Why Chinese-English code-switching is so difficult to avoid:
Medium-of-instruction-induced code-switching in Hong Kong and Taiwan

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Code-switching very common in HK public discourse

- '**phone in 節目**'

- **去唔去 'Happy Hour'？**

- '**讓肌膚每天做 spa**'（某‧液之影音廣告）

- '**卡數 Easy Go**'（邦民日本財務 影音及印刷廣告）

- '**外表 open 內裡斯文**'（學師，十一月號 封面專題）

Yet, **English-only communication among HKers is uncommon**

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The more highly educated, the more difficult to avoid

Chen & Gray (2005)

***present 一個 project ? ***

- Over 30 university students and staff interviewed:
  Idiomatic 'pure' Cantonese 'equivalents' not available

➔ Result in CS
➔ Linguistic motivation in HK (long) attested

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Why 'happy hour'？
Why not '歡樂時光'？

e.g.
Ask in pure Cantonese…

- 去 唔 去 歡 樂 時 光 ？

'歡樂時光':
Carries unwanted meanings not found in 'happy hour'

C-E mixed code in bilingual interaction

e.g.
- AQ, EQ, IQ, SQ
- Cappuccino
- Chanel
- DNA
- Facebook
- Google
- iPhone
- iPod
- MP3
- SMS
- Tiramisu
- YouTube… etc.

English as embedded language

In speech
➔ **Cantonese-English mixed code**

In writing
➔ **Chinese-English mixed code**

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Dilemma faced by HK Chinese bilinguals

- Code-mixing is 'bad'

- Yet difficult to avoid

- Why difficult?
  ➔ One major difficulty: '**medium-of-learning effect**'

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Outline

1. **Brief review CS motivations research**
2. **Methods and participants**
3. **Types of data**
4. **Evidence of 'medium-of-learning effect' (MOLE)**
5. **Conclusions / Implications**

Research question

Why do Chinese-English bilinguals code-switch ?

"Why do bilinguals code-switch ?"

➔ **Two asymmetric explanations to date**:

A. **Mainstream explanation**
   Researchers' etic analysis of naturally occurring CS data

B. **Dispreferred explanation**
   Code-switchers' emic self-report accounts

Mainstream explanation: Researchers' etic analysis

Two competing models:

1. **Social motivations / Markedness theory** (Myers-Scotton 2002)
2. **Conversation analysis** (e.g. Auer 1995, Gafaranga 2007, **Li** Wei 2002)

Typically: **"X code-switched because…"**

Features in common: **etic / interpretive**
- **based on conversational data**
- **CS motivations attributed to code-switchers**
- **no attempt to seek confirmation from code-switchers**

Dispreferred explanation: Code-switchers' emic accounts

- self-report data ("I code-switched because…")

- assumed unreliable (since Blom & Gumperz 1972)

  -- informants denied CS, until shown audio-recording

  -- bilinguals absorbed in meaning-making; unconscious of language choice:
  "speakers are not even aware that they are engaging in CS" (Myers-Scotton 2002: 44)

  ∴ self-report data held to be unreliable / unresearchable

Critique of the etic approach

Researchers' theory-driven analysis:
- **explanatory adequacy?**
- **picture incomplete**

Can we go beyond interpretive analysis ?
- **Yes, provided code-switchers' awareness is raised**
- **Experimental approach to elicit situated concerns**

Emic approach allows us to uncover
- **code-switchers' own accounts**

Crucial question:
➔ **How ?**

How to obtain high-quality self-report CS data ?

Multi-method approach
1. 'revelation through disruption' (Garfinkel's **breaching experiments**)
2. reflective diary
3. focus group (FG)

Important link between 2 and 3:
- Collate similar themes in diaries inductively
   = stimulus material as '**talking points**' for FG

Additional advantage:
- FGs yield natural and instructive CS data

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Li & Tse's (2002) experimental study

One day in the life of a "purist"

- **No English for one day (only Cantonese)**

- **12 English majors**

- **Methods: reflective diary / focus group**

- **Empirical evidence:**
   – **'translation equivalent' carries unwanted meaning**
   – **CS due to code-switchers' situated concerns**

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'Translation equivalent' dispreferred due to unwanted meaning

One female participant invited a male friend to:

打 野 戰 (daa2 je5 zin3)
'fight wild battle'

- Mixed code preferred ('打 war game'), but prevented

- obliged to use 'pure Cantonese' ('打 野 戰')

   ➔ problem: Cantonese 'equivalent' has sexual connotation
   ➔ evidence: CS to avoid embarrassment (subconsciously)

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This study: Methods and participants

- Replication of Li & Tse (2002) in Taiwan & HK

- **108 participants (self-selected):**
   – **65 in Taiwan**
   – **43 in HK**

- **3 universities** (**two in Taiwan; one in HK**)

- **5 disciplines**: English, Chinese, Psychology, Science, Business

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'One day with only Mandarin / Cantonese'

- **HK participants**: **no English**
- **Taiwanese participants**: **no Minnan hua / Hakka / aboriginal language / English**

All participants were required to:

1. attend a briefing before experiment

2. record words (in other langs.) on proforma (soft copy)

3. write a reflective diary (1-2 pages; in CHI or ENG)

4. attend a two-hour FG (in Mandarin / Cantonese)

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Types of data: **self-report data**

√ **'code-switcher categories'** (**emic**)
χ 'researcher categories' (**etic**)

- 108 **reflective diaries**
   -- Rich extracts collated
      ➔ **stimulus material** for focus groups (FGs)

- 13 **FGs** audio- & video-recorded:
   – 8 FGs in Taiwan; 5 FGs in HK
   – Transcription (coarse-grained)
   – Coding followed grounded approach

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Key finding

'medium-of-learning effect' (MOLE)

(cf. 'learning effect', Gibbons 1987)

'Medium-of-learning effect' (MOLE)

"…**what we learnt and were taught in schools are in English**. We all have a better understanding and good command of English and **even more understanding than Cantonese**. So, it is **unavoidable in using English** to have a communication with others. As a result, we **always mix some English words in Cantonese** or vice versa."

(HKE M2)

(based on 26 emic / metalinguistic commentaries)

Evidence of MOLE
1 of 10

"…during our conversation, I couldn't avoid using some English words to express my meaning. Like when she asked about my progress of the research, I had to say something related to my **sample size, pilot test**, etc. I really don't know what the Chinese words are for **sample size** and **pilot test**, so I didn't mention this and just talking about something related to it or directly using the English words although I knew it violated the rule of this experiment." (HKB M4)

Evidence of MOLE
2 of 10

"…**since I started learning computer, I haven't come across any Chinese terms**. So, when I was suddenly asked to speak only Cantonese, I found it **very hard to get rid of saying some English** during my explanation." (HKE M3)

Evidence of MOLE
3 of 10

這也是一點我覺得會用到 **code-switching** 的原因，除了方便習慣，有些時候第一反應就出現某一種語言，也覺得心裡想的要用這種語言才能表達的淋漓盡致，用中文的話，可能無法那麼確切表達自己的感受，所以才會 **switch** 到另一種語言… (TWCE F2)	I think this is another reason why I will use *code-switching*. Apart from convenience and habit, sometimes a particular language figures in my immediate response, feeling that what I want to say can only be adequately expressed in this language; if I use Chinese, perhaps I won't be able to express my inner feelings so precisely; this is why I *switch* to another language… (my translation)

Evidence of MOLE
4 of 10

"其實我真的常常做 **code-switching** 啊…雖然不是故意的，不過覺得有時這樣講話會比較流利，不會有被限定住的感覺。" (TWCE F1)	As a matter of fact, I often do *code-switching*… although not on purpose, but [I] feel that sometimes saying things in this way will be more fluent, [and that I] won't feel constrained [in what I say]. (my translation)

729 F5 HCU Sc 聽到呀 / 學到見到咖啲全部都.. 像好多種語言夾埋一齊囉 / 啲 / 啲**terms** 全部英文嘅 / 咁你講出口就好自然都係英文講番出嚟囉 //	F5 (my paraphrase): many **terms** taught in secondary school were in English, no wonder why these terms are used in mixed code
730 M1 HCU Sc 平時寫**program** / 你一入到嚟就係聽寫**program** / 就唔係寫程式 / 亦都唔會話住**write program** / 咁你已經一嚟到已經知道係寫**program** / 咖唔會有其他**choice** 俾你揀囉 / 你講呢樣嘢嘅時候 //	M1 (my paraphrase): We were taught '**se**^{35} **program**' ('write program') not '**se**^{35} **cing**^{21} **sik**^{55}', nor '**write program**'; if '**se**^{35} **program**' is what you learned, there is no other **choice** when you say it

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"…we are mentors from **Mentoring Scheme**. We have never thought about the Chinese words of **mentors** and **mentees**. Although these words are very easy, **we will never call these names in Chinese**." (HKS F5)

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University jargon reported by Taiwanese participants

High-frequency example:
• **BBS** ('Bulletin Board System'
= university-wide intranet system)

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Abbreviations / university jargon reported by **HK participants**:
e.g.
• **add-drop** (i.e. add/drop courses on the web)
• **AIMS**: 'Academic Information Management System'
• **CAPP**: 'Curriculum, Advising and Programme Planning'
• **CSC**: 'Computer Services Centre'
• **e-portal**: name of the intranet for staff and students
• **FMO**: 'Facilities Management Office'
• **FYP**: Final Year Project (graduation requirement)
• **GPA**: 'Grade Point Average'

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520 F2 TDU Bu 像我們有時候就是看很多國際雜誌 / 它都是英文簡稱 / 像大陸那像..或者是 APEC / 或者是 WTO / 對 / 就是都會用到就是英文簡稱 / 對 / 所以你你要你要把它講成中文 / 其實很繞舌又很長 / 對.. 像之前肆虐的 SARS 也是一個例子 / 就都會都用到 //

[**approximate translation**]
'Like sometimes in many international magazines we read / English acronyms are all over the place / the same thing in mainland China… like APEC / or WTO / right / they will.. they'll use English acronyms / right / so if you.. you refer to them in Chinese / actually [you get] tongue-tied and [they're] long / right… like SARS which caused lots of problems earlier is another example / [so acronyms will be] used also //'

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· 275 M3	TDU Sc	像DNA就好 / 誰會跑去講那甚麼去氧核糖核酸 / 大家都講DNA //
· 276 DL	TDU Sc	DNA //
· 277 M3	TDU Sc	=對呀 //
· 278 DL	TDU Sc	=DNA / 呀 right //
· 279 M3	TDU Sc	[M8: 那我想] =中文太長了 //

[**approximate translation**]

· 275 M3	TDU Sc	saying DNA is fine / who would want to say 'qù yǎng hé táng hé xuan' / everyone says DNA //
· 276 DL	TDU Sc	DNA //
· 277 M3	TDU Sc	=yes //
· 278 DL	TDU Sc	=DNA / ah, right //
· 279 M3	TDU Sc	[M8: that I think…] =**Chinese is too long** //

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MOLE is consistent with **topic-specific CS (Fishman 1972)**

Judo **(Japanese):** e.g. 'yi bong!' ('全勝!')

Modern dance (English): e.g. **'Freeze!'**

Fencing **(French):** e.g. **'Marche!'**

NBA jargon **(Eng via TV)** **e.g. 'wide open' / 'goal-tending'**

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Medium-of-learning effect:
Practicing judo in Japanese

「本人課餘活動是練習柔道,在柔道上有很多名詞都會用上日語,如果不用日語去講就會做成不方便。因為習慣用比賽用的專有名詞,用中文覺得很難聽。」(TDU Ch M2)

(**My extra-curricular activity is judo. In judo many terms are in Japanese; it would be inconvenient if [we] don't use Japanese. Because [we] are accustomed to using special [Japanese] terms for judo competition, the [corresponding] Chinese [terms] are difficult to follow.**)

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Medium-of-learning effect:
practicing fencing in French

「一開始,學長姐當然感覺很奇怪,明明術語就是法文,幹嘛說中文,我只好跟他解釋今天我只能用中文,學長姐都能諒解,只是聽慣了的法文變成了中文,真是十分的不習慣～!」(TCU Bu M3)

(At the beginning, [my] mentor sister surely found it very strange: the **jargon [in fencing practice] is in French**, why use Chinese? So I had to explain that today I could only use Chinese. [My] mentor sister showed understanding. It is however very inconvenient using Chinese because [we are] accustomed to hearing French [jargon]!)

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Medium-of-learning effect:
Practicing singing in Italian/English

「分部練習時,很自然地說出 soprano 如何如何、tenor 如何如何,當時並不覺得有什麼不對,也不覺得這是中文以外的語言,畢竟在合唱團裡沒人會說:女高音要……男高音要……。」(TCU En F7)

(During group practice, I found it **very natural to say** *soprano* so and so, *tenor* so and so. At that moment I did not find anything wrong with it, nor did I realize they were non-Chinese words; after all, in a choir hardly anyone would say **nǚ gāo yīn** ['soprano'] needs to…, **nán gāo yīn** ['tenor'] needs to…)

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Medium-of-learning effect:
Practicing modern dance in AmE

"I went practice dancing as a performance is coming soon. Among all the steps, there was one calling "freeze". Obviously, we cannot use Cantonese to present this word." (HCU Sc M4)

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**One instructive case:
An exchange student from Guangzhou**

- **Didn't find it challenging not to use computer jargon in English (e.g. 'click', 'double click', 'cursor', 'delete', 'print', 'save', etc.)**
- **Reason: computer training -- MoI mainly in Putonghua e.g. 点击,双击 (HK students reacted with laughter)**

Problem after studying one semester in HK:

- **She took some time to get used to Cantonese-English CS in HK**
- **After returning to Guangzhou, could not stop CS ➔ took time to get re-adjusted (i.e., suppress CS)**
- **Typical reaction of peers in Guangzhou: 'show off' (炫耀)**
- **Felt frustrated ➔ reason why wanted to take part in this project**

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Conclusions (1 of 3)

1. Learning through the medium of English makes us…

    (a) cognitively dependent on English terminologies

    (b) negligent of / unwilling to use corresponding Chinese terms

    ➔ **Medium-of-learning effect** (MOLE) attested

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Conclusions (1 of 3, cont'd)

1. **MOLE** ~ **psycholinguistic consequence of EMI education**:

Concepts acquired in English
➔ **cognitively mediated through English**
    ➔ **cognitive dependence on English terminologies**
        ➔ **intra-sentential CS in bilingual interaction**
          (**HK'ers being reluctant to CS entirely to English**)
            ➔ **corresponding Chinese terms: neglected / 'odd'**

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Conclusions (1 of 3, cont'd)

1. **Cognitive / psycholinguistic basis of MOLE**

    (cf. 'learning effect', Gibbons 1987)

    ➔ **First-impression hypothesis (FIH ~ 先入為主):**

    "When a concept C is introduced in language X, C tends to be psycholinguistically mediated through X (Cx), even though the same concept is later encountered in language Y (Cy)."

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Conclusions (2 & 3 of 3)

2. **Code-switcher (emic) category of CS motivation attested:**
    -- medium-of-learning effect (MOLE)
    Self-report data can be valid & reliable for researching CS motivations (*pace* Blom & Gumperz 1972).

3. **'Revelation through disruption' proved productive…**
    -- for uncovering code-switchers' situated concerns about code choice in bilingual interaction

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If time… (more than an aside…)

pace **(Latin): 'with due deference to', as in '*pace* Blom & Gumperz 1972'**

How is it pronounced?

"Pah-chay. Like everyone else, I write it a lot more than I speak it."

"Pah-che. I learned it from the Latin and it never occured to me to pronounce it otherwise."

"I've always said pah-kay, like the Latin pronunciation I learned at school in England. I think I've heard others say it like that here too."

"PAH-chay, even though I took three years of classical Latin in high school. It's probably because the first academic speaker I heard use 'pace' said it the Italian way."

"Yeah, I'm sure that's a common phenomenon. I still remember my dissertation adviser when I say the name Darius (I was surprised when he said da-RYE-us, but immediately adopted it)."

Source: http://www.languagehat.com/archives/002880.php (accessed 22/4/2012) 41

MOLE-driven CS in HK: Two implications

➔**Pedagogical (in class):**
How not to CS
when discussing school work in Chinese ?

➔**Social (in society):**
How not to CS
despite social stigma ?

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Thank you !

Q & A

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Long Chinese translation not useable / not used

e.g., school jargon in 'education discourse'

- *SBA* (school-based assessment, 校本評核)

- *TBL* (task-based learning, 以作業為本學習)

- *TSA* (territory-wide system assessment, 全港系統性評估)

etc.

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Code-switcher category: FIH
1 of 3

"你第一次聽的名字是英文，第一印象就會是英文…" (TWDC F3)

The first time you heard the term, it was in English, so your first impression [of that term] **will be in English…**

(my translation)

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Code-switcher category: FIH
2 of 3

"有些東西不用英文說對方可能還聽不懂，像是滿常用到的 'BBS', 'VCD', 'MSN', 'CPU', 'ID', 等等，發現這一類幾乎都是英文縮寫後的名稱，大家可能從第一次知道某樣東西時，它就是以英文的型式出現，閩南語方面有些也是有相同的情況，像有些吃的東西的名稱就是很難翻成國語的…" (TWDS M2)

There are certain things that, if you don't use English, others may not understand, like those terms that we use quite often: *'BBS', 'VCD', 'MSN', 'CPU', 'ID'*, etc., mostly English abbreviations; **probably the first time we encounter them, they are in English**. The same is true of some expressions in **southern Min, like local snacks and delicacies**; [this is why] it is **very difficult to translate them into Mandarin** [satisfactorily]. (my translation)

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Code-switcher (emic) category: FIH
3 of 3

"当一个人第一次接触一个新词汇是用英文时，则这个词留在他脑海中的印象就是英文，以后使用英文来表达这个词的机会比较大些。 例如：我第一次接触到 '中国文化中心' 的课程时，就是 'CCIV'，在以后的表达中我一直使用 'CCIV' 来表达，本次实验是我第一次用中文来表达，非常不习惯，不自然。" (HKE F9)

When a person first encounters a new term in English, the impression of this term in that person's mind will be in English, and so later the chance of using that English term will be higher. For example, **the first time I came across the course *zhongguo wenhua zhongxin*** [literally 'Chinese Civilization Centre'] **is '*CCIV*'. After that, I have always used '*CCIV*' to refer to that course**. [In] this experiment I used the Chinese term [of this course] for the first time, very unnatural and [I am] not used to it at all. (my translation)

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'Revelation through disruption' as technique to raise bilinguals' awareness of code choice
(examples from 5 HK FGs)

Academic jargon:
add/drop / BATESL / CCIV / course / e-portal / FYP / GPA / lab / break / etc.

Computer jargon:
click / double click / control / delete / enter / escape / insert / print / save / shift / etc.

Places / offices on campus:
ARRO / Blue Zone / FMO / Multi-Purpose Room / etc.

Personal names:
- Many students known to each other by English first names;
- Many found out classmates' Chinese given names through experiment

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FIH defined

First-impression hypothesis:

When a concept C is first encountered in language X, then C tends to be cognitively mediated through X (Cx), even if a direct translation of C is encountered later on in language Y (Cy).

➔ **explains why Cx cognitively more salient**

➔ **if Y = matrix language, inserting Cx in the middle of Y will result in (intra-sentential) code-switching**

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Evidence of FIH: the case of personal names
1 of 2

323 F4 Cc Bu   哦 / 因為我跟她認識的時候 / 就是我們因為上一個課程嘛 / 然後認識 / 然後那個學長跟我介紹的時候 / 就從頭到尾一開始認識她都 / 就都是叫她Vivian [DL: Vivian] / 就從來沒叫她中文名字 /

324 (...)

325 F4 Cc Bu   我是之後到課程結束 / 然後我才問她說 / 哦.. 她就是中文名字叫甚麼 // 可是我知道 / 但是也從來沒叫過她中文名字.. / 對啊 / 因為大家在裏面從頭都是講英文名 // 所以那時候因為她是高 / 她人在高雄 / 然後只是那一天 / 我來政大然後後我學長 / 然後就剛好跟她講到這個 / 然後一時之間沒想到 / 我都直接講Vivian / .. 因為講..我講她的本名 / 然後學長也會一時反應不過來 / 因為大家都叫她Vivian //   [TWCB F4]

The first time my senior classmate introduced her to me, she was known as Vivian. It was not until the course ended that I asked her what her Chinese name was, but I never called her by her Chinese name. She has always been known to me as Vivian. I met my senior classmate and mentioned Vivian on the day of the experiment; I used her English name because I thought that my senior classmate wouldn't know who I was talking about if I used her Chinese name. (my translation)

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<table>
<tr><td colspan="2" style="text-align:center">Evidence of FIH: the case of personal names
2 of 2</td></tr>
<tr><td>

407　　F5　　HCU Ch　　即
譬如話呢我識奇洛李維斯‧
時候..咁係**我係識奇洛李維
斯**..就唔係識**KEANU
REEVES** / 咁我就會慣咗講
奇洛李維斯 / 但係**我識TOM
CRUISE嘅時候係識佢叫
TOM CRUISE** / 咁所以呢我
就會講佢英文名 / 咁呢**就要
睇我第一...即第一個印象係
中文定英文 / 咁我就會用**..係
囉 // [HKC F5]

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F5:　When I first came across
Keanu Reeves, he was known
to me as **kei^{21} lok^{22} lei^{23} wai^{21}
si^{55}** / that is why I am used to
calling him **kei^{21} lok^{22} lei^{23} wai^{21}
si^{55}** / but when I got to know
Tom Cruise / he was known to
me as **Tom Cruise** / so I call
him by his English name / so it
depends on the first... whether
the first impression is Chinese
or English // (my translation) [55]

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