

CHINESE LOANWORDS IN THE *OED*

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ABSTRACT

It was traditionally assumed that Chinese had contributed few borrowings into English until Cannon (1987, 1988, 1990) carried out his research based on different English desk-dictionaries. His studies were supplemented by Moody (1996) who reviewed Cannon's list focusing on the information provided by the *Oxford English dictionary* (henceforth *OED*) and *Webster's third new international dictionary of the English language*. Nonetheless, Moody's analysis did not explore all the possibilities the *OED* offered at the time. This article aims at revising those previous pieces of work on the topic to find out whether there are significant changes in view of the latest data supplied by the *OED*, to determine whether there is an increase in the number of items borrowed, which are the transmission and source languages and to see whether any predictions for the near future can be made. Finally, some comments on the transliteration of the terms are also included.

1. Introduction

This article arises from a personal interest in the language and the culture of China, which is meant to be a future world power according to economic experts. Both the development of the nation as a crucial source of labour force and its inhabitants as potential consumers and the fact that this vast territory is gradually opening its frontiers and fostering commercial relations with western countries favour interaction at all levels, including language. This contact will allegedly involve exportation of some aspects of Chinese culture along with its language. Subsequently, the number of loanwords from Chinese into western languages has probably experienced an important increase in the last decades. Language contacts between China and Europe, and Britain in particular, have existed for centuries.¹ However, it was traditionally assumed that Chinese borrowings in English

¹ For a complete account of the language contact between China and English speaking coun-

were few. In fact, Serjeantson (1935) listed just 27 items from Chinese, until Cannon's studies (1987, 1988 and 1990) changed this conception drastically. His articles were complemented by Moody (1996), who centred on the information provided by the *Oxford English dictionary* (henceforth *OED*), but also on *Webster's third new international dictionary of the English language*. Nonetheless, since Moody's analysis did not explore all the possibilities the *OED* offered at the time, but rather relied on Cannon's retrieval of data, the present research deals with a comprehensive corpus extracted from the *OED*, which has undergone dramatic revisions in the last decade. In fact, a huge amount of items has been amended since 1997 and some of them were even introduced for the first time as draft entries since the time when this lexicographic work has been available online (2000). Thus, this article aims at revising those previous pieces of work on the topic to find out whether there are significant changes in view of the latest data supplied by the *OED*, to determine whether the English vocabulary is being enlarged with Chinese elements due to the economic expansion of China, which are the transmission and source languages and to see whether any predictions for the near future can be made. Finally, some comments on the transliteration of some terms are included, as well.²

2. Selection of data

In order to carry out the present study, the data were retrieved from the *Oxford English dictionary* online. By making a query for terms containing the word "Chinese" in their etymology, 409 tokens were obtained.³ Despite this amount of occurrences, not all the elements were to be taken into account, since some of the tokens were not considered valid for research purposes:

- 1) Terms from a different etymological origin. Even if the word shows the term *Chinese* in its etymology explanation, its linguistic origin can be ascribed to any other language. This includes derivatives such as *chinesery*, whose allograph *chinoiserie* recalls its French origin.

tries, see Chan and Kwok (1985).

² Although Chinese is a tonal language, tones have little influence in English. Furthermore, the *OED* does not mark them in their entries. Thus, the terms reflect the *OED* spelling where Chinese tones are left unmarked.

³ The *OED* was last accessed in May 2007, so it includes all the additions of the first quarter of the year. It is true that the regular updating of the data may alter the results. In fact, an earlier version was written with the entries introduced until December 2006 and when the March additions appeared, there was a slight modification of the data (from 402 tokens to 409 in total). However, it is considered that the new updating will not significantly change the tendencies mentioned in this article in the near future.

- 2) Terms that are out of use nowadays and thus, considered obsolete: *alfin*, *bing*, *camaca*, *cheyney*, *Gormogon latinxua*, *moc-main* and *peeling*.
- 3) There are also loan translations or calques, by which the idea expressed in the Chinese language is conveyed more or less literally with English words.

Before analysing the final corpus, more detailed information will be provided on how and why these items are excluded from the corpus. In the case of 2.1. Different etymological origins and 2.2. Obsolete terms, the denomination of the sections are self-explanatory. However, regarding calques, some reasons will be adduced to explain their exclusion.

Finally, when the research was complete, some crucial items to the Chinese culture seemed to be missing. After searching for some like *qi* or *Kuomintang*, it was realized that the *OED* did sometimes not include the whole word *Chinese* in the etymology section, but just the abbreviation *chin*. An additional search by *chin* retrieved 58 elements, most of which were directly related to English *chin* as a physical part of the face and had nothing to do with the scope of the present study. Thus, out of 58, just 17 were considered valid for inclusion in the final corpus: *gung ho* (1942),⁴ *ho-ho* (1901), *hutung* (1922), *I Ching* (1876), *inro* (1617), *kongsi* (1839), *kuei* (1935), *Kuomintang* (1912), *Kuo-yü* (1932), *Lohan* (1878), *qi* (1850), *Shar-Pei* (1976), *shih-tzu* (1921), *Szechuan* (1956), *wonk* (1) (1900), *Yin* (2) (1846) and *Zen* (1727). The remaining items are completely disregarded and not even listed here, as they have no connection at all with Chinese, but mainly with Old English and Latin and Greek. Thus, the initial query was increased with these 17 items, which makes a total of 426 tokens.

2.1. Different etymological origins

The group comprises 37 words or expressions. These terms were disregarded because they have a different origin from Chinese, although the word Chinese appears in the etymology section. As the *OED* considers them not to have sprung from this language, they are not included in the final corpus. However, some of them are worth commenting on more thoroughly:

Bonze (1552), *cangue* (1727), *cash* (2) (1598), *China* (1555), *Chinese* (1577), *chinesery* (1890), *Chinglish* (1957), *compound* (1679), *Dobsonian* (1980), *Hun* (900), *joss* (1711), *junk* (1555), *Manchu* (1697), *Manchurian* (1706), *mandarin*

⁴ The date reflects the first time the word is registered with such form in the *OED*. As some of the items are under revision, an earlier quotation might be offered in the near future. However, the date chart provided by the *OED* has not been updated. Thus, the official date accepted by the *OED* is used.

(1589), *miaow* (1634), *myriarch* (1623), *ombres chinoises* (1779), *pavillon chinois* (1876), *Père David's Deer* (1898), *phad thai* (1978), *piastre* (1592), *prefect* (1853), *prefecture* (1855), *Ryukyu* (1808), *samisen* (1616), *shaman* (1698), *Sharawaggi* (1685), *shogun* (1615), *Shorin ryu* (1974), *silk* (c.888), *Symbionese* (1973), *transitional* (1945), *Turfanian* (1939), *Turk* (13..), *Wade-Giles* (1943), *Yarkand* (1875).

Some of the words have a disputed origin. Thus, *bonze* is said to come from French, taken from Portuguese *bonzo*, although other reference works claim Japanese is the source language, although it was adopted from Chinese *fan seng* 'religious person'. Like the *OED*, Moody (1996: 408) chooses French as the transmission language and includes the word in his selection. In this case as well as in some others, it was necessary to reach decisions concerning the real origin of the term. The decisions adopted here do not always coincide with Moody's and Cannon's, as they both consulted the *Webster's third new international dictionary of the English language*. Unlike their studies, the main source of information for this article is the *OED*; that is why in case of dubious etymology, the etymons can be ascribed to different languages depending on the reference work that is taken into consideration.

Other items owe much to the influence of Portugal in the area. This country had intense contact with Chinese traders. Thus, some remarkable words like *mandarin* were first recorded in Portuguese although, other European influences, such as Spanish or Dutch, are shown in similar forms like *mandarim*, *mandeline* or *Mandorijns*. The word comes from Malay *menteri* or its Sanskrit etymon *mantri*. The *OED* explains that "the Sanskrit word was the usual term for a counsellor or minister of state in pre-Islamic India. It was widely adopted in South-East Asia, and especially in the Malay-speaking states". The Portuguese were the first to apply it to Chinese officials, for whom the Chinese term was *guan* 'kwan'. The change of <t> to <d> in Portuguese is explained by a possible association with the verb *mandar* 'to order'. Portuguese people were also familiar with *caixa* to refer to 'small coins used by different peoples', the Chinese among them, although the form *cash* probably goes back to Tamil. Also from Portuguese is *cangue*, although transmitted through French; in this case, the *OED* even denies the Chinese origin that was attributed to the word by Prof. Legge. Likewise, the influence of Portuguese is seen in what Chan and Kwok call "false loans", that is, words that are erroneously being ascribed to Chinese "because of ignorance about the Chinese language" (1985: 18). Thus, as the *OED* claims, *joss* is neither Chinese nor has been transmitted through this language. It apparently derives from Portuguese *deos*, but is originally a Javanese name given to a Chinese idol or image. Another unit that comes from Javanese but has been related to

Chinese is *junk*. However, the *OED* states that the English form comes from other European languages. Besides, no Chinese origin can be claimed, according to the *OED*, because “the Portuguese and Dutch were established in Java and the Malay Archipelago before they visited China, and found the Javanese and Malay word (which has no connexion with the Chinese) applied to all large native vessels as well as to the Chinese ships which visited those shores”.

Other terms show a wide range of etymological sources. Thus, *compound* comes from Malay, whose Chinese reflex is *kampong*, referring to ‘the enclosure where a factory or house is’. *Dobsonian* is after the last name of a Chinese-born U.S. amateur astronomer who developed the telescope. Even widespread denominations like *China* and *Chinese* do not go back to the original term in Chinese, whose country and people are *zhong guo* and *zhong guo ren*, respectively. *China* is already found in Sanskrit at the Christian era. From this base word, French coins *chinesery*, and *Chinglish* is a blend from Chinese and English. The presence of French in connection to things Chinese is relevant indeed. Probably most items within this group come directly from French and are used to designate objects, entities, animals or people from China. That is the case of *cangue*, *ombres chinoises*, *pavillon chinois*, *Père David’s Deer*, or *prefect* and *prefecture*. Others come directly from Japanese, such as *Ryukyu*, *samisen*, *shogun* or *Shorin ryu*.

Finally, a peculiar history is found around the word *Hun* which was already present in Old English to represent the native name of the people who were known to the Chinese as *Hiong-nu* or *Han* and who overran Europe in the 4th and 5th centuries. It was also attested in Latin as *Hunnus*, ultimately from Turkic *Hun-yü* according to Harper’s *Online etymology dictionary*. Likewise, the denomination *Manchu* goes back to another Altaic language, Manchu or *Manju*, which “is said to have been the name adopted by Abahai, leader of the Altaic-speaking Ruzhen tribes of Manchuria, who conquered China and ruled as the Qing dynasty from 1644-1912”, according to the *OED*. Unlike the previous one, the origin of *Manchurian* is not clear. It can allegedly have sprung from Manchu with euphonic medial *r*, perhaps after place names in *-uria* such as *Etruria* or *Liguria*.

2.2. Obsolete terms

This group includes just 8 items. The only one that can still be found in present-day English texts is *Latinxua*, which, although the *OED* warns the reader it is obsolete except historically, could be found in language books referring to a recent past, since this system of transliteration was introduced in 1931 and was in full use until it was superseded by *Pinyin* in the late 1950s. Some of the ele-

ments of this group are not even of Chinese origin, like *alfin/alphin* that comes from Old French and was used to refer to the chess piece known to Chinese and other peoples as ‘elephant’.

Alfin/alpin (1440-1801), *bing* (1701-1721), *camaca* (1375-1485), *cheyney* (1634-1701), *Gormogon* (1725-1791), *Latinxua* (1937-1974), *moc-main* (1857-1881), *peeling* (1671-1798).

2.3. Loan translations or calques

The total amount of loan translations or calques is 36:

Acupuncture point (1932), *barefoot doctor* (1971), *dragon* (1981), *dragon boat* (1846), *loose face* (1876), *flowery* (Empire, Kingdom, Land, Nation) (1847), *functional* (1990), *gang* (1976), *martial arts* (1920), *mat* (1) (1613), *meridian* (1959), *Middle* (Empire, Kingdom, Land, Nation) (1698), *milk name* (1836), *money tree* (1934), *moon gate* (1924), *mud* (1852), *no can do* (1868), *paper tiger* (1836), *paste* (1735), *pearl tea* (1838), *pillow book* (1906), *porcelain tower* (1666), *potsticker* (1968), *reform through labour* (1957), *capitalist road* (1966), *capitalist roader* (1)(1967), *running dog* (1937), *save one’s face* (1898), *semi-proletariat* (1951), *snakehead* (1965), *Son of Heaven* (1613), *splittism* (1962), *struggle meeting* (1966), *to ride a tiger* (1902), *triad society* (1821), *war-lord* (1922).

Moody (1996: 406) deletes loan translations from his list on account of the following reasons:

- a) Scholars do not always agree on whether to consider these lexical items as Chinese loanwords and do not treat them uniformly as borrowings. He further illustrates this point by referring to some expressions that are regarded loan translations by the *OED* but not by *Webster’s third new international dictionary of the English language* and vice versa.
- b) Calques offer little evidence about the source or transmission language. To support this view, he mentions two facts: on the one hand, variation among the Chinese dialects is phonological rather than lexical, which would make difficult to establish the source language. On the other, the Chinese source is not always mentioned. At times, the *OED* even claims a Japanese origin, as in the case of *functional* (*food*), *martial art* or *mat*.

However, Moody (1996: 417) concludes his article stating that “modern trends suggest that loan translations will supply more borrowings than will loanwords” in the case of direct borrowings from Chinese into English. In fact, he just provides 10 loan translations; namely, *barefoot doctor*, *Canton crepe*, *Canton flannel*, *face*, *Middle Kingdom*, *paper tiger*, *Red Guard*, *scorched earth*, *war-lord* and *winter melon*. Out of these, *Canton* appears as an entry that includes *Canton china*, *crape*, *enamel*, *flannel*, *matting*, but no etymology or explanation is provided for any of these collocations in his article; *winter melon* was found in *Webster’s third new international dictionary of the English language*, but not in the *OED*. With the new data provided by the *OED*, some new additions are *acupuncture point* and *flowery* to modify any of the following nouns (*Empire*, *Kingdom*, *Land*, *Nation*), mainly referring to China. As a modifier *middle* is also found as a referent for China, as it is the original name given to the imperial state in Chinese in contrast to the dependencies surrounding it.

Thus, as the focal point of the present investigation is original Chinese etymons adopted into the English language and recorded in the *OED*, disregarding non-etymological related items (37), loan translations (36) and obsolete words (8), from the initial corpus made up of 426 items, the final number of hints to be considered is of 345 English terms borrowed from Chinese.

3. Discussion and classification of data

To see the real growing tendency of adoption of Chinese terms, if the 345 items are distributed according to the century when they were first registered in the English language, the following progression can be observed:

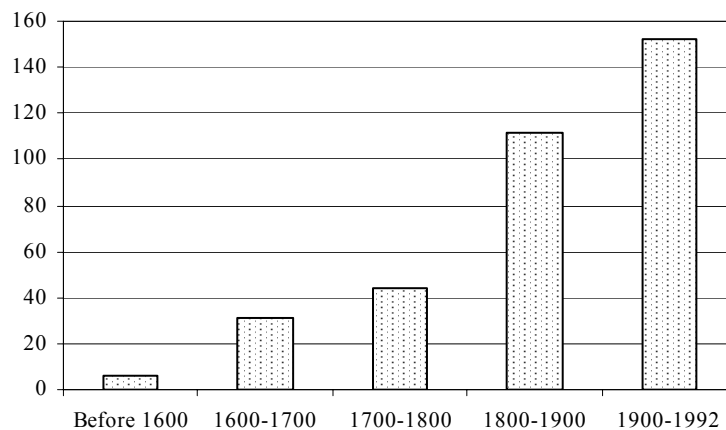


Figure 1. Number of items introduced according to date

Before 1600 only 6 borrowings are documented: namely *galingale*, *japan*, *li* (1), *litchi*, *typhoon* and *Tangut*; in 17th century: 31 items, followed by 44 tokens between 1700-1800; the next century, 1800-1900, shows 112, while in the last century 152 loanwords are displayed from 1900 to 1992, which shows the last year when a Chinese etymon was registered for the first time in the *OED*. It could be argued that this progressive increase could be explained in terms of the culture of globalization, but undoubtedly the relevance that this particular language is acquiring worldwide is also accountable for the increasing number of items adopted. Furthermore, even if some entries were added in 2007, the *OED* records lexical units registered up to 1992 as the initial date. It follows from here that others will be documented in the following decades. Indeed, it would be desirable the *OED* would update its database soon and present readers with more recent data that cover this time span (1992 up to now).

3.1. Transmission languages

Chinese loanwords may not pass directly into English, but there may have come through another language. Thus, the 345 items were classified according to the language that was used for transmission: namely Japanese, French, Portuguese, Malay, Korean, Dutch, Pidgin English and others. Table 1 displays the number of loanwords in order of productivity.

Table 1. Transmission languages in order of productivity

Language of transmission	Number of items
Japanese	92
Pidgin English	7
French	5
Korean	3
Malay	3
Dutch	2
Portuguese	2
Mongol	1
Swedish	1
Vietnamese	1

JAPANESE

Bento (1616), *budo* (1905), *daimio* (1839), *dairi* (1662), *furo* (1615), *gingko* (1773), *gobang* (1886), *gyoza* (1955), *inro* (1627), *itzebu/itzeboo* (1616), *judo* (1889), *ju-jistu* (1875), *juku* (1931), *kago* (1857), *k'ai shu* (1876), *kanji* (1920), *karotsi* (1988), *keiretsu* (1965), *kirin* (1727), *kobang* (1616), *kyudo* (1933),

maki-e (1616), *makunouchi* (1898), *makuuchi* (1957), *manga* (1951), *manyogana* (1841), *Meiji* (1873), *meishi* (1971), *Mikado* (1727), *mikan* (1618), *mingei* (1955), *Minseito* (1927), *minshuku* (1970), *mirin* (1880), *miso* (1615), *mokume* (1884), *momme* (1727), *mon* (1878), *mondo* (1) (1927), *mondo* (2) (1956), *mu* (1933), *mushin* (1934), *Nagami* (1935), *Nanga* (1910), *nanten* (1884), *napa* (1979), *narikin* (1918), *nashi* (1902), *Nashiji* (1881), *natto* (1905), *nembutsu* (1727), *Nichiren* (1876), *nikkei* (1) (1969), *Nikkei* (2) (1974), *nikkei-jin* (1979), *ninja* (1964), *ninjutsu* (1950), *Nintendo* (1987), *Nippon* (1614), *nisei* (1939), *nogaku* (1916), *Noh* (1871), *nunchaku* (1969), *Obaku* (1833), *oban* (1615), *on* (1946), *onsen* (1909), *orihon* (1882), *otaku* (1992), *oyabun* (1948), *ramen* (1972), *reiki* (1982), *Rinzai* (1833), *seitan* (1974), *sennin* (1875), *seppuku* (1871), *shaku* (1727), *shakudo* (1860), *Shinto* (1727), *shipo* (1875), *shiso* (1985), *soroban* (1891), *soshi* (1891), *soy* (1696), *temmoku* (1880), *Tendai* (1727), *tofu* (1880), *tycoon* (1857), *Wagyu* (1963), *yen* (1) (1875), *yuzu* (1910), *Zen* (1727).

Non-naturalized are: *daimio*, *dairi*, *inro*, *itzebu*, *kago*, *k'ai shu*, *kanji*, *kirin*, *kobang*, *Rinzai*, *sennin*, *seppuku*, *shaku*, *shakudo*, *shippo*, *soroban*, *soshi*.

Undoubtedly, Japanese was the most active transmitter of Chinese terms into English for centuries. Indeed, the word structure reveals its Japanese past, as the sequence of characters and sounds do not conform to Chinese patterns. In fact, unlike Japanese lexical units, Chinese words ending in *ku* are not usual. Likewise, the clusters <gy>, <ky> do not appear in Chinese either. Nevertheless, the increasing interest in China and its culture and language has shifted this tendency and more recent terms are coming direct from Chinese into English.

Focusing on the etymological aspect, it is observed that the list contains some doublets, as in the case of *makunouchi* (1898) and *makuuchi* (1957), which appear as two different entries in the *OED*. Even if they refer to the same concept, the latter form is preferred lately. Doublets can also be found between Chinese and Japanese. Firstly, *jiaozi* and *gyoza*: the latter was introduced earlier from Japanese, probably by 1955, but goes back to the former, which represents more accurately the Chinese etymon. Secondly, one finds the well-known *yen* and *yuan*, where the former is maintained to refer to the Japanese currency and the latter to the Chinese one.

PIDGIN

Chop-chop (1834), *chop-stick* (1699), *makee* (1719), *mash* (1870), *muchee* (1723), *pidgin* (1807), *samshoo* (1697).

Non-naturalized is *samshoo*.

Some of the items in this list has gained wide acceptance among English speakers, despite its controversial etymology on some occasions. Thus, although the origin of the word *mash* is uncertain, in the following quotation the *OED* claims a Chinese pidgin English use:

1870 J. J. McCloskey *Across Continent in America's Lost Plays* (1940)
IV. 107 Chinaman: *Hello, Johnnie. Me makee mashee.*

Pidgin or *pigeon* is supposed to reproduce English *business*. According to the *OED* numerous 19th-century sources provide this etymology. Regarding the pronunciation, the development was perhaps via an intermediate form from /biznis/ to /pidzinis/ replacing English /z/ with /dʒ/ and deleting last syllable, because it was taken as a plural inflection.

FRENCH

Galingale (1000), *kalanchoe* (1830), *kaolin* (1727), *pampelmoes* (1698), *tea* (1655).

Because of the continuous presence of Jesuits in China until the collapse of the order in 1760, and the important link that it represented between the East and the West, the role of French as a transmission language could have been thought to be more crucial. In fact, many of the Jesuits learned Chinese as an instrument for their evangelisation purposes. However, few items can be traced back to French, even if some of them appeared prior to this period of missionary activity. Thus, *galingale* was introduced into English from Old French, which in turn adopted it from Arabic, although it is originally Chinese, according to the *OED*. It is the first borrowing documented in the present corpus and appeared in English literature in so famous works as the *Canterbury Tales* (General Prologue, 381).

KOREAN

Hapkido (1971), *ondol* (1935), *onmun* (1882).

Korean contributed three items of Chinese origin into English whose meanings are quite varied: *ondol* designates 'a form of domestic heating', *onmun* refers to 'script' or 'writing', while *hapkido* names the 'Korean martial art'. The latter was first registered in the *Washington Post* in 1971, but the *OED* warns about the fact that the name was already applied to this martial art in 1959 by one of the founder's student, Han Jae Ji. The founder was really the Korean-born (and Japanese-raised), Yong Sul Choi (1904-1986). However, *hapkido* was first introduced in the United States in 1967 by Bong Soo Han.

MALAY

Nonya (1934), *popiah* (1986), *sinseh* (1972).

With the exception of *popiah*, which goes back to its original Malay etymon for ‘spring roll’, the origin of the other two items seems dubious. A double source is offered for *nonya*: either coming from Malay and Indonesian *nona* that could render a shortened form of Portuguese *senhora*; or a second explanation that points out towards Chinese or maybe a mixed form of Chinese and Portuguese related to *nian* ‘mama’, ‘mother’, ‘married woman’. The ultimate origin of *sinseh* is not clear either, as it was adopted from Malay and could probably represent a Chinese dialectal form.

DUTCH

Mebos (1793), *nooi* (1850).

Both *mebos* and *nooi* come from South African Dutch, where *mebos* means ‘dried and sugared apricots’ from Japanese *umeboshi* ‘dried, preserved Japanese apricot’ < *ume* ‘Japanese apricot’ (coming from Middle Chinese). In the quotation from the *OED* the reference is apparently made to Japanese *umeboshi*.

1793 tr. C. P. Thunberg *Trav.* III. 120, I saw several kinds of fruit, the produce of this country [*sc.* Japan], either dried or preserved in yeast, in a mode which is, I fancy, only practised at Japan or China. The fruit that was only dried, such as plumbs and the like, was called *Mebos* [*Sw.* *Mebos*].

Nooi refers to a ‘female employer’, but it also a respectful form of address to a woman in authority. It has been suggested that it could derive from Portuguese, but also from Malay whose ultimate origin would be Chinese *niang*, related to *nonya*.

PORTUGUESE

Japan (1577), *macao* (1778).

Despite the fact that the influence of Portuguese is exerted on a wide range of items, the ones that are directly transmitted through this language were originally toponyms, that underwent metonymy and that are now used as common nouns; in the case of *japan* it is used even as a verb meaning ‘to varnish or lacquer with japan’. On the one hand, *japan* is according to the *OED*, from Chinese *Jih-pun*, equivalent to Japanese *Ni-pon*, ‘sun-rise’. The name seems to have been transmitted through Portuguese reaching Europe with Marco Polo as *Chipangu*. The existing form represent Portuguese *Japão* and Dutch *Japan*

“acquired from the traders at Malacca in the Malay forms” (Yule, cited in *OED*). Although Giles (1974: 136) agrees on the origin, explaining *Jeh-pun* is the Chinese word which represents the Dutch orthography of Japanese *Ni-pon*, Chan and Kwok (1985) do not include the term as a borrowing from Chinese. The current form in Mandarin is *ri ben*. On the other, *macao* was also adopted firstly as the name of the city and later on to mean the card game played in the area.

MONGOL

Tangut (1598).

Tangut is Mongol to designate “a Tibetan people who inhabited north-western China and western Inner Mongolia, and formed the independent kingdom of Hsi Hsia from the eleventh to the thirteenth centuries A.D.; the country or language of this people” (*OED*).

SWEDISH

Mandarin (1771).

Mandarin as a fruit is first found in *mandarin apelsin*, probably a special application of Swedish *mandarin* also earliest attested in Swedish in Osbeck, as can be read in the quotation provided by the *OED* below:

1771 J. R. FORSTER tr. P. Osbeck *Voy. China* I. 307 Here are two sorts of China oranges (*Citrus sinensis*). The first is that called the *Mandarin-orange*, whose peel is quite loose.

According to the *OED*, “the reason for the fruit being so named is not specified by Osbeck and is obscure: comparison of the fruit’s colour with the yellow silk robes of mandarins has been suggested, although since Osbeck comments that the mandarin is the better kind of Chinese orange the alternative explanation that the name carries connotations of choiceness is perh. more likely”.

VIETNAMESE

Hao (1948).

The only item from Vietnamese is ‘a monetary unit equal to one-tenth of a dong’, although in Chinese it was used for a hundredth of a Chinese ounce.

3.2. Source language

As stated in the introduction, the source language is also analysed. A reflection on what is meant by Chinese is necessary here. Chinese comprises various varieties which can be clearly distinguished phonologically and lexically. The majority of the population of China comes from the Han group, so usually Chinese refers to the language of this ethnic group. In fact, *hanyu* ('Han speech' or 'Han language') is the usual term in academic writing to refer to the Chinese language. However, there are other ethnic groups, such as Manchus, Mongolians or Tibetans. Even within the language of the Hans, a number of regional varieties can be named, such as Mandarin, Cantonese or Amoy. Regarding the distinction between these language varieties, the *OED* can be either no specific at all when referring to Chinese or, at times, draws a line between Mandarin, Cantonese and Amoy. Thus, the classification has been made taking into account this division. The number of items included within each group can be consulted in Table 2.

Table 2. Source language or specific Chinese variety

Source language	Number of items
Cantonese	23
Amoy	2
Mandarin	2
Other varieties	6
Undefined	195

CANTONESE

This is the larger group of items whose origin has been identified (23 tokens). This is clearly understood if one takes into account the fact that Hong Kong is included within this diatopic variety. It follows from here that, as Cantonese is spoken in the speech community known for direct language contact with English, the abundance of terms within this group is easily explained by this fact. Thus the following words are found:

Bok choy (1847), *campoi* (1842), *chop-suey* (1888), *dim sum* (1948), *fu yung* (1917), *hoisin* (1957), *kumquat/cuamquat* (1699), *kwai-lo* (1969), *loquat* (1820), *moo goo gai pan* (1902), *oopack* (1855), *pai gow* (1906), *pakapoo* (1886), *pak pai* (1972), *paktong* (1775), *Tanka* (1839), *Wing Chun* (1967), *wok* (1858), *won ton* (1948), *yen* (2) (1876), *yen* (3) (1882), *yen-yen* (1886), *yulo* (1878).

AMOY

Cumshaw (1839), *ketchup* (1711).

On the one hand, although the *OED* ascribes *ketchup* to Amoy, Chan and Kwok (1985: 146-47) contend that, even if there is no conclusive evidence, it could be based on Cantonese ‘tomato sauce’, rather than on Amoy, where the base word *kôe* and *tsiap* are said to mean ‘seafood’ and ‘sauce’ respectively. The Amoy speakers consulted by these authors could think of no word that even approximated the first syllable of *ketchup* in pronunciation. On the other, there is no controversy regarding *cumshaw*, a term used in the Chinese ports to ask for a present or gratuity.

MANDARIN

Cha/chah (1616), *hoey* (1865).

Despite being the official variety nowadays, not too many items are found here. In fact just *cha* and *hoey* are recognised as Mandarin. Moody (1996) includes here all the items that are marked as Chinese with no further distinction. In the present study it is preferred to follow the division, as established in the *OED*, since some terms show special phonological or spelling features which made it difficult to justify its Mandarin provenance as will be seen under the section 3.3. Transliteration and pronunciation of Chinese borrowings.

OTHER VARIETIES

Mee (1935), *kiasu* (1978), *kongsi* (1839), *lah* (1972), *pekoe* (1713), *Teochew* (1893).

The forms in this section correspond mainly to Southern varieties. The first three items are from Hokkien:⁵ *Mee* is the form for ‘flour, noodles’ and is related to Mandarin *mian*. *Kiasu* is one of the latest additions (March, 2007) used colloquially and depreciatively to mean ‘selfish’ both as a noun and as an adjective. Regarding *kongsi*, the *OED* explains that owes its pronunciation to this language variety.

The other words come from different regional varieties of the South: *Pekoe* (1713) from Southern Min corresponding to Mandarin *paihao* ‘good quality tea’. *Teochew/Teo-chew* (1893) after the name Swatow in district of Kwangtung

⁵ According to Bolton (2003: 75), Hokkien is a dialect of Min spoken in South-East provinces of China, such as Hainan, Guangdong and Fujian, but is spoken in Taiwan as well.

in southern China serves to designate both the people and the language spoken by this people. In the case of the interjection *lah*, although it does not specify the exact region, the *OED* attributes its form to the Southern variety.

UNDEFINED

Finally, out of the 228 items coming from Chinese, the biggest group is made up of 195 items whose origin has not been specified accurately. Thus, ‘undefined’ does not mean that the origin is unknown, but rather that is classified by the *OED* just as Chinese.

Bohea (1701),⁶ *chen shu* (1655), *cheongsam* (1957), *chin chin* (1795), *chow mein* (1903), *Confucian* (1837), *congou* (1725), *erhu* (1908), *fan tan* (1878), *fen* (1852), *feng-shui* (1797), *fum* (1820), *Gan* (1943), *ganbei* (1940), *ganbu* (1956), *ginseng* (1654), *gow* (1922), *gung ho* (1942), *Hakka* (1867), *hien/hsien* (1837), *ho-ho* (1901), *hong* (1726), *hutung* (1922), *hyson* (1740), *I Ching* (1876), *jiao* (1949), *jiaozi* (1978), *kang* (1770), *kaoliang* (1904), *Kiangsi* (1937), *Ko* (2) (1882), *ko* (3) (1923), *kow-tow/kotow* (1804), *Kuan/Kwan* (1814), *kuei* (1935), *kung-fu* (1966), *Kuomintang* (1912), *Kuo-yü* (1932), *kylin* (1857), *Langshan* (1871), *lei* (1929), *lei-wên* (1922), *li* (1) (1588), *li* (2) (1771), *li* (3) (1912), *li* (4) (1945), *liang* (1827), *likin* (1876), *ling* (1860), *ling chih* (1904), *li shu* (1824), *litchi* (1588), *li ting* (1958), *Lohan* (1878), *longan* (1732), *lü* (1655), *mafoo* (1863), *mah-jong* (1922), *Mamenchisaurus* (1954), *man t'ou* (1955), *Maoism* (1950), *Mao-tai* (1962), *mei ping* (1915), *Miao* (1834), *Miaotse* (1810), *mien* (1890), *Mien* (1873), *Min* (1902), *Ming* (2) (1795), *ming* (4) (1937), *ming chi* (1958), *Min Yuen* (1951), *Mohism* (1861), *moo shu* (1962), *mou* (1836), *moutan* (1808), *Nanyang* (1946), *Nei kuan* (1959), *nien hao* (1824), *oolong* (1845), *pai-ban* (1884), *pai-hua* (1923), *pailou* (1836), *paitung* (1736), *pan* (1874), *p'an* (1904), *pao-chia* (1931), *pao-tzu* (1944), *Peking* (1776), *pela* (1754), *pelong* (1675), *pe-tsai* (1788), *petuntse* (1728),⁷ *pi* (1871), *Pinyin* (1963), *pipa* (1839), *p'o* (1850), *Pong* (1910), *pongee* (1711), *po shan lu* (1915), *pung* (1922), *putonghua* (1950), *qi* (1850), *qigong* (1974), *qinghaosu* (1977), *renminbi* (1957), *sampan* (1620), *Sanfan* (1956), *san hsien* (1839), *san ts'ai* (1901), *se* (1874), *senshaw* (1848), *Shang* (1669), *shang* (1887), *Shanghainese* (1964), *Shaolin* (1974), *Shar-Pei* (1976), *shen* (1847), *sheng* (1) (1795), *sheng* (2) (1886), *shih-tzu* (1921), *so-na* (1908), *souchong* (1760), *suan-pan* (1736), *Sui*

⁶ According to *OED*, it refers to the Wu-i hills in north of Fuhkien and the tea that is produced there. In this variety *b* is used for *w* or *v*.

⁷ In both *pe-tsai* and *petuntse* the *OED* explains that the pronunciation with /e/ is due to Southern Mandarin, but it does not assure that the items come from that specific variety.

(1738), *Sung* (1673), *sycee* (1711), *Szechuan* (1956), *Sze Yap* (1964), *ta chuan* (1894), *T'ai Chi* (1736), *taipan* (1834), *Tai-ping* (1853), *tan* (1) (1886), *tan* (2) (1911), *Tang* (1669), *tangpu* (1941), *tao* (1736), *taotai* (1747), *t'ao t'ieh* (1915), *ta tzu-pao* (1960), *te* (1895), *tiao* (1883), *t'ien* (1683), *ting* (1904), *t'ing* (1853), *ti-tzu* (1874), *tou* (1899), *tou-ts'ai* (1953), *ts'ao shu* (1876), *tsu* (1939), *tsun* (1958), *tsung* (1904), *tuchun* (1917), *tu-mo* (1972), *tung* (1889),⁸ *tupan* (1925), *tutang* (1613), *Twankay* (1840), *typhoon* (1588), *Tz'u Chou* (1910), *ve-tsin* (1958), *wampee* (1830), *wei ch'i* (1871), *wên jên* (1958), *wen li* (1887), *wen yen* (1936), *whangee* (1790), *wonk* (1) (1900), *Wu* (1908), *Wufan* (1956), *wushu* (1973), *wu ts'ai* (1904), *wu-wei* (1859), *yamun/yamen* (1747), *yang* (1671), *yang ch'in* (1876), *yang-ko* (1954), *Yenan* (1949), *Yi* (1960), *yin* (1) (1671), *Yin* (2) (1846), *ying ch'ing* (1922), *yu* (1904), *Yuan* (1) (1673), *yuan* (2) (1912), *yuan* (3) (1928), *yuan hsiao* (1956), *Yüeh* (2) (1901), *Yüeh* (3) (1954), *yüeh* (4) (1956), *yüeh ch'in* (1839), *yulan* (1822), *Yunnanese* (1849), *zhuyin zimu* (1938).

Some processes undergone by these terms deserve further comment. *Langshan*, *mao-tai*, *Peking* and *Tz'u Chou*, among others, have experienced metonymy, since, from meaning originally the place of provenance, they ended up designating the product that comes from these specific regions. Throughout the history of the English language this processes is well attested since the well-known *sherry* (1608) to other items such as *bikini* (1947), *champagne* (1664), *cognac* (1594), *cordovan* (1625), *delft* (1714), *denim* (1695), *Havana* (1711), *jersey* (1583), *limousine* (1902), *muslim* (1609), *Parmesan* (1556-68), *Pils* (1961), *Pilsen* (1939) or *Wiener* (1889).

Some of the units in this group are recent coinages. For instance, *Mamenchi-saurus* (1954) where the first element of the compound responds to the name of the Chinese province where fossils were found, while the second part is Latin. Similarly, *Maoism* is created after the name of *Mao Zedong* (1893-1976), chairman of the Communist Party of the People's Republic of China (1949-76) and Chinese head of state (1949-59). Mao's name was formerly transliterated *Mao Tse-Tung*. This is one of the few Chinese nouns that serve as a base for derivatives, such as *Maoist*. *Shanghainese* is also a derivative, noun and adjective, taking the name of the city *Shanghai* as basis, plus the suffix *-ese*, as in *Chinese* or *Yunnanese* and others designating the people from a specific place.

Some other items have an uncertain origin. Thus, regarding *typhoon* the *OED* explains that it can go back to Chinese *ta* 'big' + *feng* 'wind', represented in Cantonese as *tai* + *fung*, but there may be another source from Arabic, adopted from Greek *typhon*.

⁸ *Tung-yu* meaning 'tung oil' appears first in 1788, but now the main entry is for the word designating the tree (*tung*) dating from 1889.

3.3. Transliteration and pronunciation of Chinese borrowings⁹

As Chan and Kwok claim “loans coming directly from China tend to follow the Putonghua¹⁰ pronunciation, while loans originating in Hong Kong the Cantonese” (1985: 24). This is perfectly understandable historically. For centuries Cantonese spoken in Hong Kong was a pool of terms to be imported into other languages. More recently, the interest in China has turned Mandarin, the Putonghua or official language, into the new source of exportation. Chan and Kwok (1985: 42-43) make several observations on the nature of the relationship and the position of both varieties in respect to English:

It is clear that the relationships between English and Chinese, and within Chinese, between Putonghua and Cantonese, will gradually change in line with the political and social changes. English will continue to be used for practical purposes, especially in business and international trade. But the importance of Chinese, especially Putonghua, will increase over the years and it is likely that the expatriate community will find it less easy to be oblivious to its all pervasiveness

Chan and Kwok (1985: 42-43).

This gradual shift can also be seen in the way the Chinese words were romanized. Cantonese was transliterated according to the Barnett-Chao and Meyer-Wempe methods, while Mandarin followed mainly the Yale and Wade-Giles system until the latter was superseded by *Pinyin*. The decade when the word was adopted can clearly be traced back according to the transliteration system employed. Moody (1996: 412) explains that the Wade-Giles system of romanization is observed in borrowings entering English from 1912 to 1949. With the establishment of the People’s Republic of China the *Pinyin* system of transliteration was fostered and officially accepted for use in the 1950s. Thus, the most recent terms will conform to *Pinyin* rules. Furthermore, the different trends followed in transliteration favoured inconsistency as can be observed in the spelling and pronunciation found in several elements used to refer to ‘noodles’ and related to Mandarin *mian*: *chow mein* (1903), *mien* (1890) and *mee* (1935) that comes from Hokkien *mi* according to the *OED*. *Mian* corresponds to the *Pinyin* transliteration, whose current Mandarin pronunciation is /mien/. On the contrary, *mein* is pronounced /meɪn/ and *mien* is pronounced /mi:n/ in British English and /min/ in American English and the transliteration is due to Wade and Giles, according to the *OED*. The spelling here fluctuates because of

⁹ Although the *OED* is based on written sources, it provides the pronunciation of almost every item. Thus, the considerations in this section refer to the pronunciation this lexicographic work assigns to every term to determine the degree of anglicisation shown by Chinese borrowings.

¹⁰ *Putonghua* is “a standard language based on the dialect of Peking and serves as the official medium of schools and all other governmental organs” (Norman 1988: 137).

the transliterations, although the pronunciation can also differ because of the regional varieties where the word was taken from. Regarding the pronunciation of *chow*, it has been completely adapted to the English pattern where <ow> represents the diphthong /aʊ/. A similar development has been followed by other words containing the same sequence, such as *gow*, which even shows a further sign of assimilation to the linguistic system, as it is the base for the derivative *gowster*.

Most terms revised seem to be anglicised in pronunciation to some extent, even non-naturalized ones, such as *erhu* or *dim sum*. Cannon (1990: 44) already commented on this fact by stating “an assimilated item has undergone successful replacement of any Chinese phonemes that have no English counterpart by similar English ones”. Thus, English speakers tend to pronounce the word according to the rules operating in their own system. Some of the tendencies observed in the process of adaptation are the following:

Words containing <a> tend to be pronounced with a front low vowel /æ/ in English. For instance, *fan tan* or *gan*. Just a few words show a different vowel for <a>, as in *ganbei* /gan'bei/ or *ganbu* /gan'bu/. However, the second syllable shows spelling pronunciation, as there is no voiced bilabial plosive in Modern Mandarin. The letter in Chinese represents the voiceless bilabial stop /p/. The same principle applies to other terms like *gobang* /gəʊ'bæŋ/. On very few occasions, both the current Chinese and the adapted English pronunciations coexist. This is the case of *pan* ‘musical instrument also called *paiban*’. Wade and Giles transcription was *pan*, although in Mandarin this is *ban*, pronounced with initial /p/. In fact, the *OED Supplement* (1982) treated this as non-naturalized, and only gave the pronunciation /ban/. Nowadays, both pronunciations with voiced and voiceless bilabial plosives are accepted. In *pi* both pronunciations are also possible, as the transliteration was due to Wade and Giles as *pi*, while the modern Chinese form is *bi*, which induces to spelling pronunciation.

Many other items followed Wade and Giles transliteration. For instance /t/ was transliterated as <t> by Wade and Giles, but in *Pinyin* is represented by <d>. However, the form introduced in English prevails in words like *moutan* (*Pinyin moudan*). Likewise, Wade and Giles transliteration contrasts with new *Pinyin* spellings in *ming chi* that is equivalent *Pinyin minqi* or *Miaotzu* written as *miaozi* in *Pinyin*. Similarly, divergences in spelling are observed in the transliteration of the velar /k/, in Wade and Giles transliteration <k> as in the second element of *Nei kuan* and in modern *Pinyin* <g>, as in *neiguan*.

Coming back to vocalic sounds, those containing <u> can be kept as a closed vowel, in *kung-fu*, but very often they tend to be adapted to the central vowel /ʌ/, e.g. *fum*, a corruption of *fung*, ‘a bird known as phoenix in the Western culture’. The first syllable in *cumshaw* is also pronounced with the central vowel, while the second one is pronounced with a long open *o* as corresponds to the

English spelling <aw> in words like *law* or *saw*. Items with <u> as a central vowel are *dim sum*, the second syllable in *fu yung* /fu: jʌŋ/ or the first one in *kumquat*, where even the second syllable has been adapted to the specific environment of the vowel preceded by /w/ that evolved into a short /ɒ/ in words like *was* or *quality* in British English. Despite this regularity in assigning the central sound /ʌ/ to words containing <u> in Chinese, *feng-shui* shows a curious pronunciation of <e> as if it were <u>. Norman claims that “the *e* of the final *eng* is pronounced farther back than *e* in *en*: [ʌŋ]” (1988: 143), although this explanation would be plausible if the word had been introduced through oral speech or speakers had a thorough knowledge of the original language. Otherwise, the easiest thing to do is to associate this <e> with the usual sound it maps onto in English. In fact, this is what happens with the diphthong in *shui* that is pronounced /ui:/, similar to the one in *ruin*, rather than /uei/, which renders better the Chinese pronunciation. Another reason for that central pronunciation of the <u> could be the fact that in Cantonese the word for *wind* is spelled *fung* rather than *feng*, which seems the simplest explanation for that anomalous relationship between sound and spelling.

Other items have been completely adapted in pronunciation and spelling and have little to do with their native pronunciation. For instance, *hyson* /ˈhaɪsən/ from Chinese *hsi-ch'un*. Likewise, <oo> as in *oolong* or *pakapoo* is pronounced as in any other English words that underwent the Great Vowel Shift process with raising from long *o* to long *u*, like *mood* or *loot*.

Finally, there is a set of lexical units that are considered non-naturalized by the *OED*. Curiously enough, many of these items show adaptation to English phonetic patterns rather than to Chinese ones, as has been commented above. Some others show a strange relationship between sound and spelling: some beginning with <t> are spelled with <d> in Chinese, although the pronunciation is /t/. However, the English spelling is with <t> although the sound is that of /d/ in words like *tan*, *te* or *tangpu*, where even <p> sounds as /b/.

This specific group comprises the following words:

Bing (1701), *chen shu* (1655), *cheongsam* (1957), *chin chin* (1795), *cumshaw* (1839), *dim sum* (1948), *erh hu* (1908), *fen* (1852), *feng-shui* (1797), *ganbei* (1940), *ganbu* (1956), *hao* (1948), *hoey* (1865), *hong* (1726), *hutung* (1922), *kang* (1770), *Ko* (1882), *ko* (1923), *kongsi* (1839), *kow-tow/kotow* (1804), *kuei* (1935), *Kuo-yü* (1932), *kwai-lo* (1969), *kylin* (1857), *lah* (1972), *lei* (1929), *lei-wen* (1922), *li* (1) (1588), *li* (2) (1771), *li* (3) (1912), *li* (4) (1945), *liang* (1827), *likin* (1876), *ling chih* (1904), *li shu* (1824), *li ting* (1958), *lü* (1655), *putonghua* (1950), *qi* (1850), *Sanfan* (1956), *san hsien* (1839), *san ts'ai* (1901), *se* (1874), *senshaw* (1848), *shang* (1887), *shen* (1847), *sheng* (1) (1795), *sheng* (2) (1886), *so-na* (1908), *suan-pan* (1736), *ta chuan* (1894), *T'ai Chi* (1736), *Tai-ping*

(1853), *tan* (1) (1886), *tan* (2) (1911), *tangpu* (1941), *Tanka* (1839), *tao* (1736), *taotai* (1747), *t'ao t'ieh* (1915), *ta tzu-pao* (1960), *te* (1895), *tiao* (1883), *t'ien* (1683), *ting* (1904), *t'ing* (1853), *ti-tzu* (1874), *tou* (1899), *tou-ts'ai* (1953), *ts'ao shu* (1876), *tsu* (1939), *tsun* (1958), *tsung* (1904), *tuchun* (1917), *tu-mo* (1972), *tupan* (1925), *tutang* (1613), *ve-tsin* (1958), *wei ch'i* (1871), *wên jên* (1958), *wen li* (1887), *wen yen* (1936), *Wufan* (1956), *wushu* (1973), *wu ts'ai* (1904), *wu-wei* (1859), *yamun/yamen* (1747), *yang* (1671), *yang ch'in* (1876), *yang-ko* (1954), *yin* (1671), *ying ch'ing* (1922), *yuan hsiao* (1956), *yüeh* (4) (1956), *yüeh ch'in* (1839), *yulan* (1822), *zhuyin zimu* (1938).

On some occasions the scarce frequency of usage of the terms in English can account for their inclusion as non-naturalized items, as many are pertaining to the music field such as *erhu*, *san hsien* or *se*; arts, mainly porcelain or some kind of ceramics, such as *tou-ts'ai* or *Tz'u chou*; theatre characters like *sheng* and *tan*; units of measurements not adopted in western countries, such as *li* and *shang*, or terms related to philosophy and religion, such as *Tao* and *yang*. But on some others, even if the lexical unit has not been completely anglicised it shows traits of assimilation to the system. The assimilation is carried out not only in terms of pronunciation, as commented above, but also at the morphological level. Thus, if it is a noun, it is inflected for number; if a verb, it takes the usual inflections as in *kow-towing* or *kowtowed*; and it is even the base for derivatives like *kow-tower* or *kow-towism*.

4. Conclusions

The present article is based on a comprehensive corpus retrieved from the *OED* that, even after disregarding those that did not meet the research requirements, outnumbers the ones presented in previous studies. Moody (1996) after Cannon (1987, 1988 and 1990) eventually analysed 96 lexical units, Chan and Kwok (1985) tabulated 108, while our corpus comprises 345 tokens. Nonetheless, even if the number of borrowings is much higher, some of the conclusions drawn in previous analyses seem to be confirmed in light of the data provided by this study. The most general statement to be made is that the Chinese language has significantly contributed terms and concepts to English. This poses the need to reconsider Chinese when writing future histories of the English language, so that this Asian language finds its right place among the other languages that are usually mentioned as sources of borrowings.

Another fact that is acknowledged by browsing the corpus is that, although other parts of speech such as adjectives and verbs are recorded, most loanwords are nouns. Likewise, the prevailing languages of transmission are the ones mentioned by previous authors; that is, basically Japanese, as the most active trans-

mitter. However, other languages exerting its influence are French, Pidgin English, Portuguese and Dutch, although other minor contributions are registered as well. There are unresolved questions regarding the etymology of some of the discussed items. The *OED* is dubious about some of the etymons, but the other lexicographic work is also rather inconclusive in those cases. Regarding the source language, the situation has not changed much either. Unless a thorough knowledge of the different varieties is attained, it is hard to distinguish between the regional features shown in words. While the early borrowings could come from any variety, the selection of Mandarin as the standard language turns this variety into the recent and future exporter of loanwords from Chinese.

As a final conclusion, it can be said that even if the most recent period of economic expansion is not covered by the *OED* and therefore has not been empirically substantiated, it can be predicted that the number of items coming from Chinese into English, and possibly into other European languages, will be larger in the near future, as a consequence of the economic development of China. Once more, the lexicon reflects the changes underwent by the society and the speech community, and studies like this one will shed light on language change and specifically on the role played by language contact.

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