and Lau (2008) then draw three implications from their analysis, of which the second is especially relevant to our discussion here: when verbs and adjectives undergo truncation, they are almost always reduced to a single syllable (Tables 3 and 4).

Table 3: Typical verb and adjective truncations (adapted from Table 3, Luke and Lau 2008: 352).

Source word	Cantonese adaptation	Truncated form
register (v.)	>[wɛ:k^{5}tʃɐs^{21}ta:^{21}]	[wɛ:k^{5}]
professional (a.)	>[p^{h}ow^{22}fɛ:t^{5}ʃən^{21}noʊ^{21}]	[p^{h}ow^{22}]
duplicate (v.)	>[tu:p^{5}p^{h}ɪk^{1}kej^{21}], [tu:p^{5}p^{h}lɪk^{1}kej^{21}]	[tu:p^{5}]
demonstrate (v.)	>[tɛ:m^{55}mɔ:n^{21}stʃ^{wh}ej^{21}]	[tɛ:m^{55}]
differentiate (v.)	>[ti:^{22}fɛ:n^{55}ʃi:^{21}ej^{21}]	[ti:^{22}], [ti:^{55}]
factorize (v.)	>[fɛ:k^{55}t^{h}ɔ:^{21}wa:js^{21}]	[fɛ:k^{55}]
interview (v.)	>[ji:n^{55}t^{h}a:^{21}wi:w^{21}], [ji:n^{55}t^{h}a:^{21}fi:w^{21}]	[ji:n^{55}]

Table 4: Typical noun truncations (adapted from Table 4, Luke and Lau 2008: 352).

Source word	Cantonese adaptation	Truncated form
Introduction	>[ji:n^{22}tʃ^{h}ow^{22}tɐk^{55}sən^{21}]	[ji:n^{22}tʃ^{h}ow^{22}]
library	>[la:j^{55}pa:^{21}wi:^{21}]	[la:j^{55}pa:^{25}]
physics	>[fi:^{55}sɪk^{1}si^{21}]	[fi:^{55}sɪk^{1}]
biology	>[paj^{22}ɔ:^{55}low^{21}tʃi:^{21}]	[paj^{22}ɔ:^{55}]
configuration	>[k^{h}ɔ:n^{22}fɪk^{5}ka:^{55}wej^{55}sən^{21}]	[k^{h}ɔ:n^{22}fɪk^{5}]
inauguration	>[ji:n^{22}ɔ:k^{5}ka:^{55}wej^{55}sən^{21}]	[ji:n^{22}ɔ:k^{5}]

More interesting still are those English lexemes with identical spelling and pronunciation except for their word class. Luke and Lau (2008) provide seven such examples (see Table 5, p. 353). In each of these (mostly) bisyllabic English words, the adapted loanword nouns remain bisyllabic, while the verb counterparts are truncated.

Table 5: Noun–verb asymmetry (adapted from Table 5, Luke and Lau 2008: 353).

Source word	Verb	Noun	Verb usage/Noun usage
copy	[k^{h}ɐp^{55}]	[k^{h}ɔ:p^{55}p^{h}i:^{21}]	to copy/a copy
fail (old loans)	[fej^{21}]	[fej^{21}low^{25}]	to fail (an exam)/a fail
major	[mej^{55}]	[mej^{55}tʃœ:^{21}]	to major in a subject/a major
minor	[ma:n^{55}]	[ma:n^{55}na:^{21}]	to minor in a subject/a minor
reply	[wi:^{22}]	[wi:^{22}p^{h}la:j^{55}]	to reply/a reply
report (old loans)	[p^{h}ɔ:t^{55}]	[wi:^{22}p^{h}ɔ:t^{55}]	to report/a report
tips (old loans)	[t^{h}i:p^{5}]	[t^{h}i:p^{5}si^{25}]	to give a tip/a tip (or a piece of advice)

The examples in Table 5 provide strong evidence that phonologically and graphemically identical lexemes – here in their bare forms – are given different truncation patterns, with verbs being reduced to one syllable. Luke and Lau (2008) further tested the Cantonese noun-verb asymmetry by eliciting judgment data from 20 undergraduate or postgraduate students. A total of 36 sentences (9 loanwords × 2 word classes × 2 realizations) were generated using nine monosyllabic loanwords from the database, each being used as noun or verb and ending with a fricative or consonant cluster, the latter being phonotactically not allowed in Cantonese. Each of the 18 sentences was read out twice, with the target word being manipulated and realized as one syllable (e.g., *pass*) or two characterized by epenthesis (e.g., *paa1 si4*). The 20 subjects were forced to choose one realization that was more acceptable. The results were statistically significant, suggesting Cantonese speakers' preference for monosyllabic forms when the words were used as verbs as opposed to nouns.

To explain the preference for monosyllabic verbs and adjectives in Cantonese, Luke and Lau (2008) translated the 207 words in the Swadesh List, representing "basic vocabulary" or native words that are unlikely to be borrowed from some other language. A colloquial version is used whenever alternative translations existed. The result shows that Cantonese has an average length of 1.09 syllables. Luke and Lau (2008) believe that this finding lends support to their hypothesis that, unlike Mandarin, native Cantonese words are still mostly monosyllabic, although such a tendency is not found in words belonging to three other "periphery" strata (Mandarin words; mimetic words including onomatopoeia and baby talk; and loanwords). Further corroborative evidence comes from an analysis of the 190,000-word Hong Kong Cantonese Corpus (HKCanCor) consisting of Hong Kong Cantonese conversations in the 1990s, where in everyday speech monosyllabic verbs (73.2%) outnumber their bisyllabic counterparts (26.2%) by a ratio of nearly three to one (p. 357).

Luke and Lau (2008) found that regardless of word class, polysyllabic English words tend to be truncated to monosyllables when used as Cantonese verbs or adjectives (e.g., the loanword noun 啤 *be1* of 啤酒 *be1 zau2* 'beer' can function as a monosyllabic verb). This leads the authors to believe that the widely attested bisyllabicity requirement may be true of Cantonese nouns (e.g., *cream* > *gei6 lim1*; *freezer* > *fi1 saa2*), but not of verbs/adjectives. According to our observation, it is indeed very common for polysyllabic English verbs to be truncated to monosyllables. This may be confirmed by several more recent examples in our field notes. Thus in one recent email (in English), the sender wrote:

(14) The next AB meeting is 15 Jan 2014. Before this, we have to cir the paper to [name withheld] again for views/endorsement. Here below is the timeline for your reference...

Like other HEIs (higher-education institutions), whereas emails (especially formal ones) among bilingual Chinese colleagues tend to be written in English, conversation tends to be in mixed code. Here, we believe the writer transferred the norm of speech ([sœ^{55}], truncated as *cir*, 'circulate') to writing. This is a clear example showing how the vernacular-style usage pattern in mixed code is transferred to more or less formal email communication in English.

7.2 The average word length of Cantonese

Luke and Lau's (2008) findings are consonant with the degree of monosyllabicity in Cantonese. In an experimental study of the relationship between homophony and internal morphological change in Chinese, Tsou (1976: 82) elicited narrative data in Mandarin and Cantonese using two stories: "Confucius Confused" and "The Boy Who Cried *Wolf*." The results showed that "the proportion of disyllabic types is much greater for Mandarin than for Cantonese", as exemplified in Table 6.

Table 6: Disyllabic words in Mandarin versus monosyllabic words in Cantonese (Tsou 1976: 78–79).

Meaning in English	Mandarin	Cantonese
to quarrel (v)	*zhēngchǎo* 爭吵	*cou4* 嘈
to perceive (v)	*gǎnjué* 感覺	*gok3* 覺
to play (v)	*wánshuǎ* 玩耍	*waan2* 玩
to say (v)	*gàosù* 告訴	*waa6* 話
be warm (adj.)	*nuǎnhé* 暖和	*nyun5* 暖
matter, affair (n.)	*shìqíng* 事情	*si6* 事

According to Tsou, such findings:

> point to a very interesting correlation between the rise of homophony and internal morphological developments in the dialects. Thus while Mandarin has undergone a much greater measure of syllabic simplification than Cantonese, it has, as a compensating factor, developed further in the direction of a polysyllabic or disyllabic language. (Tsou 1976: 82)

More recently, a basic word list with a stronger empirical grounding, the Leipzig-Jakarta Word List, has been made available by Haspelmath (2008) and his associates (Haspelmath and Tadmor 2009; Tadmor et al. 2010) as one of the outcomes of their World Loanword Database (WOLD) project. They invited scholars to indicate whether the 1,460 word meanings adapted mainly from

Mary Ritchie Key's *Intercontinental Dictionary Series* are indigenous words or loanwords in the languages they examined. This approach has many advantages compared with a largely intuitive word list. Controlled for meanings from 24 semantic fields (http://wold.livingsources.org/semanticfield), and analyzed for their borrowability score on a 5-point scale (1 = "No evidence for borrowing"; 5 = "Clearly borrowed"), each of the 1,460 meanings in the recipient language across 41 language projects generated a composite score to facilitate ranking. On the basis of the composite scores, a top-100 word list was produced (the Leipzig-Jakarta list, Tadmor et al. 2010: 239–241). Other lexicostatistics generated from this large-scale collaborative project include the "ranking of the languages with respect to the proportion of (clear or probable) loanwords in their vocabulary" (Tadmor et al. 2010: 230). Of the 41 languages, Mandarin ranks the lowest (1%) while English ranks fifth (41%). The 41 vocabulary lists, coordinated and maintained by the digital library of Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, can be accessed online for easy comparison. The approach in this well-conceived, empirically grounded project has substantially helped complement theory-driven work that focuses on researching linguistic constraints as a paradigm for better understanding factors which impact on the paths (directions) and rates (frequency and speed) of language change.

On the basis of the 2,120 entries on the Mandarin Word List (http://wold.livingsources.org/vocabulary/22), we worked out the Cantonese equivalents. When analyzing the Cantonese and Mandarin data, we found that often multiple entries may correspond with a given WOLD meaning (e.g., for meaning 1.212, 'soil', three entries are provided for Mandarin: *tu3rang3* 土壤, *tu3di4* 土地, and *tu3* 土). This happens to both Mandarin and Cantonese. For our purpose in this study, we excluded all those meanings in Mandarin and Cantonese with more than one entry, and analyzed only those with one entry. This process yielded 674 items in both languages (46.16% of the 1,460 word meanings on the WOLD list, Appendix 3). Of this subset, Mandarin shows a monosyllabic-polysyllabic (mono-poly) ratio of ca. 2:4 (228:446 > 51:100), while the corresponding ratio for Cantonese is ca. 3:4 (290:384 > 76:100) (Figure 1). A similar trend is found after the top 100 words in the Leipzig-Jakarta list are translated into Mandarin and Cantonese. Of the top 100 word meanings, 88 (mono-poly ratio ca. 9:1) and 73 (mono-poly ratio ca. 7:3) are monosyllabic in Cantonese and Mandarin, respectively (Appendix 3).

These ratios are consistent with Luke and Lau's (2008) finding that Cantonese is more characteristically monosyllabic compared with Mandarin. We believe this provides further evidence in support of the Hong Kong Cantonese community's predilection for monosyllabicity, especially verbs and adjectives.

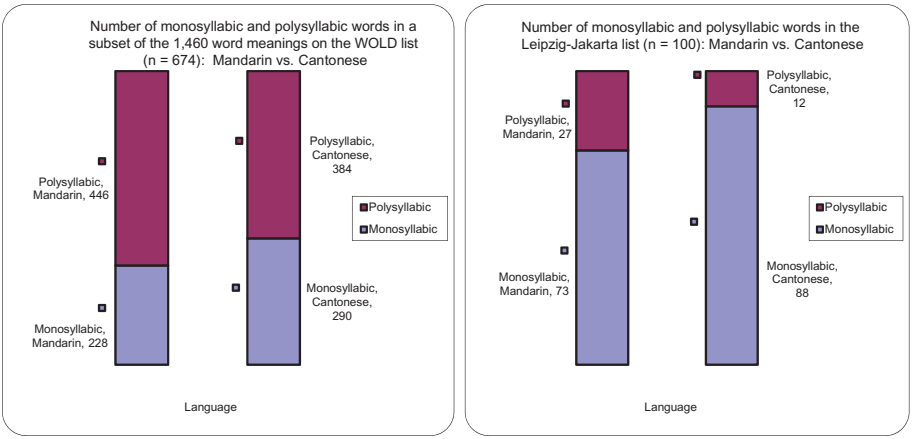

Figure 1: Monosyllabic-polysyllabic ratios in Mandarin vs. Cantonese.

7.3 Bilingual punning

MEWs constitute a pool of additional resources for bilingual punning, which is very common in Hong Kong Chinese public discourse, especially advertising. Words such as *fun*, *high* and *phone* are among the most often blended into Cantonese to create additional semantic nuances. For example, biliterate readers have no difficulty reading *FUN FUN* 鐘, *fan1 fan1 zung1*, as 'every FUN minute', where *FUN*, homophonous with 分 (*fan1*), yields the double meaning 'fun' and 'minute' (compare: 分分鐘, *fan1 fan1 zung1*, 'every minute', Li 2000a: 315; cf. Li and Costa 2009). Similarly, a writer who alluded to the community-wide fad of iPhones wrote *i*瘋 (*ai1 fung1*, 'i crazy'), whose reference to iPhone was unmistakable for Chinese readers (Mandarin *fēng*, example from Chan 2011). A still more instructive example of bilingual punning is found on the home page of the Development Bureau of the Hong Kong Government:

(15) '由我建造' BUILD 升培訓計劃
jau4 ngo5 gin3zou6 BUILD *sing1 pui4fan3 gai3waak6*
by 1SG construct BUILD rise training program
'"Constructed by me" Build/rise/soar training program'
(Heading/slogan, http://www.buildhk.hk/tc/build_prospect/, see Figure 2)

The creative collocation 'BUILD 升' puns on 飆升 (*biu1 sing1*, 'soar'), thus conveying an additional nuance that the training program is designed to groom master 'builders' and promises a fast track to a rewarding career. This message is reinforced visually by the advert, where the character 升 is artistically stylized like a high-rise

Figure 2: Slogan of the Development Bureau, Hong Kong Government, http://www.buildhk.hk/en/build_prospect/ (Accessed 18 April 2013).

building, with the angled first stroke to the top left shaped like an upward-pointing arrow (Figure 2). In the rest of the home page, the program is presented consistently within angled brackets as「*Build* 升」計劃 ‘Build/rise/soar program’.

Clyne (2003) notes that bilingual homophones are pivotal points which allow the bilingual to proceed in either the recipient language or the source language. We believe bilingual punning constitutes strong evidence demonstrating not only the speaker-writer’s bilingual awareness, but also a conscious attempt to exploit the semantic potential afforded by bilingual homophones.

7.4 A-not-A structure

In the Cantonese A-not-A structure used for asking yes-no questions, if A is monosyllabic, it is fully reduplicated (e.g., *kip1 m4 kip1*, ‘[do you] want to keep?’). When a polysyllabic verb or adjective (e.g., *happy*) is embedded in this structure, A may be reduplicated in full (e.g., *hep1 pi2 m4 hep1 pi2*?) or partially (e.g., *hep1 m4 hep1 pi2*? – both meaning ‘happy or not?’). In the latter case, only the first syllable of the word is reduplicated and serves as the exponent of the target word. Polysyllabic English words (PEWs) such as *available*, *comfortable*, and *interesting* are commonly embedded in this structure (see example (12)). In some cases, partial reduplication of a PEW has been conventionalized, such that the first syllable is enough to invoke the longer word. This is the case of *interview*, whose verb meaning is reduced to *in* and given high, level tone: *in1*, but not its noun meaning (16) (cf. Luke and Lau 2008: 353).

(16) 今日個 interview, 我未 in1 呀, 你 in1 唔 in1 呀?
gam1jat6 go3 INTERVIEW *ngo5 mei6 in1 aa3*,
today CLF INTERVIEW 1SG not yet in1 SFP
nei5 in1 m6 in1 aa3?
2SG in1 NEG in1 SFP
‘Today’s interview, I have not interviewed [yet], do you plan to (attend the) interview?’

In (12) and (16), the relative salience of the first syllable of a polysyllabic English verb or adjective in the A-not-A structure appears to provide a syntactic frame which

encourages its truncation. We believe it is worth exploring whether there is any causal link between the A-not-A structure and the relative salience of the Cantonese monosyllable. Probably because this structure is more characteristic of bilingual speech, no comparable data has been found in our Chinese newspaper corpora.

7.5 Romanized Cantonese words

Where Cantonese vernacular-style is perceived as acceptable, Romanized Cantonese words, which tend to be monosyllabic and spelled using the Roman script, are fairly common. In a separate corpus of more recent Chinese infotainment news stories and columns in the 2010s, a number of monosyllabic Cantonese morphemes have been collected, e.g., adjectives *chok* (*cok3*, 'suffocating', in reference to someone posing when photographed; also used as verb, probably inspired by Eng. *choke*), *chur* (*coe2*, 'extremely busy and hard pressed for time'), *hea* (*he3*, 'laid-back', 'tardy'), and the classifier *pad* (*pet6*, 'a patch of', no written Chinese representation):

(17) 頭條日報 No.1 Chok 得喜 分享 Chok 相, 開心驚喜贏勁賞！
Tau4Tiu4Jat6Bou3 No.1 *CHOK dak1 hei2*
Headline Daily No.1 CHOK merit cheerful
fan1hoeng2 CHOK soeng2, hoi1sam1 ging1hei2 jeng4 ging6 soeng2
share CHOK photo happy surprised win awesome prize
'Headline Daily, No. 1 in circulation [among free newspapers], merits a CHOK pose for a photo.
Sharing [your] CHOK photos, and be happy and pleasantly surprised to win awesome prizes!'
(*Headline Daily*, 2011-9-29, p. 47, attention-grabber, one-page advert)

(18) Vivian 呢期好 Chur, 比堅尼上陣撐偶像杜汶澤開騷...「現在接 Job 可以更自主 (...)」
VIVIAN *ni1 kei4 hou2 CHUR,* *bei1gin1nei4*
VIVIAN this time very busy.and.hard.pressed.for.time bikini
soeng5zan6 caang3 ngau5zoeng6 To Man Chak *hoi1 sou1...*
go.into.battle support idol To Man Chak launch show
"*jin6zoi6 zip3* JOB *ho2ji5 gang3 zi6zyu2* (...)"
now take.up JOB can more self.decide
'Vivian is very busy and hard pressed for time recently, supporting her idol To Man Chak to launch his show... "Now [I] can decide [whether I want to] take up a job (...)".'
(*Headline Daily*, 2012-12-21, p. 104)

(19) 一張很「Hea」的沙發，可讓人很舒泰地，把頭貼近沙發背，整個人「攤」於沙發上。
jat1 zoeng1 han2 HEA dik1 saa1faat3, ho2 joeng6 jan4 han2
one CLF very laid-back NOM sofa can let person very
syu1taai3dei6, baa2 tau4 tip3gan6 saa1faat3 bui3, zing2 go3 jan4
relaxed DM head lean.on sofa back whole CLF person
taan1 jyu1 saa1faat3 soeng6
lie at sofa on
'A very "laid-back" sofa allows one to be very relaxed, with one's head leaning on the back and the entire body lying on it.'
(*Headline Daily*, 2010-6-21, p. 39, part of a direct quote from a news story)

(20) 不知道面前是一pad 爛泥, 還跟他理論發他脾氣
bat1 zi1dou3 min6 cin4 si6 jat1 PAD laan6nai4,
NEG know face front COP one CLF slime
waan4 gan1 taa1 lei5leon6 faat3 taa1 pei4hei3
still with 3SG argue throw 3SG tantrum
'[I] didn't realize [the person] in front [of me] was a patch of slime, [and I was foolish enough to] still trying to argue with him and throw a tantrum.'
(*Sky Post*, 2013-11-5, p. 35, columnist expressed frustration when talking to a manager of a 5-star hotel)

Romanized words such as these are clearly Cantonese morphemes. Being monosyllabic in Roman script, they reflect Hong Kong Cantonese speakers' perceptual salience of monosyllabicity, especially verbs and adjectives for which there are no convenient written representations in Chinese characters that may serve as phonetic loans (Li 2000b). Further, at the receiving end, being biliterate in Chinese and English, Chinese Hongkongers have no problem recognizing these creative Romanized Cantonese words, which helps explain why they catch on so quickly in the local community.

All the linguistic evidence presented above points toward a typological characteristic in Cantonese, namely, monosyllabic salience, whence the Monosyllabic Salience Hypothesis (MSH):

> **Monosyllabic salience**, a typological characteristic in Hong Kong Cantonese, facilitates the borrowing of MEWs as insertions or integrated loanwords, including polysyllabic words of any word class which are truncated to monosyllables and used like Cantonese morphemes.

We hope to have provided sound evidence to make a convincing case for MSH, which we believe merits further empirical investigation intra-linguistically.

Typologically, it would be interesting to see whether monosyllabicity plays any role in facilitating contact in other languages. This may well be a worthwhile topic for cross-linguistic research on language contact.

8 Conclusion

Our starting point was the observation that many monosyllabic English words (MEWs) are freely inserted into Hong Kong Cantonese, in speech and informal written Chinese. In a corpus of informal writing collected from Chinese newspapers during the mid-1990s (Li et al. 2014) consisting of 600,000 characters, roughly one in four to five unintegrated insertions is monosyllabic. There is thus prima facie evidence suggesting that MEWs are treated collectively by the Hong Kong Chinese community on par like Cantonese morpho-syllables. This led us to a search in the literature for the theoretical grounding of this phenomenon. After examining Clyne's (2003) analysis of language contact data in Australia, we believe his notion of facilitation – building on his earlier work on triggering (Clyne 1967, 1980) – lends itself very well as an explanatory framework of the preponderance of MEWs in Cantonese, written as much as spoken.

To argue on the grounds of perceptual salience as the basis for facilitation of cross-linguistic transference begs the question, what linguistic evidence is there to prove that transference is facilitated? Guided by this research question, we found a variety of linguistic evidence that point toward monosyllabic salience of Cantonese as a possible typological feature. These include:

(i) a tendency for polysyllabic English words to be truncated to monosyllables (Luke and Lau 2008), especially verbs and adjectives;
(ii) a shorter average word length compared with Mandarin (Tsou 1976), which is further evidenced in the World Loanword Database (WOLD, controlled for 1,460 word meanings) involving 41 languages (http://wold.livingsources.org/, Appendix 3), and the Leipzig-Jakarta word list (top 100 words based on WOLD, Appendix 4);
(iii) the truncation of the first syllable of a polysyllabic word embedded in the A-not-A structure for asking yes-no questions;
(iv) bilingual homophony, which is commonly exploited for bilingual punning, facilitating cross-linguistic transference thereby (Clyne 2003); and
(v) the creative coinage of Romanized Cantonese words, which tend to be monosyllabic.

The above conclusion is essentially based on the analysis of unintegrated insertions of MEWs in our written Chinese corpus. We expect the monosyllabic

salience of Cantonese to be even more marked when integrated monosyllabic English loanwords, written in Chinese characters, are included for analysis. The picture presented in this study is therefore incomplete. Further research is needed to ascertain the validity of the MSH with regard to the central claim in this study, that monosyllabic salience in Cantonese facilitates transference of MEWs from English into Cantonese. Cross-linguistic comparisons with the borrowing of MEWs into other languages will also help us calibrate the extent of monosyllabicity in Cantonese.

Funding: This work was supported by a special grant of the Hong Kong Institute of Education. The Institute's support is hereby gratefully acknowledged.

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Appendix 1: Comic strip used in the survey of reader response

PANEL 1
第一格

PANEL 2
第二格

PANEL 3
第三格

PANEL 4
第四格

Appendix 2: E-questionnaire used for the survey of reader response to a comic strip

Newspaper Language in Hong Kong:
A Questionnaire Survey

Please take a close look at the comic strip (漫畫) projected on the screen, and answer the following questions. Your response is non-assessed. It will take about 6–8 minutes. Thank you.

1. What language is used in the comic strip?
   - ☐ Standard Chinese （標準中文）
   - ☐ Cantonese (廣東話)
   - ☐ Mixed Code (中英夾雜)
   - ☐ Other (Please specify): _____

   Remark (if any)
   _____
   _____
   _____

2. Look at the language use pattern: How natural (i.e. how commonly heard or read) is it?
   - ☐ Very natural
   - ☐ Quite natural
   - ☐ Not so natural
   - ☐ Not natural at all

   Remark (if any)
   _____
   _____
   _____

3. Is it written language or spoken language?
   - ☐ Clearly written
   - ☐ More written than spoken
   - ☐ Half written, half spoken
   - ☐ More spoken than written
   - ☐ Clearly spoken

Remark (if any)

_____
_____
_____

4. How similar is it to the way you use Cantonese?
   - ☐ Similar to the way I speak
   - ☐ Different from the way I speak
   - ☐ Similar to the way I write (e.g., SMS)
   - ☐ Different from the way I write (e.g. SMS)

Remark (if any)

_____
_____
_____

5. How similar is it to the way you use Putonghua/Mandarin?
   - ☐ Similar to the way I speak
   - ☐ Different from the way I speak
   - ☐ Similar to the way I write (e.g. SMS)
   - ☐ Different from the way I write (e.g. SMS)

Remark (if any)

_____
_____
_____

6. How often do you use these words when using Cantonese?
   - ☐ I rarely speak Cantonese

	Frequently	Often	Sometimes	Never	N/A
Smart	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Part	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Miss	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Pause	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Play	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

7. How often do you use these words when using Putonghua/Mandarin?
   ☐ I rarely speak Putonghua/Mandarin

	Frequently	Often	Sometimes	Never	N/A
Smart	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Part	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Miss	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Pause	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Play	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

8. Please give a concrete example how you'd use these words. (In each case, please tick 'writing' and/or 'speech' where appropriate.)

smart
☐ Speech
☐ Writing

_____
_____
_____

part
☐ Speech
☐ Writing

_____
_____
_____

miss
☐ Speech
☐ Writing

_____
_____
_____

pause
☐ Speech
☐ Writing

_____
_____
_____

play
☐ Speech
☐ Writing

_____
_____
_____

9. Is the language use pattern in this comic strip typical of other comic strips in Hong Kong?
   ☐ Yes
   ☐ No

   If 'Yes', can you give an example (Title of comic strip, newspaper or magazine)?

   _____
   _____
   _____

10. Is there any expression in this comic strip that you do not understand? If so, please indicate.
   ☐ Panel 1
   ☐ Panel 2
   ☐ Panel 3
   ☐ Panel 4

   Expression(s)

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

11. Please use two adjectives to describe the language used in this comic strip.

   _____
   _____

12. Imagine you were a teacher, would you encourage your students to use language as in this comic strip? Why or why not?
    - ☐ Yes
    - ☐ No
    - ☐ Do not intervene

    because

    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____

13. Any other comments (if any)

    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____

Personal Info

(Your responses will be kept in strictest confidence and will be used for research purposes only.)

Sex
- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

Age

_____

Year

_____

Affiliation
☐ CityU
☐ HKIEd
☐ PolyU
☐ Other (Please specify) _____

Major discipline
☐ Humanities
  ☐ Chinese
  ☐ English
  ☐ Translation
  ☐ Language Studies
  ☐ Other (Please specify) _____
☐ Social Sciences
☐ Science / Engineering
☐ Business
☐ Other (Please specify) _____

Place of Birth
☐ Hong Kong
☐ Other (Please specify) _____

How long have you been living in Hong Kong?
_____ years and _____ months

Language Profile (Self-estimate)

'L1' = first language or mother tongue, usually a home language
'L2' = second language
'FL' = foreign language

	L1	L2	FL	N/A
Cantonese	☐	☐	☐	☐
Putonghua / Mandarin	☐	☐	☐	☐
Written Chinese	☐	☐	☐	☐
English	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other (Please Specify)	☐	☐	☐	☐

_____

In each of the boxes below, which number (1–7) is true of you?

1: Beginner 4: Intermediate 7: Native-like

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Cantonese (Listening)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Cantonese (Speaking)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Cantonese (Reading)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Cantonese (Writing)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Putonghua / Mandarin (Listening)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Putonghua / Mandarin (Speaking)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Written Chinese (Reading)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Written Chinese (Writing)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
English (Listening)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
English (Speaking)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
English (Reading)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
English (Writing)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other (Listening)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other (Speaking)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other (Reading)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other (Writing)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Appendix 3: 674 Cantonese equivalents of Mandarin entries for the World Loanword Database of 1,460 word meanings (WOLD, http://wold.livingsources.org/vocabulary/22)

Mandarin	WOLD gloss	Cantonese
shi4jie4	the world	世界
shan1gu3	the valley	山谷
dao3	the island	島
shui3	the water	水
hai3	the sea	海
hai3yang2	the ocean	海洋
jiao1shi2	the reef	礁石
hai3jiao3	the cape	半島
di1chao2	the low tide	潮退
zhao3ze2	the swamp	沼澤
pu4bu4	the waterfall	瀑布
di4zhen4	the earthquake	地震
tian1kong1	the sky	天
shan3dian4	the lightning	閃電
lei2dian4	the bolt oflightning	雷電
guang1	the light	光
hei1an4	the darkness	黑暗
ying3zi	the shade orshadow	影
kong1qi4	the air	空氣
feng1	the wind	風
wu4	the fog	霧
yu3	the rain	雨
xue3	the snow	雪
bei3ji2guang1	the arctic lights	北極光
tian1qi4	the weather	天氣
huo3	the fire	火
huo3yan4	the flame	火焰
yan1	the smoke	煙
zheng1qi4	the steam	蒸氣
hui1	the ash	灰
hui1jin4	the embers	灰燼
zhao2huo3	to burn(2)	著火
dian3ran2	to light	點
huo3chai2	the match	火柴

(*continued*)

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Mandarin	WOLD gloss	Cantonese
chai2huo	the firewood	柴
mu4tan4	the charcoal	炭
ren2	the person	人
nan2ren2	the man	男人
nan2hai2	the boy	男仔
xiao3huo3zi	the young man	後生仔
nü3hai2	the girl	女仔
jie2hun1	to marry	結婚
li2hun1	the divorce	離婚
fu4mu3	the parents	父母
er2zi	the son	仔
nü3er	the daughter	女
xiong1di4	the brother	兄弟
ge1ge	the older brother	阿哥
di4di	the younger brother	細佬
jie3mei4	the sister	姐妹
jie3jie	the older sister	家姐
mei4mei	the younger sister	細妹
zu3xian1	the ancestors	祖先
nü3xu	the son-in-law(of a man)	女婿
nü3xu	the son-in-law(of a woman)	女婿
ji4fu4	the stepfather	繼父
gu1er2	the orphan	孤兒
gua3fu4	the widow	寡婦
guan1fu1	the widower	鰥夫
qin1qi1	the relatives	親戚
wo3	I	我
ta1	he/she/it	佢
ta1	he	佢
ta1	she	佢
ta1	it	佢
wo3men	we	我地
zan2men	we (inclusive)	我地
wo3men	we (exclusive)	我地
ta1men	they	佢地
dong4wu4	the animal	動物
mu4ren2	the herdsman	牧羊人
niu2	the cattle	牛
jian1niu2	the ox	閹牛
mu3niu2	the cow	牛嫲
ye3zhu1	the boar	野豬
mu3zhu1	the sow	豬嫲

(*continued*)

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Mandarin	WOLD gloss	Cantonese
zhu1	the pig	豬
gong1shan1yang2	the he-goat	山羊公
gao1yang2	the kid	羊仔
ma3	the horse	馬
mu3ma3	the mare	馬嗎
jia1qin2	the fowl	家禽
e2	the goose	鵝
ya1	the duck	鴨
niao3	the bird	雀
hai3ou1	the seagull	海鷗
lao3ying2	the eagle	麻鷹
jiu4	the vulture	禿鷹
Ying1wu3	the parrot	鸚鵡
wu1ya1	the crow	烏鴉
ge1zi	the dove	白鴿
mao1tou2ying1	the owl	貓頭鷹
ju4zui3niao3	the toucan	巨嘴鳥
gou3	the dog	狗
tu4zi	the rabbit	兔仔
mao1	the cat	貓
fu4zi3dai4shu3	the opossum	負鼠
yu2	the fish	魚
sai1	the gill	鰓
bei4ke2	the shell	貝殼
sha1yu2	the shark	鯊魚
hai3tun2	the porpoise ordolphin	海豚
jing1yu2	the whale	鯨魚
hong1	the stingray	黃貂魚
lang2	the wolf	狼
shi1zi	the lion	獅子
hu2li	the fox	狐狸
lu4	the deer	鹿
luo4tuo	the camel	駱駝
kun1chong2	the insect	昆蟲
ti3shi1	the body louse	蝨嗎
tiao4zao3	the flea	跳蚤
xie1zi	the scorpion	蠍子
ma3yi3	the ant	蟻
mi4feng1	the bee	蜜蜂
huang2feng1	the wasp	黃蜂
cang1ying	the fly	烏蠅
wen2zi	the mosquito	蚊

(*continued*)

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Mandarin	WOLD gloss	Cantonese
xia1	the prawns orshrimp	蝦
bai2yi3	the termites	白蟻
she2	the snake	蛇
an1chun2	the quail	鵪鶉
huan4xiong2	the raccoon	浣熊
song1shu3	the squirrel	松鼠
xun4lu4	the reindeer/caribou	馴鹿
hai3li2	the beaver	水獺
dai4shu3	the kangaroo	袋鼠
bao4zi	the jaguar	美洲豹
ying2huo3chong2	the firefly	螢火蟲
wo1niu2	the snail	蝸牛
e4yu2	the crocodile oralligator	鱷魚
mo4	the tapir	貘
rou4	the flesh	肉
tou2fa	the hair	頭髮
mao2	the body hair	毛
yin1mao2	the pubic hair	陰毛
lei4gu3	the rib	髆骨
jiao3	the horn	角
tou2	the head	頭
lian3	the face	面
yan3jing	the eye	眼
yan3pi2	the eyelid	眼皮
jie2mao2	the eyelash	眼曆毛
er3chui2	the earlobe	耳珠
er3shi3	the earwax	耳屎
bi2kong3	the nostril	鼻哥窿
bi2ti4	the nasal mucus	鼻涕
zui3chun2	the lip	嘴脣
she2tou	the tongue	腳
ya2yin2	the gums	牙齦
jiu4chi3	the molar tooth	大牙
jian2bang3	the shoulder	膊頭
suo3gu3	the collarbone	鎖骨
shou3wan2zi	the wrist	手腕
shou3	the hand	手
shou3zhang3	the palm of the hand	手掌
shou3zhi3	the finger	手指
mu3zhi3	the thumb	手指公
zhi3jia1	the fingernail	指甲
da4tui3	the thigh	大髀

(*continued*)

(*continued*)

Mandarin	WOLD gloss	Cantonese
tui3du4zi	the calf of the leg	腳瓜
jiao3	the foot	腳
jiao3wan4zi	the ankle	腳踝
jiao3gen1	the heel	腳踝
jiao3zhi3	the toe	腳趾
chi4bang3	the wing	翼
yu3mao2	the feather	羽毛
qi2	the navel	肚臍
wei4	the stomach	胃
yao1	the waist	腰
jian4	the sinew or tendon	筋
he1qian4	to yawn	打喊路
ke2sou	to cough	咳
da3pen1ti4	to sneeze	打乞嚏
ou3tu4	to vomit	嘔
yao3	to bite	咬
liu2kou3shui3	to dribble	流口水
zuo4meng4	to dream	發夢
sheng1huo2	the life	生活
si3de	dead	死咗
yan1si3	to drown	沉死
chu4ti3	the carcass	死屍
jia3zhuang4xian4zhong3	the goitre/goiter	甲狀線腫脹
ji2bing4	the disease	病
shang1kou3	the wound or sore	傷口
xue4zhong3	the bruise	瘀傷
yang3	the itch	痕
shui3pao4	the blister	水爆
nong2	the pus	膿
yao4	the medicine	藥
lei4	tired	劫
xiu1xi	to rest	透
tu1/3	bald	光頭
bo3	lame	跛
long2	deaf	聾
ya3	mute	啞
zui4	drunk	醉
sheng1	raw	生
cheng2shu2	ripe	熟
sheng1	unripe	生
he1	to drink	飲
ji1huang1	the famine	饑荒

(*continued*)

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Mandarin	WOLD gloss	Cantonese
kao3	to bake	焙
lu2zi	the oven	爐
wan3	the bowl	碗
bei1zi	the cup	杯
die2zi	the saucer	碟
qian2zi	the tongs	鉗
can1	the meal	飯
gua1	to scrape	刮
mian4bao1	the bread	麪包
sheng1mian4tuan2	the dough	生麪團
mian4fen3	the flour	麵粉
rou4	the meat	肉
tang1	the soup	湯
shu1cai4	the vegetables	菜
shui3guo3	the fruit	生果
wu2hua1guo3	the fig	無花果
gan3lan3	the olive	橄欖
you2	the oil	油
la4jiao1	the chili pepper	辣椒
feng1mi4	the honey	蜜糖
tang2	the sugar	糖
niu2nai3	the milk	奶
ji3nai3	to milk	揸奶
feng1mi4jiu3	the mead	蜂蜜酒
pu2tao2jiu3	the wine	葡萄酒
pi2jiu3	the beer	啤酒
jiu3	the fermented drink	酒
chuan1	to put on	著
yi1fu	the clothing orclothes	衫
cai2feng	the tailor	裁縫
bu4	the cloth	布
yang2mao2	the wool	羊毛
mian2hua1	the cotton	棉花
zhan1	the felt	氈
fang3	to spin	紡織
feng2	to sew	聯
zhen1	the needle(1)	針
zhui1zi	the awl	錐
xian4	the thread	線
ran3	to dye	染
da4yi1	the cloak	斗篷
pi1jian1	the poncho	披肩

(*continued*)

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Mandarin	WOLD gloss	Cantonese
lian2yi1qun2	the (woman's) dress	連身裙
chen4shan1	the shirt	衫衫
ling3zi	the collar	領
qun2zi	the skirt	裙
cao3qun2	the grass-skirt	草裙
ku4zi	the trousers	褲
wa4zi	the sock or stocking	襪
xie2zi	the shoe	鞋
xie2jiang4	the shoemaker	鞋匠
mao4zi	the hat or cap	帽
mian4sha1	the veil	頭紗
niu3kou4	the button	鈕
jie4zhi	the ring	戒指
xiang4lian4	the necklace	頸鍊
zhu1zi	the bead	珍珠
er3huan2	the earring	耳環
wen2shen1	the tattoo	紋身
mao2jin1	the towel	毛巾
shu1zi	the comb	梳
shua1zi	the brush	刷
bian4zi	the plait/braid	辮
ti4dao1	the razor	鬚刨
you2gao1	the ointment	藥膏
fei2zao4	the soap	番鹼
jing4zi	the mirror	鏡
xue3di4xie2	the snowshoe	雪鞋
zhu4	to live	住
fang2zi	the house	屋
xiao3wu1	the hut	茅屋
ting2zi	the garden-house	花園
zhang4peng	the tent	帳幕
ting2yuan4	the yard or court	花園
zhu4zi	the doorpost	柱
yao4shi	the key	鎖匙
chuang1hu	the window	窗
qiang2bi4	the wall	牆
huo3lu2	the stove	火爐
yan1cong1	the chimney	煙通
ti1zi	the ladder	梯
chuang2	the bed	牀
zhen3tou	the pillow	枕頭
zhuo1zi	the table	檯

(*continued*)

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Mandarin	WOLD gloss	Cantonese
la4zhu2	the candle	蠟燭
wu1ding3	the roof	屋頂
mao2cao3wu1ding3	the thatch	茅屋頂
dong4liang2	the ridgepole	樑
chuan2	the rafter	椽
zhu4	the post or pole	柱
gong3xing2	the arch	拱門
sha1jiang1	the mortar(2)	石屎
zhuan1pi1	the adobe	泥磚
diao4chuang2	the hammock	吊牀
shui3tian2	the paddy	水田
li2gou1	the furrow	坑
wa1jue2	to dig	挖
tao4suo3	the lasso	套索
zhong3zi	the seed	種
lian2dao1	the sickle or scythe	鐮刀
da3gu3	to thresh	打穀
da3gu3chang2	the threshing-floor	打穀場
xiao3mai4	the wheat	小麥
da4mai4	the barley	大麥
hei1mai4	the rye	黑麥
yan4mai4	the oats	燕麥
zhi2wu4	the plant	植物
zhong4	to plant	種
shu4zhi1	the branch	樹枝
xiang4shu4	the oak	橡樹
shan1mao2ju3	the beech	山毛櫸
hua4shu4	the birch	樺樹
song1shu4	the pine	松樹
shan1shu4	the fir	杉樹
xiang4zi	the acorn	橡果
chou1yan1	to smoke	食煙
yan1dou3	the pipe	煙斗
shu4dun1	the tree stump	樹樁
shu4gan4	the tree trunk	樹幹
shu4pi2	the bark	樹皮
shu4ye4	the sap	樹液
ye1zi	the coconut	椰子
xiang1jiao1	the banana	香蕉
rong2shu4	the banyan	菩提樹
mu4shu3	the cassava/manioc	木薯
hu2lu	the gourd	葫蘆

(*continued*)

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Mandarin	WOLD gloss	Cantonese
zhu2zi	the bamboo	竹
gan1zhe	the sugar cane	蔗
qian2ma2	the nettle	蕁麻
mo2gu	the mushroom	蘑菇
luo4ye4song1	the larch	落葉松
zuo4	to do	做
zuo4	to make	整
gong1zuo4	the work	工作
jie3kai1	to untie	解開
lian4tiao2	the chain	鏈
sheng2	the rope	繩
jie2	the knot	綟
qiao1	to pound	打
kan3	to cut down	斬
jian3dao1	the scissorsor shears	鉸剪
ca1	to wipe	擦
la1chang2	to stretch	拉長
la1	to pull	拉
gua4	to hang up	掛
xi3	to wash	洗
sao4zhou	the broom	掃把
mu4jiang	the carpenter	木匠
wa1kong1	to hollow out	挖空
ding1zi	the nail	釘
duan4gong1	the blacksmith	鐵匠
chui2da3	to forge	打鐵
tie3zhen3	the anvil	鐵砧
tie3	the iron	鐵
qian1	the lead	鉛
xi1	the tin or tinplate	錫
nian2tu3	the clay	黏土
bo1li	the glass	玻璃
xi2	the mat	蓆
di4tan3	the rug	地氈
wang3dou1	the netbag	網袋
shan4zi	the fan	扇
shan1shan4zi	to fan	搧扇
diao1ke4jia1	the sculptor	雕刻家
zao2zi	the chisel	鑿
fei1biao1	the boomerang	回力標
da3shui3	to draw water	打水
zhuang1	the peg	樁釘

(*continued*)

(*continued*)

Mandarin	WOLD gloss	Cantonese
mo2dao1shi2	the whetstone	磨刀石
dong4	to move	郁
juan3	to wrap	捲
gun3	to roll	轆
diu1	to drop	跌
chan2rao4	to twist	扭
diao4	to fall	跌
di1	to drip	滴
liu2	to flow	流
chen2	to sink	沉
fei1	to fly	飛
tiao4	to jump	跳
ti1	to kick	踢
tiao4wu3	to dance	跳舞
bo3	to limp	跛下跛下嘅行
lai2	to come	啱
hui2lai2	to come back	返啱
zhui1	to pursue	追
dai4	to carry	帶
bei4	to carry on shoulder	揹
ding3	to carry on head	頂
jia1	to carry under the arm	夾
ji4	to send	寄
dai4ling3	to lead	帶
kai1che1	to drive	揸車
qi2	to ride	騎
lu4	the road	路
xiao3lu4	the path	巷
qiao2	the bridge	橋
che1	the cart or wagon	車
lun2zi	the wheel	轆
zhou2	the axle	軸
e4	the yoke	軛
xue3qiao1	the sledge/sled	雪橇
chuan2	the ship	船
du2mu4zhou1	the canoe	獨木舟
wei2gan1	the mast	桅桿
fan1	the sail	帆
mao2	the anchor	錨
deng1lu4	to land	上岸
you3	to have	有
na2	to take	攞

(*continued*)

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Mandarin	WOLD gloss	Cantonese
zhua1	to grasp	揸住
dong1xi1	the thing	嘢
gei3	to give	畀
jiu4	to rescue	救
zhao3	to look for	搵
zhao3dao4	to find	搵到
qian2	the money	錢
fu4you3	rich	有錢
qi3gai4	the beggar	乞兒
jie4	to lend	借
jie4	to borrow	借
qian4	to owe	爭
fu4	to pay	畀錢
shui4	the tax	稅
mai3	to buy	買
mai4	to sell	賣
shi4chang3	the market	市
shang1dian4	the shop/store	舖頭
gui4	expensive	貴
pian2yi	cheap	平
fen1xiang3	to share	分
cheng1zhong4	to weigh	重
zai4 … li3mian4	in	喺…裡便
zai4	at	喺
xiang4xia4	down	喺…下便
zuo4	to sit	坐
zhan4	to stand	倚
sheng4xia	the remains	淨返嘅
jian3qi3	to pick up	執起
dui1	to pile up	堆
lian2	to join	聯
fen1kai1	to separate	分開
gao1	high	高
jian1	the top	頂
di3	the bottom	底
jin4tou2	the end(1)	尾
jian1	pointed	尖
bian1	the edge	邊
zhong1xin1	the middle	中間
yuan3	far	遠
da4	big	大
xiao3	small	細

(*continued*)

(*continued*)

Mandarin	WOLD gloss	Cantonese
chang2	long	長
gao1	tall	高
zhai3	narrow	窄
shen1	deep	深
qian3	shallow	淺
ping2	flat	平
zhi2	straight	直
gou1zi	the hook	勾
jiao3	the corner	角落頭
shi2zi4	the cross	交叉
dong4	the hole	窿
ling2	zero	零
yi1	one	一
san1	three	三
si4	four	四
wu3	five	五
liu4	six	六
qi1	seven	七
ba1	eight	八
jiu3	nine	九
shi2	ten	十
shi2yi1	eleven	十一
shi2er2	twelve	十二
shi2wu5	fifteen	十五
er4shi2	twenty	二十
yi1bai3	a hundred	一百
yi1qian1	a thousand	一千
shu3	to count	數
man3	full	滿
bu4fen	the part	部分
ban4	the half	半
dan1du2	alone	一個人
di4yi1	first	第一
di4-er4	second	第二
di4-san1	third	第三
san1ci4	three times	三次
xin1	new	新
zao3	early	早
ma3shang4	immediately	即刻
kuai4	fast	快
man4	slow	慢
chi2dao4	to be late	遲到

(*continued*)

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Mandarin	WOLD gloss	Cantonese
kai1shi3	to begin	開始
you3shi2hou	sometimes	有時
tian1	the day(2)	日頭
jin1tian1	today	今日
ming2tian1	tomorrow	聽日
hou4tian1	the day aftertomorrow	後日
qian2tian1	the day beforeyesterday	前日
yue4	the month	月
nian2	the year	年
dong1tian1	the winter	冬天
chun1tian1	the spring(2)	春天
xia4tian1	the summer	夏天
qiu1tian1	the autumn/fall	秋天
wen2qi3lai2	to smell(1)	聞起咪
wen2	to sniff	欶
wen2dao4	to smell(2)	聞到
xiang1	fragrant	香
chou4	stinking	臭
chang2qi3lai2	to taste	試起咪
tian2	sweet	甜
xian2	salty	鹹
ku3	bitter	苦
suan1	sour	酸
se4	brackish	鹹
ting1dao4	to hear	聽到
ting1	to listen	聽
an1jing4	quiet	靜
shan3guang1	to shine	發光
liang4	light(2)	光
bai2	white	白
hei1	black	黑
hong2	red	紅
huang2	yellow	黃
mo1	to feel	摸
ying4	hard	硬
ruan3	soft	軟
dun4	blunt	鈍
qing1	light(1)	輕
shi1	wet	濕
gan1	dry	乾
gan1jing4	clean	乾淨
zhou4wen2	wrinkled	皺

(*continued*)

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Mandarin	WOLD gloss	Cantonese
xiao4	to laugh	笑
wei1xiao4	to smile	微笑
wan2	to play	玩
ai4	to love	鍾意
bao4qian4	to regret or be sorry	後悔
ku1	to cry	喊
yan3lei4	the tear	淚
du4ji4	the envy or jealousy	妒忌
xiu1chi3	the shame	羞恥
jiao1ao4	proud	驕傲
hai4pa4	the fear	恐懼
wei1xian3	the danger	危險
yuan2liang4	to forgive	原諒
cuo4	wrong	錯
cuo4wu4	the mistake	錯
zhi3ze2	the blame	指摘
xin1	the mind	心
xiang3	to think(1)	諗
cai1	to guess	估
mo2fang3	to imitate	扮
jiao4	to teach	教
xue2xiao4	the school	學校
wang4ji4	to forget	唔記得
qing1chu	clear	清楚
mo2hu	obscure	模糊
huai2yi2	the doubt	懷疑
nan2	difficult	難
shi4	to try	試
bu4	no	唔係
han3	to shout	嗌
er3yu3	to whisper	咬耳仔
du1nang	to mumble	吟沉
chui1kou3shao4r	to whistle	吹口哨
jian1jiao4	to shriek	尖叫
jiao4	to howl	嗌
chen2mo4	to be silent	唔出聲
wen4	to ask(1)	問
hui2da2	to answer	答
ju4jue2	to refuse	拒絕
jin4zhi3	to forbid	唔畀
jiao4	to call(2)	叫
xuan1bu4	to announce	宣布

(*continued*)

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Mandarin	WOLD gloss	Cantonese
wei1xie2	to threaten	威脅
xie3	to write	寫
zhi3	the paper	紙
shu1	the book	書
gu3	the drum	鼓
zhu3ren2	the master	主人
jie3fang4	to liberate	解放
di2ren2	the enemy	敵人
lin2ju1	the neighbour	隔籬鄰舍
zhu3ren2	the host	主人
yin1mou2	the plot	陰謀
he2ping2	the peace	太平
jun1dui4	the army	軍隊
bang4	the club	棍
zhan4fu3	the battle-axe	戰釜
dan2gong1	the sling	彈弓
jian4	the arrow	箭
jian4	the sword	劍
qiang1	the gun	鎗
kui1jia3	the armour	盔甲
tou2kui1	the helmet	頭盔
sheng4li4	the victory	勝利
shi1bai4	the defeat	失敗
che4tui4	to retreat	撤退
tou2xiang2	to surrender	投降
jing3wei4	the guard	守衛
zhan4li4pin3	the booty	戰利品
mai2fu	the ambush	埋伏
yu2gou1	the fishhook	魚鈎
yu2wang3	the fishnet	漁網
xian4jing3	the trap	陷阱
pan4jue2	the judgment	判決
fa3guan1	the judge	法官
yuan2gao4	the plaintiff	原告
bei4gao4	the defendant	被告
shi4yan2	the oath	誓言
zhi3kong4	to accuse	指控
xuan1pan4 Xyou3zui4	to convict	判佢有罪
xuan1pan4 Xwu2zui4	to acquit	判佢冇罪
you3zui4	guilty	有罪
wu2zui4	innocent	冇罪
cheng2fa2	the penaltyor punishment	懲罰

(*continued*)

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Mandarin	WOLD gloss	Cantonese
fa2kuan3	the fine	罰款
tong1jian1	the adultery	通姦
zong4huo3	the arson	縱火
zong1jiao4	the religion	宗教
jiao4tang4	the church	教堂
qing1zhen1si4	the mosque	清眞寺
chong2bai4	to worship	拜
shen2sheng4	holy	神聖
tian1tang2	the heaven	天堂
mo2gui3	the demon	魔鬼
xian1nü3	the fairy or elf	仙女
yu4zhao4	the omen	預言
ge1li3	the circumcision	割禮
shou1yin1ji1	the radio	收音機
dian4shi4	the television	電視
dian4hua4	the telephone	電話
mo2tuo1che1	the motorcycle	電單車
huo3che1	the train	火車
fei1ji1	the airplane	飛機
dian4chi3	the battery	電芯
sha1che1	to brake	bik6 lik1
ji1qi4	the machine	機器
yi1yuan4	the hospital	醫院
yao4pian4	the pill or tablet	藥丸
yan3jing4	the spectacles/glasses	眼鏡
zheng4fu3	the government	政府
chu1sheng1zheng4	the birth certificate	出世紙
you2piao4	the postage stamp	郵票
xin4	the letter	信
ming2xin1pian4	the postcard	明信片
yin2hang2	the bank	銀行
long2tou2	the tap/faucet	水龍頭
chuang2dian4	the mattress	牀褥
luo2si1	the screw	螺絲
qi3zi	the screwdriver	螺絲批
tang2guo3	the candy/sweets	糖
zha4dan4	the bomb	炸彈
gong1chang3	the workshop	工場
xiang1yan1	the cigarette	煙仔
bao4zhi3	the newspaper	報紙
dian4ying3	the film/movie	戲
yin1yue4	the music	音樂

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Mandarin	WOLD gloss	Cantonese
cha2	the tea	茶
ka1fei1	the coffee	咖啡
shi4	to be	係
mei2you3	without	冇
tong1guo4	through	通
zhe4ge	this	呢個
na4ge	that	嗰個
ling4yi1ge	other	另外一個
xia4yi1ge*	next	下一個
tong2yi1ge4	same	同一個

Appendix 4: Cantonese and Mandarin equivalents of the Leipzig-Jakarta word list (top 100 word meanings based on WOLD)

English (meaning)	Mandarin	Cantonese
fire	火	火
nose	鼻子	鼻(哥)
to go	去	去
water	水	水
mouth	口/嘴	口/嘴
tongue	舌頭	腩
blood	血	血
bone	骨頭	骨(頭)
[2SG pronoun you]	你/您	你
root	根(子)	根
to come	來	啱
breast	乳房	乳房/睾/胸/波
rain	雨	雨
[1SG pronoun I]	我	我
name	名字/姓名	名
louse	蝨子/頭蝨/體蝨	蝨(蝨)
wing	翅膀	翼
flesh/meat	肉	肉
armhand	胳膊/胳臂手	手臂/手
fly	蒼蠅	烏蠅
night	夜	夜/晚/夜晚/晚黑/晚頭
ear	耳朵	耳(仔)
neck	頸/脖子	頸
far	遠	遠

(*continued*)

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English (meaning)	Mandarin	Cantonese
to do/make	做/造	做/造
house	房子	屋/樓
stone/rock	石頭	石(頭)
bitter	苦	苦
to say	說	講/話/嗰
tooth	牙(齒)	牙
hair	頭髮	頭髮
big	大	大
one	一	一
who?	誰?	邊個?/乜誰?
[3SG pronoun he/she/it]	他/她/它	佢
to hit/Beat	打	打/抽/郁/揸
legfoot	腿/腳	小腿/腳
horn(trumpet)	小號/喇叭/號角	啲打/喇叭/號角
this	這個	呢個
fish	魚	魚
yesterday	昨天	琴日/尋日
to drink	喝	飲
black	黑	黑
navel	臍	肚臍
to stand	站	企
to bite	咬	咬
back	(脊)背	背(脊/脢)
wind	風	風
smoke	煙	煙
what?	甚麼?	乜(野)?/咩?
child(kin term)	孩子/小孩/兒童	細蚊仔/細路仔/小朋友/細路哥/細佬哥/仔女
egg	雞蛋	(雞)蛋/鶵
to give	給	俾
new	新	新
to burn	燒(掉)/著火	燒着/著火
not	不/沒有	唔/冇
good	好	好
to know	知到	知(到)
knee	膝(蓋)	膝頭(哥)
sand	沙(子)	沙
to laugh	笑	笑
to hear	聽到	聽到
soil	土(壤)	泥(土)
leaf	葉子	葉
red	紅	紅
liver	肝(臟)	肝(臟)/膶

(*continued*)

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English (meaning)	Mandarin	Cantonese
to hide	躲/藏	闇(埋)/摒(埋)
skin/hide	皮(膚)	皮(膚)
to suck	吸(取)/吸吮/吮吸	吸/嗍
to carry	帶/拿/背/頂/夾	帶/攞/揹/頂/夾
ant	螞蟻	蟻
heavy	重/沉	重/聚手
to take	拿	攞
old	(古)老/舊	(古)老/舊
to eat	吃	食/喫/刷
thigh	大腿	大髀
thick	厚	厚
long	長	長
to blow	颳(風)	吹
wood	木(頭)	木(頭)
to run	跑	走/跑
to fall	掉	跌
eye	眼睛	眼
ash	灰(燼)	灰
tail	尾(巴)	尾
dog	狗	狗
to cry/weep	哭	喊
to tie	紮/綑/縛/結/繫/綁/拴	札/綁/打緂
to see	(看)見	見/睇/望
sweet	甜	甜
rope	繩	繩
shade/shadow	影子	影
bird	鳥	雀/鳥/雀仔
salt	鹽	鹽
small	小	細
wide	廣/寬/闊	闊(落)
star	星星	星(星)
in	在...裏面	裏面/入面
hard	硬	硬
to crush/grind	磨/撚	磨/研